Taiwan is certainly regarded as an economic tiger in Asia, but it has not, until recently, been regarded as a cultural producer. Taiwanese art was studied, if at all, as a subset of Chinese art. While the Palace Museum in Taipei has long been regarded as the premier repository of Chinese art, the concept of Taiwanese art as an independent entity gained international currency only in the 1990s, when a number of important international exhibitions took place — the Taipei Biennial since 1992, the Venice Biennale since 1995, “Art Taiwan: The Contemporary Art of Taiwan” in Sydney in 1995, “Inside Out: New Chinese Art” in New York and elsewhere in 1999, “Face to Face: Contemporary Art from Taiwan” in Queensland, Australia, in 1999, and “Visions of Pluralism: Contemporary Art in Taiwan, 1988–1999” in Beijing and other places in 1999.

And at the same time that the international art world was awakening to Taiwanese contemporary art, the art world in Taiwan itself was rediscovering the art produced in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period and subsequently under the Chinese nationalist party, the Kuomintang [Guomingdang, KMT]. Notable exhibitions have included “Taiwan Art 1945–1993” (Taiwan Meishu Xin Fengmao 1945–1993) in 1993, “The Origins of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan” (Taiwan Donyanghua Tanyuan) in 2000, “Wave Striking: One Hundred Years of Taiwanese Arts” (Qiantao Paian: Taiwan Meishu Yibainian) in 2001, and “The Experimental Sixties: Avant-Garde Art in Taiwan” (Qianwei: Liushi Niandai Taiwan Meishu Fazhan) in 2003. Since the publication in 1976 of the first history of modern Taiwanese art, The History of Taiwanese Art during the Japanese Period (Riju shidai Taiwan meishu yundong shi) by Shaïh Lifa [Xie Lifa], the number of academic studies on the subject has been growing. In 1998 Chuan-ying Yen [Juanying Yan] published The Chronology of Taiwanese Fine Arts Events (Taiwan jindai meishu dashi nianbiao), and in 2001, Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art (Fengjing xinjing:...
Taiwan jindai meishu wenxian daodu. In these works she compiled substantial primary data and resources from the colonial period and translated them into Chinese, making them accessible to Taiwanese scholars who had been deterred by the language barrier. Yet publications in English remain scarce. Apart from the catalogs for the international exhibitions, the only significant works in English have been those by Yen, Wang Hsui-hsiung [Wang Xiuxiong], and John Clark,¹ as well as Jason C. Kuò’s Art and Cultural Politics in Postwar Taiwan (2000). This volume is, therefore, intended to offer additional critical studies of modern Taiwanese art to the English-speaking world. Its nine essays provide multiple perspectives on the visual culture of Taiwan during the colonial period (1895–1945) and focus on Taiwan’s dynamic yet intricate relations with modernities and colonialisms in Japan and Euroamerica.

Part 1 presents several typical encounters of the Japanese with the alien Taiwanese culture, which effectively form a prelude to the formation of modernity. Historian Naoko Shimazu discusses an “imagined Taiwan” as a literary landscape depicted in travel writings by the Japanese cultural elite, who described Taiwan and its inhabitants in terms related to the colonizers’ own identity. Three art historians — Hsin-tien [Xintian] Liao, Toshio Watanabe, and Chuan-ying Yen [Juanying Yan] — follow. They focus on the Western and Oriental/Japanese-style paintings that became the two major genres of modern painting, both of which were invented and institutionalized during the late nineteenth century in Japan. Liao explores the work of Western-style painters “discovering Taiwanese landscape” in relation to colonial power and modern travels of exploration. Watanabe discusses how two Japanese Western-style painters depicted Taiwan in the context of the “modern” concept of Japanese landscape and the imperial ideology of the “South.” Yen documents the short life of Oriental/Japanese-style paintings in Taiwan, employing the problematic idea of “local color,” a concept imposed in the 1920s by an important government-sponsored exhibition, Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition (Taiten).

Part 2 considers gender and images of “Chinese women.” Art historian Kaoru Kojima examines, in the context of modernity, the representation of women in “beauty paintings” (bijinga) by Western-trained Japanese male painters and their Taiwanese disciples. Kojima’s fellow art historian Ming-chu [Mingzhu] Lai discusses the paternalized colonial modernity expressed in the images of women created by Taiwanese women painters, both amateur and professional.

Finally, Part 3 foregrounds vernacularism in architecture, aboriginal artifacts, and Taiwanese folkcrafts. Architectural historian Chao-ching [Chaoqing] Fu proposes that a new hybrid Taiwanese identity developed
in the styles of residential houses and churches in relation to Western-style Japanese public architecture. Cultural anthropologist Chia-yu [Jiayu] Hu explores the representation of Taiwanese aboriginal art and artifacts in the study of Japanese anthropology, in museums, and at international exhibitions, while art historian Yuko Kikuchi investigates, again in the context of colonialism and modernism, the discourse and images of vernacularism in crafts.

Although most of its chapters deal with Taiwanese visual art, this volume does not intend to present a survey of painting, architecture, or crafts, as many such works have already been published by Taiwanese scholars. Indeed, not all of the contributors are experts in Taiwanese art and visual culture in the conventional sense. However, two common threads of expertise that they all do share are a postcolonial perspective and great familiarity with modern/contemporary studies of Asia. The collection rests on this theoretical, cross-cultural foundation, which it complements and extends by examining both the fine arts and those arts (including design, craft, and various artifacts) whose boundaries often defy categorization.

Japanese Colonization and Modernization Projects

In the late nineteenth century, European imperialism, colonialism, and global capitalism expanded in East Asia. Japan joined the ranks of world imperial powers in part to resolve its own unequal relations with Euro-America and also to avoid falling under the control of those same powers. When the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), caused by a dispute regarding hegemony over Korea, ended in Japan’s defeat of China, the Treaty of Shimonoseki ceded Taiwan to Japan from Qing China. Thus Taiwan became a Japanese colony for the next fifty years.

Japanese colonization went through three stages. The first two decades began with military rule followed by civilian governance, including establishment of the notably efficient administration of Governor-General Kodama Gentarō and his chief civilian official, Gotō Shinpei. But this period also saw the military suppression of armed resistance by the local Chinese and autochthonous peoples, in which thousands of Taiwanese were killed. The second two decades can be regarded as a period of consolidation in which various policies of cultural assimilation were implemented. During the last decade Taiwan became, in truth, a model colony for Japan’s expanding empire. This decade also encompassed the era of “imperialization” (kōminka), when the Taiwanese were forced to naturalize as Japanese imperial subjects. This system was based on a Japanese ideology that the nation was an “imperial family,” populated by a hierarchy of “imperial peoples.”
Implementation of this ideology was brought about coercively; it included national language reform (enforcement of the use of Japanese language and education in Japanese), religious reform (enforcement of Shintō practice), name reform (voluntary change to Japanese surnames), and a volunteer soldiers program, followed by general conscription. During Taiwan’s era as a colony, the Japanese cultivated products such as sugarcane, tea, bananas, pineapples, opium, and camphor, extracted salt, and manufactured industrial products, mainly for the purpose of supplying Japanese people either in the motherland or in the expanding colonies. Various projects that characterize a modern nation were also carried out, notably, the creation of modern technological and social infrastructures. Roads, railways, bridges, and ports were built; irrigation, water, and sewerage systems were established; an electricity system was installed; industry was created; and banks, hospitals, schools, research institutes, and museums were built.

The colonial government also conducted numerous scientific research projects, including land surveys, census data collection, investigations of tropical medicine, and, importantly, anthropological studies, especially of the indigenous aboriginal tribes, languages, and cultures.

Another important phenomenon brought into being during the Japanese colonial period was the modern cultural consciousness of an “imagined community.” From a vague characterization as a peripheral part of China, Taiwan came to be defined as an independent cultural entity with distinctive characteristics. The prototypes for Taiwanese ethnic and cultural identity were formed during this period. The Han Chinese people living in Taiwan were identified by the Japanese as hontōjin (Islanders) and the indigenous aboriginal people as banjin (savages), both of whom were conceived as distinct from naichijin (Japanese residents in Taiwan and Japan). Though hontōjin and banjin are derogatory, these newly coined terms created cohesive Taiwanese ethnic identities and made the modern nation imaginable. In addition, the colonial government invested heavily in anthropological research and created a classification of the aboriginal peoples into eight tribes; these have since evolved into the currently used classification of ten tribes. Images of Taiwanese culture were also constructed, initially as problematic and inferior, but also dramatically exotic. Taiwan itself was regarded as primitive, full of endemic tropical diseases — a virgin territory filled with headhunting savages (banjin). During the course of Japanization, however, this image mutated into a romanticized and idealized image of nangoku (the Southern Country) — the equivalent, more or less, of northern Europe’s longed-for “South” (Italy, for example), and eventually Taiwan evolved into the image of a model colony that formed the base for the nanshin (push for the South) imperial doctrine. In Part
2, Liao and Watanabe discuss the similarities in rhetoric regarding “Italy” and “Taiwan,” and Watanabe expands his discussion into a politicization of Japan’s romantic image of Taiwan.

Art also played an important part in the colonial construction of the cultural entity of Taiwan. First, the modern concept of “primitive art,” based on ideas engendered by Social Darwinism, was introduced, and this art became the object of “scientific” studies in anthropology and ethnology. Pioneering government-sponsored research on the material culture of the aboriginal tribes was conducted, notably by Inō Kanori and later by ethnologists of the Taihoku Imperial University as well as amateurs. Artifacts were collected at the Taiwan Colonial Government Museum and the Institute of Ethnology at Taihoku Imperial University, established respectively in 1908 and 1927, and exhibited to the public at domestic and international exhibitions, a process by which the colonizer represented and valorized the artifacts as primitive art. In addition to the primitive art of the aboriginal tribes, the Japanese introduced another modern concept, that of “folkcrafts,” with reference to certain Han Chinese crafts, and objects fitting that classification were similarly collected, estheticized/valorized, and exhibited, notably by Yanagi Sōetsu, Kanaseki Takeo, and European designers. The representation and estheticization of aboriginal artifacts and Han Chinese crafts is discussed in this volume by Hu and Kikuchi.

Annual official exhibitions of the fine arts were organized, specifically the Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition (Taiwan Bijutsu Tenrankai or Taiten) during 1927–1936 and the Taiwan Government-General Fine Arts Exhibition (Taiwan Sōtokufu Bijutsu Tenrankai or Futen) during 1938–1943. These exhibitions followed the model of government-sponsored exhibitions that Japan had established at home and in its colony Korea, the Ministry of Education Fine Arts Exhibition (Monbushō Bijutsu Tenrankai or Bunten) in Tokyo in 1907, which later became the Imperial Fine Arts Exhibition (Teikoku Bijutsu Tenrankai or Teiten), and the Korean Fine Arts Exhibition (Chōsen Bijutsu Tenrankai or Senten) in Korea in 1922. The official exhibitions in Taiwan had two divisions: Oriental-style painting (tōyōga) and Western-style painting (seiyōga). As Chuan-ying Yen [Juan-ying Yan] discusses in her essay, Oriental-style painting, a genre used in colonial exhibitions including the Taiten and Senten, embraces various styles of Oriental paintings. It was regarded as a genre that differed in principle from nihonga (Japanese-style painting), yet in practice tōyōga was clearly centered on nihonga. Selection for and awards from the official exhibitions represented the ultimate honor and bestowed a status of authority upon the artists. Most judges were Japanese sent from the motherland, and their views greatly affected the work of the artists in the exhibitions. Among
Oriental-style paintings in particular, works followed a specific type, subject, and style, such as the “Taiten-style” (Taiten-gata), that was favored by the judges. As Yen notes in her chapter, Taiten-style paintings were regarded as a reflection of the colonizer’s taste for images of Taiwan, a preference summarized in the problematic expression “local color.” Four Japanese painters and judges, including the prolific watercolor painter Ishikawa Kin’ichirō, Western-style oil painter Shiotsuki Tōho, and Oriental-style painters Gōhara Kotō and Kinoshita Seigai were particularly influential.

The first generation of Taiwanese painters under colonial rule were initially trained by Japanese teachers at schools and private studios in Taiwan before many went for further study in metropolitan Japan and Europe. The Taiwanese painters imbibed their teachers’ views and created “Taiwanese art” according to the dictates of the new authority that undergirded the Taiwanese art academy. Liao, Yen, and Lai take these influences into account as they explore various issues in Taiwanese fine art.

Colonial Modernity and Refraction

Modernity in Taiwanese visual culture emerged in this cross-cultural complexity under Japanese colonization. To investigate it properly requires a tool that is capable of accommodating multiple perspectives. The analytical framework we have adopted in this volume is that of “colonial modernity,” following its successful application by Tani Barlow and other scholars in *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*. This framework has proved particularly useful for the study of non-European modernities because of its premises that “colonialism and modernity are indivisible features of the history of industrial capitalism” and that the modernity of non-European cultures is inextricably interrelated with European modernity. It provides multiple perspectives on the interrelated modernity of the colonizers and the colonized, including the Euroamerican, the Japanese, and the Taiwanese. Without this framework of interrelations, what Japanese colonization meant to Taiwan as well as to Japan itself and to Euroamerica cannot be captured.

Although it is a somewhat elusive and expanding framework, it is particularly useful to examine the cultural phenomena of modernity because doing so gives both a diachronic perspective on indigenous development and a synchronic perspective on common modes of modernity triggered by the intervention by foreign cultural imperialisms. This approach enables us to draw a dynamic picture of complex cultural phenomena that cannot be captured by the binary, one-dimensional approach of an orthodox Eurocentric historiography based on a polarized model such as tradition vs.
modernity. Such a binary model is often used to explain the modernity of non-Euroamerican cultures, but it fails to capture the continuity within the indigenous development. The effectiveness of the framework of colonial modernity has been demonstrated, for example, by Stephen Vlastos and other contributors to *Mirror of Modernity* in their analysis of “tradition.” They have extended and applied the ideas of “invention of tradition,” coined by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, to the non-Euroamerican case — Japan. Vlastos and his colleagues argue that Japanese “tradition” is a modern invention, and they do so by examining indigenous ideas as well as by analyzing global capitalism and the cultural function of modernity. In this volume we also argue that the key ideas of modernity in Taiwanese visual art — “vernacularism” and “landscape” (which I shall explore more extensively later) — are also invented cultural phenomena involving colonial politics, scientific modernism, and art discourses that cut across Euroamerica, Japan, and Taiwan. In this volume we present distinct cases relating to these themes and examine the formation of modern culture in Japan and Taiwan within the framework of colonial modernity.

This leads to our central investigations of “modernity” itself. Our concern is the complex transferable nature of modernity and the characteristics of modernity in Taiwanese visual culture. Modernity, in general, encompasses the characteristics of modern society that are seen in such new phenomena as secular political forms and democracy, capitalism, a social and gendered division of labor, a new intellectual and cognitive world, science, and the construction of an “imagined community” and a national identity. Modern society with these characteristics emerged in late nineteenth-century Japan, and the idea of modernity was transplanted and articulated as a discourse of the modern, particularly from around 1910 to the end of the 1930s. Taiwan came to experience such modernity during the Japanese colonization, and the Japanese idea of the modern, which Japan had appropriated from Euroamerica, was transplanted to Taiwan at that time.

Modernity is also clearly visible in art. According to John Clark, modernity in art means relativizing the customary style as “old” by imposing newly transferred techniques, media, forms, and subjects, and by decontextualizing and eventually repositioning the customary style, thus creating a new art work in an eclectic manner. Such modernity is clearly evident in Japan through five art phenomena: newly imported Western-style oil and watercolor painting, newly invented neotraditionalist *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting), Western-style architecture, craft with a *zuan* (design) concept and technology from the West, and “studio craft” created by artists for creative expression. Different phases of these modernities developed in Asian art through contact with Euroamerican art. In this volume we
observe similar characteristics of modernity in Taiwanese visual culture. It is evident, for example, in the newly developed genre of landscape in yōga (Japanized Western-style painting), in the portrayal of idealized Taiwanese (both Chinese and aboriginal) women, in tōyōga (Oriental-style painting, known as nihonga in Japan), and the emergence of Western-style and eclectic-style architecture and vernacular crafts. The Japanese modernity that grew out of a fusion of Japanese and Western ideas was appropriated locally in Taiwan, with the result that cultural variants emerged. They contained ideas common to three cultures, for Taiwan presents a unique case of a transfer of modernity in which three cultural factors — Euroamerican, Japanese, and Chinese/Taiwanese — are intermixed. In this volume we assert that Taiwan’s case presents a model that cuts across common issues existing in Asian modernities, highlighting in particular their concurrent relations with Japanese and Euroamerican modernities.

The state and product of localization or appropriation often appears in an eclectic form and is often described by the term “hybrid,” which Homi Bhabha has used to depict an aspect of colonial modernity contested by the colonized. The concept of hybridity effectively describes the complex, double-edged situation that results from the continuous dissemination and translation of cultures in colonial situations. To present this requires revision of the one-dimensional, black-and-white analytical models of colonialism. Hybridity stresses the originality and creativity that exists among the colonized and denounces the notion of imitation, a judgment often imposed by the Eurocentric view. It also enables us to capture the complexity of modernity in Taiwanese culture in relation to that of Japan and Euroamerica and to highlight creative appropriation and localization by the Taiwanese. In this volume, for example, Fu presents powerful visual evidence of hybridity in the mansions of Taiwan’s gentry, the street houses, and Christian churches, which are a mixture of Western, Japanese, and Taiwanese Minnan style. He sees them all as demonstrations of Taiwaneseeness in architecture. Hu, for her part, points out how aboriginal costumes, incorporating Japanese coins and colorful plastic straws, present an extraordinary example of hybrid colonial modernity. All of us are also fully aware, however, of the potentially superficial celebration of hybridity. As John Clark has noted, the sudden Euroamerican interest in non-Euroamerican contemporary art — identified as a sensational “postmodern hybrid” — occurred only at the moment when Asian art showed no obvious reference to Euroamerican stylistic discourses. Other types of art, particularly those that exhibit visual similarity to Euroamerican work, even though they emerged from the shared context of the so-called “postmodern hybrid” art, have simply been dismissed by Euroamerica as
retrogressive, without any examination of their locally specific meanings.\textsuperscript{11} This is the dangerously elusive aspect that, Geeta Kapur notes, “elides the diachronic edge of cultural phenomena.”\textsuperscript{12} Celebration of the postmodernity of non-Euroamerica is often a case of Euroamericans understanding non-Euroamerican art where it fits within a Euroamerican paradigm, but fails to understand non-Euroamerican art where it fits within the local paradigm. Nonetheless, we still regard the notion of hybridity as significant if used with caution and in combination with understanding of implications in local contexts.\textsuperscript{13} In our essays we present both synchronic and diachronic analyses, with particular focus on diachronic perspectives from our own cultural standpoint and expertise. With this framework, we believe that we can not only accommodate multiple perspectives on complex cultural phenomena but also retain an ideological stance that avoids being trapped in the pitfalls of essentialism and misrepresentation.\textsuperscript{14}

From the framework of colonial modernity, the central theoretical notion of “refraction” has emerged. This volume focuses on the transfer and appropriation of modernity, which can be summarized by the key word refraction. Refraction is used here in the sense of Kang Sang-Jung’s expression “refracted Orientalism.”\textsuperscript{15} In physics, the refraction of light describes a change of direction, an altered course, taken by a beam of light. In this volume we use refraction to refer to the transferable nature of the ideas and practices of Euroamerican colonialism and in particular, Japanese colonialism, which itself had adopted and refracted those of Western colonialism. Although many pages here will examine the Japanese basis for Taiwanese art and craft, the main focus is not Japanese influence, which would force the discourse into terms of originality and imitation, but rather the phenomenon of refraction, where notions from outside shift the creative invention of the local population in new directions, but directions that are specifically meaningful in the local context.

Since Edward Said identified the characteristics of the systemic representation of the Orient by the dominant Occident in his seminal work in 1978, his idea has inspired numerous studies and its application has extended into many fields.\textsuperscript{16} The most fruitful applications were made by Stefan Tanaka, Kang San-Jung, and Oguma Eiji\textsuperscript{17} in their studies on Japanese modernity in the colonial context, which established the notion of “Japan’s Orient” (tōyō).\textsuperscript{18} Japan’s Orient refers to a geocultural entity, including Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria/China, formed by places where Japan was the dominant colonizer. This actual space was constructed into an imagined Japanese Orient in a process that mirrored the Euroamerican Orientalism that had been projected onto Japan. By creating its own Orient — and thus dissociating itself from the “other,” still-lesser Orient — Japan was able to
reject domination by the West and then join the Western imperial powers in their own game. This process can be described as a kind of refraction, Euroamerican Orientalism having first been projected onto Japan and having helped construct Japan’s new identity. This Japanese variant of Orientalism was then projected onto the rest of East Asia. In this volume we use the notion of refraction to describe how modernization in Taiwan was first imposed by Japanese colonialism and then localized and subsequently modified.

Refraction refers mainly to the transfer of ideas from the original source, but importantly it also encapsulates the actual process by which these ideas are “bent” or modified during the course of transfer. In consonance with Euroamerican colonialism and notions of Orientalism, Japan regarded Taiwan as a virgin land inhabited by headhunting, though noble, savages and full of diseases, all of which required the civilization and modernization that Japan was well equipped to dispense. Japanese colonization was not, however, the same as Euroamerican colonization. Unlike the British in India, the French in Algeria, or the Spanish in the Philippines, the Japanese share some cultural background with the Taiwanese Chinese. Nor was Japan’s own cultural location the same as its Euroamerican counterpart. Japan had long felt culturally inferior to Chinese culture, in addition to feeling inferior to Western culture, which had regarded the Japanese as both uncivilized and primitive. This double sense of inferiority stimulated the Japanese to modify and make Japanese their concept of colonization. Unlike Euroamerica, the Japanese strove to bring about assimilation of the lands it colonized, impose Confucian ideology, and implement their ideology of imperialization.¹⁹ They also emphasized “spirituality” through the symbolism of the Japanese emperor and the Japanese language. These, as Oguma points out, the only firm forms of Japanese national cultural pride, represent the “bending” or modification that constitute Japan’s refraction of Euroamerican colonialism.

Each contributor to this volume examines refraction. In the development of Taiwanese modern painting, Liao holds that refracted modern ideas, such as tourism as an activity concerned with “conquering the untamed land,” were the impetus for how artists visualized the typical Taiwanese landscape, and Watanabe finds Japan’s variant Orientalizing of an exotic South the stimulus for creation of an imperial “landscape.” Back in the seventeenth century, Chinese Literati painters had begun developing portraiture of women, and Japanese painters and ukiyoe print makers appropriated this into Japanese-style bijinga (beauty painting). In the modern period, Kojima notes, bijinga absorbed refracted ideas of Orientalism, and the notion of Japan’s Orient was expressed in the representation
of modern Oriental women by male artists. Lai also examines how the Japanese male gaze and imperial ideology were expressed through *bijinga*. In architecture, Fu reveals how refracted Western and Japanese styles are evident in official public buildings, hybrid-style mansions of Taiwanese gentry, street houses, and Christian churches, both in their technical and aesthetic aspects. Anthropology and ethnology are also refracted modern academic disciplines. Hu shows how colonial and scientific studies created “primitive art” through a system of collecting and taxonomizing it in museums, while Kikuchi examines the estheticization of Taiwanese crafts in accordance with modern aesthetics and the political discourse of “vernacular” and “folk.” However, ambivalent and partial refraction are also observed. Shimazu examines how the central question of modernization was challenged in some cases by the complex borders Japanese writers had to negotiate, and Yen observes how the notion of local color as a key element of modern art discourse in the Taiwanese Oriental-style painting lost substance in the process of refraction.

Although refraction was omnipresent in the formation of modernity in Taiwanese visual culture, we want to emphasize our focus on refraction through Japan is not intended to esteem Japanese colonialism in relation to Taiwanese modernity. Nor does this volume claim that modernity refracted through Japan is the only source for modern Taiwanese art, particularly when we consider Taiwan’s cultural ties with mainland China. Refracted modernity is but one of several significant streams that contributed to Taiwanese modernism, but it was one that later became grounds for critical reassessment by the Taiwanese. The modernity of artists such as Lin Ke-gong, who studied in Britain and absorbed the British watercolor style directly from the British, was not refracted through Japan. Lai finds a similar separation from Japanese modern art among the Literati-style ink painters/calligraphers and the female painters who worked within their families.

Vernacularism

One key element of colonial modernity is the discourse regarding local color or vernacularism in Taiwanese art. We use the term vernacularism in this volume largely as an idea or ideology that valorizes the particular as opposed to the international and universal, as in the vernacular style in architecture. Vernacularism is also a discourse of modern art that has come to define regional “tradition.”20 It also has become a mode of expressing neotraditionalism or nativism as seen from the viewpoint of the vernacular culture’s proprietor, which is selectively constructed from regional and traditional
elements of the culture and manifests “modernity” in ideas and styles. In his argument that tradition and modernity are not opposing concepts, John Clark provides examples of neotraditional art as a form of modern art. His examples include Japanese nihonga (Japanese-style painting), Indian spiritualism, and Thai art inspired by folk or country subjects. If we extend Clark’s examples into the world of crafts, neotraditionalism can also be found in the Japanese mingei and the folkcrafts movement led by Yanagi Sōetsu and the Indian swadeshi (indigenous) and the folkcrafts movement led by Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy. In Taiwanese art, craft, and design, vernacularism was first developed as part of the Japanese colonizers’ discourse through their depiction of local color. Examples are Taiwanese tropical landscapes with exotic fruits, plants, animals, crafts, Chinese and aboriginal women, and aboriginal people, or the use of tropical bright colors or local materials, techniques, and designs that had existed for a long time. Subsequently, as Liao, Kojima, Fu, Hu, and Kikuchi observe, the colonized Taiwanese appropriated this stylistic, technical, and conceptual idea of local color into their own visual and material culture, which they then developed as nativism. Accordingly, we can observe that modernity and a new Taiwanese tradition were constructed from Taiwanese indigenous vernacular elements. At the same time, however, Yen offers a complex view of appropriation in the example she gives of local color in tōyōga/nihonga.

John Clark and Partha Mitter have both examined the intervention of Euroamerica in the construction of a neotraditional art in Asia. In Japanese painting, Ernest Fenollosa played an important role in helping to select traditional elements while adding innovative modern techniques and reinventing the tradition in the newly created nihonga. Alfred Parsons, Alfred East, and John Varley, Jr., all had a crucial impact on the Japanese watercolor movement, as did William Morris and John Ruskin. Bruno Taut and Charlotte Perriand were similarly crucial to the Japanese folkcrafts and design movement. During these Euroamerican cultural interventions, European Orientalism and Primitivism were also transferred, and complementary empowering relations developed between these cultural ideas and the nationalist discourse of Japanese ethnic art. In Taiwan, Japanese intervention played a similar role, although there seems to have been a more complex process of transfer and appropriation in the development of the Taiwanese modernism than in other modernisms where there was direct Euroamerican intervention. In our essays here we address this comparative perspective in discussing the development of modernity in Taiwan.

We also discuss the political dimension of vernacularism. For most contributors the Japanese imposed the notion of vernacularism initially, through their unequal power relationship. Yen writes here and elsewhere
that local color, a synonym of vernacularism, was a colonial art policy, with propaganda for it promoted through the Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition (Tai-ten) and the Taiwan Government-General Fine Arts Exhibition (Futen). Indeed, this led to the construction of a particular genre depicting local color.24 The judges of these exhibitions and the teachers at art institutions also played important roles in the dissemination of vernacularism. Liao and Lai discuss the notion extensively as they investigate nangoku (the Southern Country) art and its characteristics. Watanabe expands the argument by examining the notion of nangoku or nanyō (the South Seas) in the context of Japanese imperialism and its central doctrine of nanshinron (“push for the South” policy). Hu analyses how savage primitiveness becomes part of a vernacular culture through the display of aboriginal artifacts at official spaces such as at Taihoku Imperial University, the Government-General Museum, and various international exhibitions. And in her study of the development of vernacular crafts, Kikuchi argues that vernacularism is not a purely esthetic ideology but is intricately combined with colonial, cultural, and industrial policy.

Vernacularism is also discussed in relation to identity. The particularity or difference pronounced in vernacularism facilitated growing awareness of modern Taiwanese identities during the Japanese colonial period. Although vernacularism was initially constructed by the colonizing Japanese from a perspective of Otherness, it was appropriated and internalized by the colonized Taiwanese and developed into nativism. Liao points to the “discovery” by Taiwanese painters of Taiwanese landscape in their secular daily life, and Fu analyses the multilayered Taiwanese identity evident in hybrid-style residential and street houses. At the same time, however, the constructed Taiwanese identities reflected back to the Japanese as colonizer. As Tessa Morris-Suzuki has put it, “Empires were full of overlapping, jostling, discordant ‘imagined communities’ in which both colonizers and colonized struggled to visualize coherent identities.”25 The Taiwanese contested the identity of the Japanese, as Shimazu notes, while Watanabe similarly raises the question as to what is Japanese landscape.

The Taiwanese identities constructed during the Japanese period seem linked with the ongoing reinvention of Taiwan’s contemporary identity, or what has been called “Taiwanese consciousness” (Taiwan ishi).26 Kuo notes that this Taiwanese consciousness, evident since the 1980s, stems from “Japanese legacies” that had been constructed on the cumulative cultural experiences of the old Chinese culture and the Japanese culture. Added on top of this was the KMT-led resinicized Chinese culture that was revived in the 1970s by the “nativist” (xiang-tu) movement, and the whole mix has been reconstructed continuously.27 Taiwanese identity has been an excit-
ing, widely discussed topic in Taiwanese social studies for the last decade and has generated several notable studies. The issues addressed include the emergence of Taiwanese consciousness during the Japanese colonial period (Ching 2001), the evolution and construction of the contemporary Taiwanese identity since the 1970s in reaction to the assertion of nationalism by Peoples Republic of China (PRC) (Gold 1993, Hughes 1997), and the volatile, fast-changing identity discourses of Taiwanese and PRC Chinese since (Brown 2004). Taiwanese identity is also seen as standing uniquely between Taiwan-centric multicultural “cultural indigenization” and actual transnational reality (Chun 2000, 2002), and conflicting multiple notions in the Taiwanese identity and postnationalist tendency are proposed (Chang 2004). Similarly, in the art world, Ye Yu-jing has commented upon the heated discussion on identity in Taiwanese art, especially during the 1980s and 1990s, as have the major contemporary art exhibitions held in Taiwan and abroad. In this volume, Hu and Kikuchi discuss the relationship between Taiwanese identity during the Japanese colonial period and that of the contemporary period. Hu investigates the redefinition of aboriginal cultural representation and ethnic identities by pointing out how contemporary Taiwanese aboriginal people have reappropriated their ancestors’ artifacts and the archival records in the Japanese colonial collections. Kikuchi traces the continuity and revitalization of the Japanese-imposed Taiwanese identities in contemporary craft works, connoisseurship, craft studies, newly established museums, and exhibitions.

Landscape

Finally, the visual theme adopted in our project is landscape, or, more specifically, Taiwanese vernacular landscape. Landscape, as we have employed the term, encompasses not only the natural landscape, but the landscape peopled with indigenous living beings (Chinese women, aboriginal people), crafts with landscape designs, crafts that associate with and form landscapes, urban landscape and architecture, and the literary landscape. By adopting W. J. T. Mitchell’s approach, we have tried to deconstruct the Taiwanese landscape as a cultural discourse and a representation of identity, as well as a historical invention. Landscape is also a site that realizes modernist ideology. Landscape is constructed by modern techniques backed by “scientific” and “rational” ideas; it is often presented in an order defined by the colonizer, appropriated under the colonizer’s system of grammar, and then made into a “free romantic space” in a national imaginary story.

The notion of Taiwanese landscape is also a product of colonial modernity. A particular kind of Taiwanese landscape was selected and con-
structed by geologists, cartographers, painters, craft producers, travelers, writers, and ordinary Taiwanese citizens as part of the modernization project during the course of colonization. Taiwanese landscape was esthetically visualized with stereotypical images of Taiwan that were represented first by Japanese artists and subsequently by Taiwanese artists before being disseminated through domestic and international official exhibitions, print media, films, and tourist souvenirs. The popular images of Taiwan created by them include, first of all, unspoiled dramatic nature, such as Mount Niitaka, Mount Ali and Mount Kannon. Then there are the scenes of the tropical “Southern” island, picturesque places like Tanshui [Danshui] — peaceful, romantic countrysides, with houses featuring red roof tiles and surrounded by bamboo, palm trees, betel nut trees, papaya trees, pineapple trees, Taiwanese acacia trees, sugarcanes, and water buffaloes. But there are also the scenes of a civilized colony, in which we see electric poles, train bridges, and thriving commercial towns. And contrasting with them are landscapes of exotic or primitive people (again, Chinese women, aboriginal tribes). And finally there are the crafts made of bamboo or rush, the aboriginal artifacts, and so forth. The notion of the typical Taiwanese landscape involved exoticism, primitivism, romanticism, but also urbanism, which are also distinctive features of Euroamerican colonialism. Refraction of the Euroamerican notion of landscape in colonial contexts is apparent here, but at the same time, refraction of the Japanese version is also clear.

In this volume we examine the Japanization of the Taiwanese landscape as a refracted colonial modernity. Liao and Watanabe discuss the notion of meisho — famous scenic spots, often with literary and religious associations, long a part of Japanese culture. Watanabe also looks at the landscape of nangoku (the Southern Country) / nanyō (the South Seas), which expressed the imperial ideology. Kojima and Lai show how bijinga (beauty painting) was appropriated and Japanized from the Chinese Literati tradition. The discovery and construction of Taiwanese landscape not only reinforced the colonizer’s system of modernization, but also created a sense of modernity and new identity among the Taiwanese. Yen reflects here and elsewhere on how Taiwanese painters and second-generation Japanese painters born in Taiwan changed and personalized ideas about Taiwanese landscape and its associated styles in the 1930s. Liao discusses the anti-meisho attitude visible in the fashion of dōro sansui (roadscapes). Lai gives an insightful analysis of the Taiwanese “woman-scape,” with its coded meanings expressed through the newly acquired modern visual language. Chen Jin internalized bijinga style in her own search for new subject matter and self-identification as a Taiwanese, and Huang Hehua’s and Zhou Hongzhou’s self-portraits were protests against colonial rule and the Tai-
Both give strong evidence of painting’s development toward Taiwanese localization. Although a great deal of modernity was refracted under colonial rule, it was soon contested by the colonized, who developed it into their own indigenous modernization.

The essays presented here highlight the interrelated commonalities and particularities in expressions of modernity during the course of transfer of modernities from Euroamerica, via Japan, to Taiwan. Viewed against the wider backdrop of Asian modernities, they offer evidence of the commonalities of hybrid phenomena among Asian and non-Western modernities, but they also suggest culturally specific expressions. We hope that our work will inspire the application of the ideas of colonial modernity to other Asian modernities, as well as stimulate further studies on the Taiwanese and Japanese modernities, so that their contemporary visual culture will be seen as not only universally attractive but as distinctively local and subjective.

Notes

2. For more detailed examination of imperialization (kōminka), see Tsurumi 1977; Chou [Zhou] 1996.
10. For definition of “street houses,” see note 16 in Fu’s essay in this book.
11. Ibid., 290.
23. For further details, see Kikuchi and Watanabe 1997.