Art and Craft as a Non-Dualism:
The Japanese Mingei Movement from a Taiwanese Perspective

Volume 1/2

Louise Yu-Jui Yang

PhD

University of York

History of Art

August 2022

Abstract

This study explores two craft movements in Japan and Taiwan in the first half of the twentieth century under the political structure of Japanese imperialism. The thesis is organised into four chapters, the first two focusing on the Japanese *Mingei* Movement and the last two on the Taiwanese artist Yen Shui-long's craft practice in forms of design. With the frame of the 'International Arts and Crafts' perpetuating in the legacy of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, I argue that these local responses should be seen as an art-historical process of displacement and replacement, rather than mere transmission or absolute subversion.

Craft has been made to play the role of a negative in the construction of art's history. Reconsidering the concept of craft, which has been previously explored by identifying its 'non-art' properties, this research re-engages with the art-versus-craft debate to reveal imperialism within European art history's narratives of Others and its influence in non-European cultures' acquirement of 'art'. In searching for alternative aesthetic value for shaping Japanese art history, Yanagi Sōetsu's *mingei* theory problematised the dualistic structure of the art-craft category, interrogating the hegemony within the modernist idea of 'fine art'. Meanwhile, *mingei* aesthetics' nuance in Taiwan extends the story to re-examine *mingei* theory's own nationalist ideology. I analyse this movement as forms of cultural resistance, challenging the myths of originality, authenticity and other artificial substances used to frame the boundary of cultural identity, highlighting the ways in which 'craft' played a significant role in processing local mobilities and autonomies. These two cases give evidence for craft's dialectical tension in relation to art, open a post-colonial view onto art history's Eurocentrism and re-examine pervasive imperialism in forms of Japanese colonialism in the early twentieth century.

Contents

Volume 1 .

List of Illustrations

Charts

Figures

Acknowledgements

Great thanks to professor Liao, Jen-I, and professor Lin Huan-Shen, for always being supportive and making the start of my PhD journey, and to professor Chang Shao-Ying and professor Lin Chen-Wei, who have contributed to studies of Taiwanese craft movements and gave me resourceful advice before I started the PhD programme.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to professor Michael White, who has been continually supportive throughout this research project, encouraging me to try everything I want to achieve in my academic approach. Professor Jason Edwards, joined the development of this research from the initial stage, and I appreciate his erudite and creative advice, as well as genuine encouragement. Very much thanks to my external examiner, professor Christopher Reed, for the fascinating and intriguing discussions that lightened up the final exam.

Many individuals and institutions generously supported my field studies. I want to thank, in particular, Wang Lea, Chen I-Fan, Saka Chihiro, National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute, Academia Sinica Taiwan and Usami Shokakudo Co. Ltd.

This research included massive archive materials in multiple languages, and I am grateful for Kazuki Inoue and Caroline Vogel's help to engage with these materials. Great thanks to Marte Stinis, Joe Allen and Francesca Curtis, for the genuine friendship and whole support at the crucial moment before the submission of the thesis.

I owe special thanks to James Moreman, an important family in York, for the warm company throughout the PhD programme in the strange Covid time.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Introduction

Art through Craft: What is Overlooked in the Frame of Orientalism

Locating Craft: Cultural Interface within Imperialism

My study explores the 'International Arts and Crafts' in the context of Japanese imperialism in the first half of the twentieth century. It examines how the art/craft dualism within this imperial structure was formed and transformed through the encounters with Others and through cultural differences.[1] This research analyses craft and represents local positions in cultural interfaces where theoreticians and activists struggled with a centralised art history and craft's subordination to art. Responding to this issue this thesis engages in cultural frontiers, describing art experiences which respond to the Eurocentric idea of art as embedded within unique historical processes in local society. In these localised movements, craft was frequently represented as a cultural resistance, challenging the myths of originality, authenticity, spirituality and other artificial substances guaranteeing art's legitimacy and dominance. Within the imperial structure, craft's peripheral agency and its pivotal role in processing this art-historical debate was constantly interpreted as a political tool mingled with state-sanctioned nationalism. By demonstrating how this art-historical approach interacted with political ideologies, and observing utterances generated by embracing the miscellaneous material and technical world, I argue that these local movements, especially in Japan and Taiwan, convey independent initiatives engaging in cultural resilience which confronts the hegemonic imperial ideology. Moreover, in a global context of art history, these activities conducted radical socialist engagements problematising the hierarchy within modern art's deployments of Others in forms of non-art.

This thesis juxtaposes two interrelated cases, the Japanese *Mingei* Movement and its initiator Yanagi Sōetsu (1889-1961), and the Taiwanese craft movement and painter Yen Shui-long (1903-1997). Although the story took place during Japan's colonisation of Taiwan, I organise this as a juxtaposition rather than a lineage, to emphasise the independence of these two cases through their divergent approaches to craft. In many cases within the art-versus-craft debate, craft has been accorded non-art properties, and has been made to play the role of a negative in the construction of art's history. Analysing the art/craft dichotomy within Japanese imperial rule, these two cases give evidence for craft's subversive tension in relation to art, open a post-colonial view looking into art

[1] Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry, *International Arts and Crafts* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2005).

history's eurocentrism and reexamine pervasive imperialism in forms of Japanese colonialism in the early twentieth century.

The *Mingei* Movement was a series of activities guided by Yanagi's *mingei* theory. It aimed at constructing the aesthetics of Japanese craft, defining the beauty of daily functional objects. Invented in 1925, the term '*mingei*' conveyed Yanagi and his *mingei* associates' target of "common people" in relation to diverse material cultures based on local traditions.[2] Their projects in the 1930s involved a considerable scale of cultural revivals in rural Japan. Afterwards its influence also arrived in Japan's colonies, including in Taiwan. The imperial structure brought together the East/West antithesis and art-versus-craft debate, stimulating multiple approaches of 'national beauty' with considerable discussions of 'western' individualism and capitalism's influences in modern Japan and the impact of modernity on daily experience. Yanagi's thoughts benefited from his early years in the *Shirakaba* (White Birch) society, which gathered intellectual and adventurous young people who embraced western philosophy and art. The *Shirakaba* brought about Yanagi's friendship with Bernard Leach (1887-1979) and Tomimoto Kenkichi (1886-1963), as well as his enthusiastic admiration toward socialists such as Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) and Arthur Penty (1889-1959), whose thoughts significantly determined Yanagi's socialist approach through the *Mingei* Movement. To improve the access for "common people," Yanagi's socialism is the foundation of his nationalism, which in this thesis I reject to draw a parallel to the state-made nationalism, or imperialism, but emphasise another kind of nationalism made by people in cultural frontiers. Distinguishing the difference between the two types of influences - one top-down, and the other, bottom-up – I argue socialist approaches through craft are still possible through nationalism without categorising it as imperialism.

The context of the Taiwanese craft movement is less precise, as it issued no manifesto or official document. I will focus on Yen Shui-long's modern craft practice that started from his handicrafts survey in the 1930s. At the time, not long after he returned from his studies in France, Yen was a well-known artist who resolved to 'shift' his career and devote himself to promoting local handicrafts. Yen's activity was independent until the early 1940s, when he started cooperating with *Minzoku Taiwan* magazine's associates through whom he then met Yanagi and *mingei* associates in 1943. Yen admired Yanagi and devoted considerable attention to the *Mingei* Movement. It is easy to find similarities between Yen's approach and *mingei* practice in terms of local accessibility and the celebration of tradition. Sketching a political picture by criticising Japanese imperialism, Kim Brandt evaluated this 'celebration of native culture' as a part of the *Kōminka* (imperialisation) Movement promoted by the colonial government.[3] This theoretical inclination encouraged taking these local

---

[2] Okamura Kichiemon,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], (Tokyo: Tamagawa University Press, 1991), 25-27.
[3] Kim Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 175.

actions as a passive response to the imperial Greater East Asian ideology, which homogenised and undervalued autonomies in these activities.

The imperial ideology is an inevitable factor that these local factions needed to negotiate with. However, I argue, the craft movement in Taiwan should not be validated as part of the Japanese *Mingei* Movement. Exploring how 'craft' engaged in the ideological argument, my question will be more focused on their different aesthetic approaches and their craft works' distinguishable forms as a consequence of their theoretical divergence. I also observe the strategies used to sidestep or mimic imperial control and dodge censorship under the colonial force.

Mingei theory's definition of Japanese craft was antithetical to the western concept of 'art', with the former representing the collective will of the majority of people and the latter inclining to intellectualism and individualism stated by Yanagi.[4] With an intention to represent *mingei* as a native construction of Japanese aesthetics, Yanagi's interest in occidental knowledge permeated his criticism of western individualism, which determined the occidental/oriental dualistic structure within *mingei* theory. It subsequently became a convenient resource to establish a pale statement of cultural essentialism combined with political argument on the *Mingei* Movement's convergence to Japanese imperialism during the war-time period. The actions that took place in Taiwan, submitted to this discursive structure, were frequently misinterpreted as a reflected subject under the expectations for resistances against the evil of imperialism.

Taiwan was included in the imperial space, the so-called Greater East Asia, which I explore more in its sophisticated definition of cultural diversity to consider the "geographical myth of centre/margin binarism" that sustains the model of "an imperial centre controlling a colonial margin".[5] With a close look into the imperial scope of Greater East Asia, there are many gaps between the central idea and the locality it attempted to define. On the one hand, plural localities reformed in discrete frontiers make it difficult to locate a single centre as ideological source; on the other hand, these local sites shaped in new forms of network made further influences, which no longer fit the pre-defined occidental/oriental binarism. The force within the imperial space is more like an internal formative process, rather than a static structure made outside of the local sphere. These discontinuities require a redirected attention to reconsider the dynamic local agency which consistently reshapes cultural forms not based on any intrinsic origin but through constant awarenesses and expressions of cultural difference.

Researchers' interests in the *Mingei* Movement can be roughly categorised into two inclinations. Firstly, the movement's response to the British Arts and Crafts Movement undoubtedly provides abundant materials to observe Japan's modernity developed under interactions with the western world.

---

[4] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈秩序の美と自由の美:天才主義への抗議〉[The beauty of order and the beauty of freedom], 1940; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 199-201.

[5] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, ed., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 213.

This intention to trace *mingei*'s external source in the West can be seen in Brain Moeran's emphasis on Bernard Leach's character in *mingei* theory and Nakayama's interest in building connection between the *Mingei* Movement and William Morris (1834-1896).[6] With a concern of 'beauty for the people', *mingei* theory's socialist connotation was depicted by referencing British pioneers John Ruskin (1819-1900) and Morris's ideas of people's art. In this precondition, Yanagi's rejection of Morris's taste triggered further discussions on his autonomy and alternative path under the so-called International Arts and Crafts influence. As Nakami Mari observed, while taking the Arts and Crafts as a significant model to construct the aesthetics of Japanese craft, Yanagi "wished to keep a certain distance from Ruskin and Morris while pursuing his own inquiry into the issues raised by them".[7] However, this did not stop the connections between these two movements in Japan and Britain.

The other inclination is to explore *mingei* theory as a cultural-political ideology. The *Mingei* Movement's revivals of rural culture, with Yanagi's expectation to reconstruct Japanese 'identity' and 'originality', triggered more discussions on Yanagi's political motivation through 'Japaneseness', which Kikuchi Yuko examined as "oriental orientalism".[8] Indeed, *mingei* theory presents Yanagi's belief of Japanese identity, through which he considered Japan's role in a contemporary global society. This cultural identity in many discussions about the *Mingei* Movement's politics was immediately explained as a kind of 'national identity', which was seen as significant to analyse *mingei* associates' cooperation with the nation's economic policy and even this movement's 'collusion' with the Japanese government's imperial expansion after the second Japan-Sino War in 1937. This can be seen in Brandt's assertion that the *Mingei* Movement represents the politics within the "Japanese discovery of folk craft" which was "reshaped by imperialism and colonialism" to produce a nationalist sense of industrial capitalism.[9] Seen within this critical context, the *Mingei* Movement's transmission through the Greater East Asian ideology expands the story to include colonial experiences in other Asian regions like Korea, Taiwan and the north-eastern part of China.

These two dispositions within the *Mingei* Movement sustained a certain tension between two divergent but equally politicised narratives of *mingei*'s history. One evaluates *mingei* theory's cultural resistance by demonstrating how it integrated western knowledge and also challenged the Eurocentric idea of art to liberate craft's beauty from the hierarchy in modern art theory. The other one reexamines this liberalised beauty through investigating how *mingei* aesthetics became a part of imperial ideology forcing a particular national taste to intensify Japan's imperialism. In the frame of cultural nationalism, the antagonistic relation based on "a negation of racially inflicted insults and

---

[6] Brian Moeran, "Bernard Leach and the Japanese Folk Craft Movement: The Formative Years", *Journal of Design History* 2, No. 2/3 (1989); Nakayama Shuichi, "The Impact of William Morris in Japan: 1904 to the Present", *Journal of Design History* 9, no. 4 (1996).
[7] Nakami Mari, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace,* (Tokyo: Trans Pacific Press, 2011), 163.
[8] Kikuchi Yuko, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism,* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).
[9] Kim Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan,* 2.

psychological injuries" often predicts confrontations and simplifies the motivation behind each action's cultural complex.[10] By taking culture as a frame, rather than an organically shaped entity, it is difficult to perceive assimilation or resistance as a counter-making process, rather than an immediate political choice.

This thesis extends the debate by including *mingei* theory's further transmission in Taiwan, which most critical writers only included as a minor subject of *mingei*'s aesthetic ideology and Japanese imperialism. Taiwan's character as a colony is absolutely an eligible subject to complete the other side of colonial culture assumed in the coloniser-colonised structure. As in many colonised countries, imagining a spontaneous historical process of cultural development without the intervention of colonialism is difficult. Colonial culture is full of overlapping complexity and political tension. However, I would like to retroactively return to the first inclination to trace the sources of these two movements, but retell the story by reconsidering our myth of cultural boundaries and the belief of cultural origins. Adding Taiwan would make a disturbing interruption, which undermines the well-organised East-versus-West connections and the once balanced critical basis since including Taiwan does not mean to merely extend the linear story after *mingei*'s reaction to western culture. No matter theoretically or visually, Taiwan did not share the same position with the *Mingei* Movement, nor satisfied any predefined colonial structure in monotonous expectations for acceptance or resistance. The case in Taiwan provides a very different story, demonstrating sources of craft movement beyond the oriental-ocidental dualism and reexamining the linear narrative of the International Arts and Crafts.

Discontinuity: Japan, Taiwan and Europe

A more specific depiction of the parallel between the Taiwanese craft movement and the *Mingei* Movement is seen in Kikuchi's research of Yen Shui-long's handicraft practice, which she considered as a case of "colonial modernity."[11] Demonstrating "vernacularism" in Yen Shui-long's craft practice, Kikuchi examined Yen's Taiwanese identity under the enforced Greater East Asian ideology in wartime Japan and its colonies. The conjunction between these two movements determined its narrative strategy, which should be read as a criticism of Japanese colonialism. Similar to *mingei*'s demonstration of 'Japanese identity' in opposition to the West, the 'Taiwanese identity' included in colonial history was also expected to convey counteractions to prove the existence of local consciousness. However, the case might disappoint those expectations for radical transgressions, since

[10] Chidi Amuta, 1989. "Fanon, Cabral and Ngugi on National Liberation. From A Dialectical Theory of African Literature: Categories and Springboards" in *The Theory of African Literature*. In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* ed. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 159.
[11] Yuko Kikuchi, 2007. Refrected Colonial Modernity: Vernacularism in the Development of Modern Taiwanese Craft. in *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan.*

not only did Yen Shui-long's local approach never aim to create anything 'non western', his practices are subtle for identifying the resistance toward Japanese assimilation.

Along with Yen's distinct practice from the *Mingei* Movement, some voices doubted the necessity to bind these two separate movements in Taiwan and Japan, which share similarity but stand alone from each other's respective developments. As Chen I-fan indicated, Yen's aspiration to establish an arts and crafts school reveals the difference from Yanagi's museological strategy for setting paradigms based on collected *mingei* objects.[12] Also, Yen's interest in craft developed quite early and had commenced a series of projects before he met Yanagi in person. Yen was trained as a painter successively at the Tokyo Fine Arts School and the Académie Art Moderne in Paris. As a consequence Yen did not polarise fine art as occidental and local craft as oriental as Yanagi did. In fact, this movement in Taiwan was derived from Yen's belief that handicraft education is a path to cultivate people's art competence.[13]

Nonetheless, the similarity between these two protagonists is too evident to ignore as in the case between Yanagi and Ruskin and Morris. Yen referred to Yanagi's *mingei* theory frequently even in his articles published after the war. Besides this, Yen's handicraft organisation strategy was directly adopted from another *mingei* activist Yoshida Shōya's model in Tottori Prefecture.[14] Disturbing but undeniable, 'colonial modernity' was an omnipresent realism. It is almost impossible to analyse this movement with a rejection of the connection of Japanese influence. However, this connection did not entirely take place within colonial control if including the global trend of western modernism. Looking into the visual materials identifying discrepancy and discontinuity is important to evaluate the similarity between these two cases. I argue that Yen's practice should be seen as a process of displacement and replacement, rather than mere transfusion or subversion. To demonstrate this, my focus will be to take Yen's design as art-historical objects in a visual sense before interpreting them as a product of the imperial ideology. Compared with Yanagi's direct criticism on western modern art, Yen's political stance is hardly radical. However, Yen's design conveys a transgression in visual form, which found an alternative and culturally hybrid engagement in modern art as decorative expressions were not encouraged under the war-time policy. When evaluating local utterances in an oppressive period struggling with limited options under the assimilation policy's cultural control, cultural resistance are very likely overlooked or roughly concluded as a passive imitation of the colonial culture.

---

[12] I-fan Chen, "Enlightening the Art in Life: Shui-long Yen's Formosa Handicrafts Movements from the 1930s to the 1950s", (master's thesis, The National Taiwan University, 2013).

[13] Yen Shui-long. 1978.〈我與臺灣工藝：從事工藝四十年的回顧與前瞻〉[Myself and Taiwanese Craft: a Forty-Year Retrospective View of My Craft Engagement and Its Prospect].《藝術家》*Artist 33,* vol.6, no.3 (2), (1978). Collected in Yen Shui-long, *Formosa Industrial Art*. (Taipei: Yuan-Liou Press, 2016), 181.

[14] Lin, Cheng-Wei, "Taiwanese crafts movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", *Arts Review,* no. 18, (2008), 181.

Could art history provide an alternative perspective beyond the centre/margin dualism to interpret cultural process by perceiving the formation of subjectivity as an active and dynamic procedure rather than a static entity? Could art-historical enquiries into visual forms produce interpretations not only for pleasing harmonious similarities but also give heterogeneities a voice to recover overlooked connections, which are also represented as disconnections? Or, could art's subversive expression be preserved as an alternative method beyond cultural resistances in forms of confrontation to embody "native appropriations of its ambivalent strategies of power"?[15]

No matter in Yanagi's rejection of fine art or in Yen's discrepancy from colonial aesthetics, these two cases echoed a similar scepticism on the state-made urban culture and modern capitalism it represents. In *mingei* theory, this scepticism was formed as a resistance to foreign culture within a modern-West and traditional-Japan dualism. However, the modern/traditional dualism is a common ideology penetrating in different art-historical cases over the world. In the late nineteenth century, some British arts and crafts practices took the countryside as "a vehicle for cultural nationalism in the sense of Englishness".[16] Craft was explored as a rural culture, celebrated as cultural authenticity to resist the damage of capitalism in urban culture. Taking capitalism as an external force outside of the culture, the art/craft dualism overlapped binaries between city and countryside, modernity and tradition, the centre and the frontier, individualism and collectivism. This pervasive art-historical phenomenon eventually converged into the occidental/oriental structure of *mingei* theory, then aligned with the cultural relativism of the Greater East Asia ideology. However, although emphasising local authenticity, Yen Shui-long modified this dualistic relation through modern design, recovering the unity of culture and eliminating divisions between the modern and the traditional, vernacularism and cosmopolitanism - art and craft. Their interpretation of art through craft, even following a very similar art-historical pattern, their respective engagements in craft's mobility determined the difference.

Continuity and discontinuity coexisted simultaneously in these two cases. The art-historical terrain reveals an organic matrix composed of diachronic and geographical complexities. Transmission seldom takes place as a linear influence from a traceable origin to its acceptors, but as a series of resonances reacting in complexities, hybridity and eclecticism. The similarities observed might be inheritances and legacies, while simultaneously being displacements and replacements.

In *mingei* theory, Yanagi made direct comments on Ruskin's recovery of mediaeval morality. He also harshly criticised the 'individualism' he observed from Morris' design. It is plausible to give a direct link between the British Arts and Crafts Movement and the *Mingei* Movement if only considering their advocacy on machines' devastation of human creativity. The heterogeneity within Yanagi's thought is revealed, as we recognise other factors significantly ruling Yanagi's understanding

[15] Janny Sharpe, "Figures of Colonial Resistance". In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* ed. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 101.
[16] Mary Greensted, "Nature and the Rural Idyll", in Livingstone and Parry, *International Arts and Crafts*, 94.

of Ruskin and Morris. His admiration of guild socialism, inspired by Arthur Penty and Peter Kropotkin's descriptions of the mediaeval city and economic model, determined his rejection of Morris's artistic design but agreement with Ruskin's celebration of "grotesqueness".[17]

In Yen Shui-long's case, Ruskin and Morris's notions were acquired in a general sense. In fact, Yen's practice shows considerable resonance with the German context of the Deutscher Werkbund (German Association of Craftsmen) and its further development in the Bauhaus movement, toward which Yanagi did not express any interest. In Yen Shui-long's practice, influences from the Werkbund and Bauhaus, even the further development of the Arts and Crafts Movement in late-nineteenth-century England, are evident.[18] Like Yanagi, Yen also looked for a style representing the aesthetic unity of collective creativity. He indicated this intrinsic desire of decoration as the "unity of plastic activity" through which people spontaneously create things motivated by individual and collective needs, even without artificially educated knowledge of "pure art" and "applied art".[19] Yen's embrace of modern industrial technique is another interface to observe his deviation from *mingei* theory and his interest in the Werkbund and Bauhaus celebration of modern technology.

The celebration of technology in the Werkbund was explored as an embodiment of morality in collective production in search for a "visual consistency of Style" as a unified aesthetic expression for representing an integrated culture free from the alienation of capitalism.[20] The Werkbund and Bauhaus's operations within mass consumption and commodity reveals a direct engagement in capitalism and accompanied social symptoms in a highly modernised society. Equally facing a rapidly urbanising society in the 1920s, Yanagi and Yen's solutions were very different. The Werkbund's pursuit of morality through technology was of no interest to Yanagi. Agreeing with Morris's hostility toward machines, the *Mingei* Movement consistently kept a distance from mechanical power. In contrast, Yen conveyed a positive attitude toward modern techniques, which, according to him, "requires integrating all artistic, industrial and engineering techniques".[21]

When involving a broader art-historical terrain, a network within which connections and inconsistencies coexist, it becomes difficult to maintain the scope of 'colonial modernity' under the framework of Japanese colonialism since these resources never overlap perfectly for shaping the discursive continuity. If we take Japanese colonialism as a predetermined structure, interpretations of the Taiwanese craft movement would fail to capture the fluidity of power embodied as an interactively and consecutively mutual-made tension.

---

[17] Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 58.

[18] Yen Shui-long, 〈Bauhaus的理念與組織〉[Bauhaus's idea and organisation], n.d., collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1.

[19] Ibid, 3.

[20] Frederic Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design theory and Mass Culture Before the First World War*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 18.

[21] Yen Shui-long,〈Bauhaus的理念與組織〉[Ideas and the organisation of Bauhaus], 3.

Likewise, tracing the *mingei* theory's western resource as an external influence is not adequate to explain the *Mingei* Movement's position toward the western influence. What we observe from both convergence and divergence in these two cases in Taiwan and Japan, the results lead to different perspectives based on activists' subjectivities. An immediate and alignable centre, no matter if this centre is Japan or Europe, might provide a convenient structure to extend the narrative by adding any influenced cases; however, this predetermined structure seldom manifests precisely the autonomy and mobility of reactions. This one-way focus can be seen in Moeran's emphasis on Leach's role in Yanagi's thoughts. As he stated:

> I have argued elsewhere that ideals about 'popular art', handicraft, mechanisation, and 'natural' beauty are likely to appear in every society undergoing rapid industrialisation and urbanisation'. There is something to be said for such a theory, but we must also realise that the development of the *Mingei* Movement in Japan in the late 1920s and 1930s did not occur totally independently of what had gone on in Britain and other European countries several decades earlier.[22]

In his article, Moeran explained how Leach played a significant role in Yanagi's social circle and Yanagi's acquaintance with other *mingei* associates. Leach was described as a hub introducing progressive occidental ideas and current art trends to his Japanese fellows. Moeran considered "popular art" and handicraft movements as a natural process in any rapidly industrialising and urbanising city, of which one could also find many examples in England and other European cities. For Moeran, *mingei*'s resistance to cosmopolitan culture in the 1920s was difficult to illustrate independently without including Leach's influence leading to the "transfusion of popular art with *mingei*" connecting to Morris' idea of people. However, it seems that there was no obstacle for him to interpret the character of 'popular art' in *mingei* theory without including Yamamoto Kanae's Peasant Art Movement and Yanagita Kunio's establishment of Japanese native folkloristics, which happened in the 1910s and triggered many discussions in Yanagi's writings. Yanagi's response to Yamamoto and Yanagita is vital to understand his stance of 'intuition' as a rejection toward intellectualist conceptual approach in fine art (also present in Morris's design). As to how he generalised the confrontation between "natural beauty" and "mechanisation", Moeran attempted to juxtapose ideologies of "eastern spiritualism" and "western materialism" to demonstrate Yanagi's "inverse Orientalism" vis-a-vis the West.[23] This discursive position demands an antagonistic subject which functioned as an external centre, and tends to ignore the ongoing development within the culture beyond this dualism. These ostensible coherences are displaced by discontinuities with inner heterogeneity in detailed views.

Efforts made for maintaining the oriental-occidental confrontation could of course carry on the narrative structure to include the case of Taiwan. However, these selected experiences were inevitably

[22] Moeran, "Bernard Leach and the Japanese Folk Craft Movement: The Formative Years", 140.
[23] Ibid, 139.

flattened in order to keep a clear shape of Others. Yen's bamboo furniture designs were included to criticise Japan's Greater East Asian ideology and the political ideology promoting local handicrafts. Kikuchi associated the modernist taste of bamboo works with western designers Bruno Taut and Charlotte Perriand's desire of oriental beauty.[24] As part of Japan's military blueprint, Taiwan maintains this historical line as a mobilised locality which submitted to the colonial government's international marketing policy. In this structure, Yen's independent view and his aesthetic position of art and craft are invisible. The expressive possibility in art was politically evaluated as a struggle for cultural identity, and the transgressive liberty guaranteed by art was substituted by limited options among Japan, Taiwan and the West. Kikuchi appreciated Yen's effort on maintaining "excellent balance" in his design "between his native interests in Taiwan and the gaze imposed by various external interventions."[25] This celebration of "excellent balance" examined Yen's identity in relation to several 'Others', which were seen as 'external interventions'. His practice of 'modern Taiwanese craft' was praised more for his performance of political stance and cultural identity than his aesthetic notion in craft.

By taking an alternative engagement in the art politics raised by these cases, I am not disregarding the colonial factors, which indeed generated a tremendous influence on a whole generation of artists in Taiwan. I aim to identify the discrepancy in determining tremendous political power as the only factor determining motivation to create. My question is, before this view of craft was over-interpreted as a political sense, both in Yanagi and Yen, how should we consciously understand and describe what they actually approached, experienced and believed, which led their respective approaches engaging in the beauty of craft? How did they negotiate with the force of imperialism at the same time knowing they were within it? In this intercultural narrative, how can we represent a local identity beyond the centre/periphery duralism, negotiating for empowerment from the discursive unity at the same time without being marginalised? Or, if they failed, what made the obstacle? By including Taiwan, this story continues, but not merely as a further development of the *Mingei* Movement via colonial power. Yen Shui-long's case demonstrates overlap, discontinuity, replacement and displacement, whose context needs to be traced back to the art-historical moment as a complete network to make visual materials speak in their own utterance.

[24] Kikuchi Yuko, "Shui-Long Yen and Vernacularism in the Development of Modern Taiwanese Craft", in *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, (Taipei: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2007), 303.
[25] Ibid, 310.

Orientalism and Cultural Originality

From an intercultural dimension by retelling the history of these two movements, there is a need to define my engagement with the term 'orientalism', which is derived from Edward Said's criticism of colonialism and the cultural dominance behind western discursive constructions of the East.[26]

Observing Yanagi's motivation in his reconstruction of *mingei* theory, Kikuchi developed the term "oriental orientalism", which is comparable to Moeran's term "inverse orientalism".[27] Both of these terms indicate a mirrored cultural landscape related to western culture's role in the formation of orientalism generated within Japan's reconstruction of the self. As a result, these terms rely on cultural divisions and differences to identify the distinction between the oriental and its mirrored occidental worlds. Today, although the occidental-oriental confrontation is gradually losing its boundary line for retaining the discursive structure on cultural difference, these terms are still applicable for identifying historical processes and demands for identity. This mirrored 'orientalism' is not an intrinsic structure but conveys a cultural framework with historical significance. The political connotation in this geographical structure of the East and the West can also be applied to represent cultural tension that existed in any antithetic relation; for example, on the Japanese imperial map, colonial Taiwan was consistently represented as the South compared to Japan's North location, which was represented in a primitive-civilised framework.[28] Aims at representing local autonomy, orientalism, which can be replaced by other alternative terms like 'oriental orientalism' and 'inverse orientalism', has less to do with "symbolic systems within different cultures", but with "the structure of symbolic representation itself".[29] In other words, although these structures represent a spatial politics to juxtapose recognisable connections and differences, the revealed facts compensate for no approach to the inner logic of symbolic systems.

To manifest Yanagi's "oriental orientalism," Kikuchi demonstrated Yanagi's claims to originality in the very beginning, questioning Yanagi's claim on "containing no trace of imitation" in the construction of *mingei* theory.[30] By tracing the resources of Ruskin, Morris and other thinkers, and Yanagi's trip to Korea and his admiration toward artefacts of the Yi period, she demonstrated *mingei* theory is not as original as Yanagi stated. As an "appropriated orientalism", *mingei* theory was more a combination of Yanagi's oriental religious philosophy and his interests in occidental thoughts and arts as circulated in his social circle.[31] This statement persuasively emphasises these western resources'

---

[26] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin Group, 1978).
[27] Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism.*
[28] Yen Chuan Yin, "The Demise of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan", in *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, edited by Kikuchi Yuko, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007).
[29] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture,* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 52.
[30] Sōetsu Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 1941. In Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980), 347; Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 2.
[31] Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 42.

direct influence on *mingei* theory and naturalised its obstacle to manifest the taste of daily life when embracing the urban market in the 1930s. In Nakayama's depiction, this inclination to Ruskin and Morris's influence resulted in the limit and danger of *mingei*'s deviation from daily objects to "a kind of aristocratic taste".[32] Responding to this statement, Nakami said this engagement fails to discuss Yanagi's interpretation of 'originality' and 'imitation' or his motivation for founding the *Mingei* Movement:

> By simply emphasising that Yanagi's *mingei* theory was a blend of the ideas of various writers such as Ruskin and Morris and therefore not his 'original' conception, Kikuchi perhaps overlooks the point that the formation of Yanagi's thought was driven, in the first place, by his desire to create something that was not an imitation.[33]

To analyse Yanagi's orientalism, Kikuchi focuses on *mingei* theory as the conjunction of Yanagi's occidental interests and his observation of Japanese tradition. It perhaps explains the origin of this orientalism. However, it was still insufficient to disaffirm the originality of *mingei* theory. Rather than 'originality', Kikuchi might prefer using the term 'hybridity' to define the united conception in *mingei* theory's integration of multiple resources. Analysing Yanagi's application of occidental knowledge, she indicated that moralised qualities such as 'grotesque' and 'irregularity' in Ruskin's representation of Gothic art were equated with Japanese Buddhist art in ancient times:

> He further developed this theory which united philosophy, religion and art and re-evaluated Oriental art with his acquired Occidentally trained 'new eyes', creating a hybrid idea of Occidental and Oriental religious art.[34]

This disclosure of hybridity apparently did not undermine the boundary between the occidental and oriental and their mirrored entities. Kikuchi observed hybridity, but this hybridity was described within the frame of the occidental-oriental structure. She demonstrated Yanagi's integration of multiple resources, which was represented as a sort of orientalism gained through "occidental eyes", rather than anything original or dialectical.

Let me manifest this further by exploring different approaches of 'originality' projected by Kikuchi and Nakami's valuations of *mingei*. When Nakami said Yanagi created something original, she acknowledged Yanagi as an independent thinker who did not imitate any existing forms or

---

[32] Nakayama, "The Impact of William Morris in Japan: 1904 to the Present", 275-276. In Kikuchi Yuko's article "The myth of Yanagi's originality: the formation of *Mingei* theory in its social and historical context" published in *Journal of Design History* (vol. 7, no. 4, 1994: 247-266), she questioned Yanagi's originality. This statement was included by Nakayama Shuichi in "The Impact of William Morris in Japan: 1904 to the Present", published in the same year and same journal(vol. 9, no. 4, 1994: 273-283).
[33] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 312.
[34] Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 44.

methods or simply copy what he learned. In this stance, *mingei* theory is original since Yanagi's notion of craft's beauty was subversively new. While in Kikuchi, the discussion of originality focuses on Yanagi's belief in craft's cultural representation of tradition as a source of 'Japanese origin', which she tried to reveal as a 'hybrid' to question that Yanagi did not attain the pure 'Japaneseness' as he claimed. This 'Japaneseness' was mirrored from Yanagi's glance looking into the West. It is evident that European art history joined as a constitutive element in the formation of *mingei* theory. However, the term 'hybridity' should not be misinterpreted as "a denial of the independence of cultural tradition" but needs to be a scope to perceive a tradition's "continual and mutual development" with multiple resources.[35] Reconsidering the terms 'oriental orientalism' or 'inversive orientalism', we need to ask how problematic it is if these notions still demand the occidental/oriental dualism with a cultural-essentialist myth of origin, which is expected to be static, intrinsic and timeless. As an antithetical of 'origin', 'hybridity' refers to incidents substituting, rather than within, the maintenance of tradition.

Looking into the 'occidental' with a close view on its internal heterogeneity, one may find 'hybridity' valuable in many turning points of tradition in art history. Ruskin and Morris and their synthesis of multiplex resources circulated among the Pre-Raphaelite circle is a good example. Although Yanagi directly adopted Ruskin's celebration of mediaeval art to interpret craft's moral matter in the *Mingei* Movement, the approach of mediaeval art among Pre-Raphaelites was not completely anti-modern. The iconoclastic stance behind Pre-Raphaelites' medievalism was a radical transgression against the convention of the 'Ideal' emphasised by the Royal Academy School.[36] The Pre-Raphaelite circle's sources of political ideology, stretching from Renaissance Europe to modern America, engaged many aspects of contemporary discussions on freedom. This group consolidated an 'English tradition' but at the same time was "fascinated by cultural transmission and the assimilation and transformation of texts from continental source materials", which also "brought Italian and Germanic writing together".[37] Isobel Armstrong manifested that they created this hybridity on purpose. "The eclecticism of this movement is deliberate. They were determined to be transgressive, hybridising genres and mixing styles both in literature and art".[38] Emancipated from the antithetic position polarised by the myth of origin and tradition, hybridity naturally happens as a process to revive tradition in a globalising contemporary society. This process embodies possibilities for reconsidering encountered obstacles, which requires autonomous thinkers to make decisions and direct the influence. The *Mingei* Movement continued the socialist stance from Ruskin and Morris, engaging in art's democratic function in attaining freedom. Yanagi's attempt was even more

[35] Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, ed., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 184.
[36] Colin Cruise, "Pre-Raphaelite Drawing", in Elizabeth Prettejohn, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 47.
[37] Isobel Armstrong, "The Pre-Raphaelites and Literature", in Prettejohn, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, 17.
[38] Ibid, 18.

transgressive in his criticism of artistic value, which led to his divergent approach from Morris' practice of design to ordinary objects in daily production.

Yanagi's orientalism, perhaps also his occidentalism, is pivotal to observe the ideology of the time. However, like other forms of ideology, such as the situational Southernism in colonial Taiwan, these plausible discourses with tremendous semiotic structure and projected power, might project more transitional ambiguity and ambivalence than clear-cut resolutions. I hope the inclusion of the case in Taiwan in this thesis can somehow undermine the mirrored relationship between the oriental and occidental, which was used to naturalise this dualism in the Japanese *mingei* history, to make a broader interconnected network visible. Then we could recover the dialectics for reconsidering Yanagi's attempt to break the duralism in the hierarchical antithesis between art and craft through applying a moral epistemology in "miscellaneous daily objects".[39]

Yen Shui-long's aesthetic stance of craft reached a certain level of maturity with highly-developed enunciations of diverse and discrete localities in the last half decade of Japanese colonialism. The New Order in the beginning of 1940s, as a nation-made cultural movement, engaged in discourses of locality with an expectation to achieve the unity of the so-called Greater East Asian diversity in a cultural-relativist view. However, as Homi K. Bhabha has stressed, "cultures are never unitary in themselves, nor simply dualistic in relation of Self to Other".[40] The more details of internal heterogeneity we illustrate, the more splits from the great narrative of orientalism within the structure of Greater East Asia appear. The divergence of Taiwanese locality problematises the attempt to identify this Asian image as 'origin' and 'tradition', which in Yen's engagement in locality was an eclectic approach reshaping local tradition in a new form of modernity. The cultural ambivalence and hybridity in colonial Taiwan penetrated local identity as an active strategy responding to multiple cultural sources, reforming itself from observed differences.

The dualistic frame often misrepresents ambivalence and hybridity with celebrations of cultural resistance which only exists in the interface between Self and Others. Sustained by the occidental-oriental spatial structure, the modern West represents collapsing capitalist realism, while the East engages in the final land of cultural authenticity, which is usually identified as pre-modern, archaic and timeless. Bhabha recognised the need for "the Third Space of enunciation" revealing the structure as an "ambivalent process", undermining the ostensibly counterbalanced historical identity, homogenising and unified force mirrored by the Other.[41] He proclaimed: "hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or purity of cultures are untenable" and "all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation".[42] The *Mingei* Movement indeed demonstrates polarised dichotomies between the occidental and the oriental, the civilised and

---

[39] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 206-208.
[40] Homi K. Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences", from 'The Commitment to Theory' *New Formations* 5, 1988; See Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, ed., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 207.
[41] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 54.
[42] Ibid, 54-55.

the primitive, the urban and the rural, individualistic and collective, and so on. However, its discursive strategy focused on complete and comprehensive constructions of Japanese locality enabled more possibility to generate 'the third space of enunciation', which is also seen in the case of Taiwan's alternative engagement in Japan's imperialist construction of locality.

For Yen's generation in Taiwan, the year 1945 means the end of the colonial period, meaning also a gap dividing their life into two sections. Before 1945, nobody knew that there was an end to Japanese imperialism and that their Taiwanese identity would gain a different meaning from the independence from Japan. My study focuses on the first half of the twentieth century, when Taiwanese identity was still ambivalent and struggled with the Japanese government's assimilation policy. Yen Shui-long would agree that he was Taiwanese, while also Japanese. He received a modern art education in Tokyo, where he met Fujishima Takeji and Okada Saburōsuke, two influential figures in his career. During his study years in France, he was also comfortable expressing his nationality as Japanese. However, Yen's Taiwanese identity was equally solid and consistent. Although his Taiwanese identity was an indispensable part of his practice of craft, it is still a complex task to describe Yen's Taiwanese identity and its dynamic autonomy as negotiating with Japan's assimilation under the ideology of Greater East Asia.

This might be more approachable by depicting his identity through a series of senses of otherness within the hierarchy of Japanese colonialism. This hierarchical sense of otherness was entangled within an imagined process of modernity and civilisation echoed from Japan's engagement in western modernity since the Meiji Restoration. Represented in sequence, diverse ethnic groups and discrete local cultures were mobilised by aligning to the unitary discourse of modernity, which also became a useful tool to legitimate Japan's colonialism. Mirrored by 'civilised' Japan, Taiwan was reconstructed as a pre-modern, primitive and tropical South; this artificial cultural-political space was an appropriation from the once antithetical relation between the East and the West. Moreover, this ideological system also disturbed the inner diversity and heterogeneity of Taiwanese culture. In the beginning of colonialism, although Japanese anthropologists identified at least eight different tribal groups of indigenous culture, the government's categorisation did not respond to this fact, roughly dividing them from the average Taiwanese Han groups as a more primitive category. For intellectuals in colonial Taiwan, the formation of Taiwanese identity was a long-term and constant struggle with these monotonous cultural stereotypes and the myth of civilisation. Yen is not an exemption. His engagement in this process through craft demonstrates resilience, interrogating this structural binary for identifying the boundary of civilisation.

Yen Shui-long's enthusiasm for indigenous cultures was a significant source of his perspective of craft. In the mid-1930s, when Taiwanese artists actively organised societies to redefine local art contending with the official construction of Taiwanese art, Yen made a dramatic shift from a high-prestige painter to an initiator of the craft movement. Yen commenced a series of surveys in indigenous societies and handicraft industries in rural places, which appear separate from the previous

stage of his life. With the Arts and Crafts Movement's aesthetic approach to functional and decorative objects, this shift is less surprising when Yen took craft as a method to promote art on a social scale. It was not a coincidence that both Yanagi and Yen chose 'craft' as a method to resolve their doubt on 'fine art' when considering the latter's lack of social functions and local connections. Synchronously, they transformed methodologies from western concept of 'fine art' to the concern of local traditions and creative objects intrinsically produced in local societies.

Yanagi's exploration of the originality in craft, which Kikuchi would rather identify as a hybrid, reveals another perspective to consider the International Arts and Crafts history. There is a necessity to reconsider what this hybridity connoted beyond the occidental-oriental dualistic structure. The rediscovery of discrete local societies in these craft practices enabled the formation of "the Third Space", which Bhabha demonstrated as a means to recognise ambivalence in all identity-making processes. The *Mingei* Movement was an attempt to recover comprehensive reconstructions as a temporal dimension sidestepping from the demand for a centralist origin of modernisation. In the Third Space, pre-modern traditions existed as something new and original. Along with this strategy, Yanagi embraced cultural ambivalences represented in miscellaneous objects, which he expected to undermine dualism which assigned a series of fixations pursuing the "purified" and "intrinsic" face of Japanese culture.[43]

The *Minzoku Taiwan* (*Folklore Taiwan*) magazine is another example to represent the displacement and replacement of colonial culture through reshaping 'pre-modern' values in localities, conversely altering the centralistic power of the Greater East Asian ideology. When Taiwan was involved in a new global network, this magazine engaged in the complexities of modernity, rediscovering local tradition as a cultural agency for resisting assimilations. Celebrating tradition as a source of originality, as a means of protectionism, can be seen in Yanagi's *mingei* theory, and also many examples in the further developments of the British Arts and Crafts in their approaches of small communities in rural England remote from "metropolitan bias of most artistic activity" to assessing local needs and encouraging community spirit.[44] The negotiated hybridity in searching for its own enunciation in the global space, in these cases, was represented with a tension between metropolitanism and localism, which in Yanagi's *Mingei* Movement was embodied as the antithesis between "international characteristics" and "national uniqueness".[45] Distinguishing Yanagi's 'nationalism' from the Japanese government's imperial 'nationalism' is an important part in perceiving the actual meaning of this local-making process. The case of the *Minzoku Taiwan*

---

[43] Sōetsu Yanagi,〈地方性の文化價値〉[Cultural value of localities], 1940; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 233.

[44] Mary Greensted, "Nature and the Rural Idyll", in Livingstone and Parry ed., *International Arts and Crafts,* 105-107.

[45] Yanagi,〈地方性の文化價値〉[Cultural value of localities], 224.

magazine demonstrates the discrepancy between the state-made ideological beauty and the actual methods through reconstructing local discourses based on daily materials.

By including Taiwan, it is easier to find out the problem of Orientalism, which seemed natural when only taking Japan as a cultural interface between the East and the West. Approaches of originality in these movements had less to do with eliminating 'external' influences since the intercultural experiences were made interactively. The belief of an instinct origin is no longer valid for allocating any tradition if we embrace the fluidity and hybridity as an essential part of cultural resilience. We should accept that tradition is not pre-given. It is intertextually made through the way we experience the hybridity and ambivalence of culture and the demand for a new enunciation of culture connections. Enabling a total reconstruction, these movements redefined cultural sources in miscellaneous daily experiences, conceiving craft forms as voices for autonomous expressions.

Beyond Peripheries: a Post-historical Space

Extending the context of International Arts and Crafts and these movements' engagements in the social hierarchy within the concept of 'fine art', I would like to explore craft as an eccentric force revealing the hegemony within the art/craft dualism. My inquiry is not only about the art history of taking craft as a subordinate of art, but also the art history of considering non-European objects as a minor domain, where artistic utterances are commonly deprived from cultural complexities. It is also a history of taking art as a symbol of cultural supremacy mirrored by imagined Others, the primitive, timeless and subhuman conditions in opposition to "all that does change or develop, namely, the civilised".[46]

One of the *mingei* associates, Tomimoto Kenkichi, a crucial figure who introduced Morris as a "decorative artist (*sōshoku bijutsuka*)" in Japan, frequently visited the Victoria and Albert Museum when studying in London.[47] One of the substantial infrastructures of the Arts and Crafts Movement, the South Kensington Museum was renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1899. The ethnographic landscape demonstrated by decorative arts became an important source of *mingei* practice for the association's strategy through museological collections. Tracing the history of the South Kensington Museum from the 1851 Exhibition, Tim Barringer reexamined the museum's role

[46] Mark Antliff and Patricia Leighten, "Primitive", in Robert S. Nelson and Richard shiff ed., *Critical terms for Art History* , (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 217.

[47] Takuya Kita,〈大正時代の工芸とユートピア思想 - 富本憲吉とウィリアム・モリス〉[Craft in the Taishō perios and utopianist thoughts: Tomimoto Kenkichi and William Morris], in Ken-ichi Nagata, Toyorō Hida and Hitōshi Mori, ed.,《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* (Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006), 192.

in design reform and public education in relation to the spectacle of Victorian imperialism.[48] The institutional power behind the imperial narrative was not only conveyed through the museum's exhibitionary mechanism but also by an expanded network sustaining educational methods.[49] Through the museological collection, non-European objects were gathered but usually represented as 'colonial peripheries' and also reinvented in new narrative contexts to enact London as the centre of the empire.[50] Exotic, perhaps also primitive, oriental objects from Japan, China, India and Persia were mobilised to compose a vague view of otherness, which had less to do with their respective cultural complexity, but more with the polarised tension between the ancient East and the modern West. The narrative reinvented oriental properties, taking otherness as comparative materials of contemporary British design. These non-European objects were installed with elaborate decorative schemes to evoke a historical style of ornament. The settings deliberately demonstrated decorative property with a "non-naturalistic, non-imitative, or conventional principle".[51]

This operation resulted in the formation of the oriental category - including China, Japan and India, which were seen as separate from those "more primitive" people - which was stressed with the concentration of their competence on "ornamental art".[52] This category for "ornamental art" also meant a certain distance from the ideas of painting and sculpture based on the emphasis on "design solutions".[53] Craig Clunas indicated that this misappropriation of non-European objects from the domain of "ethnography" to that of "art" with a removal of "function" failed to make the transition of meaning.[54] The association of oriental culture with 'decorative art' also echoed the ideological bias in the western modern art history, potentially identifying Japan as a kingdom of craft by distinguishing 'decorative art' and 'applied art' exclusively from the idea of 'pure' or 'fine' art.

Japan encountered this ambivalent complex within the western idea of 'fine art' on many occasions in the form of the international expositions. At the 1900 Paris International Exposition, Japanese objects were categorised as craft and cast out from the category of 'pure art', while in the 1893 Chicago Exposition, Japanese objects were included in the fine art gallery to demonstrate the "uniqueness of Japanese art".[55] The ornamental quality represented as the feature of 'Japanese art' in

---

[48] Tim Barringer, "The South Kensington Museum and the Colonial Project", in Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, ed., *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998).
[49] Ibid, 14.
[50] Ibid, 11-12.
[51] J. Physick, "From Iron Shed to Marble Hall". unpublished PhD dissertation, London: Royal College of Art (on deposit in National Art Library, Victoria And Albert Museum), 1982, 117; See in Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, ed., *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, 15.
[52] Craig Clunas, "China in Britain: The Imperial Collections", in Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, ed., *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, 45.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid, 44.
[55] Yoshiaki Itō, 〈万国博覧会の工芸デザイン- 陶瓷を中心に〉[Crafts design in world expositions - Focusing on pottery]. in Ken-ichi Nagata, Toyorō Hida and Hitōshi Mori, ed.,《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s*, 56.

these invented contexts was usually associated with collective products by anonymous makers, who were generalised as a race, in an imperial spectacle, raising no contradiction to western art's approach of individualities.

This artificial idea of 'Japanese art' was composed of stereotypes, of misinformation and misinterpretations. This process was mutually constructed. The European desire for *Japonisme* was difficult to disassociate from the Japanese government's export of 'Japanese art' under an economic concern since the Meiji Restoration over the second half of the nineteenth century. Their strategy was somehow successful by identifying Japanese art with a class-oriental connection to pre-modern aristocratic objects. In the late Victorian period, the word 'exquisite' became British writers' favourite term for Japanese culture. Grace Lavery reminds us that the use of "exquisite" was not derived from Japanese writers and artists but from "orientalists" with "a set of stereotypes and associations with which they were compelled to grapple".[56] Etymologically, 'exquisite' was obtained in English language, indicating "an object that has been sought out, whose preciousness is dependent upon the distance one has travelled to obtain it".[57] Associated with "exquisite",

> Japan is elegant, but perhaps excessively so; its decorative arts exhibit an economy of arrangement, which is perhaps indicative of parsimony; the price of Japanese supremacy in the aesthetic realm is indefinite, but persistent, discomfort.[58]

In western eyes, Japanese art was too beautiful and "excessively elegant". Its aesthetic ambiguity was also a sort of "discomfort". These artworks were seen as the cultural performance of a race, which was too remote to share the same art history, which has trouble in defining the beauty of a Japanese object without sorting it as a decorative object.

During the same period, Japanese modern art developed under a new climate of creative education integrating with western modern art training. Founded in 1887, Tokyo Fine Arts School, the first modern art educational institution in Japan, programmed academic training in painting and sculpture, applying western academic methods in art education. However, Satō elaborated, these educational institutions of modern art had less to do with the reconstructions of Japanese art history. The history-making task was assigned with the national economic policy *shokusan kōgyō* (promotion of industry and manufacturing), which produced history as a more "western view of Japanese art" or "official art forms" reacting to western interests of *ukiyo-e* and craft products.[59] This bureaucratic split gave no chance to Europe's acquisition of modern art in Japanese because "art produced through art

---

[56] Grace Lavery, *Quaint, Exquisite: Victorian Aesthetics and the Idea of Japan,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 5.
[57] Ibid, 6.
[58] Ibid, 5.
[59] Satō Dōshin, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty,* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 1999), 134.

education was not something for export",[60] Taking advantage of the political power vacuum due to China's loss of its central cohesive force, Japan showed an attempt to re-engage the idea of 'Asian art' with the reconstruction of Japanese art history, which Satō thought was 'a product of ideology' serving for the theory of civilisation (namely, such notion of Japan, the East, and the West) or frameworks for nationhood' in political terms.[61] It demonstrates, behind the western 'exquisite' type, Japan participated in making this artificial image of 'Japanese art', which did not represent the facts of Japanese art history.

The *Mingei* Movement took England as a socialist model in its resistance against mechanisation, aristocratism and intellectualism. Yanagi rejected the 'exquisite' type of ornament, which he associated with aristocratic taste. He reinvented the 'aesthetic of craft' by taking 'fine art' as a western ideology of modern art, which he thought the British Arts and Crafts movement had tried, but ultimately failed to debunk. These altered meanings in different motivations should be considered independently before fitting them in different sides of "the same orientalist coin".[62] Yanagi's claim on rural Japan's authenticity in representing Japanese culture shows a transgression against the official-made 'Japanese art history' which he thought as a superficial imitation of western ideology. Yanagi was aware of this fallacy even though it was not recognised as orientalism. He emphasised craft's aesthetics should not be identified as the exquisite beauty of aristocratic objects, which he thought were popular in the European market. *Mingei* objects were usually subtle and sober daily craft wares, the most common things used by people of any class. Orientalism developed through travelling people, merchandise, and circulated literature and artworks in cosmopolitan culture. Even though Japan economically benefited from it, Yanagi refused to replicate the cosmopolitan value and would rather take a reversed approach through localities, the cultural frontiers where aesthetic materials maintain undefined quality.

The concern of locality was also the core of Yen Shui-long's practice regardless of art or craft. Ostensibly, his eventful art journey ran into an abrupt shift in his thirties from an oil painter to a craft activist promoting local handicrafts after finishing his study in France. In fact, the long fermentation of Yen's change started quite early. Yen was highly interested in crafted objects during his study in France. He carried on surveys beyond his technical training in the Académie Art Moderne, visiting a broad range of institutions including manufacturing studios, craft museums, as well as ethnographic exhibitions displaying collections from non-European cultures.[63] It was also when "ethnographic surrealists", such as Alberto Giacometti, were active in developing aesthetic connections between artworks and non-European objects from ethnographic collections in museums.[64] Within this trend,

[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid, 180.
[62] Moeran, "Bernard Leach and the Japanese Folk Craft Movement: The Formative Years", 143.
[63] Chuang Su-O, 〈純藝術的反叛者〉[A rebel of fine art - Yen Shui-Long], in《臺灣美術全集》*Taiwan Fine Arts Series 6: Yen Shui-Long*, (Taipei: Artist Magazine, 1992), 20.
[64] James Clifford, "On Ethnographic Surrealism" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* vol. 23, no. 4, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 539-564.

non-European objects from African and Oceanic cultures engaged in European aesthetics, but in a quite different sense from how the Victoria and Albert Museum identified 'oriental arts'. Surrealism, a term derived from the Parisian cultural scene, circumscribed the modern aesthetics of avant-garde, exploring the domains of the erotic, the exotic, and the unconscious thought, valuing fragments, curious collections and unexpected juxtapositions.[65]

Conceivably, through decontextualising and recontextualising processes, these mobilised ethnographic objects were seen as art, in primitive types, no matter how they functioned in the original society. Yen's artworks demonstrate his ethnographic tendency in his creative methods, but different from the surrealist and cubist trends that he knew. His use of ethnographic images was consistently cautious in the correctness of cultural references and discernments. His approach of craft also retained this intention to conserve and represent original sources that he observed from the diversity of local Taiwanese culture. There was a distance between Yen's principle of using local materials and his belief in fine art, but this distance did not exist as an unmendable gap. The problem of 'fine art' in Taiwan, for him, was more like an issue of cultural difference as fine art was eventually seen as a foreign concept. Yen's revival of local handicrafts should not be seen as what had been embodied by the *Mingei* Association under a preservative sense of culture. Yen was comfortable in embracing modern design, in which he believed art's experimental principle was universal and was not entirely bothered with applying western elements.

The cases in Japan and Taiwan manifest interrelation and interconnection of intercultural experience, but they were also operated with displacement and discontinuity. Ideas circulated in these practices are familiarly comparable but not interchangeable, even if they could be perceived with several patterns in sociological conformity. Within the scope of orientalism, the psychological statement can be explained as a mirrored complex, but this formalised frame fails to manifest how things are nuanced and entangled in intersubjectivities. Lavery identified orientalism as one of "poststructuralist theory's constitutive blind spots".[66] Its criticism misrepresents the conjunction and distinction of Japan, which "both belongs and does not belong to the history of western rationality" and can "neither be simply excluded nor excluded from the colonial historiography".[67] She indicated that such a condition of Japan is "not merely postmodern, but actually post-historical".[68]

Japan was represented as a 'post-historical moment' out of any historical dialectic, where Hegelians looked for essentially ultimate value but might have no idea about how to deal with Japan's unique position in its modernisation. *Mingei*'s history happened far earlier than Arthur Danto's declaration on 'the end of art' in 1964, which revealed the arrival of the historical end of great

[65] Ibid, 540
[66] Lavery, *Quaint, Exquisite: Victorian Aesthetics and the Idea of Japan*, 27.
[67] Ibid, 28.
[68] Ibid.

narrative replaced by fragmental and discontinuous facts of history.[69] It was also earlier than the publication of *Art and Objecthood* in 1967, in which Michael Fried defined objecthood as "the condition of non-art," revealing modern art's language's reliance on this binary to "undo or neutralise objecthood" by defeating or suspending this non-art property through the medium of shape.[70] These debates in the 1960s noticed that art's essence is made, and nothing is intrinsically artistic. This poststructural space was explored to request the validity of claiming any aesthetic essence in art by revealing that the boundary between art and daily objects is artificial and manipulatable. When any claim of art's essence is seen as ideologically plausible, the discursive space which Yanagi and Yen Shui-long explored to interrogate the universal validity of western art history is not merely postmodern, but also post-historical. Through exploring the aesthetic agency of craft, these movements extended art-historical discussions in realms of anti-art or non-art, and other engagements in myths reflected from the belief of art's intrinsic aura.

By identifying craft as a peripheral agency reengaging in art's theory in this mutual-made structure, my study examines this structure's transformation in this post-historical discursive space composed by dynamically framed multicentric localities, which sustained arts and crafts movements' engagement in people's everyday life. These peripheral spaces maintain the tension between self and Others, also the interface to observe the interaction between intertextual powers and potential resistance, imitation and mimicry. Rather than looking for expected political confrontation, my research observes cultural resistance in forms of displacement and replacement, identifying the pivotal moment when hybridity was recognised and internalised as a part of subjectivity. The juxtaposition of Japan and Taiwan presents an overlapped history, doubled complex, and multicentric tension confronting a world order with the ready-made modernity.

This thesis is composed of four chapters, with the first two focusing on Japan and the last two on Taiwan. Chapter One explores the socialist ground and multiple resources in *mingei* theory and its engagement with 'common people', which also marks the antithetical relation between 'fine art' and craft in *mingei*'s aesthetic base. Considering the socialist approach through the miscellaneity of daily objects as antagonistic toward the western concept of 'fine art', this chapter explores Yanagi's doubt toward the hierarchical value system behind the dualism between art and craft. With a focus on Yanagi's acquisition and acceptance of Arthur Penty and Peter Kropotkin's guild socialism, which I consider significant for Yanagi to answer his question on state-made industry in opposition to small-scale local societies, I clarify *mingei* theory's centre/periphery structure in representing craft's mobility. Penty's economic engagement in guild socialism provided a practical trajectory for Yanagi to accommodate Ruskin's thought in his well-known book *The Stones of Venice*, which took

[69] Arthur Coleman Danto, *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[70] Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 6, 41, 152.

mediaeval art as a moral model of forms contributed by craft makers. The mediaeval guild became an ideal model in Yanagi's social structure when considering the energetic creativity in localities as a cultural resistance confronting capitalism and state-made modernism. Yanagi consistently expressed that *mingei* theory aimed to establish craft aesthetics with tangible approaches, reconnecting immediate, intuitional experiences based on objects. This also represents his notion of reconstructing infinite meanings found in daily experiences rather than in a predetermined hierarchy of beauty.

Based on theoretical interpretation in the first chapter, the second chapter demonstrates *mingei* associates' approaches in concrete actions. As the economic policy was bound with imperial expansion, it is important to clarify the difference between Yanagi's nationalism and the state's imperialism. This chapter demonstrates *mingei*'s socialist engagements in conversation with craft's aesthetic environment in Japan entangled with the government's export policy negotiating with the international market's demand for Japanese products. Through participating in national expositions, which circulated relative ideas like 'decorative art' and 'applied art' and stimulated the reconstruction of Japanese art, this chapter starts from reconsidering craft's modernisation with influences of Art Deco and Art Nouveau in Europe. The superiority of 'pure art', distinguished from satisfaction of functional property, triggered *mingei* associates' notion of 'ordinary objects' (*getemono*) engaging in aesthetic value of daily life. With a rejection of urban culture, this pursuit of *getemono* ultimately aligned to a series of revivals of local manufactures. The idea of 'pure craft' formed against 'pure art' converged with the *Mingei* Movement's rejection of cosmopolitan taste, developing alternative approaches via local objects. In the 1930s, with preparative works of the Japan *Mingei* Museum, *mingei* associates developed multiple projects in the term 'new *mingei*' in rural Japan, and also reconstructed local discourses to represent diverse localities over the country. Building up the economic network linking to these local projects was also *mingei* associates' solution to revive 'national beauty' integrated with Japanese tradition, which Yanagi believed to be otherwise substituted by urban culture. In this stage, *mingei* activities showed a clear intention to rebuild the connection between tradition and the beauty of the State through precise definitions of localities.

Simultaneously integrating the complex colonial context, I organise Chapter Three to illustrate how *mingei* theory was transmitted, acquired and transformed in Taiwan and its conjunction with Yen Shui-long's practice. Observing how *mingei*'s theoretical content was altered for specific aims in the Taiwanese context, I aim to build up a more independent narrative to understand Taiwan's interaction with Japanese imperialism. Except for Yen's relationship with his Japanese fellows, I include Yen's intercultural experiences and his contacts with European art to depict his synthetic engagements in his arts and crafts practice. Within the background of the colonial government's assimilation in Taiwan, Yen's practice's independence from the imperial mobilisation of local culture is an inevitable debate. To manifest the complexity of cultural resistance under the colonial force, this chapter analyses the *Minzoku Taiwan* magazine's social circle to demonstrate alternative forms of resistance.

The publication of *Minzoku Taiwan* (folklore Taiwan) magazine, which I argue to a certain degree utilised the ambivalence in the assimilation policy, is an important point to reconsider local intellectuals' reaction to imperialism and the colonial control under the disguise of modernity. Responding to a manipulated representation of modernity by the colonial government, the idea of folklore through this magazine was an eclecticism integrating historical, anthropological, sociological and aesthetic observations of local traditions, including intangible knowledge, ritual and customs and tangible material culture. This eclecticism determined Yen's flexibility in using *mingei* theory for his own sake. Yen played a critical role to circulate the *mingei* aesthetics in Taiwan, but his preference of 'composite beauty' drove more attention than the emphasis on moral characters in craft. Manifested in his article History of Craft and Art, Yen's aesthetic survey on the question of art's categorisation goes beyond the ideology of 'fine art' by looking into multiple aesthetic materials, corresponding to his ethnographic engagement in indigenous culture.[71] It seems that the *Mingei* Movement never really landed and rooted in Taiwan, but was transformed, replaced and synthesised into other forms of craft movement.

With a focus on Yen Shui-long's practice of craft, the final chapter demonstrates Yen's aesthetic approach in his revival of local handicrafts through modern design, in which I think his artist identity played a significant part in navigating his perspective. With an attempt to demonstrate his craft projects as part of his art approach, this chapter starts from a whole picture of his artist journey which led him to recognise the indispensable role of craft in his art approach. I analyse his use of "free craft" in comparison with other similar terms on craft's social function in relation to "fine art", emphasising Yen's claim on craft's liberty as a pivotal point hinged to the unity of the art world. Based on this, the similarity between Yanagi and Yen, such as Yen's adoptions of 'new *mingei*' and 'composite beauty', can be explained by seeing the synthetic theoretical structure sustaining Yen's eclectic approach, which is nuanced from Yanagi's dualistic structure. Yen's 'free craft' considered craft's aesthetic function by engaging in cultural complexities conveyed by the interface of the myth of 'fine art' and ethnographic interpretations of non-European objects. Interpreting Yen's primitivism in relation to colonialism within art history, this chapter traces back to Yen's academic cultivation at the beginning of the 1930s and his paintings in indigenous subjects. Yen's unique engagement through ethnographic materials, which in the western context usually involves a desire for exoticism, demonstrates the intimacy of local culture in his eclectic art practice. It clarifies the hybridity in Yen's design, manifesting ambiguous characteristics in his works that are simultaneously modern and traditional. In Yen, developed from Yanagi's notion of 'composite beauty', the division between art and craft was derived from problematising the categorisation of craft and art, which Yen envisioned in a unified cultural system. Yen's practice showed an attempt to go beyond this dualism without the discomfort from the mixed-use of art-historical languages.

---

[71] Yen Shui-long, 〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], [1944?], manuscript collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

My research engages in the ambivalence of imperial space and the complexity of colonial culture, which requires careful views on its dynamic resilience instead of the otherwise desire for simplistic confrontation between monotonous ideological force and pale resistances for a well-defined identity. These two cases manifest the dynamic tension negotiating with a changeable imperialism, problematising the linear narrative which consistently confirms the dominance of a static centre. Craft, as a post-historical dialectics of art, engages in the discursive frontiers of art, where art's aesthetic basis is rooted in the soil of miscellaneous everyday experience. Emancipated from the dualistic structure of orientalism, I hope the craft studies in these two cases can manifest art history in a sense to empower creativities in cultural frontiers, which I think involve complexity beyond the simplified identification of a static local authenticity.

Chapter One

On Art/Craft Dualism: '*Mingei*' as an Eccentric Attempt of Aesthetics

Published in 1928, *The Way of Craft* signifies the maturity of Yanagi's *mingei* theory, confirming the term '*mingei*', a shorthand for 'folk craft' (*minshuteki kogei*), with an affirmation of aesthetics for common people.[1] This book epitomises the theoretical development of *mingei* aesthetics, marking Yanagi's philosophical exploration through craft until the late 1920s. The book also concluded Yanagi's early-career involvement in literature activities organised by the elite society *Shirakaba,* "a group of privileged young men" who pursued liberty and sought to solve the problems of their day though "synthesising western artistic and philosophical ideas with native cultural traditions".[2] Within decades, *The Way of Craft* became a significant source for English readers' understanding of the Japanese *Mingei* Movement. Significantly, Yanagi's *Shirakaba* fellow Bernard Leach (1887-1979) systematically introduced the *mingei* theory in several articles collected in *The Unknown Craftsman*, from which Glenn Adamson extracted and included the chapter 'The Way of Craftsmanship' in *The Craft Reader* of which he was editor.[3]

Both Leach's *The Unknown Craftsman* and Adamson's introductory interpretation of 'The Way of Craftsmanship' emphasise the parallel between the Japanese *Mingei* Movement and the British Arts and Crafts Movement initiated by renowned figures like Ruskin and Morris.[4] More significantly, these materials demonstrated a shared interest in *mingei* theory's aesthetics with a reflected scope of fine art in western view. Directly involved in the *Mingei* Movement, Leach immediately associated the

---

[1] *The Way of Craft* is one of Yanagi's most influential books, which collects writings revised and re-edited from nine articles he published in *Dai Chōwa* [Great harmony] magazine, edited by *mingei* activist Mushanokōji Saneatsu since 1927.

[2] Rupert Faulkner, "A New Generation of Artist-Craftsmen", in Livingstone and Parry, ed.,, *International Arts and Crafts*, 315.

[3] Born in a colonial barrister family in Hong Kong, British potter Bernard Leach played a significant role in White Birch society sharing ideas in relative and intercultural views. He arrived in Japan in 1909 and became active in *Shirakaba*'s projects. A volume titled 'Bernard Leach' was published in 1910 as a special collection to introduce art, sculpture and pottery on an international scale. Bernard Leach's knowledge related his personal experience about William Morris was a critical resource for Yanagi's understanding about the British Arts and Crafts Movement and the key figures John Ruskin and Morris. Based on his friendship with Yanagi, Tomimoto and other *mingei* associates, he is also the key person who introduced *mingei* aesthetic to the UK after he went back to England. In Shiga Naokuni,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2016), 18-19; Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 12-13.

[4] Bernard Leach's introduction in Yanagi Sōetsu, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*, (New York: Kodansha Institutional, 1972). 90; Glenn Adamson's introductory interpretation of 'The Way of Craftsmanship' in Glenn Adamson, ed., *The Craft Reader,* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2010), 167.

concept of *mingei* with the "deformation, discarding conventional form", which modern artists pursued as "expressions of freedom".[5] In terms of the beauty of "irregularity" and "asymmetricality", he identified that this Oriental inheritance - the prompting to "magnetic effect on artists like Piccaso and Matisse" - in its significance of aesthetic history, had been "misused and debased in modern time".[6] (Fig. 1) Converting the idea of the "irregular beauty", Leach's analogy of "grotesque", through which Ruskin had made a link to Gothic art by raising the principle of nature, extended *mingei* theory's engagement in producing modern meaning beyond the current frame of western art history. Explaining *mingei* theory's engagement in the modern realm, Adamson stated that the term '*mingei'* is rather "coined" than inherited from folk culture.[7] He highlighted the radicality of *mingei* theory in its representation of craft as an antithesis of art, shaping craft's entity as a "progressive art movement in Japan".[8] Taking Ruskin and Morris's 'influence' in Japan as a confirmed fact, Adamson conveyed his interest in the antithetical relationship between craft and art in *mingei* theory. In order to cohesively demonstrate this focus, in his translated article he omitted a substantial section of Yanagi's writing on mechanised industry and social reformation inspired by the idea of mediaeval guild community (this omission did not occur in Leach's collection). These two writers had different emphases on the legacy of this movement in Japan but agreed on a reflective view of modern art in the oriental/occidental framework. Due to its political independence, narratives of this movement seldom involved themselves in the formulated pattern of cultural colonialism. The inclination to take the British Arts and Crafts Movement as a source which therefore projects Yanagi's intention to transcend the idea of high art in a democratic sense, particularly determined the way the *Mingei* Movement's legacy is defined.

In this chapter, I will discuss the *Mingei* Movement in Japan within the framework of modern art, encompassing the dualism between art and craft, modernity and traditionality, as well as the West and East within the climate of cosmopolitanism. In a more clarified post-colonial context, this chapter engages in the theoretical complexity beyond the apparent frame of orientalism, observing the ambiguity and hybridity revealed in *mingei* theory to problematise the artificial stability of dualism. Instead of making a quick connection between 'the beauty of irregularity' of any *mingei* object and Piccaso and Matisse's deformations celebrated as the emancipation of the artistic mind - the case study of Yen Shui-long in chapter four will provide the opportunity to demonstrate this - I believe that the re-examination of *mingei*'s acquisition from the British Arts and Crafts Movement is pivotal to begin with. In the term 'acquisition' (of Yanagi), rather than Adamson's term 'influence' (from either Ruskin or Morris), this chapter adjusts the focal point on *mingei* theory's subjectivity, reflecting how Yanagi replaced the meanings when he adopted relevant concepts.

---

[5] Leach, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*, 119.
[6] Ibid, 119-120.
[7] Adamson, "The Way of Craftsmanship", 167.
[8] Ibid.

In *The Way of Craft*, Yanagi manifested his preference for Ruskin's medievalism with his own projection of morality in the making and his rejection of Morris's practice through visuality. Criticising the *mingei* theory's originality, Kikuchi mentions several occidental sources Yanagi acquired in his young age in addition to Ruskin and Morris, like Roger Fry's interpretation of Post-Impressionism, Leo Tolstoy, Henri Bergson, William James and William Blake, as circulated through Yanagi's social group *Shirakaba*.[9] Demonstrating how Yanagi synthetically converted these occidental resources into his "appropriated orientalism" as a "modern critique of the modern Occident," Kikuchi suggested the "oriental-occidental hybridity" of *mingei* theory, which is not as original as Yanagi claimed.[10] I will explain why the dichotomic term "oriental-occidental hybridity", which works quite well within the theoretical frame of orientalism, is not adequate to define or evaluate this movement with an extended spatial structure joined by the case of colonised Taiwan in further chapters. In this chapter, I would like to reexamine Yanagi's originality by considering his engagement of cultural 'hybridity' of his time, when occidental concepts became so easily accessible through the thriving publication industry. As Kikuchi has suggested, *mingei* theory was created as a critique by conversely reusing these sources. However, *mingei* theory is far more than a group of loosely assembled notions. To manifest this, I am not repeating all possible sources which might cause 'influences' on Yanagi but alternatively concentrating on Yanagi's idea of 'art for people' which benefited from the British Arts and Crafts Movement so much.

Analysing Yanagi's approach of 'art for the people' - from his acquisition of Ruskin's medievalism to his mix-use of medievalism and the Buddhist ideal of "nothingness", seeing no difference between beauty in art and craft - this chapter explores Yanagi's doubt on the arbitrary art/craft dualism, which determined the hierarchical relationship between art and craft.[11] Along with his engagement in the art/craft duality, his interrogation involved other extended social and cultural intersections of equality, which Yanagi bound with the idea of the 'guild' as a reformist solution. Yanagi's socialist guildism is a crucial and prevalent source in his writing in search of a universal aesthetic value for people based on the morality of making.

Considering Leach's role in the *Shirakaba* society, Yanagi's acquisition of Ruskin and Morris's guildism is predictable. Unsurprisingly, Yanagi's comments and criticism of the Arts and Crafts Movement were also immediate and straightforward, especially the class issue in Morris's approach of socialist art. However, in addition to these two prominent protagonists of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, I would like to include two other figures, York-born architect Arthur Penty (1889-1959) and Russian anarchist philosopher Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) in the formation of *mingei* guildism. Within the investigation of possible sources, I value these two figures as significant to reallocate

[9] Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism,* 7-23.
[10] Ibid, 42-43, 4.
[11] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 456-457.

mingei aesthetics' socialist basis, which extended, deviated and displaced the British model - although Yanagi's references of them are far more obscure than his critiques on Ruskin and Morris.

Yanagi's adoption of Penty and Kropotkin's ideas is an interconnected and mutually-directed process. In *The Way of Craft,* Yanagi said he had read a couple of Arthur Penty's books.[12] These materials might include *The Restoration of the Gild* (sic) *System* (1906) and *Post-Industrialism* (1922), in which Penty demonstrated the notion that the State's industrial policies often colluded with capitalism and failed to achieve authentic collective benefits.[13] He praised Penty as Ruskin's "authentic successor" who was genuinely concerned about the relationship between economics and morality.[14] Penty's guild socialism suggested a resistance toward commercialism under the capitalist logic; this was an appealing viewpoint to Yanagi as Japan was transforming into a highly urbanised society. As a result, Yanagi's interest in the sociological factor of production and makers' autonomy in modern industrial competition subsequently drove his attention to Kropotkin's idea of "mutual aid", a belief in "decentralisation of industry" guaranteeing diversity by taking "the advantage of every region" and progressing specialisation through "mutual cooperation".[15] Yanagi also read many of Kropotkin's books. Except for *Mutual Aid: the Factor of Evolution* (1902)*,* Yanagi's collection of Kropotkin's monographs included *The Conquest of Bread* (1892); *The Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (1899)*; Field, Factories and Workshops* (1899); and *The Terror in Russia* (1909). His notes and marks in *Mutual Aid* and *The Conquest of Bread* show Yanagi's enthusiasm for these two books in particular.[16] The term "mutual aid" frequently appears in several of his writings.[17] However, it is rare to see Yanagi's inclusion of Kropotkin's name in his writings. Even on those few occasions, he did not emphasise Kropotkin's socialist inclination as he did with Ruskin and Morris. Although Kropotkin and *Mutual Aid* were mentioned in Yanagi's article "Questions of Life", whose context was about biological rhythms of animal migration, Kropotkin's name is absent in *The Way of Craft,* yet with the term 'mutual aid' appearing everywhere.[18] Yanagi seemed to avoid mentioning Kropotkin in contexts of sociological discussions even though he did consider him as a crucial source of his guild-socialism.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, an era of social movement, Kropotkin was a well-known anarchist thinker among Japanese intellectuals, including Yanagi and his friends in the *Shirakaba* group. According to Nakami, with concerns about the Japanese government's suppression against

---

[12] Yanagi Sōetsu,《工藝の道》*The Way of Craft*, 1928, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2005), 28.

[13] Arthur Penty, *The Restoration of the Gild System*, (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co, 1906); Arthur Penty, *Post-industrialism*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1922).

[14] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 29.

[15] Peter Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread*; *The Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, 1907, (Cambridge: Great Britain at the University Press, 1995), 174.

[16] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 51.

[17] Yanagi used the term "mutual aid" in different Japanese translations, such as *Sōgo hojo* (相互補助), *Sōgo no hojo* (相互の補助), and *Sōgo no hosa* (相互の補佐). In Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 78, 80, 248.

[18] Yanagi Sōetsu, 〈生命の問題〉[Questions of life], 1913; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第一巻 - 科學、宗教、藝術；初期論集》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 1, Science, Religion and Art; Early Works*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981), 302.

socialist activities and the risk of involvement in censorship for anti-government thoughts, Yanagi avoided directly mentioning Kropotkin.[19] With a notion to liberalise individual freedom and the resistance against controlling powers from a centralised political body, particularly a state government, anarchism thrived and stimulated thoughts to consider a national government as a top-down law functioning with political ideology rather than representing mutual agreements from the public. An alternative social structure was advocated to resist the very power of a state by establishing numerous decentralised communities constructed with organic, diverse forms of self-jurisdictions. This reformed social pattern aims at a bottom-up agency against direct political control from a small group of people, empowering, instead, people's energy in a politicised 'non-political' domain. Nakami suggested that the seed of anarchism had been sown in Yanagi's mind even far before his engagement in guild socialism in the 1920s. This is evident not only from Yanagi's enthusiastic interest in Kropotkin's thought but also the substantial attention among his intellectual friends and their sympathy toward anarchist activities in Japan, especially the High Treason Incident (*taiyaku jiken*) in 1910.[20] There is no evidence to say Yanagi is an anarchist; however, evidently he knew the sensitivity along with the name and transformed the enthusiasm into his unequivocal celebration of guild socialism. This also explains why Yanagi always believed that the local autonomy in rural Japan should be the answer to the freedom guaranteed by craft. Embodied by the *Mingei* Association's practices in the 1930s, this decentralising tendency led to a deliberate deviation from the state-made manufacturing industry, which embraced the desire for Japanese products for the international market.

I am deferring this discussion of the *Mingei* Movement's rejection of the international style of 'Japaneseness' to the next chapter. In this first chapter, I wish to scope out several settings of dualism fundamentally bound with Yanagi's approach of decentralisation, which he used to draw the complexity represented through craft. This includes his notion of 'composite beauty' based on 'intuition' rather than any form of authorised power.

'Composite beauty' projects Yanagi's attempt to transcend the oriental/occidental dichotomy. However, this non-dualistic approach's theoretical foundation and critique system eventually still relied on this dualism and its derivatives. Yanagi recognised similarities between cases in the East and West in searching for craft's value for common people - who produce things anonymously, and its active propulsion on eliminating the hierarchical structure within the myth of 'fine art' in either western or eastern society. However, his approach is far from any acknowledgement of cultural comparison. Through conceptualising craft's 'composite beauty', Yanagi identified 'craft' within a broader aesthetic domain, whose entity is preconditioned by the concept of 'fine art', or 'pure art' as

[19] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 54.
[20] The High Treason Incident revealed a peak of suppression and persecution by the Japanese government to eliminate the so-called dangerous anti-government thoughts. It was also when Yanagi and his intellectual circle published *Shirakaba* magazine and Yanagi produced articles to introduce the concept of 'mutual aid' and Tolstoy's socialist ideas. In Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 47.

derived from "western individualism".[21] Moreover, Yanagi associated the celebration of individualism as part of modern capitalist values. Rejecting the authoritative monopoly of fine art, the term 'composite beauty' ostensibly revealed a pluralistic realm of human-made objects; however, its subjectivity was framed and constrained in cultural relativism assigning its opponent as a singularised central power. That made it difficult to affirm the value of plurality without consistently confirming and reinforcing the dualism Yanagi interrogated. *Mingei* theory's aesthetics rely on the timeless domain of an "eternal now", the realm promising emancipation from progressivism, bound Japanese national beauty within the "essence" of tradition, to reject imitating any ephemeral modern value, such as capitalism, commercialism, individualism and intellectualism in Yanagi's categorisation.[22] Aiming at recovering tradition's value as a collective-made essence, *mingei* theory embraced guild socialism derived from Yanagi's inclination of Ruskin's medievalism. This extracted antiquity reframed as timeless eternality eventually became an antithesis of the 'purity' guaranteed by modern art's individualistic approach.

Thus, my intention is not merely to reveal the dualistic structure behind Yanagi's critique but to reconsider the redeployment of socialist sources in searching for a reversed position for reallocating craft's aesthetic value in modern Japan. Further development of *mingei* theory contributed to several settings of dualism, which might seem contradictory to Yanagi's claim at craft's essential beauty. These binary antitheses were embodied as confrontations between western and eastern, foreign and domestic, cosmopolitan and rural, modern and traditional, individualistic and universal, copy and original, as well as artificial and authentic. The *Mingei* Movement successfully demonstrated these concepts and represented the obvious paradox of modern aesthetics' reliance on the inferiority of craft. The 'eternal now' temporality sustained a rather phenomenological process as opposed to Hegelian chronological linearity, while the principle Yanagi claimed is based on peripheral organic reformations of things rather than a predetermined power structure. His engagement projects an intention to recover the ambiguity, the undefined statement in aesthetic judgments. Identifying craft's connotation of tangible things (*mono*), Yanagi emphasised the significance of the "intuitional" engagement of things, revealing a rejection of epistemological or linguistic approaches of aesthetics.[23] This visuality-versus-knowledge structure formed through subversiveness might be very familiar in modern art's claim on 'irregularity' and 'asymmetricality' with a celebration of "intuitive perception of beauty", concerning "seeing" as an emancipated domain from the field of "knowing".[24] In many western art movements, such as Post-Impressionism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, this belief was reshaped as antagonism toward the institutionalised principle of art's tradition monopolised by academy schools. Yanagi, on the other hand, grafted the avant-garde legacy guaranteed by modern

[21] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 391-392.
[22] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft,* 62-63.
[23] Tsuchida Maki,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], (Urayasu: Sofukan, 2008), 261.
[24] Leach, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*, 109.

aesthetics into his theory of craft, reallocating tradition's subversion with a decline of intuitional value in the daily making process. Yanagi's reversed decentralisation of artistic value through craft revealed the indeterminacy of modern aesthetics by replacing meanings converted from craft's peripheral ambiguity, instability and flexibility, negotiating with the legitimacy of a so-called 'pure' art.

Approaches through Nature: Yanagi's Critique of Ruskin and Morris

Leach played a direct role in Yanagi's understanding of the British Arts and Crafts Movement. They met at the Imperial University in 1909, the year before the *Shirakaba* society launched the first issue of *Shirakaba* magazine in 1910. Through Yanagi, Leach became involved in several of the *Shirakaba* society's activities as a key member of the group. Yanagi's friendship with Leach developed earlier than any other *mingei* activists, however, including Tomimoto Kenkichi (1886-1963), who met in 1910 after returning from a year-and-a-half period of study in London, and Hamada Shōji (1894-1978), who helped Leach found his pottery studio in St. Ives, Cornwall, between 1920-1923.[25] (Fig. 2) Seen as "the outset of *mingei* activity", the *Shirakaba*'s early influence was pivotal for Yanagi's socialist engagement in *mingei* theory, even though most *Shirakaba* members were not involved in *mingei* activity directly.[26] Leach and Tomimoto's roles were also crucial for Yanagi's contact with ceramic artisans Hamada Shōji and Kawai Kanjirō (1890-1966), who subsequently co-founded the *Mingei* Association which was significantly influential. Hamada and Kawai had met each other at the Ceramic Department of Tokyo Technical College around 1913 and then became Yanagi's acquaintances through Leach since Yanagi met Hamada in 1919.[27]

Leach's intercultural experience sustained his interest in the "East-West exchange" and "cultural unification of mankind", observing the *Shirakaba* group in insider and outsider views.[28] Regarding the Meiji Restoration, which started in 1868 as the end of a long hibernation of "isolated medievalism" and a leap to "the nineteenth century of Queen Victoria", Leach indicated that "the best young brains" were assigned abroad: "to England for naval and financial tutelage, to Germany for scientific and military knowledge, and to France for art".[29] Commending on the *Shirakaba* group's enthusiasm for western literature, Leach was impressed by their "horizons of western art and thought, ancient and modern," from Giotto, the High Renaissance and Post-Impressionism to current art and literature

[25] Faulkner, "A New Generation of Artist-Craftsmen", 315, 319
[26] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 16.
[27] These figures might have acquired each other through the media before they actually met in person. Hamada was more socially active than Kawai. He visited Tomimoto's Kiln in Nara in 1916, then met Leach in 1918 at Leach's exhibition in Russeau Gallery. Through Hamada, Yanagi met Kawai in 1924. In Faulkner, "A New Generation of Artist-Craftsmen", 317-319.
[28] Leach, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*, 88.
[29] Ibid, 91-92.

trends, praising that they were "progressively educated but traditionally oriental".[30] As a "bridge connecting the East and the West", the *Shirakaba* group's activities were not limited to literary works. They also demonstrate thoughts and up-to-date art trends through exhibitions with invited artists.[31] Working with *Shirakaba* members, Leach's role provided an interface of first-hand knowledge related to the British Arts and Crafts Movement due to his acquaintance with Morris and his educational background at the London School of Art, which was under the direct influence of the movement.[32]

Yanagi and Leach's contact and the launch of the first *Shirakaba* issue also happened when the High Treason Incident shocked the Japanese public in 1910 and the perpetuated political tension nurtured socialist soil in young minds of the nation, including the *Shirakaba* members. In a more imminent and subtle observation of Yanagi's time, Leach's celebration of Japan's Meiji modernity might come out with an awkward estrangement. Leach took Japan's open-minded embrace of western modernity, which he traced back to the mid-nineteenth century, as a progressive development. Praising the Meiji Restoration as the end of "isolated medievalism", he appreciated his Japanese fellows' enthusiasm for western culture, considering their "progression" as synthetically bridging the gap between the East and West. However, this "leap to the century of Queen Victoria" developed into a peak of Japanese militarism in Yanagi's generation with the triumphs in the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and Russo-Japanese War in 1906. The process of Japanese modernisation was accompanied by the rise of military conscription and the imperial government's mobilisation on citizens' national duty, responding to which the *Shirakaba* was just one of the social voices questioning the immense national power's intervention in individuals' liberty.[33] Young elites' 'enthusiasm' might be far from inspired by the progressive western enlightenment in searching for "cultural unification of mankind depends". In a socialist sense, it was more like the prevalent anxiety among intellectuals looking for a counterbalance to elevate the collective will and social agency confronting the surging national totalitarianism. Identifying this socialist basis, I recognise the necessity to recontextualise Yanagi's acquisition of Ruskin and Morris' thought beyond the circulation of the British Arts and Crafts Movement in Leach's framework.

Even without Leach as an intermediate, Ruskin and Morris should not be unfamiliar to Yanagi. These two influential figures were introduced into Japan in the late 1880s, and their works of literature and art were available to the public in several magazines. Shimazaki Tōson's translation of Ruskin's *Modern Painters* came out in 1896. Later, in 1899, Morris's *News From Nowhere* was translated by Sakai Toshihiko.[34] Through writers, such as Murai Tomoyoshi and Iwamura Tōru for

---

[30] Ibid, 93.

[31] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 31.

[32] Kikuchi, Yuko, 2004. *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism.* 14-15.

[33] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 17-18.

[34] Kikuchi, Yuko, 2004. *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 24-25.

example, Ruskin and Morris were introduced as social revolutionists advocating beauty and labour value in industrial products.[35] Among a tremendous number of publications on Ruskin and Morris, Murobuse Kōshin's books were substantially popular and remarkable for including many occidental theories of well-known philosophers such as Karl Marx, Leo Tolstoy and Oswald Spengler. The term 'guild socialism' can be seen in his *Guild Socialist (Girudo Shakaishuki)* published in 1920, while Ruskin's enthusiasm for Gothic art was included in *The Decline of Civilisation (Bunmei no Botsuraku)* in 1923.[36] Observed from a literary perspective, it is very likely that Ruskin and Morris initially were not known as art reformers within the context of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, but as social activists.

In *The Way of Craft*, Yanagi mentioned Ōkuma Nobuyuki's current book *Socialists Ruskin and Morris* as a primary source of his understanding of the Arts and Crafts Movement's guild socialism.[37] This book's engagement with these two protagonists shows a socialist inclination with an emphasis on the morality of making either art or craft works. Yanagi's discussion of Ruskin's *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice* drove a substantial focus on a more aesthetic-related domain, but still substantially navigated by Ōkuma's socialist interpretation of Ruskin's concern of "morality within beauty."[38] Mainly, Ōkuma's analysis of Ruskin's aesthetics was conspicuously concentrated on the sixth chapter of *The Stones of Venice* titled 'The Nature of Gothic'. Ōkuma juxtaposed Ruskin's socialist approach in an antagonistic side of "economic liberalism".[39] He demonstrated art as the joy inhabiting the "essential freedom of work", through which he highlighted that Ruskin's primary argument on Gothic art was rooted in individuals' genuine devotion to creating beautiful things sustained by religious principle and collective value.[40] By mentioning six characteristics, or "moral elements", of Gothic - savageness, changefulness, naturalism, grotesqueness, rigidity, and redundancy - Ōkuma quoted Ruskin's explanation of "savageness" and "barbaric characteristics" applied to the architecture of the North:[41]

> And it is, perhaps, the principle abominableness of the Gothic schools of architecture, that they thus receive the results of the labour of inferior minds; and out of fragments full of imperfection, and betraying that imperfection in every touch, indulgently raise up a stately and unaccusable whole.[42]

---

[35] Kita,〈大正時代の工芸とユートピア思想 - 富本憲吉とウィリアム・モリス〉[Craft in the Taishō perios and utopianist thoughts: Tomimoto Kenkichi and William Morris], 192-193.
[36] Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism.* 25-26.
[37] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 208.
[38] Ibid, 209-210.
[39] Ōkuma Nobuyuki,《社会思想家としてのラスキンとモリス》[Socialists Ruskin and Morris], 1927; (Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 2004), 20.
[40] Ibid, 20-21.
[41] Ibid, 23-24.
[42] John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice,* vol. 2, (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1874), 159-160.

Through Ruskin's perspective on the imperfection of Gothic art, which transformed "the labour of inferior minds" into an "unaccusable whole", Ōkuma's socialist model scopes a moralised aesthetics enabling a collective value without sacrificing individuals' autonomy. Ōkuma, therefore, confirmed craft as collective art made by people, with the support of social consensus of morality, whose freedom relied on operations of universal principle rather than any mechanical rule or hierarchical system. Their art was full of imperfections but "honest and thoughtful", guaranteeing "liberty of every workman".[43] Referring to Morris & Co, Ōkuma explained the idea of "people's art" further distinguished from ideas of the "genius painter" and "aristocratic taste", identifying craft as "lesser art" demonstrating "labour liberty" with reliance on non-conscious autonomy, conventional rule and universal value.[44]

Ruskin's chapter of 'The Nature of Gothic' provided a primary prototype of Yanagi's medievalism associated with the idea of craft. In Yanagi's article on mediaeval art, this belief on moralised beauty derived from the satisfaction of autonomously participating in daily production projects a 'greater beauty' beyond individualistic expressions in fine art. Recognising collective will as a transcendence beyond individuals' imperfection, Yanagi proclaimed,

> The retained ancient symbolism with immense reverence tells why mediaeval art is that profound. Following this path enabled specific greatness to happen. There would be something in art, which is not individualistic but reaches the inner depth. Symbols are not individual possessions but communal-based consciousness, through which theologists' minds, national instinct and artists' perceptions collaborate. [45]

It is self-evident that Yanagi's medievalism consisted of a setting of concepts polarising craft as collective, cooperative and universal, and art as individualistic, self-conscious and unique. Praising the former as "greatness", *mingei* aesthetics created a moral domain which was convertible for Yanagi to replace Gothic "theologists' mind" with his engagement in Buddhism, conveying "open trust" and "humble faith" toward the "whole" as salvation for individuals' imperfection.[46] Parallel ideas can be seen in Ruskin's notion of religious morality and reliance on nature. For example, Yanagi's concepts of "beauty of no-thought" (*musō no bi*), "no-mindedness" (*mushin*), "rustic beauty" (*soya no bi*) and "beauty of astringency (*shibusa no bi*)" denote similarities to Ruskin's demonstration of barbaric character in mediaeval art.[47] In Ruskin, this naturalist approach is obedience to the "law of the universe" and the "love of natural objects for their own sake".[48] In *mingei* theory, Yanagi exchanges

---

[43] Livingstone and Parry, *International Arts and Crafts*, 14.
[44] Ōkuma,《社会思想家としてのラスキンとモリス》[Socialists Ruskin and Morris], 34-35.
[45] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈中世紀の藝術〉[Mediaeval art], 1913; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第一巻 - 科學、宗教、藝術；初期論集》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 1, Science, Religion and Art; Early Works*, 602.
[46] Adamson, "The Way of Craftsmanship", 157.
[47] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 259-262.
[48] Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice,* vol. 2, 160.

Ruskin's mediaeval naturalism with the Buddhist conception of 'other power' (*tariki*) - an open trust in universal creativity supported by nature and collective intelligence.

Ruskinian naturalism is pivotal for Yanagi to construct his notion of cultural originality in *mingei* theory. Ruskin urged studying the "truth" of nature, "rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, and scorning nothing, believing all things to be right and good, and always rejoicing in the truth".[49] This notion of truth is also seen in Yanagi's constructions of "originality" and "freedom" in his aesthetics of craft, taking nature as a "purified" domain of beauty, giving a non-dualistic whole.[50] However, the further connection to the liberty promised by natural originality is also where Yanagi's naturalism developed away from Ruskin's medievalist aesthetics to a critical depreciation of Morris's design.

Taking nature as an infinite source of originality was not Ruskin nor the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's invention but derived from the European art historical tradition. In the eighteenth century, originality was defined as the capacity to fulfil the "fertile and pleasant field" in mind by accessing nature with native powers rather than imitating any form of composition.[51] Along with the belief that conceived nature as an immediate source, originality represented "the truth of nature" by one's genuine mind and diligent work, not through other eyes or second-hand interpretation.[52] In the domain of art, this belief in nature provided a fundamental theoretical source for critics to denounce academies' discipline in educating technique through imitating antique styles from masterpieces but ignoring "accurate ideas of truth", which matter to an author's liberty.[53] The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's naturalism is a typical case in nineteenth-century England. By looking backwards before the High Renaissance, the Pre-Raphaelites recovered an alternative style of mediaeval "linearity", challenging the academic orthodoxy developed by the Royal Academy Schools, who emphasised an "Ideal" dominated by specific deployments of composition and colours. Simultaneously, "close drawing from nature" was advocated by Ruskin to nurture views of art that "contradicted the academic Ideal of selection and synthesis".[54] In this context, nature was almost used as a synonym of 'infinity' against the dominance of conventional principles framed to give a centralised definition of art. Ruskin's Guild of Saint George is a prominent case of this approach through nature. Praising the beauty for "truth to nature", the guild set up collections consisting of prints, drawings, and watercolours to educate the "structure of nature" as "a basis of design and beauty," rather than "the design of industrial goods" or the drawing skill "valuable only for fine artists".[55]

---

[49] John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. 1, (London Smith Elder and Co., 1857), 417.
[50] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 240.
[51] Edward Young, *Conjectures: On Original Composition*, (Leeds: The Scolar Press Limited, 1759), 9.
[52] Ibid, 38.
[53] Denis Diderot, *Diderot on Art, Volume I: The Salon of 1765 and Notes on Painting*, 1765(?), translated by John Goodman, (Yale University Press, 1995), 195.
[54] Cruise, "Pre-Raphaelite Drawing", 48-53.
[55] Cruise, "Pre-Raphaelite Drawing", 55.

Considering the *Shirakaba* group's interest in western art, Yanagi must have been aware of Ruskin's role in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, although no precise evidence shows how much he learned about it. If Yanagi's understanding of Ruskin was mainly through Ōkuma's socialist perspective, then Ruskin's symbiotic model between beauty and morality would demonstrate mediaeval guild association as a social reform paradigm.[56] However, when explaining an individual's originality's link to nature, Yanagi made a clear distinction between the embodiments of originality in fine art and in craft, which the Pre-Raphaelites had not done. According to Yanagi, Ruskin's idealism revealed a genuine passion as a love of art; however, expecting all artisans to become artists is inconceivable. Indicating the "artisticalised craft", he said,

> I saw a world that deviated far from reality in this beauty. There, all things were lifted from the ground, gaining spiritual sights in a heavenly realm. However, the heaven grounded on the earth is not found. Should I not say the realm approached by 'the Guild of St George' is not an entity grounded on the earth?[57]

Applying the analogy between either "heaven" and "art" or "ground" and "craft", Yanagi conveyed his belief of the essential difference between 'art' and 'craft'. The way artists pursue liberty through nature, in Yanagi, is not the same path that all makers can take. Drawing a parallel between Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, one of the Pre-Raphaelite painters, Yanagi suggested that the notion that the Pre-Raphaelite proposed under the Gothic spirit was an alternative Romanticism.[58] He made a harsh comment on the 'Red House' (Fig. 3, 1855-1860), which Morris designed as his new home with his new wife, Jane:

> The 'Red House' is more a painting than a residence, and it is for beauty rather than for use. The interior decorations are even absolutely going wrong. The pattern of wallpaper is equally unsightly.[59]

For Yanagi, it might have been a betrayal when Morris 'pretended' as an artisan but crafting everything with artistic intentions. In his eyes, the Red House is an exquisite "painting" chasing artistic beauty but showing no character as a functional house. Apparently, Yanagi saw nothing as functional beauty since the house had been excessively decorated. He rejected this work as an equivalent to the mediaeval art made by nameless workers. The Red House, according to Yanagi, is a "heavenly realm" lifted far from reality, where average workers produce in daily principle, demonstrating beauty in its humble universality, not in any form of uniqueness.

Connecting Yanagi's critiques on the Guild of Saint George and the Red House with an attempt to identify Ruskin and Morris's desire for artistic expressions instead of pure satisfaction by function, it

---

[56] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 209-210.
[57] Ibid, 215.
[58] Ibid, 220.
[59] Ibid, 219.

is becoming evident that Yanagi's aesthetics was meant for an exclusive domain of craft. He proclaimed that the essence of craft should be accessible for all men. Originality, in *mingei* theory, was therefore associated with a universal mechanism that enabled the daily producing process for every individual to work with the liberty benefited by nature. Transformed from Ruskin's interpretation of mediaeval mind, Yanagi invented a regression to nature supported by the principle of the 'whole' and the long-term developed tradition that contributes to its stability. With a resolution to establish the beauty of craft as a different quality from the beauty of art, Yanagi's concept of originality reversed the engagement of nature's infinity with the reliance on tradition. This originality aims at nothing unique and novel but the daily beauty in its regression of universality. Indicating that the Red House is more "a painting than a residence", Yanagi implied Morris's project is still a work of 'art', responding to which he created the term '*getemono*' to reallocate the "beauty for people" with an allowance of imperfection.[60] He doubted that the artificial design composed with artistic intention is not a natural path for all makers:

> The composition of units determines their rigorous geometric characters. Since mathematical methods construct them, there is no flexible space for human-made possibilities. It might be a kind of 'unfreedom from a human's perception'.[61]

Morris's design might demonstrate an approach to nature in its "honest and timeless" forms "freely available to all," which he perceived as the mediaeval model of "cooperative craftsmanship".[62] He transformed and visualised this nature in concrete practice by offering "disciplined, flat and geometric" features based on a "strict overall composition".[63] However, in Yanagi, Morris's interpretation of nature in geometric unity was still not persuasive enough to represent nature in its infinity. The "rigorous geometric characters" serves as "a kind of unfreedom", he countered, justifying that the 'principle' is decided by artists but not by nature because nature's infinity should accommodate more than that. Morris's revival of manufacture and historical techniques was politically charged due to his resentment of modern civilisation and expectation to eliminate the hierarchy in production ruled by capitalism.[64] Yanagi indicated that in the new rule determined by artists, the geometric pattern was not so far from the "man of mastery over the forces of nature" that Morris had rejected in his observation of the current class society.[65] In Yanagi's viewpoint, Morris's embrace of nature was still not pervasive enough when bringing questions confronting his love and

---

[60] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 25-27.

[61] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 414-415.

[62] Imogen Hart, "The Designs of William Morris", in Prettejohn, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, 214.

[63] Ibid, 215.

[64] Livingstone and Parry, *International Arts and Crafts*, 15.

[65] William Morris, "Socialism and Anarchism", in A. L. Morton, ed., *Political Writings of William Morris*, (Lawrence and Wishart London, International Publishers, 1979), 210.

practice of art. His exquisite patterns on wallpaper were still produced by cultivated designers, not by "all men in equality of condition".[66]

From Yanagi's modification of Morris's socialist model, it is evident that Yanagi tried to construct an aesthetics of craft, which he considered more qualified than the case of the Red House in reforming equality to eliminate all hierarchical divisions. *Mingei* theory, representing this statement, educates no artisan to become an artist but justifies the glory of craftsmanship, which in Yanagi's thinking, is an "entity grounded on the earth". By following the rule of nature - if real liberty can be realised as the elimination of class - then even "uneducated artisans" should equally benefit in a reformed society with acknowledgement and respect for all makers.[67] Inspired by Morris in terms of social reform, the alienated capitalist realism motivated Yanagi to achieve an equal realm without division between art and craft. Through abolishing differentiation, Yanagi envisioned *mingei* theory as a non-dualistic approach accommodating craft's nature as a significant part of social reform:

> However, all things are based on natural principles, leaving no space for artificial freedom-generated errors. Things following natural principles are never mistaken or forged. Here is a realm that, real and fake, beautiful and ugly, all divisions are transcended. Those divisions are pathetic products existing in the human realm, not in the conception of nature.[68]

Yanagi suggested an intuitive sensibility that transcended the division between "real and fake, beautiful and ugly", which is bound to his Buddhist engagement of the undifferentiated as the utmost importance to real the artifice that "precedes the birth of opposition between the two".[69] Conceived as a similar power, this nature guarantees a domain where people trust in "rejecting nothing", "believing all things to be right and good" as Ruskin defined.[70] It became a convenient statement for Yanagi to conceive of his aesthetics of craft, questioning the flaw of 'fine art'. In Yanagi, art's individualistic expression is limited to its artificial intention. Decisions made only concerning individualistic purposes do not satisfy the ideal of authentic freedom for all. Understood under the structure of Yanagi's medievalism, the individualism demonstrated through 'fine art' is a synonym of "intellectualism", a myth of genius developed with the surge of Renaissance that contributed artificial divisions on things against the order of nature.[71] This development then deviated from the authentic freedom bestowed by nature.

Identifying his aesthetics of craft, Yanagi developed a specific connection to nature based on one's 'non-consciousness' and 'intuition' (*chokkan*) derived from the essential universality of daily

---

[66] William Morris, "How I Became a Socialist", 1894, in A. L. Morton, ed., *Political Writings of William Morris.* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1979), 240.
[67] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 88.
[68] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 516.
[69] Leach, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*, 131.
[70] Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, 417.
[71] Yanagi,〈秩序の美と自由の美:天才主義への抗議〉[The beauty of order and the beauty of freedom], 198.

experience. Yanagi claimed the 'free beauty' in craft firmly relied on substantial physical engagement with natural sources, which serve infinite possibilities for one's creativity. Craftsmanship through nature desires immediate practice based on concrete materials rather than abstract forms and conceptual knowledge. Due to this, apart from *mingei*'s distinction from 'fine art', Yanagi also identified *mingei* as a different approach from other modern humanities subjects such as anthropology and folkloristics. Nonetheless, Yanagi's categorisation is still within his rejection of intellectualism converging to an epistemological hegemony of reason. In Yanagi's thinking, intuition relies on the existence of "tangible things" (*mono*), which have not been defined through an epistemological or linguistic logic.[72] The concept of "tangible things" was usually referred to in order to explain the divergent tendency between *mingei* study and folkloristics, which he considered as an investigative method to approach comprehension of "intangible things" (*koto*).[73] In terms of 'intangible things', he indicated that cognitive knowledge and abstract concepts build rules with preconditions, and these predetermined views usually serve as obstacles to gaining institutional experiences from things.[74] Ruskin's medievalism provided a prompt for Yanagi to identify craft's relative positions to Renaissance individualism, which excluded craft makers as inferior labourers.[75] With the term "Gothic spirit", Ruskin said the self-evidence of things enable "variation" and capability of "perpetual novelty", whose principle is not the "love of knowledge" but the "love of change".[76] Supplying for Yanagi's non-dualistic approach, the dichotomous structures - craft-versus-art, socialism-versus-intellectualism, universality-versus-individuality, intuition-versus-epistemology and nature-versus-artifice - formed as presuppositions enables a presumption of craft out of the control of linguistic logic and conceptualised knowledge. Therefore, craft became a resistance toward modern value in 'fine art', challenging the absolute beauty hierarchically identified by the privileged minority.

Engaging *mingei* theory by analysing Yanagi's acceptance and rejection of Ruskin and Morris is just a start to anchor Yanagi's thought with a brief view of the intercultural connection brought to this research. Still, as a result of Yanagi's consumption of countless reading materials, factors that contributed to the birth of *mingei* theory and its sources are even more miscellaneous than this. However, apart from demonstrating a direct connection to the British Arts and Crafts Movement, I intend to demonstrate how *mingei* theory was constructed as Yanagi's replacement of occidental thoughts in a new theoretical framework to reshape the concept of craft. With a comparison looking into several key concepts of *mingei* theory and its relationship with Ruskin's and Morris's models, their familiarity in structure and difference in reversed subversion, this story is not the retold version that took Ruskin and Morris as the core influence. In contrast, it has been displaced by resetting the

[72] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 261.

[73] Sōetsu Yanagi, 1939.〈「もの」と「こと」〉[Tangible things and intangible things]. In Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 178.

[74] Ibid, 179-180.

[75] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 240.

[76] Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice, vol. 2*, 175, 181.

discursive power based on concrete materials. What the model of the British Arts and Crafts Movement served was no more a legacy or paradigm but a process to reset, reshape and regenerate.

Guild Socialism in *Mingei* Theory

Although the *Mingei* Movement took pre-modern Japan as a model for revivals, in the term 'mediaeval', Yanagi seldom referred to Japan's ancient culture. Specifically, 'Middle Ages' in Yanagi's writing context means the western mediaeval period when social relationships consisted of numerous guilds carrying on different social roles. Developing in various campaigns, the guild concept circulated with references to Ruskin and Morris's medievalism, which inspired many successors in the United Kingdom and Europe. Quasi-guild organisations continued emerging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as the Art Workers' Guild in London, Guild of Handicraft in Germany and the Viennese Workshop in Austria, enabling interfaces for collaborations between "painters, sculptors, architects, designers and craftsmen" to rescope the relationship between arts and crafts and industry, and the "socialist ideal of art for the people".[77] This trend eventually arrived in Japan; however, it converged into the local discursive climate of socialism, which nuanced the pursuit of 'art for the people'. Thriving through relevant contemporary publications, the 'Ruskin fever' in the 1920s appealed for the notion of a "pluralistic society" juxtaposed to the "dominant Hegelian concept of the unitary state".[78] In the second half of the 1920s, Yanagi referred to the term 'guild socialism' several times in his proposals, including the prospectus composed for establishing the Japan Folk Crafts Museum in 1926, which is recognised as the start of the *Mingei* Movement.[79] The notion of guild socialism as a process of social reform also appears in his article "Proposition Concerning Crafts Guild" of 1927.[80]

Yanagi learned of Arthur Penty as a guild socialist, which he might consider within the same framework as Ruskin's medievalism, although Penty's guild socialism did not share the same social context with Ruskin's idea of guild formed more than a half-century ago. In 1912, the phrase "guild socialism" was initially used in Samuel George Hobson's article for *The New Age* weekly magazine, whose editor A. R. Orage was an enthusiastic Fabian socialist in favour of the policy of the Labour Party. When Hobson used the term, guild socialism still referred to a collectivist approach to "national

---

[77] Livingstone and Parry, "Introduction: International Arts and Crafts"; Alan Crawford, "The importance of the City", in *International Arts and Crafts,* 26-9; 62.

[78] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sōetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 159-160.

[79] Yanagi Sōetsu, Kawai Kanjirō, Tomimoto Kenkichi and Hamada Shōji,〈日本民藝美術館設立趣意書〉[Proposition concerning crafts guild], 1927;《柳宗悦全集 - 第十六巻 》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 16,* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1982), 3-12.

[80] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈工芸の協団に関する一提案〉[Prospectus for establishing the Japan Folk Crafts Museum], 1926; 《柳宗悦全集 - 第八巻 》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 8,* Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980), 46-57.

guild", which was quite different from Penty's notion of the guild in the sense of local agency.[81] George Douglas Cole was an early convert to the *New Age* programme, identifying the state as "primus inter pares" among other "associations", rather than any "final sovereignty", who embodied necessary extension of control through "industrial action on the part of unions".[82] However, Penty's resolution of social reform is not through Cole's model of the 'national guild'. He indicated that this Marxist term of revolution through machinery is a "central creative force", revealing industrialism as a "destructive rather than a constructive force" congregating no social cooperation and autonomy.[83] Compared to Cole's inclination toward Marxist economics, Penty's guild socialism was inspired by Ruskin's medievalism and his notion of "cooperative production" with "enforcement of moral standards" in a small society.[84] Instead of a national guild, what Penty appreciated were local organisations in the form of an "industrial guild", whose "entirely self-governing basis" serves for no "admixture of private interests".[85] Yanagi might have been aware of Penty's deviation from Cole. In *The Way of Craft*, he praised Penty as a 'real successor of Ruskin' and appreciated his synthetical analysis explaining the relationship between economics and morality.[86] He agreed with Penty's criticism of Cole's embrace of industrialism, emphasising that the coexistence between mechanisation and guild socialism's connotation of liberty in the making is thoroughly contradictory.[87] Responding to the rapid expansion of urbanisation in the nineteenth century, Penty's notion was appealing to Yanagi since the social crisis he described sounded quite familiar to Yanagi's time when the Japanese government was deploying the national industrial policy through centralised force targeting the international market. Yanagi embraced Penty's guild socialism with a concurrence that a centralised national force will undermine social equality by intervening in local mobility.

However, Yanagi did not learn Penty's thought with an overall view of his practice responding to the Arts and Crafts Movement. His understanding of Penty's practice was partially from a couple of Penty's books but not from any of his concrete architectural projects. He agreed that Penty's "craft-related economics" were very similar to his own aesthetic perspectives. He carried on,

> Except for some trivial things, it is not easy to give opposite opinions against the fundamental spirit he demonstrated in the book. However, his discussions on crafts show limited links to the question of beauty. I think it is fair to say this is not an ignorable defect.[88]

---

[81] Penty contributed an article on 'The Peril of Large Organisations' to the *New Age* in January, 1912. Hobson's first article on Guild Socialism was published in October of the same year. In Niles H. Carpenter, "The Literature of Guild Socialism", *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 34, no. 4 (1920): 764-765.
[82] Ibid. 766-768.
[83] Arthur Penty, *Post-industrialism*, 28, 38.
[84] Ibid, 87.
[85] Ibid, 86.
[86] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 29.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid, 28.

Yanagi admitted that his idea of *mingei* overlapped with Penty's stance of guild socialism when looking at the question of economics in craft. However, he emphasised that a more precise definition of craft's "beauty" is needed, and Penty's discussion did not include this aesthetic factor. Apparently, Yanagi was not completely satisfied with Penty's "unignorable defect" in his focus merely on economic factors rather than the concern of beauty, which Yanagi thought should be a matter of craft. Yanagi seemed ignorant of, or uninterested in, the actual movement in nineteenth-century England several decades after Morris's project of the Red House, while Penty did have a clear aesthetic notion as an architect. Far from giving "limited links to the question of beauty", Penty advocated achieving a "virtual abolition of design on paper" in architectural projects to retain on-site collaboration between architects and craftsmen.[89] In his first critique on *The New Age* in 1907, he said architects were obligated to preserve "detachment" and presented the use of a "full range of forms", negotiating more space for craftsmen's autonomous engagement.[90] With the revival of craftsmanship, Penty preferred the "simple, unadorned and undecorated vernacular", stating that mechanical ornamentation mimicking prestigious architecture is "objectionable" for their speculative deception in camouflages.[91] Yanagi would agree with Penty's aesthetic perspective if he had learned more about his architecture projects. However, even only within the theoretical scope, Yanagi's aesthetic approach, though understanding Penty's guild socialism, still demonstrated predictable similarity derived from their mutual understanding of Ruskin's medievalism.

This regression to Ruskinian humanities engaged in modern economic issues, focusing on the achievement of the 'intrinsic value' of labourers' well-being, which polarised the capital system as the circulation of 'exchange value'. Agreeing with Ruskin, Penty suggested the essence of production based on the happiness of the working class had been alienated and had converged with the modern capitalist logic. Quoting Ruskin, Penty emphasised that social value in production should be ultimately judged through the "subjective standard of human happiness" rather than the "monetary standard" projected by economists with political concerns. As a path of intrinsic value, labour should be a "means of happiness" related to one's health, mental and moral pleasure obtained from a productive and creative life.[92] However, with an approach of commercialism, rules for producing are controlled by the financiers, not the producers. Through revealing this depriving structure, Yanagi saw nothing essential had been fulfilled; nothing beautiful had been created if the hierarchical system never took individuals' creativity as vital.[93] He urged that social reform was required for workers to produce "correct" and beautiful things. He said:

---

[89] David Thistlewood, "A. J. Penty and the Legacy of 19th-Century English Domestic Architecture," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 46, no. 4 (Dec, 1987): 327.
[90] Ibid, 333.
[91] Ibid, 327-328.
[92] Penty, *The Restoration of the Gild System*, 10-11.
[93] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 185.

> We should not allow this illness to continue; instead, we should eradicate those factors which cause the illness. I think healthy crafts for the future relies on a healthy new society. Authentic crafts are naturally embodied in a correct epoch. Thus, high-quality crafts should be considered an indispensable part of a high-level society.[94]

The term "illness (*yamai*)" Yanagi used to describe an alienated producing system is very close to Penty's interpretation of the term 'illth' used by Ruskin. According to Penty, the nation-wide capital does not circulate as a solution for financial difficulties in the present day. People do not become more affluent, but poorer, under this financial system that only takes the 'profit' into account but fails to distinguish between "what are assets and liabilities".[95] According to Yanagi, this capital-based system brought no real fortune and no intrinsic value. He indicated that cheapness became a commercialist goal, but only a few noticed it was a trap when makers were encouraged to produce low-quality products.[96] Yanagi stressed that increasing profit became a core commercialist principle. The competition would always be bound with mass production and low price, with no consideration for labourers' fortune and happiness.

Similar to Penty, Yanagi insisted on his doubt toward machinery. Among the further Arts and Crafts developments, Penty was just one of several western influences circulated in Japan including the time of the German Jugendstil, a stream embracing legitimate uses of technology to refine craft-making.[97] Nonetheless, Yanagi never considered the machine as a possible path. His consistent rejection of machines had much to do with his agreement with Penty's criticism of machinery with his empathy of social inequality derived from the capitalised society controlled by a highly-centralised totalitarian state. Rejecting Cole's notion of 'national guild', Penty observed machinery as a means for a state to build up centralised industrialism. In Yanagi, the dominance of commercialism was like a "shackle" fettering individuals' minds to control mechanical techniques as their supportive function. He indicated that these techniques are usually "misused with capitalist ideas" supported by ignorance and excessive confidence in machinery.[98] This viewpoint is equivalent to Penty's argument saying that the benefits machines should bring to society in the modern era has vanished when the ultimate effect tends to "swallow up even the normal profits in fighting machinery", then "prices have to be raised, or the quality lowered to make up the difference".[99] Both Penty and Yanagi stressed the problem of using machines with a moral concern in social production:

---

[94] Ibid, 185-186.
[95] Penty, *The Restoration of the Gild System*, 27.
[96] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉 [Craft culture], 414-415.
[97] Livingstone and Parry, *International Arts and Crafts*, 26-28.
[98] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉 [Craft culture], 417.
[99] Penty, *The Restoration of the Gild System*, 32.

> We may then see how the growth of this external material problem coincides at every point with an internal spiritual decline, which separates religion, art and philosophy from life, has plunged society into the throes of materialism, with its concomitants of ugliness and money-making, the reckless pursuit.[100]

They held pessimistic views to demonstrate how materialism usually ended up sacrificing qualified and beautiful things in a commercialised society due to the collapse of the intrinsic value system. Yanagi condemned the hegemony of mechanical production, which ostensibly satisfies superficial materialist pleasure, yet communicates nothing essential due to its intrinsic lack of creativity and flexibility. In order to attain spiritual pleasure, productions should enable human minds' expression rather than enforcing submissions to mechanical logic.[101] According to Yanagi, protecting human minds from the deprivation of joy guarantees the pursuit of morality, which he emphasised as the most important requirement for craft-making. Products without the craftsmen's temperament and morality are bound to corrupt since their makers are forced to struggle for survival from the competition of low prices by reducing the quality of things they produce.[102]

Yanagi's notion of 'competing for quality rather than low price' might initially derive from Penty's perspective of the mediaeval guild. Foreseeing the necessity of social reform, Yanagi considered the mediaeval guild as a possible model to rehabilitate the morality of making which had been prosperous in a traditional society. In Penty's words, social reform is required to enable "spiritual regeneration".[103] He clarified that commercialism induces the evil that drives labourers in suffering from deviated goals of the competition. People struggle for commercial profits, which are never equivalent to the intrinsic values they deserve. Penty's solution for this is to recover the moral value in daily life that was once preserved as a religious tradition in the guild in the mediaeval times.

> As this change is ultimately dependent upon such things as the recovery of a more scrupulous honesty respect to our trade relation of living traditions of handicraft, and the emergence of nobler conceptions of life in general, it is evident that the nature of the reforms is such as to place the centre of gravity of the reform movement outside the sphere of politics.[104]

Derived from Cole's economic model of the national guild, Penty conceived a solution to recover a "more scrupulous honesty respect" in trade relationships transcending artificial collectivism framed in the "sphere of politics". Through social reform, Penty expected an inner reconstruction of social relationships, which led to a direct link to Ruskin's medievalist model. Reiterating the constructive value in a guild society, he demonstrated how a community with high-standard morality competed for

---

[100] Ibid, 44-45.
[101] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 412.
[102] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 405.
[103] Penty, *The Restoration of the Gild System*, 58.
[104] Ibid, 57.

the "general excellence of mediaeval craftsmanship".[105] Unlike the "unfair competition" that a commercialised society usually runs with, mediaeval craft makers never seek a "lower competition for cheapness" but the competition of quality. The moral standards on products contributed to a healthier labour community to stimulate makers to struggle not for the "survival of the fittest" but the "survival of the best".[106]

To finalise my discussion of Yanagi's acquisition of Penty's guild socialism, I would like to analyse how Yanagi conceived and reconstructed guild reformation as a means to retain the support of the 'other power'. Yanagi's notion of the 'other power' in craft could be embodied in two different forms: the power of tradition and the power of a healthy social community. He explained that a healthy social community maintained by moral rules is more likely to develop spiritual value through mutual aid. This collective-formed morality usually requires a cooperative community to learn and cultivate.[107] Thus, the mediaeval guild system could serve as a model of a collective ideal, sustaining traditional principles and social equalities for producing intrinsic value. Mirrored by the ideal of guild society, Yanagi attributed the hierarchical differentiation to the illness of modern capitalism:

> [Rules for] labour are no longer organised by guild communities, but transfer into the salary system; the organisers are no longer the makers themselves, but those who hold the wealth but never participate in production; the profit no longer benefits people who create, but gathered by the minority who are capitally privileged. This is where the ideal of equality collapses and benevolence ruptures, hierarchical division appears, and mutual antagonism among people escalates. Where can we find love and joy from labourers and their products with this standoff between the arrogant and humiliated?[108]

Consistently raising the question of the absence of equality in modern production, Yanagi's celebrated guild as an ideal in contrast to his criticism on excessive individualism tangled with the pursuit of artificial exchange value in the modern era. Rendering a "universal order" and conventional harmony, guild socialism provided a formula for Yanagi to build up the link to the Buddhist concept of "other power", which derived from the reliance on the principle of nature:

> From a specific viewpoint, a guild society transcends individuality without rejecting any individual. In a realm beyond individual engagements, there is no place for individualistic aim. People are involved with a greater self and then retain their authentic selves within it.[109]

---

[105] Ibid, 68.
[106] Ibid, 68-69.
[107] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 402-403.
[108] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 111-112.
[109] Ibid, 196.

Through no division but union beyond individualism, the guild social model became the key for individuals to gain the "greater self", the "non-self", "non-consciousness" statement with the support of collective force: the 'other power'.[110] Here, Yanagi's purpose is clear to convert guild morality into his rhetorical demonstration of the 'other power' as a significant element for the revival of handicraft. Corresponding to capitalism's celebration of individualism and intellectualism, the reformation of guild became a resistance to the hierarchical division to recover equality and benevolence by mutual aid.

As mentioned before, Yanagi's term 'mutual aid' is very likely derived from Peter Kropotkin's anarchist thought. Synthetically reconstructed in *mingei* theory, 'mutual aid', which Kropotkin scoped with his observation of mediaeval guild, served as a hinge to integrate Yanagi and Penty's socialism. In searching for an alternative trajectory to access the origin of modern individualism, Yanagi might find Kropotkin's theory of 'competition' appealing and resourceful to start with. In 1860s Britain, Kropotkin was influential for his counteraction to the neoliberal economic study of the Manchester School and social Darwinism. He rejected the dominant belief of 'individual competition' as a 'law of nature', derived from social Darwinists' contradictory misuses of Darwin's 'nature selects' theory, indicating the competition between individuals in society is not a "law of nature", but, certainly, a "law of capitalism".[111] He argued that the abnormal capital system should be recognised as an artificial nature that alienates people into disconnected individuals, and the survival competition within this precondition cannot be falsely generalised as human nature. In his later collection, which Yanagi might read, he referred to Darwin's *Descent of Man* (1871), explaining that in Darwin's discourse, human nature is not merely about "natural weapons" used to engage in competitions; there are more about the "counterbalance" by establishing "intellectual faculties" and "social qualities", which allow individuals to "give and receive aid from his fellow men".[112] In Kropotkin, "mutual aid", rather than reckless competition, preserves more of human nature across long-term human history, and in mediaeval time it was, significantly, retained in the form of guild.[113]

Kropotkin claimed that the illusory necessity of "coercive power", such as the state, is a "product of capitalist ideology".[114] This statement structured with the division between the competitive capital rule enforced by national power and the social collaboration autonomously generated in the pre-modern period, contributed to Yanagi's criticism of individualism as the obstacle to restoring craftsmanship. The beauty of craft requires the "beauty of society" with "correct system" and "good discipline", he said. Yanagi continued,

---

[110] Ibid.
[111] John Hewetson, "Introductory Essay: Mutual Aid and the Social Significance of Darwinism", 1987; in Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution,* 1902, (London: Freedom Press, 1987), X.
[112] Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, 6.
[113] Ibid, 5-7.
[114] Ibid, 10.

> It was not just a coincidence that the guild system reached its prosperity in the Middle Ages, following a unity under the order with benevolence. It should be the same in the eastern world. That usually means a unified collective system, in which individuals are obligated to maintain their community, and the community also protects individuals in the group. Benevolence is a principle of a guild, accompanied by mutual respect and mutual aid.[115]

Yanagi considered the prosperity of the guild system in a mediaeval city to also be a direction for social reform in an eastern country, while "mutual aid" is applicable as universal nature, in the 'eternal now'. Far beyond recognising the guild in the mediaeval context, Yanagi believed the value conveyed by the guild system is perpetual, not historical. Yanagi's medievalism scoped a timeless realm bestowed by universality, representing an eternal principle. Converging with Yanagi's critique of modern capitalism, "mutual aid" became the key for liberty, "mutual respects" and the elimination of social hierarchy. In the model of guild society, when the capital rule had not eventually enforced an absolute value of profit, all makers cooperated equally.[116] Kropotkin argued that

> manual labour was no token of inferiority; it bore, on the contrary, traces of the high respect it had been kept in the village community. Manual labour in a 'mystery' was considered as a pious duty towards the citizens: a public function, as honourable as any other.[117]

According to Kropotkin, this "pious duty towards the citizens" formed within a collaborative social model, bringing together a community sharing a certain degree of fellowship. An artisan in this kind of community took responsibility for their goods since they were not producing for any unknown buyer or unknown market. Nobody produced in isolation; instead, one produced for the guild he belonged to, for a "brotherhood of men who knew each other, knew the technics of the craft, and in naming the price of each product".[118] That enhanced individual duty, bestowed with collective trust and public respect toward the inherited skill. Within such a community, a guild's function was bound with collective morality, which took the production as an essential representation of public trust to examine any technical defect and adulteration.[119]

Yanagi meticulously absorbed Kropotkin's guild socialism, replacing it with his medievalism and theoretical structure, which polarised craft as collaborative beauty formed with the 'other power'. Yanagi stated that not even educated workers of the pre-modern era were able to generate this 'superior unified power' under the support of mutual aid. This power should not exclusively exist in western guild societies. He took the Six Dynasties in ancient China as an example to prove the universality of the "superior power":

---

[115] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 79.
[116] Ibid, 73-74.
[117] Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, 157-158
[118] Ibid, 158.
[119] Ibid.

> It was an epoch that people were fulfilled with this superior power. Likewise, countries accessible to this power, rather than dominant authorities, can produce beautiful things. [For example,] the Buddhist culture guaranteed profundity and beauty to a certain degree. As for the west, the Romanesque era is a typical case.[120]

Here, Yanagi indicated that profound beauty was not generated by a "dominant authority" based on individualistic wills. He praised the guild system for its corporate function, which sustained individuals' duty for producing reliable works. In a pre-modern city, this collective will was not in the form of dominant law enacted by the state; instead, the state needed to learn how to accommodate this collective will, which Yanagi took as a matter of morality in daily works. Kropotkin celebrated local industries' decentralised position as a "constructive power of the popular masses" to explain how a "full self-jurisdiction" and "self-administration' supported citizens' folkmotes".[121] This performance of morality was embodied as a kind brotherhood or "brotherly duties" from equal brethren, which he stressed with a distinction from a state's "theorists of law" and "defenders of someone else's interests."[122] Potentially, Kropotkin's model of mediaeval cities was also a substantial source for Yanagi to develop his critical views to examine the national power in forms of collectivism, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Most of all, these models of guild socialism were vital resources for the *mingei* aesthetics, which Yanagi emphasised as a matter of morality in craft to transcend individualistic interests.

The Division between Art and Craft

Yanagi's interest in guild socialism was motivated by his question on art's definition, suggesting the conceptual difference between 'art' and 'craft'. The 'art' Yanagi put in question here explicitly referred to the new term 'fine art' (*bijutsu*) oriented from western languages, and subsequently became an antithetical term to craft in modern Japan. Conceiving mediaeval craft-making as an achievement of collaborative beauty, Yanagi tried to identify when this 'mutual-aid' mechanism started being substituted by something hierarchical in order to place fine art above craft.

His terminological analysis of 'art' in the European context implied that this division is a modern process. He mentioned that the word 'art' has already been included in the *New Oxford Dictionary*

---

[120] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 513-514

[121] "Folkmotes" is an alternative term of 'folkmoots', which means general assemblies of the people. Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution,* 138-139.

[122] Although the idea of "the citizens" denotes Kropotkin anarchist approach, this engagement of mediaeval culture is still patriarchal. The understanding of structure of mediaeval city space praises the sites for public conservations sustained by a kind brotherhood or "brotherly duties", which also polarises the unseen, 'domestic' domain of gendered Others. Ibid, 145-146.

since 1888, however seeing no reference to the distinction between art and craft. This sounded intriguing for Yanagi as a phenomenon that deserved reexamination to determine exactly the antithetical relation between art and craft. Tracing the art-versus-craft concept's terminological source, Yanagi found the juxtaposition of these two categories in William Morris and T. J. Cobden-Sanderson's *The Art and Crafts Exhibition Society,* also published in 1888. Being surprised, he said, "today, anyone recognises the difference between art and craft as common sense, but few of them know that this is such a young concept in our history".[123] He affirmed that before Morris's definition, no specific concept precisely defined craft-related ideas, such as "technical", "industrial" and even "crafty", always corresponding to the term "artistic" in a binary frame.[124] He highlighted Morris's dualism between "art and craft", explaining how these terms were designed to categorise creative forms into a dual relation. Clarifying how 'new' this division is, he pointed out "works usually created with functionality" before the independence of visuality and the "free expressions of individuality started being emphasised and encouraged in the modern era".[125] Yanagi stressed that the current definition of art had a decisive influence in determining how craft's nature was recognised. This terminological review motivated his inquiry to reconsider the independence of art as a modern issue in art history, before which there was no necessity to identify the difference between artworks and craftworks. With the term "epoch of composite beauty", Yanagi assumed there was once no hierarchical differentiation between art and craft, asserting the birth of "art" made a significant contribution to the termination of "composite beauty" in human creativity.[126]

Inspired by Penty's guild socialism, Yanagi integrated the antithesis between art and craft into several constructive concepts in dualism, one of which is Yanagi's categories of collaborative production and capitalist production in a binary frame. The former is equivalent to the mediaeval value of 'composite beauty', while the latter is represented by the Renaissance, which for Yanagi referred to the birth of individualism:

> The culture of the modern era can be manifested with the awareness of the 'self'. In philosophy, it started from René Descartes; in the religious field, Protestantism emerged; in art, the Renaissance thrived; in the economic system, capitalism germinated. Concluding these transformations in simple words, the Middle Ages presented culture with a god-centred approach while the modern era presents culture with a human-centric approach.[127]

Yanagi took the Renaissance as a changing point, announcing the end of 'composite beauty' and the beginning of individualism supplied by capitalist logic. He suggested that the rediscovery of the 'self'

---

[123] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 362-363.
[124] Ibid, 364.
[125] Ibid, 365-366.
[126] Ibid, 367.
[127] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 366.

is significant to the decline of collaboration and the rise of individuality. He stated further that this human-centric inclination contributed to the birth of capitalism. This statement is not far from Penty's claim that the Renaissance was a watershed moment for distinguishing cultural approaches between different eras. Penty disagreed that the Renaissance liberated people from the fetters formed with the authorities of church and the bible; instead, he denounced how Renaissance values destroyed what had been considered excellent and valuable before this historical shift led to the decline by separating art from life.[128] He said,

> First, we see the gradual formation of canons of taste; then follows the growth of academies which impose rigid classical standards upon the people, and finally, tradition, which has hitherto been the source of vitality in the arts, is everywhere extinguished and a complete divorce is effected between Art and Life.[129]

Through analysing this Renaissance division, Penty observed a new-formed hierarchy contributing to the "complete divorce between Art and Life". "Art" was institutionalised and eradicated from the 'source of vitality' generated in people's daily life and no longer functioned as an expressive agency for all people, while "life" was "degenerated into manufacture", which serves only for the production of industry.[130] Makers split into artist and artisan groups deprived of the composite balance of human creation. Before this division, art functioned as a joint part within a complete system retained in guild communities, where citizens joined in productions to fulfil daily life. However, the Renaissance revealed art as the product of individualism. Art became a purified expression for individualistic uses with craft deprived of its autonomous process and so converged into the utilitarian realm of industrial production.

So far, the dualistic structure for *mingei* theory's transcendence beyond 'individualism' was almost accomplished. Craft engaged in the realm of tradition, collaboration and morality for producing 'composite beauty', while art was categorised with individualism and supremacy of uniqueness allied with the modern rule of capitalism. Penty's discourse provided a complete structure for Yanagi to re-engage in the dualism between art and craft, associating art with the surge of capitalism. Moreover, Yanagi built up an immediate relationship between art's individualistic expression and the capital rule in commercialism's manipulation of qualities and prices.

Stating 'fine art' as a product of individualism, Yanagi identified the occurrence of fine art as a historical incident along with the economic transformation of human society, which also determined the change in criteria of beauty in Japan. He suggested that leaving signatures is a sign of the surge of individualism.[131] That denotes the emergence of the concepts 'pure art' and 'individual makers' as

---

[128] Penty, *The Restoration of the Gild System*, 52.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid, 53.
[131] Yanagi used the term 'early modern' (近世) with a comparison with religious arts of from the 'mediaeval period' (中世). in Yanagi, Sōetsu. 1941. The Culture of Crafts. In Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 366-368.

antithetical terms to their opposition as “functional art” and “nameless makers”, which in Japan have a long history of never being seen as aesthetically viable.[132] Modern criteria of beauty looked for outstanding individuals, celebrating rareness and geniuses who have the ability and responsibility to lead significant upheavals and revolutions. Their works served as expressions of individual ideas, “free thoughts and critiques”, enabling “innovations”, as well as “subversions”, to extend art history:[133]

> Individualism aims to discover those outstanding geniuses in history, leaving most people in their mediocre status. The ‘art’ relying on geniuses requests nothing from the masses. That increases the gap between people and beauty. Is it not a considerable loss in modern society?[134]

Pointing out the myth of “genius”, Yanagi doubted the freedom guaranteed by individualism for its deviation from universal value and day-to-day experience. What is polarised by this celebration of “genius” and pure art is the “mediocre status” of “ the masses”. In that sense, the division of art and craft is equivalent to the division of privilege, a supposed high culture of a minority and general working condition of the majority; this division in Yanagi’s thinking by no means contributes to authentic freedom in any form. He associated fine art’s individualistic approach with Penty’s argument on Renaissance culture. “In Renaissance Europe, painting diverged from the tradition, serving as individual works”, he said:

> People have consciously changed their approach to craft from the masses to individuals. This kind of craft departs from the realm of functionality and converges into the domain of art. A buyer holds enthusiastic love because a piece of work is created by somebody [well-known]. These works are not things of daily life but luxurious objects. Works with signatures are sold at high prices, while nameless works are put aside.[135]

Perceiving individual artworks “sold at high price” while “nameless crafted works are put aside”, Yanagi indicated that this division’s capitalist inclination also introduced the consciousness of hierarchy in shaping aesthetic judgements and one’s experience of beauty. These deviated artworks aim at free expressions of individuality, celebrating individuals’ departure from universality rather than engagements with functional nature. Disclosing the art-craft hierarchy and glorified fine art’s individualistic beauty, Yanagi reshaped craft’s intrinsic value with his imagination of a primal communal society where works based on collaboration survived. Evidently, his model is not far from the mediaeval guild in Penty and Kropotkin’s prototypes. However, Yanagi’s aim at “non-duality”

---

[132] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 368.
[133] Ibid, 370.
[134] Ibid, 371.
[135] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 122.

acknowledged craft's "frontier" entity as a significant cultural basis for social fluidity.[136] His method refutes the attempt to represent craft as superior to art, but it abrogates the hierarchical judgement without changing craft's nature in functionality and universality. Yanagi advocated the demand of "frontier" forces to perpetuate a culture in massive populations' experiences dynamically supporting the social foundation with stability.[137] This comprehensive spectrum rejects the dominance of uniqueness with an affirmation of 'people' as the essence of a community.

In *mingei* theory, Yanagi attempted to treat craftworks as aesthetic objects for all people. He refused to acknowledge artistic objects as *mingei* objects as these works were made based on individuals' wills, which guaranteed novelty, unconventionality and distinctiveness. Derived from the art-versus-craft framework, Yanagi's solution for the dualism did not conform to an art-to-craft spectrum in the Ruskinian sense. Instead, he took a reversed approach by reshaping the independent essence of craft which he thought should be purified from any form of conceptual intervention determined by the idea of art. Yanagi's aesthetics through craft present a peripheral-oriented approach in shaping the free domains that art and craft respectively engage. *Mingei* theory aims at defining the nature of craft, fitting no category within the domain of 'fine art'. According to Yanagi, approaching freedom through craft is never the same as artists' expressive freedom in individual forms such as painting or sculpture. The beauty of craft should be reallocated with an utterly different purpose from the beauty of art. Taking the art-craft duality as a reversal process rather than a spectrum, Yanagi built a discursive model beyond the British Arts and Crafts and its further extensions such as Jugendstil, Art Nouveau and Bauhaus in Europe. He raised a non-art notion, taking craft's peripheral innovation as the essential vitality for the movement, which departed from the British Arts and Crafts Movement's operation through art.

Yanagi's approach of 'non-dualism' problematises the art-craft duality in a hierarchical frame; however, the dual structure is pivotal for Yanagi's non-dual transcendence. His critique on the idea of 'fine art' mirrors a purified, essential domain for a reconstruction of craft's beauty. His comments on his fellow Tomimoto Kenkichi's practices and Morris reaffirmed this theoretical structure in framing craft as non-art.[138] According to Yanagi, Morris's craft practice revealed a romanticist competence and his designs were constrained by the concept of painting from the Pre-Raphaelites artists; the love of art made him irresolutely linger between fine art and craft:[139]

---

[136] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 25-27.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Tomimoto Kenkichi (富本憲吉, 1886-1963) was a Japanese potter who is known for his survey and systematic analysis on patterns used to decorate crafted works. His survey aims at constructing patterns with clear references to their symbolic meanings and historical resources, which were significant for the pattern innovation movement in Japanese design history.

[139] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 167.

> From patterns he applied on rugs and figures in books, one can see how Rossetti's style influenced him. That tells the truth that these crafts were operated as an artistic attempt. He intended to lift ordinary craft to the position of high art. He thought it was a pity that crafts in his time were inferior to those in the Middle Ages and felt inspired to recover the lost beauty. This idea was not developed to consider craft a superior path to art.[140]

Observing Morris's craft practices, Yanagi observed a concealed hierarchy between art and craft, which he thought a craft thinker should reject. The standpoint to promote one's work to "the position of high art" would not be a goal that a craft maker in the Middle Ages would achieve. His comment on Tomimoto's works reveals a similar doubt with this perspective. He reviewed Tomimoto's survey of paintings and patterns used to decorate crafted works collected in his book *Collected Works of Patterns* (Fig 4, 1927), judging that Tomimoto analysed these paintings as individual pieces of art whose subjects and symbolic meanings were associated with *nanga* in Japanese tradition.[141] They were appreciated as individual pieces of painting rather than unified parts of crafted works. He concluded,

> Consistently, these individual makers reveal an intention to paint or carve elements onto their craftworks. This kind of individualistic expression is rather appropriated and recognised as a piece of art than a piece of pure craft. For individual makers, their individualities could be expressed appropriately and freely in the domain of art rather than craft. With this intention, craft-making would encounter numerous limits of freedom on ingredients, materials, and working processes. Thus, as a craftwork, its quality will not be better than as a painting in these cases.[142]

These paintings collected in *Collected Works of Patterns* functioned as prototypes, suggesting ideal patterns that could be applied on a crafted object. (Fig. 5) Yanagi indicated that this "intention to paint or carve" operated these patterns as separate elements, failing to embody a craft as a whole. In either Morris's or Tomimoto's case, Yanagi persistently remarked those works as 'art' rather than 'craft', suggesting these makers' visual expressions invaded the craft's nature as a functional object. Yanagi's categorisation between art and craft should be recognised as a set of more clarified terms of "artistic object" and "folkcraft", or "pure craft", with the latter also known as *mingei* objects.[143] Yanagi drew a clear line to construct craft as an independent, self-sufficient concept. A crafted object need not be

---

[140] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 393-394.

[141] *Nanga* (南畫), also known as 'Southern painting' or 'Bunjinga', was a Japanese school developed in the late Edo period. With a historical source related to Chinese literati painting tradition which also known as *wenrenhua* (文人畫), a traditional school inherited and developed the notion from Dong Qi-chang (董其昌 1555-1636), a Ming nanga painters pursued conceptual representations of nature rather than realistic depictions of objects.
Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 167.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Yanagi, "The Way of Craftsmanship", 1927; in Adamson, ed., *The Craft Reader*, 168.

artistic to gain aesthetic value. The intention of being artistic, in many cases, was embodied as an obstacle to gaining 'pure' beauty when sacrificing functions. Yanagi's critique of Tomimoto's designs implied that when a potter puts excessive attention on individualistic expressions of pattern, then the shape, colours and the scale of a pottery work would be considered as secondary requirements and thus as compromising the artistic representation. Yanagi also mentioned other artist potters, such as Toft and Simpson, elaborating how their pottery work was designed with a size considering the accommodation with its decorations rather than its practical functions.[144]

Yanagi scoped a 'pure' domain to see craft's nature and the aesthetic principle within it. This nature cannot be approached through self-expression as fine art does because making craftworks is not an imitation of art, and being visually appealing or artistic is not of primary importance for a sincere craftsman. In craft, Yanagi's definition of freedom has nothing to do with unique expressions based on individuality, which is seen as significant in the art domain. In craft, freedom thrives in a composite balance of shape, material, colour, price and pleasure for miscellaneous uses in daily life. Craft serves in a universal sense, which Yanagi refused to take as synonymy to conceive expressions based on individualism or intellectualism. Yanagi's idea of art is a comprehensive cultural transmission delivered in the form of predetermined concepts. This structure provided the opportunity for Yanagi to reallocate craft's peripheral position; their area was an un-predetermined domain for infinite possibilities re-engaging in the aesthetically free domain guaranteed by nature's originality.

Composite Beauty and Yanagi's Non-duality

'Composite beauty' is a core value in *mingei* theory which Yanagi developed to combine craft's nature with human's nature in producing. Through embodying mediaeval craft as a 'mutual aid' process, he demonstrated craft as a source of human creativity to attain the "original form of art competence."[145] The term "composite beauty" Yanagi used to describe art forms in the past, identifies a massive "domain of techniques" corresponding to daily life without dividing practices like painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, music, or performance into separate parts.[146] Also, the notion of 'composite beauty' suggests a realm where art and craft are interrelated, with no one claiming that individualistic expressions are a superior approach to free beauty. However, Yanagi proclaimed that composite beauty is not a rejection of individuality. "Having no individuality is different from transcending it - these two issues must not be confused", he said.[147] As he suggested, the 'other

[144] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 166.
[145] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 368.
[146] Ibid, 376.
[147] Yanagi, "The Way of Craftsmanship", 1927; in Adamson, ed., *The Craft Reader*, 169.

power', collective construction based on tradition, is a greater force than the 'self power' because individual efforts need to search for support to join the universal value.

Yanagi identified "tradition" as the rhythm of an epoch, which conveys the principle of techniques based on a unified goal with all people participating within. He explained how the power of tradition benefits individuals' approaches to the "other power":

> In the past, nothing was created for individualistic purposes or free expressions of individuality. Even if individuality somehow existed, the non-individual aspect usually worked as a more dominant form. Craftsmen submissively followed the tradition to maintain the model of an epoch. As working with the principle, craftsmen could intrinsically contribute their skills thoroughly.[148]

Praising tradition as a reliable force supported by the non-individualistic "principle", Yanagi took tradition as a perpetual unity of collective will. As a form of principle, tradition is a natural mechanism; every worker initially knows how to cooperate and contribute themselves because this system is founded for everyone sustaining universality, not exclusively for a few talented individuals. Yanagi applied Penty's analogy of language as a "common possession of the whole people", identifying tradition as a model chosen by time interacting with sources of natural power, which is more reliable to follow than individualistic approaches.[149] Therefore, composite beauty, representing human creativity's dynamic connection to nature, embodied Yanagi's idea of 'intuition' derived from consistent physical engagements of tangible things, reshaping beauty as infinite representations of the 'eternal now'.

As an unexpected coincidence, Yanagi's pursuit of an 'eternal now' converges with Morris' medievalist metaphor of "timeless nature", linking to a utopian vision of intrinsic beauty perpetuated through natural principles.[150] He asserted that 'correct' things generate via correct engagements with works; thus, learning from the correctness of the past does not mean imitating old forms but creating new values with the reliance on the principle of beauty.[151] Yanagi clarified, reconnecting to 'tradition', guild socialism does not mean returning to the past, but an achievement of the essence, the eternal value, within craft. He believed that these "correct crafts" contain the beauty presenting an idea of "eternal now" free from epistemological progression, predetermined dominance and institutional transformation with time.[152] Mirrored from fine art's quality that pursues outstanding novelty in a progressive historical process, craft engages a realm of stability sustained through peripheral

---

[148] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 366.
[149] Penty, *The Restoration of the Gild System*, 49.
[150] Hart, "The Designs of William Morris", 214.
[151] Yanagi Sōetsu, 〈復古主義に就いて〉[About Archaism], 1941; in Yanagi, *Complete works of Yanagi Sōetsu*, vol. 9, 68-69.
[152] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 61, 63.

convergence facilitated by all people with a magnificent view of miscellaneous things in composite beauty.

Reconnecting tradition as a means of the 'other power', *mingei* theory's historical inclination is by no means a regression of feudalism and religious dogmatism. Indeed, these earlier materials of mediaeval models, embodied in Yanagi's context, were represented as "incarnations without singular identities", forms of affective experience without "notions of subjectivity" and "performances on the part of both actors and works of craft".[153] This mediaeval timelessness is more like a spatiality, which is "temporal" rather than "chronological".[154] Yanagi's resistance to historicism as engaged as the most radical and also democratic parts of *mingei* theory by claiming craft as an agency to reveal the plurality of art history. 'Eternal now' is a timeless space Yanagi conceived to consider craft's 'composite beauty'. He saw this intrinsic beauty oriented from ancient times as "forever new", which never "breaks through the past, neither being accomplished in the present nor being finished in the future".[155] Through transforming this timeless space into a modern Japanese reconstruction of local craft, *mingei* theory extended into a post-historical space, transcending the idea of art history built with Hegelian progression. For Yanagi, progressivism in art history is a trap that entices individuals with artificial pleasure that deviates from the essence of beauty. He elaborated that forms evolve with time in modern art while the essence of beauty never changes. It serves stability to sustain the intrinsic value. Yanagi's rejection of historicism also demonstrates his interrogation toward the current social climate of western superiority, which also dominated the narratives in shaping art history in modern Japan. Yanagi's "eternal now" is an earthly utopian he expected to go beyond cultural divisions with a motivation similar to Morris' expectation of a non-hierarchical society, "in which there should be neither rich nor poor, neither master nor master's man, neither idle nor overworked, neither brainslack brain workers, nor heart-sick handworkers".[156]

To reverse the hierarchy that Yanagi considered a part of capitalist culture, he suggested that two primary sources dominated people's experience of beauty: individualism and state-made nationalism. Meticulously and synthetically, Yanagi integrated his acquisition of guild socialism and Buddhist philosophical concepts of the "self power" and the "other power" into *mingei* aesthetics' eccentric structure.[157] According to Nakami's analysis, Yanagi thought the ideal beauty within a "correct craft" requires art makers to access through three stages of training: gaining the "self power", obtaining the "other power" and accessing the life of "mutual aid".[158] In the first stage, an artist explores the

---

[153] Alexander Nagel, *Medieval Modern: Art Out of Time,* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012), 12.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 62-63.
[156] William Morris, "How I Became a Socialist", 240.
[157] The self power (*tzuriki*, 自力) and the other power (*tariki*, 他力). They are a key concept circulated among english readers who acquire ideas of *mingei* theory via Glenn Adamson's extraction from a chapter in Yanagi's *The Way of Craft* published in 1927. See Yanagi, "The Way of Craftsmanship", 1927; in Adamson, ed., *The Craft Reader*, 167-176.
[158] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace,* 156.

meaning of beauty with a 'self' to gain techniques and competencies. This self-oriented beauty requires efforts to equip the ability to create rather than mechanically copy others. Then, one should improve the sense of beauty to a broader scale. In the second stage, one should go beyond self-oriented thinking to gain influence from the 'other power', the eternal beauty of nature. The 'other power' can only be obtained via the acceptance of nature and the trust toward tradition, not through individualistic approaches of intent and artifice. As a final goal, the ideal realm, one will achieve a socialist scale of beauty: to obtain the life of 'mutual aid'. The whole structure with the ideas of 'self power' and 'other power' Yanagi developed to define the beauty of craft conveyed a critical view reconsidering art and its aesthetic role in modern time. Yanagi did not take modern art's cramped definition merely as a westernisation issue but as a prevalent phenomenon of civilisation in his time. With a Buddhist belief, Yanagi identified that authentic beauty does not celebrate any forms of egoistic individualism or self-centred fulfilment. Real beauty does not aim to control or dominate; instead, it lies in a firm trust in nature and the tradition residing in it. Nakami suggested that *mingei* theory might be incomprehensible, and the 'other power' seemed to be a nearly inconceivable term for modernist aestheticians who scope beauty exclusively for the idea of 'fine art':

> Based on this critical view of modern aesthetics, Yanagi saw the ideal state of beauty of the future in the transition from the 'age of fine art' focused on 'individualistic beauty' to the 'age of craft' focused on 'collaborative beauty'. It was not beauty for beauty's sake but beauty for actual use and beauty united with living.[159]

This ideal statement of beauty in "the age of craft", reflected from Yanagi's criticism of "the age of art" and the modernist ideology of "beauty for beauty's sake" behind it, is only possible to attain in 'collaborative' forms achieving 'composite beauty' in day-to-day life. Assigning craft's beauty as 'composite' and synthetic, Yanagi raised the 'complexity' of creativity working in all aspects of human culture. Collaborating with real life, craft's 'miscellaneity' engages an 'indeterminate' domain emancipated from the dominance of modernist epistemological order.[160] *Mingei* objects fit no category of art such as painting, sculpture or architecture. Morris's term "lesser arts" embodied the awkward obstacle of representing craft as its inevitable boundlessness.[161] In *mingei* aesthetics, Yanagi embraced this boundlessness as craft's peripheral nature, where things are allowed to maintain their undefined meanings, and this ambiguity maintains the autonomy of daily creativity in organic social exchanges.

The other source *mingei* theory engaged with referred to the operation of state-made nationalism, toward which Yanagi's resolution substantially directed to Kropotkin's notion of 'mutual aid'. As mentioned, 'mutual aid' presents Kropotkin's optimism toward human nature with his observation of

---

[159] Ibid, 157.
[160] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 59.
[161] William Morris, "The Lesser Arts", 1878; in Morton, *Political Writings of William Morris*, 31.

animal species' survival strategies. Constructing the natural world with all species organically living in a united entity, Kropotkin saw advantages through mutual cooperation, rather than competition, which offers enormous benefits for an animal group to survive. He believed that human nature should be the same. The greater advantage humans build based on mutual support rather than "reckless competition for personal advantages", the better the society functions to all individuals, even in the circumstance of contemporary society.[162] Kropotkin's theory shows his political stance based on the entity of human nature, against the legitimacy of any authorised body, like a state or a government, which is usually established to redefine and undermine this human nature. He saw how this human nature in mutual support formed in the Middle Ages through observing several European mediaeval cities' development. These cities prospered with interconnected guilds enabling different cooperating forms among specialist artisans. They lived in high liberty, flourished through a mutual-supporting system, which was instituted not by a central government, but by their "co-jurations", "fraternities," and "friendships". Kropotkin said:

> When we now look to the forces which have produced these grand results, we find them - not in the genius of individual heroes, not in the mighty organisation of huge States or the political capacities of their rulers, but in the very same current of mutual aid and support which we saw at work in the village community, and which was vivified and reinforced in the Middle Ages by a model - the guilds.[163]

Since a city did not rely on "the mighty organisation of huge States" or "the political capacities of their rulers", the guild system ran with a full "self-jurisdiction" and "self-administration for their folkmotes.[164] That also means the capability to grow the "diversity of occupations" with new union structures and their new energies supplied by the guilds.[165] Kropotkin's theory of 'mutual aid' reveals his distrust of the dominance of governmental control. Since that, his admiration of mediaeval guilds focused on the emancipation of folk energies in their autonomous diversity based on human nature, which Kropotkin believed should support each individual in forms of 'mutual aid'.

Mingei theory's emphasis on the 'other power' reveals a spatial political structure taking craft as a peripheral agency, which Yanagi reallocated as non-centric interfaces, like rural tradition, locality and regional material culture. His criticism problematised the hierarchical dominance of the national-made industry and the cosmopolitan culture in urban Japan.[166] In Kropotkin's thinking, the state's centralisation of control constrains freedom in human society from instituting the fundamental autonomy for independent creativities based on actual needs in life. He showed guilds as diverse forms of "self-jurisdiction" well-suited "to serve the need for union, without depriving the individual

---

[162] Hewetson, "Introductory Essay: Mutual Aid and the Social Significance of Darwinism", 7.
[163] Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution.* 136.
[164] Ibid, 136-137
[165] Ibid, 139.
[166] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 466.

of his initiative, could but spread, grow, and fortify".[167] Yanagi considered the possibility of the guild, in the forms of small-scaled self-jurisdictions, as a path to liberalise control in many types, such as academic, political as well as ideological. He implied that liberation in craft is free from constraints in forms of authority or coercive power through its 'miscellaneity', its eccentric peripherality. *Mingei* aesthetics engaged the frontiers of human creativity embodied as discrete, independent and self-governed small societies for "local intrinsic industries", rejecting industrialism on a national scale.[168] This spatial structure projecting a guild-like framework, either in Kropotkin or Penty's model, was promoted to organise workers on a "co-operative and communist basis".[169] Penty perceived a large modern industry in a circulation of "over-specialisation" and overproduction (or under-consumption as some people prefer to call it) for an unpredictable market.[170] Deployed for a capital mechanism, the national industry offers no place for bringing individuals working in unity, in Yanagi's term, crafting for 'composite beauty'.

In reversed terms, craft's 'composite beauty' serves as a hinge to 'originality' in the sense of liberation from dominance. *Mingei* theory identifies craft's beauty as the emancipation from individualistic will as well as external control in authoritative forms. The intuitive 'other power', which Yanagi defined as the dignity of craft, reveals an approach of decentralisation. It served as the source of originality for craftsmen to create long-lasting beauty inhabited in the diversity of cultural presentations. In *mingei* theory's context, originality functions not merely as self-expressive freedom but aims for liberalising cultural agency within an organic, dynamic and supportive community. He emphasised that originality is significantly related to independence in localities that will subsequently converge into a prosperous nation:

> If a nation's citizens have originality, will they be satisfied with imitating things from other countries? Nature bestows people with a unique environment, unique climate, unique history and unique custom. If these requirements never generate independent productions, then it can be said to be a deviation against nature's will.[171]

Yanagi stressed that the diverse magnificence of cultural life is the "will of nature" serving as an infinite source of creativity for all citizens. Preserved in long-term traditions, this "unique" nature sustains people, is also, generated and transformed by people. Every individual contributes to this 'other power' through 'mutual aid' and benefits from that. Yanagi redefined originality in craft by confirming its 'lesser' quality dynamically generated and transformed in cultural frontiers. Through this local-oriented comprehensive model, the concept of originality transcends the frame of modern

---

[167] Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution,* 144, 146.
[168] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 465-466.
[169] Penty, *Post-industrialism*, 23.
[170] Ibid, 37, 61.
[171] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 464.

aesthetics, replacing artistic novelty with the old, the tradition and the inherent vibrating energy of daily life.

Yanagi's 'non-duality', embodied through craft, embraces the ambiguity and undefinability in miscellaneous daily experiences. It scopes a domain of unpredictable infinity, free from the control of modern epistemology, which has been used to predefine, categorise, decontextualise and recontextualise things in a comprehensible order. With his criticism on the aesthetic progression in artistic beauty, Yanagi's spatial idea of 'eternal now' projects 'non-duality' as a rejection to reproduced craft as archaic, as imitative or constrained in an antithetical relation with art. 'Eternal now' promises a perpetuating dialect appreciating the beauty of any form:

> Many people are ignorant when they are wrongly disparaging localities. Could we evaluate the meaning of a culture by only judging values between old and new? It is impossible to evaluate it without considering if [our engagement] is correct or not. […] Correct things are forever novel since they contain [the value of] 'eternal now'. A locality with a concern of the past usually produces things authentically without any interventional notion of time.[172]

According to Yanagi, the derogation of craft's beauty is derived from the ignorant fallacy within one's judgement based on simplified categories. Except for the dualism between old and new, *mingei* theory also manifests the art/craft dichotomy in several sets of dual concepts - foreign and domestic, urban and rural, modern and traditional, individualistic and universal, mimic and original, as well as artificial and authentic - which are structured as pre-determined categories rather than dialectical processes.

To conclude, I want to return to the parallel that Leach and Adamson drew to associate the Japanese *Mingei* Movement and the British Arts and Crafts Movement in a relative influence.[173] Through prolonging their ostensibly immediate connection by including the further development of guild socialism, this chapter manifested the hybridity of Yanagi's thought in a more dialectic and autonomous complexity beyond the orientalist view on the East-West cultural dichotomy. This complexity can help understand and empathise with what the *Mingei* Movement achieved and failed to achieve, which I will elaborate on in the next chapter. In an overall view, *mingei* theory identifies the value of craft as a stable decentralising agency to resist authoritative power and recover aesthetic experiences in non-dualistic mobility. As an agency for decentralisation, craft demonstrates creativity with intuitive expansion in the cultural frontier, within which Yanagi assigned a peripheral agency negotiating with art/craft, individual/collective, core/peripheral and central/local divisions. *Mingei* theory embodies Yanagi's non-dualism as an attempt to undermine hierarchical categorisations and

---

[172] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 466.

[173] Leach, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*; Adamson, "The Way of Craftsmanship", 167.

reconstruct craft's value as a reversed, decentralised power. Inspired by guild socialism in the early twentieth century, Yanagi conceived craft as an eccentric domain free from the dominance of modern aesthetics. Seeking solutions in ambiguity and plurality, craft makers engage in the 'intrinsic value' universal and accessible for all. Engaging in discussions of art's socialist character on promoting democracy, *mingei* theory scopes a reflective view to reconsider the domain of craft which had been narrowed as 'lesser arts' in modern aesthetic terms. Being aware of the paradox behind the division between art and craft with this eccentric reversal, Yanagi's reversal of craft's entity conveys his rediscovery of art history in plurality, fluidity and dynamicity.

Chapter Two

Locating the Transcendence: The *Mingei* Movement in Practice

Since 1926 when Yanagi drafted the 'Prospectus for establishing the Japan Folk Crafts Museum', the construction of the museum institution would take another decade to be accomplished. In 1936, the Japanese Folk Crafts Museum building opened to the public in Komaba, Tokyo. Alongside daily objects collected by *mingei* associates, as a "memorial opening show", the 'New Works of *Mingei* Associates' exhibition engaged the central space of the building, with Munakata Shikō's prints (Fig. 6, 1936) and Serizawa Keisuke's *Don Quixote* (Fig. 7, 1936) stencilling-dyed panels catching people's eyes.[1] Munakata's simplistic composition through black-and-white woodblock prints is outstanding in the lucid flow of crude lines, powerfully dramatising his expression of the Buddhist sutra's narrative. While Serizawa used stencils combined with hand-drawn arbitrariness in bright colours, presenting a delicate and playful arrangement of short lines and finely embellished details in his literary landscape of Don Quixote as a dream-like, poetic adventure. Munakata and Serizawa created prints by applying different techniques and forms, conveying distinguished individual characteristics. These works were exhibited, emphasising their respective authorships, to convey a note of discordance from Yanagi's definition of a *mingei* object, which is supposed to be made by nameless craftsmen for everyday use.

This discrepancy appeared when the *Mingei* Movement was embodied in individual *mingei* associates' practices as multiple activities. The idea of *mingei* sustained an abstracted harmony in its theoretical shape of socialism. However, discursive discontinuity occurred when linking the theory with concrete objects. To consider what forms a beautiful object should serve in everyday life, the *mingei* associates' engagements generated the term 'new *mingei*' in the 1930s, demonstrating the complexity of craft's aesthetic role in the modern era. 'New *mingei*' projected a "future", shaping the possibility of reconnecting local traditions to the newness of modern culture.[2] Serizawa's printing technique was inspired by many of his folk drawings and prints collections, such as picture-horse (*ema*) plaques from Iwate and stencilling-dyed textiles from Okinawa.[3] These individual makers created works by reforming traditional methods with modern aesthetic ideas, reconsidering *mingei* objects' beauty and function in their time.

---

[1] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 159.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Picture-horse (*ema*) plaques are usually seen in a temple or shrine. Worshippers write wishes praying for good health or others. This custom is oriented from the South of Mutsu Province, where in Edo period local people drew farming horses on wooden plaques to gain blessing. In Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 114, 166.

The *mingei* associates' demonstrations of the *mingei* concept via concrete materials were dynamic and had developed far beyond the scope of founding the Japanese Folk Crafts Museum. Although the Japanese *Mingei* Association was officially founded in 1934 and appointed Yanagi as the president, the *mingei* associates (including Bernard Leach, Tomimoto Kenkichi, Hamada Shōji, Kawai Kanjirō, Ōta Naoyuki, Yoshida Shōya, Munakata Shikō and Serizawa Keisuke) had developed multiple practices to convey the idea of *mingei* to the public since 1926. To demonstrate the *mingei* objects they collected over the country, they frequently utilised exhibitionary methods to visualise *mingei* objects in daily life simultaneously. Their exhibitionary strategies were not limited to exhibitions in art galleries. By cooperating with commercial firms such as publishers and department stores, the *mingei* associates created a specific trajectory to potential markets. They established retail stores, known as *Takumi,* promoted within an exhibitionary discourse to shape a certain *mingei* taste in urban Japan. Connected with these marketing channels, these practices introduced local handicraft products from rural prefectures to middle-class consumers in cities. *Mingei*'s embrace of marketing in the 1930s suggests a direct negotiation with commercialism and capitalism, which Yanagi associated with 'exchange value' rather than 'intrinsic value'. Embodying craft as products within the essence of economic rule, *mingei* activists struggled with their original position of anti-capitalism, which also re-examined the ideal of *mingei* in the theoretical realm.

During this decade, the *Mingei* Association's practice reinforced the importance of *getemono*, which Yanagi applied as a hinge to approach craft's freedom for 'common people'. New *mingei* objects required makers' initiatives to develop beautiful products whose functions simultaneously satisfied a need in modern life. When the *mingei* associates participated as guides to revive rural handicrafts, their character as individual artist-craftsmen was pivotal in transforming those traditional models into appealing commodities. *Mingei* associates eventually encountered the paradox of *getemono*, which exclusively referred to anonymous artisans and refused credits for individual makers' creative contributions. Tomimoto often quoted "never make patterns from patterns", stating his rejection of seeing *mingei* objects as mere copies of historical models.[4] These discrepancies revealed in practical engagements in craft raised questions concerning the inner heterogeneity of the idea of 'common people', which in *mingei* theory was roughly categorised as the opposite of individualism and intellectualism. New *mingei* in the 1930s inevitably encountered more clarified definitions of 'common people' when the population structure rapidly changed with the speeding urbanisation and social mobility in Japan. Responding to arising questions - who are 'common people', and where are they? How do they produce, and for whom? - Yanagi gradually transferred his notion of 'composite beauty' from decentralising the hegemony of 'fine art' to criticising cosmopolitan culture's dominance and deprivation of local culture. His criticism of cultural dualism, therefore, expanded from the initial art-craft duality and the individualistic/universal aesthetic

[4] Faulkner, "A New Generation of Artist-Craftsmen", 317.

antithesis to a more complicated central-peripheral structure engaging in confrontations between western and eastern, foreign and domestic, urban and rural, copy and original, as well as artificial and authentic.

Simultaneously, further influences inspired by the international arts and crafts movement transmitted and circulated in Europe and developed into multifarious craft-making innovations. New trends, such as Art Nouveau and Art Deco, embodied the idea of modern design and cooperated with new techniques and technologies. Enthusiastically participating in world fairs and expositions, Japan recognised the necessity to develop the modern language of craft to negotiate the western aesthetic context generated within a craft-as-art framework. Some Japanese craft makers who had these "European experiences" undertook the task of reconstructing the modernity of craft with an obvious intention of 'art', reshaping ancient forms with an emphasis on individuals' initiative in creating new art-historical narratives and contemporary interpretations of the past.[5] Their influences also circulated in art and industrial schools and academies, which more or less converged into the state-made economic policy's embrace of the international market at the peak of Japonisme. Yanagi identified this phenomenon as craft's "artisticalisation", suggesting that this intention fermented to enhance art's superiority and had nothing to do with reviving craft's intrinsic value as a peripheral agency.[6] The term *getemono* thus gained a socialist inclination looking into the "purity" of Japanese culture produced by untamed Japanese makers who are free from imitating foreign taste, rejecting European's desire for artificial Japanese culture coined by the government for commercial purposes.[7] Revivals of handicrafts in rural Japan reshaped the new *mingei*'s core value as resistance toward the commodity landscape glutted with vulgar products imitating western taste in urban culture.[8]

However, *getemono* was a tricky idea with clear cultural boundaries, whose peripherality highly relied on polarising urban culture as an undesirable external dominance. This demand for a centre contributed to the risk of polarising craft to the other end of the spectrum. It failed to achieve transcendence beyond "beautiful and ugly and all divisions" that *mingei* theory promised to emancipate.[9] As Tomimoto questioned, if *getemono* denoted the principle that "only objects made by anonymous artisans could be truly beautiful", *mingei* aesthetics is far from "rejecting nothing" and the "composite beauty" it promised.[10] Observing the *mingei* associates' practical operations in the 1930s, cultural politics researchers like Brandt and Kikuchi were very keen to examine if the *mingei* aesthetics became a new dominant ideology constraining the recognition of beauty in craft by

---

[5] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time].

[6] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 215.

[7] Ibid, 6

[8] Yanagi Sōetsu, Kawai Kanjirō, Tomimoto Kenkichi and Hamada Shōji,〈日本民藝美術館設立趣意書〉[Proposition concerning crafts guild], 6

[9] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 516.

[10] Faulkner, "A New Generation of Artist-Craftsmen", 317.

claiming its truthful 'Japaneseness'.[11] Brandt indicated Yanagi and his peers utilised their "cultural capital" to achieve a reformation of "middle-class taste" preoccupied with folk craft, "translating their private predilections into public programs".[12] Yanagi's notion of 'people' through *getemono*, the miscellaneous material facts in undetermined daily experience, eventually encountered contradictions and lost its theoretical lucidity in peripherality when transferring ordinary things into commercial products.

Mingei associates' active commercial strategy was not the only thing provoking critical nerves. Unfortunately, 'new *mingei*'s prosperity in the 1930s revealed a coincidental parallel to the Japanese government's imperialistic approach to national beauty. By the end of the 1930s, Yanagi's emphasis on the cultural authenticity and originality in rural Japan seems analogous to the government's aesthetic ideology of national value to mobilise local productivities during the war-time period. In *mingei* theory, Yanagi's nationalism conveys a comprehensive construction engaging in cultural frontiers, distinguishable from the state-made nationalism which took place as a centralised ideology. However, in several of his articles, the 'New Order and the Issue of Craft's Beauty' for example, Yanagi restated his active attitude to constructing a "new principle of beauty" in correct ways under the climate of the 'New Order'.[13] When Japan increased military activities to retain imperial expansion, 'New Order' was flagged as a slogan of the government's propaganda to reshape people's civil duty for the war-time mobilisation. Yanagi's reiteration of *mingei* aesthetics' progressive advance in promoting collective and traditional value's convergence with the imperial policy revealed an ambiguity in his position toward this state-made nationalism.

Indeed, the *Mingei* Movement in the 1930s encountered new issues caused by an intrinsic paradox lurking in *mingei* theory's dualistic structure. I want to explore this dualistic structure as a structural necessity rather than a defect as engaging in the ideological complexity during the war-time period. *Mingei* theory successfully identified the inequality within the European-centric art-historical narrative. However, embodying the force in a centre-frontier spatial structure, Yanagi and his associates needed to deal with the constantly reshaping boundary of the centre. In this chapter, I continue the focus on this movement's socialist approach and bring the theoretical scope from Chapter One to examine what was achieved and what led to obstacles in practical operations of reviving local handicrafts.

The obvious contradiction in *mingei* practice during the war-time period might seem to be the association's convergence to the 'New Order' policy. Under the government's commission, Bruno Taut (1880-1938) and Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999) arrived in Japan in the 1930s, participating in the developments of export products as international consultants. Both criticised the imitation of

---

[11] Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism.*
[12] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 11.
[13] Yanagi Sōetsu ,〈新體制と工藝美の問題〉[The New Order and the Issue of craft's beauty],《月刊民藝》[*Mingei* journal], no. 10(10), 1940; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi,* 242.

foreign taste, suggesting reviving local characteristics to engage the international market by praising the uniqueness of Japanese culture.[14] The *Mingei* Association's celebration of rural handicrafts overlapped with the government's intention to transform local industries into 'national beauty' in competition with the international market. Nagata Ken-ichi suggested that the movement became a supportive agency to the government's "peripheral organisation" after the middle 1930s.[15] He described that the idea of guild became the association's means to achieve social composition, aiming at constructing the idea of a "nation of beauty" within the frame of "national guild".[16] As analysed in Chapter One, Yanagi's appreciation of guilds is a socialist approach far from the idea of 'national guild'. In responding to this, the following chapter analyses the nuanced difference between Yanagi's 'composite beauty' and the imperial ideological promotion of local craft beneath the ostensible similarity between the imperial government's political mobilisation of local culture and *mingei* aesthetics' connotation of locality through 'common people'.

However, I would like to extend the political ground of this debate from the 1930's imperial space to the long-term problem of reshaping Japanese art history as a process of modernisation. It is necessary to review the cliché of western colonial ideology, which determined art and craft's insider/outsider binary and the superiority of fine art. That helps explain why problematising *mingei*'s political intention does not radically identify the force within the political structure of 'national beauty' generated to resist the hegemony of world art history. We need to accept that a neutral idea of modern craft is impossible when 'modernity' itself has already carried historical imbalances and inequalities in the global system. As Satō revealed, the idea of 'Japanese art history' in its modern transition involved a national-made process, where everything was coined with political meanings to engage in the international environment.[17] This nation negotiated with the modern idea of art through international expositions and fairs, then generated inner logic to recognise fine art (*bijutsu*) as a new term distinguished from other cultural objects. The 'modernisation' of craft involved in this national bureaucratic process for long was then embodied as a politicised 'national beauty'. However, this does not mean this term's political connotation was never changed in its circulation by people who held different motivations and resisted different subjects. Before roughly drawing this parallel, we need to ask: what did 'national beauty' mean in Yanagi's thinking? How can beauty for 'common people' also be recognised as 'national beauty' on a state's ground? Did it convey the same direction as the state's will, or was it replaced with alternative political intentions?

I will start my analysis outwards from the art-and-craft framework, observing the idea of 'modern craft' as transmitted and transformed in the early nineteenth century and observing how the *Mingei*

---

[14] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 174-182.

[15] Nagata Ken-ichi,〈「美の国」NIPPONとその実現の夢 - 民芸運動と「新體制」〉['Nation of beauty' NIPPON magazine and the reliased dream: the *mingei* activity and the 'New Order'], in Ken-ichi Nagata, Toyorō Hida and Hitōshi Mori, ed.,《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s*, 354.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty*.

Movement allocated the idea of 'common people' by keeping a certain discursive distance from either the individual or the national approach. Within a socialist scope, Yanagi persistently emphasised the idea of 'common people', autonomous makers who create beautiful works without hierarchical consciousness and sustain the concrete forms of *getemono*. Demonstrating the actual forms of *mingei* objects, the practice negotiated within the complex discourse of the state-made 'Japanese art history' categorising craft as a pre-modern source, which was examined for its class-oriented entity in modern society.[18] As a part of the modernity-making phenomena in the construction of craft's engagement in the rapidly urbanised Japanese culture in the 1930s and the ideological control of national beauty, the idea of *getemono* was a product of *mingei* activity's engagement of 'people' under the new social expectation of freedom with democratic matters. New *mingei*'s 'triumph' in the 1930s and 1940s utilised the necessarily dualistic structure demanded under the social climate. However, the desire for a cultural boundary in his socialist approach was also why these activities failed to embody *getemono* as the miscellaneity of composite beauty transcending art/craft dualism promised in *mingei* theory.

Craft's Modernisation: the Aestheticised Tradition

Leach's association of *mingei* objects' "asymmetricality" to Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse's art might be not as surprising as it sounds if there was a final goal of art history to construct modern art as the process to unify human creativities.[19] Through a focused observation of their forms, their aesthetic qualities with respectively eloquent discursive grounds are astounding in their resemblance and similarity. In *mingei*, the simplistic form is bestowed by nature, while in Picasso and Matisse's modernity spiritual emancipation is promised by abstraction. Leach's use of "asymmetricality" is quite precise in depicting the desire for a 'pure' form to represent the universality of human intuition pulsing with the perpetual rhythm of nature, which existed in both Picasso and Matisse's abstraction and Yanagi's "thoughtlessness" and "nothingness" of *getemono*. Western modern art's pursuit of experiential universality provided an aesthetic prototype for developing *mingei* theory's approach to 'people'. However, Yanagi rejected the idea of 'fine art' by questioning this category's representativeness of 'the people'. This tendency seemed odd and eccentric from the mainstream perspective in early-nineteenth-century Japan, when the modernisation of craft more or less meant dealing with crafts as artistic pieces. Yanagi identified this new category of aestheticised crafts as "artist crafts", referring to objects designed for aristocratic taste with an emphasis on makers' individuality.[20]

[18] Ibid.
[19] Leach, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*, 119.
[20] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 230.

For Yanagi, it was abnormal that craft needed to be elevated to the level of 'fine art' to be modern. This idea of modernisation had a structural flaw. It represented the government's bureaucratic invention of art history for the imagined international audience in the western world; however, it failed to retain the tradition and forced a standardised approach of modernity in local art. The realm of miscellaneous creativity represented by the traditional term art (*geijutsu*), or 'composite beauty' in Yanagi's discourse, was divided into higher fine art and the rest. This division was initially coined by the nation, accompanied by a process of neologism. The earliest use of the term 'fine art' (*bijutsu*) was seen as a category at the time when Japan was preparing the 1873 Vienna International Exhibition.[21] The category 'fine art' once included poetry and music until 1887, when it started to be exclusively presented as the concept of visual art.[22] Not only new words were invented to accommodate the new linguistic environment, but also existing terms changed to accommodate the whole system of meaning. The general term craft (*kōgei*), which signified skills requiring a high level of precision, became interchangeable with industrial concepts in the 1870s until its manufacturing feature was separated from the term industry (*kōgyo*) at the end of the nineteenth century.[23] This bureaucratic operation led to the full control of the new term 'fine art' as a domain of individual expression; while the general term 'craft' converged into the field of industry, whose functional property lost the aesthetic foundation of creativity. As a result, 'craft' was assigned with a comparatively 'concrete' but also flexible connotation to refer to technical works; in contrast, art was considered with those selected forms, which were loaded with more "abstract and conceptual ideas", assigned to be positionally higher than "the rest".[24] Within this context, craft modernisation tended to be operated as tasks to make crafted works artistic in order to gain higher aesthetic status.

Inspired by Leach, Yanagi held a substantial interest in western modern art. He and his *Shirakaba* fellows played a significant role in circulating the newest western ideas of art via the *Shirakaba* magazine along with literature reviews, art critiques and introductions of philosophical theories. The liberal inclination of this magazine showed an interest in generating ideas of idealism, individualism, humanism and utopianism, which directed a discourse to examine art's social function in Japanese society.[25] Rejecting aestheticised craft under the idea of fine art, Yanagi was by no means xenophobic. He appreciated and kept a close view of modern art activity in the western world. In 1910, the same year of the first issue of *Shirakaba* magazine in Japan, Roger Fry famously organised the Manet and the Post-Impressionist exhibition at London's Grafton Galleries, which coined the lasting art-literary term 'Post-Impressionism' that Fry used to celebrate "radical" expressions and non-naturalistic

[21] Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty*, 67.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid, 68-69.
[24] Ibid, 69-70.
[25] Stephen Kohl, *The White Birch School (*白桦派 *Shirakabaha) of Japanese Literature: Some Sketches and Commentary.* Occasion paper no.2. (Eugene: Asian Studies Committee University of Oregon, 1975).

figurations; in other words, "obstraction".[26] Along with the second Post-Impressionist exhibition in 1912, Fry and his Bloomsbury peers redefined the history of modern art. By celebrating the historical "maturity of Cézanne", Picasso, Matisse and Derain became leading "precursors" of this modern movement.[27] Fry attempted to introduce the "progressive art in comparison to the cultural sophistication of the continent" to the British public with an avant-garde approach of "freedom" and "release".[28] These two Post-Impressionist exhibitions also enhanced an aesthetic dichotomy between the new belief in abstraction and the obedience of an objective nature under scientific views and the secession from the representation of objectivity.[29] This endorsed early-twentieth-century modernity as "an art of creation but not of reproduction or interpretation", to "create form" but not to "imitate form".[30]

For *Shirakaba* magazine, Yanagi produced several articles following the newborn avant-garde of Post-Impressionism constructed by Fry. In 1912, Yanagi published 'Revolutionist Painters' and identified impressionism as a revolutionary movement when expressing "individuality" and the "awareness of self" were seen as a new path to realising universal value by questioning the authority of conventional, rhetorical and representative art in the past.[31] Yanagi praised Post-Impressionist abstraction as a subversion to transcend the objective depiction of the material semblances in order to access spiritual meanings of things, which shows no tolerance to paintings merely relying on delicate rhetoric and inherited legacies.[32] In 1913, Yanagi introduced this exhibition again and announced the arrival of the "era for creating" with a long translated text from the Manet and the Post-Impressionist exhibition's catalogue and preface.[33] These articles might be a few of the earliest reading materials circulating in Japan concerning this prominent art-historical incident in England, which also led to an interest in European modern art by the Japanese public.

In the following decades, Fry's legacy quickly became an increasing interest in modern art in Japan, before which French Impressionist art and academy taste had long been dominant in art's educational institutions. The art of Post-Impressionism, Cubism and Fauvism enriched the landscape of modern art and brought appealing topics into the public domain through art exhibitions. For

---

[26] Elizabeth Berkowitz, "The 1910 'Manet and the Post-Impressionists' Exhibition: Importance and Critical Issues." *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*, edited by Dino Franco Felluga, 2017, extension of *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*, accessed Jul 24, 2020, https://branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=elizabeth-berkowitz-the-1910-manet-and-the-post-impressionists-exhibition-importance-and-critical-issues.

[27] James Beechy, "Defining Modernism: Roger Fry and Clive Bell in the 1920s", in *The Art of Bloomsbury: Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 40.

[28] Berkowitz, "The 1910 'Manet and the Post-Impressionists' Exhibition: Importance and Critical Issues".

[29] Ibid.

[30] Beechy, "Defining Modernism: Roger Fry and Clive Bell in the 1920s", 43.

[31] Yanagi Sōetsu, 〈革命の畫家〉[Revolutionist painters], 1912; in《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第一巻》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu,* vol. 1, 1981, 544-547.

[32] Ibid, 547.

[33] Yanagi Sōetsu, trans, 〈アンリ. マテイスと後印象派〉[Henri Matisse and Post-Impressionism], 1913; in《著作篇 第一巻》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol.1*, 1981, 707.

example, the exhibition of French modern art in 1922, the exhibition of Picasso, Braque and Matisse in 1923 and the exhibition of Expressionism in 1924 were quite prominent events for the Japanese populace.[34] Van Gogh, Paul Cézanne and Paul Gauguin were also consistently seen in publications, including art critiques and introductory artist articles.[35] This landscape polarised a purified domain for art's conceptual expressions connected to individuals' innovation to create new forms.

The concept of craft inevitably converged into the domain embodied as an opposite of the so-called 'pure art'. This tendency created concrete uses of terms like 'useful art', 'practical art', 'applied art', and 'decorative art'. Moreover, with the surging industrialism of the nineteenth century, terms like 'industrial art' and 'technical art' were invented to refer to things, which are appreciated as useful and functional objects rather than as a united aesthetic and practical experience of things created in the past.[36] In Yanagi's view, this conceptual division was a historical process. People from different cultural backgrounds experience different transitional embodiments of forms. However, the development will not lead to anything different from the split between the individualistic pursuit of beauty and the applicational approach to people. The Japanese government's industrial and educational policies accelerated this dividing process. In 1914, the Ministry of Education released a new policy to abolish the subject of pattern (*zuan*) design in industry schools. This subject was assigned to the field of art education in aesthetic terms, which was less associated with functionalism. In contrast, industrial education was inclined toward developing technology in scientific terms.[37] Manufactured objects produced by artisans were still popular in the European market. However, the pre-modern temperament of these objects was artificially made under the government's bureaucratic operation and by no means reflected the reality of modern Japan.

The acknowledgement of Japanese art among international audiences encountered cultural obstacles when faced with European stereotypes. The Chicago International Exposition of 1887 was seen as a successful experience for Japanese participation. Crafted works were included in the art exhibition in art galleries; however, according to the policy in the Paris International Exposition of 1900, the category of art referred to a genre of 'pure artworks' that excluded crafted artworks.[38] This experience clarified Japanese crafted objects' art/craft position in the western art-historical context. Although the Provisional Expedition Bureau had recognised Japanese craftworks as art rather than insisting on the statement of artistic craft when organising the attendance in the Paris Exposition, most

---

[34] Lin Yu-Chun,《進入世界藝壇的先驅:日據時期留法畫家研究》"The Pioneer to the International Art World - A research of Artists Study in France During the Japanese Period", (Master thesis, National Taiwan University, 1991), 20.

[35] Ibid, 39.

[36] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 364.

[37] Nagata Ken-ichi,〈日本のアプライド. アート-大正期における工業と美術の再接近〉[Applied art in Japan - re-approaching industry and art in the Taishō Era], in Ken-ichi Nagata, Toyorō Hida and Hitōshi Mori, ed.,《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s*, 157-160.

[38] Itō,〈万国博覧会の工芸デザイン- 陶瓷を中心に〉[Crafts design in world expositions - Focusing on pottery], 58.

of the Japanese showpieces, including fine ceramic works by authoritative potters, were excluded from the department of fine art in the exhibition.[39] After the Paris Exposition, Japan confirmed a new direction for pattern design and product development to approach a more decorative style inspired by the Art Nouveau movement, taking 'design' as a professional method to compose figures and patterns.

For a further investigation of art's concept in European culture, the introduction of Art Nouveau form subsequently stimulated a reform of pattern (*zuan*) with the establishment of research institutions in Japan to explore the figure, pattern, design, and painting applied to craft as an individual subject. Pattern (*zuan*) design plays a significant role in studio craft-making in Japanese art history. A pattern can be presented in sketched drafts (*shita-e*), demonstrating designs, subjects, and motifs, which can be applied to a crafted work. In Asian countries like Japan and China, developments of patterns significantly rely on studies of ancient prototypes, which were considered lacking originality due to considerable copies as part of its learning process. Nonetheless, the use of prototypes is not a culturally exclusive phenomenon. In western art history, imitation was conducted as essential in art academies. Even J.-A.-D. Ingres and Nicolas Poussin would emphasise the benefits of copying "antiquity and old masters" and take it as a studying process to gain creativity from "Nature".[40] Art historians also analyse architectural sculptures by comparing their prototypes to link interregional influences. The imitation process had once been seen as essential in the past. However, it seemed problematic with the pursuit of abstraction in modern art.

According to Tsuchida Maki, pattern making after the Paris Exposition in 1900 reveals a tendency of "artisticalisation", a specific phenomenon in the modern epoch.[41] The thriving publications referencing artisans and craft researchers' engagements with pattern increasingly represent patterns as individual works of design rather than an indispensable part of a concrete utensil or textile as they used to be in traditional studio productions. With the term "artisticalisation", Tsuchida explained this development that pattern had been reconsidered with the acquisition of 'fine art' whose aesthetics and taste were founded on western art-historical basics.

> However, after all, pattern (*zuan*) is still a different concept from painting and sculpture; thus, the idea to recognise pattern as a form of art does not really work. Of course, pattern was never dealt with in a field of art history before. As I demonstrated, since pattern is not a self-sustaining subject, the pursuit of pattern's convergence into modern art's purified and autonomous domain will eventually be in vain.[42]

Tsuchida problematised this attempt to transform craftworks into 'artworks' which basically meant "painting and sculpture", and it was false to consider pattern as a de-contextualised subject for

---

[39] Ibid.
[40] Paul Duro, "Why Imitation, and Why Global?" in *Art History,* Vol. 37(4), 2014, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.), 609-610.
[41] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 61.
[42] Ibid, 62.

reshaping an alternative art history that people were not familiar with. On the one hand, the pattern reform struggled with a divergence from its conventional position in the original field of studio craft; on the other hand, fine art, in a western art-historical context, provided no accommodation for these patterns' adherent nature.

Precisely, the pattern reform conveyed a new attitude to integrating modern art and Japanese art's tradition, which was far beyond the idea of pattern as an instrumental or decorative idea in a utilitarian frame. In searching for 'Japanese tradition', the legacy of the past was rediscovered under the new idea of art. Asai Chū (1856-1907) and Takeda Goichi (1872-1938) are intriguing cases. The former studied western painting in France, and the latter studied design in London commissioned by the Ministry of Education. Both were invited to teach at the Kyoto Higher School of Design by the first principal Nakazawa Iwata (1858-1943), and played influential roles in introducing Art Nouveau to Japan.[43] Their notion could be seen as imitations of western forms if ignoring the western art-historical context of Japonisme. However, some pattern designers quickly realised that the so-called Art Nouveau was not too unfamiliar even in forms of western design. It has an oriental origin, and the decorative style is a culturally hybrid succession influenced by imported Japanese products manufactured by artisans.[44] Asai associated the similarity with Japanese *ukiyo-e* prints of the Tokugawa period such as those made by Ogata Kōrin (1658-1716), Ogata Kenza 1663-1743) and Sakai Hōitsu (1761-1829). Synthetically comparing with his own research of Korean and Chinese art, Asai proclaimed that the stylistic compositions of simplified figures, flat colour bulks and vivid outlines demonstrated the "unique expressions of line" for "the pleasure of ornament", which was never a significant concern in western "pure painting".[45] (Fig. 8-10) The 'imported' Art Nouveau provided a reverse angle to consider the artistic entity of ancient art. As demonstrated by Asai, Art Nouveau expanded to explore art's ornamental dimension, not in a utilitarian frame but in the purity of decorative pleasure, which had been consistently practised in Edo Japan.

In 1904, Tsuda Seifū (1880-1978) founded the *Ko Bijutsu* (Small Art) magazine as a methodological project to publish study-based and commentary articles on pattern design. At a younger age, Tsuda was trained in traditional Japanese painting and accepted western art education at Kansai Art Academy, founded by Asai. Tsuda's pattern designs were dominant in the performance of lines, derived from his enthusiasm for drawing techniques and his critical attitude toward amateur

---

[43] Maki Tsuchida, 〈明治三〇年代の図案 - アール・ヌーヴォーあるいは琳派〉[Pattern design in the Meiji 30s - The Art Nouveau and the Rinha], in Ken-ichi Nagata, Toyorō Hida and Hitōshi Mori, ed.,《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* 107.

[44] Ibid, 104.

[45] Asai Chū, 1904. 〈図案の線に就て〉[About the line of pattern].《小美術》*Small Art:* 1(5); see Tsuchida, 〈明治三〇年代の図案 - アール・ヌーヴォーあるいは琳派〉[Pattern design in the Meiji 30s - The Art Nouveau and the Rinha], 106.

replications in industries.[46] He recognised "sketching from life" (*shasei*) as a fundamental task and emphasised the necessity of the "original pattern (*jibun no zuan*)" with a conscious engagement of individuality.[47] The term *shasei* shared a profound history in Japanese painting. It was derived from a Chinese-oriented phrase written as '写生', *including* the character *seii* (生), which means "to live", "to revive", and "life energy", referring to depictions and expressions based on real observed lives.[48] Tsuda emphasised an immediate capture of perceived nature, which requires individuals' conscious immersions in the living energy of things. This approach attempts to depart from the form of Art Nouveau by tracing the methodological source and cultural originality of Japanese tradition. This retrospective reconstruction of traditional legacies contributed to the hybrid taste of new pattern designs, which theoretically integrate traditional works into the realm of modern aesthetics.

The Japanese government flagged the slogans of "innovation" and "newness" as a matter of modernity in the 1925 Paris exposition.[49] The attempt to perform craftwork as a piece of modern artwork could go quite far, even giving up the condition as a functional object. Two years before Yanagi published *The Way of Craft,* Tsuda Shinobu founded a metalwork research group known as *Mugata* (shapeless) in 1926, gathering artists of the Tokyo School of Arts, including Sugita Kado (1886-1955) and Takamura Toyochika (1890-1972).[50] Sugita's *Beauty Without Function* (Fig. 11, 1930) demonstrates a minimalist and geometric composition, manipulating the concept of function, which never merely served as pure visual amusement of daily utensils. This work conveys a material rhythm in representations of colour, visual and tactile texture, and motion in shapes; none can be recognised as functional elements. Its aesthetic dimension is even beyond the subordinate stance of ornament on a functional object, representing decoration as the form itself. Nonetheless, Yanagi refuted this development, saying that the cancellation of function is equivalent to abolishing craft's entity. Takamura considered this split from the traditional frame as a navigation to the convergence of an international model in forms of Futurism and Constructivism.[51] As a synonym for artistic craftworks, modern craft emerged as a self-sustaining domain, which also generated the requirements of professionalised statements of their makers, not as artisans but as artists.

The *Mingei* Movement might be located on the other end of the spectrum within the series of modern craft reforms. With a strict standard, the visual form of *mingei* objects is not precisely definable since *mingei* is such an intangible concept whose tangible forms dynamically vary with its immeasurable ground of miscellaneity. In this context, Tomimoto Kenkichi's role as a member of *mingei* activists deserves further discussion. Tomimoto galvanised the *Mingei* Movement by providing

---

[46] Tsuchida, 〈明治三〇年代の図案 - アール・ヌーヴォーあるいは琳派〉[Pattern design in the Meiji 30s - The Art Nouveau and the Rinha], 111.

[47] Tsuda Seifū, 〈うづら衣三巻を出すに就て思う儘を記す〉[A note of thoughts with the third volume of *Uzuragoromo*], in《うづら衣》[*Uzuragoromo*],vol. 3 (1903).

[48] Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty.* 236, 242-243.

[49] Ibid, 210.

[50] Ibid, 211.

[51] Ibid, 211-217.

a precise aesthetic model with a concrete form, which Art Nouveau-inspired designers like Asai Chū and Tsuda Seifū might reject as amateurism. Tomimoto's congenial friendship with Leach very likely derived from his familiarity with British culture and admiration of the British Arts and Crafts Movement. Between 1908 and 1910, Tomimoto majored in architecture in London, therefore getting an opportunity to visit Morris' works and numerous Arts-and-Crafts items collected by the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum).[52] He praised Morris as a "decorative artist" (adding on the term 'socialist' long recognised in Japan), who endeavoured to the "utopia realm with uniting art and daily life".[53] Inspired by the South Kensington Museum's collections which included folk works from different cultures, Tomimoto found simple, straight, undecorated and primitive forms in traditional manufactured works, which embodied an excellent balance between techniques and a nation's material nature sustained by artisans' self-esteem of pursuing "the fine and the beautiful".[54] Demonstrated through the museological order, this folklore approach of everyday wares engaged in amateur creativities, which shared a different aesthetic language from the ornamentally exquisite Japanese works circulated in the European market. Taking South Kensington Museum's imperialist background into account, although the "material cultural" diversity of nations might convey a less restrictive domain than the "decorative arts", Tomimoto's celebration of artisans' self-esteem was a visualised "hierarchy of value", the dominance to "define something as art" in relation to an acknowledgement of cultural status.[55]

Like Yanagi, Tomimoto was interested in the universal source of intuitional energy for creating beautiful things, regardless of artistic or amateur form. However, focusing on the subject of pattern design, he gave more credit to individuals' efforts. Tomimoto considered originality a comparatively individual path to free oneself from the constraint of those patterns that were seen as classic models in the past.[56] He would agree with Tsuda Seifū's emphasis on the significance of sketching from lives (*shasei*). Responding to the use of models (*moyō*) as prototypes in traditional studios, he found the reliance on these models ultimately led to recompositions of other's work, which one might find convenient to attain semblance but cultivate nothing original. He proclaimed,

> When completely putting those ancient patterns aside and perceiving the beauty of wild plants with an innocent mind, I am not still holding [the influence of] those ancient patterns in mind. In this way, original pattern models (*jibun no moyō*) are generated naturally.[57]

---

[52] Kita,〈大正時代の工芸とユートピア思想 - 富本憲吉とウィリアム・モリス〉[Craft in the Taishō perios and utopianist thoughts: Tomimoto Kenkichi and William Morris], 185-187.
[53] Ibid, 192-193.
[54] Tomimoto Kenkichi, 〈ウィリアム・モリスの話 (上)〉[A story of William Morris], in《美術新報》*Art News,* vol.11, no.4 (2), (1912): 16. 14-20
[55] Barringer and Flynn, Introduction of Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, ed., *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, 3-6.
[56] Tomimoto Kenkichi, 〈模様雑感〉[Some thoughts about pattern],《美術新報》*Art News,* vol.13, no.12(10), (1914): 8-9.
[57] Ibid.

For the sake of originality, Tomimoto encouraged an 'innocent mind' to create patterns without artificial models. Those long-retaining ancient patterns are usually the final results of a master's creative view to conventionalise and transfer living things from nature into pictorial images. In Tomimoto's view, an artisan's originality should be cultivated through this conventionalising process, which is crucial for acquiring competence to create patterns with one's original, direct conceptual engagements in the dynamic nature. Sketching from lives was also related to Edo art's 'southern painting' (*nanga*) tradition, which encouraged direct engagements with nature to gain beauty in principle, minimising redundant elements and simplifying uses of lines and strokes to compose a concise motif articulating the draughtsman's capture from nature.[58] Tomimoto's urge for independence from prototypes reversed this tradition to create patterns based on immediate observations of reality without any predetermined regulation. His practice neutralised the hierarchical bias with the myth of originality disparaging pre-modern art and creating an interface to reconsider tradition as a path to modernity.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Yanagi criticised the tendency of artist crafts as a product of individualism. He also identified artistic craftworks as the same category as pre-modern aristocratic craftworks for their ornamental expressions deviating from day-to-day functions. That reveals a philosophical discrepancy among the *mingei* associates, at least between Yanagi and Tomimoto. The difference might be subtle in the *Shirakaba* stage but became more prominent after the term *getemono* was clarified to define *mingei*'s form. Yanagi explained that the *Shirakaba* society's engagement of craft's entity was motivated by the discussions of the concept of 'fine art' derived from western terms:

> Fine art is a world for the diversity of conceptual senses, where it requires manifestations of spirits and thoughts of the epoch. It is also a realm where you would follow a specific philosophical approach. In contrast, [our] thoughts of craft are rarely based on its functional entity. … Themes on the significance of multi-dimensional aspects of craft still drive limited attention from people to consider this question within craft.[59]

Tomimoto might agree with Yanagi that the craft's entity shows a more concrete practice of material culture, which is different from the rhetorical and conceptual operations in art. In the South Kensington Museum, crafted works were interpreted with a universal value shared with all people, which Tomimoto explored as amateurism, the mutual cultural property without hierarchical division. However, his acknowledgement of individuals' creative contributions connects to Fry's claim of "create form but not to imitate form" through Post-Impressionism. Tomimoto's advocacy of 'original

---

[58] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 112.

[59] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈「白樺」と「工藝」〉[White birch and craft] *in*《工藝》*Craft*, no. 94(3), 1939; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 184.

pattern' is doubtlessly modern.[60] However, it does not mean that, on the other end of the spectrum, Yanagi failed to reach modernity through his definition of *mingei*. For Yanagi, the revolutionary value of Post-Impressionism represents "a united life with one's innocent feeling immersed in the tremendous nature", both existing in Van Gogh's art and also in Cezanne's disclosure of "the superficial mask of human's civilisation".[61] Yanagi's approach to universality through craft also aimed at the innocence behind "the superficial mask of human's civilisation".[62] Through the rediscovery of '*getemono*' (ordinary things), the universal value in craft was interpreted as a humble "practical nature", which recovers the intimate simplicity, instead of visual complexity, as an innate entity of craft.[63] Fry's sense of Post-Impressionism pursued an immediate engagement of intuitional consciousness embodied as the simplification of visual forms, which figured concepts of spirit without relying on any resemblance or imitation of predetermined objects.[64] Fry's exploration of originality as a universal condition became a metaphor for modernity. The surge of modern craft encouraged individual creativities engaging in craft-making, while for Yanagi, it converged into a collective realm associated with the concept of 'tradition'.

Relocating 'Common People': 'New *Mingei*' in the Name of Tradition

The discovery of '*getemono*' turned a new page of the *Mingei* Movement from a theoretical construction to practical activities, defining *mingei* objects' forms and the idea of 'common people' they represented. At the interface between the theory and its miscellaneous subjects in the fluid and dynamic cultural realm, *mingei* aesthetics' socialist approach encountered various examinations. The dimension of a nationalist ideology became more and more articulate. In the theoretical stage, *mingei* aesthetics' confrontation with the western idea of fine art was demonstrated as a rejection of social hierarchy and class division. Under the Meiji government's bureaucratic operation, the idea of western art initially resonated with those class-based objects in traditional studios requiring "a level of quality differentiated from ordinary objects".[65] Objects, such as paintings of *Kano* and *nanga* traditions, which corresponded to the transplanted concept of art in the western discourse, were mainly from artists whose hereditary status showed an origin in relation to the imperial and samurai ruling

---

[60] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 112.

[61] Yanagi,〈革命の畫家〉[Revolutionist painters], 552, 556.

[62] Ibid, 552.

[63] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 254-255.

[64] Roger Fry, "Impressionist Painters", 1910, translated by Yanagi Sōetsu, 〈アンリ．マテイスと後印象派〉[Henri Matisse and Post-Impressionism], 1913; in Yanagi《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第一巻》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu*, 706-707.

[65] Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty*, 75.

classes.[66] Initially, 'fine art' in Japanese culture emerged as an equivalent to high-class works under the hierarchy of social stratification. This parallel seemed plausible until the social structure changed along with the rapid urbanisation and the subsequent dominance of middle-class culture. The discursive environment of 'people' as a socialist approach engaged in a more sophisticated international, cosmopolitan culture. *Mingei* activities in the 1930s encountered an inevitable shift with the new expectation of democracy and practical engagements in the making-process of 'national beauty' competed and also cooperated with the nation's aesthetic-political guidelines.

Yanagi's art/craft dualism is not completely equal to the western colonial differentiation between 'European art' and 'non-European' objects. As demonstrated in Chapter One, Yanagi's concept of 'art' is a synthesis of capital culture and the surge of individualism, which in the 1930s aligned with Yanagi's interpretation of urban culture. Art engaged in a high-class domain that was still pivotal to polarising the socialist location of 'craft'. The term *getemono*, referring to ordinary objects, shows Yanagi's engagement in universality represented as a mutual form shared by the majority with a rejection of art's approach to the minor privilege. Yanagi constantly emphasised that *mingei*, or folk art, engages the realm of the majority of people, whose "general life" is differentiated from the affluent minority.[67] He indicated that many manufactured handicrafts were massively and substantially attributed and penetrated people's lives but were still depreciated as subordinate to individualistic works only crafted for a few affordable consumers.[68] Social affiliations indeed existed in Japanese history as a hierarchical system represented by things produced for different targets of users and audiences. As a part of modernisation, the term 'people' (*minshū*) in Japanese was generated with the rising social class consciousness in response to the new idea of democracy. It took the place of the dated term "commoner (*heimin*)", which denoted one's social statement under the political control embodied by the conventional family registration system.[69] In Yanagi's generation, feudalism was not a remote concept. Although Japan had commenced a series of reformations to change the Tokugawa shogunate's ranking system, the replacing system still maintained social hierarchies by using the term *heimin,* which referred to one's status and was related to categorisations farmers, artisans and merchants, until it was abolished in 1914.[70] The reformation of population structure in urban places

---

[66] As pre-Meiji works became a category to present Japanese *bijutsu* (art) as a part of the Japanese government's *shokusan kōgyō* (promotion of industry and manufacturing) policy, the first group of 'fine artists' involved in institutional construction of art history shows a considerable connection to their social status in the hierarchies of the previous era under the Tokugawa shogunate government. Although this rank system (samurai, farmer, artisan, and merchant) was abolished in 1869 when the power owned by domains was returned to the Meiji emperor, the replacing system still maintained a hierarchical structure identifying the category of *heimin* as commoners who had been farmers, artisans and merchants under the previous status system to be separated from the other two categories, the nobility and the gentry. The term *heimin* lasted for about another half century until it was replaced by the new family registration system enacted in 1914. In Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty,* 78-84.

[67] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 399.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 28.

[70] Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty,* 78-84.

showed more complicated mobility from the mid-1910s with the rapid development of capitalism and the expansion of the urban middle class. To reallocate the dimension of art to engage the life of 'common people', or 'urban proletariats', ideas of 'popular art' emerged as a new paradigm with various attempts. For example, the magazine *Minshū no Geijutsu* (The People's Art) was founded in 1918, Katō Kazuo's *Minshū Geijutsu-ron* (Popular Art Theory) was published in 1919, and the Peasant Art Movement was initiated by Yamamoto Kanae (1882-1946) in the same year.[71] The new term 'people' emerged when the social climate changed with the surge of liberal thoughts and the advocacy of democracy colliding with the old order of the past.[72] The use of 'people' was also presented for the representation of the common majority instead of affirming one's social class and hierarchical role.

Postured as 'people's art', the *Mingei* Movement scoped a general idea of 'people', corresponding to the collapse of the class system and the reforming social structure. This 'people' was structured as united, not divided. It scoped a contemporary role corresponding to the modern concept of people, which also stimulated discussions on the democratic property of crafted objects. However, as Yanagi claimed, the term *getemono* did not present a complete unity without excluding anything. Juxtaposed with an exclusive interpretation of art, *getemono* was conceived as a well-framed category to recognise daily objects' generality and 'universality'. Explaining the term *mingei* as "people's craft", Yanagi referred to the English term "folk" to associate manufactured things with a general concept of "nation" composed of a variety of local forms.[73] The connection between 'people's art' with local-based 'traditions', which was defined as the source of national culture, was a decisive link in *mingei* theory to identify the beauty of craft as a general 'universal' value.

Not all objects created by 'common people' could be recognised as a '*mingei* object'. Yanagi's interrogation questioning Yamamoto Kanae's Peasant Art Movement shows the discrepancy in their agreements with 'artistic craft', revealing Yanagi's scepticism on the unity between art and craft. The Peasant Art Movement encouraged a free domain for individual expressions in daily object-making. It derived from Yamamoto's criticism of the reliance on prototypes in conventional pattern education and his advocacy of "free drawing education" applying creativity-stimulating didactics to create unconstrained inner space for expressions.[74] (Fig. 12, 13) With a gesture of democratism, this

---

[71] Ibid, 123-124.

[72] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 28.

[73] The term mingei was discussed and invented during Yanagi's trip to Kishū at the end of 1925 with Kawai Kanjirō and Hamada Shōji for the investigation of works sculpted by Mokujiki Shōnin, an eighteenth-century Buddhist sculptor. In Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 25-27.

[74] The formation of this statement was substantially related to Yamamoto's studying journey in Europe as a creative artist making prints and oil paintings from 1912 to 1914. On the way back to Japan, he visited the Tolstoy's House in Yasnaya Polyana, Kustar Museum's exhibition of peasant works and exhibitions of young adults' artworks in Moscow when he went through Russia. During the returning journey Yamamotowas impressed by the art education in rural culture demonstrated in children's paintings and craft works like furniture and toys manufactured by peasants. In Yamaguchi Makoto, Mitsuhashi Toshio and Miyasaki Kiyoshi, "Endogenous Doctrines of Peasant Art Movement by Yamamoto Nanae: On Endogenous Development of Rural

movement celebrated "freedom" and "beauty" to encourage amateur peasants to make craft in original forms, which would guarantee "pleasure" and "fulfilment" in leisure time or to sustain a side occupation during the agricultural off-season.[75] The Peasant Art Movement facilitated the development of side industries in the countryside and then became a nation-wide activity. Related associations and industrial institutions disseminated over the country from Nagano to other prefectures, including Yamanashi, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Saitama, Tokyo, Chiba, Shizuoka, Gifu, Kyoto, Wakayama, Fukuoka and Shimane by the end of 1930.[76]

This movement promoted a proletarian taste and anti-academist sentiments. Observed from the waterbird design on tableware, pictorial elements were randomly arranged, and many depicted details were deliberately unpublished. The rustic motif conveys an inadvertent approach to decoration, paying barely amateur attention to techniques. These pastoral wares sold well in urban Japan and brought considerable profits to promote the economy in rural regions.[77] However, Yanagi doubted the authenticity of these free-created objects, which were rather "artificially made" than "inherently generated" by "reproducing urban taste" with an "artistic approach".[78] He argued,

> I would like to especially clarify how the so-called 'peasant art' differs from *mingei*. The thing we are looking for should be confirmed (as true) without any explanation supposing a work is generally produced by peasants or naturally generated locally. That means *mingei* shows a definite kinship in relation to peasant art; however, as I have previously mentioned, the peasant art in Japan ultimately is not genuine peasant products.[79]

Yanagi's manifestation demonstrated a different approach to 'authenticity', or originality, of rural art. For Yamamoto, what was emphasised is the 'freedom' related to individuals' capability to create forms which can be educated and developed; meanwhile for Yanagi, the authenticity of the original rural culture was not framed as individual expressions. For Yanagi, products 'imitating' urban taste is not real freedom if the purpose is making money from urban consumers. In contrast, craft should scope freedom significantly rooted in the genuine lifestyle with the benevolence of local tradition. In Yanagi's ideal, originality is not a value that requires an 'artificial-made' process to gain. Anything "generally produced" or "naturally generated" should be recognised as a general path to emancipation from class-oriented division.

Craft at Taisho and the First Half of Showa Era", *Bulletin of Japanese Society for the Science of Design*, vol. 42, no. 2(1995): 57-58.

[75] Yamaguchi, Mitsuhashi and Miyasaki, "Endogenous Doctrines of Peasant Art Movement by Yamamoto Nanae: On Endogenous Development of Rural Craft at Taisho and the First Half of Showa Era", 59.

[76] Ibid, 60.

[77] Ibid, 59-61.

[78] Sōetsu Yanagi,〈民藝と農民美術〉[*Mingei* and peasant art]《工藝》*Craft*: 51(3), 1935; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 58-59.

[79] Ibid, 60.

Yanagi's criticism of peasant art clarified his distinct understanding of craft's aesthetic value. A beautiful object must be a genuine being. Any craftwork does not need to be appreciated as an art piece to attain a maker's perspective of life. As a product generated from everyday experience, it should be praised for its functional basis and the local-connected characteristics. Derived from Yanagi's proposition of universality, the aesthetic quality of *getemono* reveals a connection between 'people' and 'folk culture', free from all forced standards of being anything novel and adventurous:

> *Ge* means 'common' and *te* means 'quality'. That is to say, *getemono* is something 'common' and 'general', also functional, regularly required and used in everyday life. Their beauty is an astonishing providence to me that the kind of beauty is found in these unsigned, cheap, abundant ordinary articles. Uncovering this truth is a substantial confirmation for the common people. Therefore, can anyone deny that there is total harmony between the concepts of economy and aesthetics?[80]

Through the accessibility to "common people", *mingei* theory created its own legitimacy of democratic stance, which was celebrated as freedom of expression in art's domain. Aiming at defining the beauty of craft, *mingei* theory's engagement is not the originality for making the new and the novel, but instead genuine everyday productions sustaining local culture's consistency.

Mingei theory's nationalist inclination was a destined development; however, it was still far from the imperial nationalism coined by the state. Yanagi declared the value of *getemono* in his article *Getemono no Bi* ('The Beauty of Ordinary Things') published in 1926. The same year, the concept of *getemono* was introduced in the jointly published prospectus for establishing the Japan Folk Crafts Museum with a complete theoretical structure explaining *getemono's* role in relation to the original beauty of a nation, which Yanagi also called "tradition":

> Neither descending into transplanted methods nor closing ends with imitations of foreign countries, *mingei* vividly demonstrates its beauty by taking native Japanese nature and blood as a presentation of the nation. Perhaps, in the realm of beauty, *getemono* reveals a domain where Japan is prominently shown with original Japanese perspectives.[81]

Getemono projected an approach to the idea of originality, which was less about individual creativity but taking "native Japanese nature and blood as a presentation of the nation". *Getemono* represents the original source of Japanese culture, demonstrating that which Yanagi's museum's programme defined the 'national beauty' as a cultural concept framing objects with this standard of 'originality'. As mentioned, a valid location of origin in a cultural framework needs the belief of a specific cultural

---

[80] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 254.

[81] Sōetsu Yanagi, Kawai Kanjirō, Tomimoto Kenkichi and Hamada Shōji, 1926.〈日本民藝美術館設立趣意書〉[Proposition concerning crafts guild], 1927, in《柳宗悦全集 - 第十六巻》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 16,* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1982), 6.

boundary to identify what is domestic. The imagination of this dividing line could be a myth as we observe the truth of culture is perpetually developed through hybrid, fluid and dynamic connections. However, the original/imitative dualism, in Yanagi's practice through *getemono,* was represented as a nationalist approach to things, polarising the other end of cultural phenomena as a foreigner.

In Yanagi, the category of 'artistic craft' revealed a lack of 'originality' since this approach conveyed a theoretical value integrating with accidental concepts of fine art. Then, what could be recognised as original? They were originally made by whom? The following model demonstrates different categories Yanagi included as parts of visual culture in the modern era.[82]

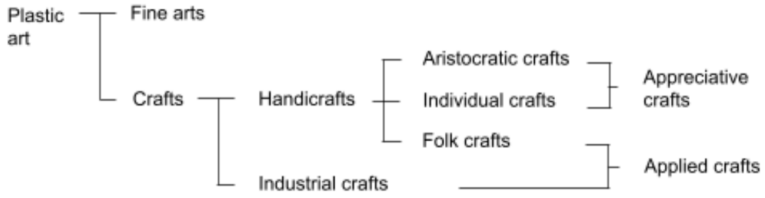

Chart 1. Yanagi's categories of works of visual culture.

Representing the category of folk craft, *mingei* is a pretty exclusive concept. *Mingei* objects are not aristocratic objects serving high-class consumers nor industrial objects produced under capitalist logic. They are by no means individualistic works, whether in fine art or artistic craft forms. Derived from Yanagi's socialist inclination, the category of "folk crafts" meticulously reshaped a purified visual form firmly linked with Japanese domestic origins, mirrored by the so-called "international feature" characterised as individualist, intellectualist, mechanist and capitalist.[83] As a modernisation process, for Yanagi to recover the originality, *mingei* activity became a journey to relocate the tradition and rediscover the integrity of traditional makers who reject imitating the international culture.

The original/imitation dualism represented by the celebration of folk craft quickly converged to the spatial structure in urban/rural dichotomy with rural objects engaging in the realm of tradition, original and socialist. In comparison, urban culture was associated with capitalism, individualism and the imitation of the hybrid cosmopolitan culture. Apparently, Yanagi thought these characteristics were externally produced rather than generated from within Japanese culture. The rediscovery of *getemono* was firmly related to Yanagi's observation of urban culture and the "loss of Japanese originality" caused by hyper-developing capitalism.[84] Japan encountered a substantial depression due to the global-scaled financial crisis at the end of the Taishō period. With the expansion of mechanisation and relative commercial models revealing a rising progression at the beginning of the

[82] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 356.

[83] Yanagi,〈新體制と工藝美の問題〉[The New Order and the Issue of craft's beauty], 245.

[84] Ibid, 252.

Shōwa period, excessive production and the exacerbating market competition increasingly threatened the vulnerable economy in rural places.[85] As discussed in Chapter One, considering the necessity of social reform, Yanagi's critical view of city culture reveals his socialist thought against capital logic. In Yanagi, the development of 'industrial craft' is another factor resulting in the deterioration of taste, which also impacted the production of beautiful things. He considered cities as a conjunction of international society, which is prominent in pursuing novelty and advance but also vulnerable due to the instability within its fragile value system. It is noteworthy that, promoting *getemono* as a form of rural culture, Yanagi frequently celebrated the "uniqueness" of Japanese culture in the dichotomy between domestic "oriental character" and external "occidental influence" with "universality".[86] On a cultural scale, Yanagi reversed his stance when discovering individualistic works as 'unique' and praising daily objects as 'universal'. Representing 'universality' as a hybridity composed of foreign cultures, Yanagi conceived a 'universality' by identifying similarities among metropolitan cities like "London, New York, Paris and Berlin".[87] This 'universality' fails to convey the 'Japaneseness', which Yanagi thought should be unique and discernible for its cultural representativity of a nation. He claimed,

> Cultural tendency retained by a cosmopolitan city usually has an international characteristic. Cultures from different countries can be all captured in the same city, and the progression of transportation makes it even much more accessible. Due to this, cities increasingly appear with an international atmosphere. However, it also means the loss of national uniqueness simultaneously.[88]

According to Yanagi, cosmopolitan cities share the same "international characteristic", and Tokyo is just one of them without the "national uniqueness". Taking Tokyo as a model, Yanagi criticised that urban culture was tamed by modern progression and capital rule with citizens willfully squandering moral life on individualistic interests and abandoning the spiritual shelter by tradition. The rapid-changing urban culture presented the instability under influences of foreign cultures, whereas the "inconvenient transportation" and "conservative temperament" even became beneficial conditions in rural places for preserving local entities in forms of "confidence, custom, technique, language", whose values were vanishing in urban life.[89]

Yanagi took rural culture as an experimental ground for his guild socialism. As demonstrated in Chapter One, *mingei* aesthetics was constructed with the guild model, a small-scaled, mutually aiding community supporting social productions, which contributed to a high level of moral status for

---

[85] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 52.

[86] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈新しき美の標準〉[New criterion of beauty], 1937, in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 237-238.

[87] Yanagi,〈地方性の文化價値〉[Cultural value of localities], 229.

[88] Ibid, 228.

[89] Ibid, 230.

making beautiful things. Yanagi indicated that in rural places, the preserved local traditions allowed people to develop an intrinsic ethnicity into their spiritual lives, making the 'morality of making' sustainable.[90] Nonetheless, traditions failed to survive in urban places with the escalating modernisation and commercialisation. The products produced became spoiled without the support of morality, even if they were ostensibly new and fashionable. As observed by Yanagi, the loss of sustainability resulting from the lack of tradition's supportive power was the main reason causing the instability of urban culture, since then it would inevitably rely on imported cultures. The financial competition would force people to make interest-inclined products through shoddy imitations, which spoiled the taste and citizens' spiritual life. With a belief in the moral function of the 'mutual aid' system, Yanagi characterised urban culture as ill while rural culture as healthy, based on his claim of preserved morality in rural culture for making beautiful things. Since he thought the authentic Japanese culture had been fading in urban culture, revivals of rural culture became the salvation to recover the moral standard in craft-making. Borrowed from the guild model, he believed rural culture could produce total mobility to displace the value in the centre. The need for redefining the value of *getemono* reveals Yanagi's viewpoint to recognise these manufactured objects' role as a relative "frontier" of culture.[91] By enhancing the mobility of peripheral 'frontiers', the celebration of local tradition in rural places was expected to reshape the centre's sustainability. Through this, Yanagi projected to utilise the mutually-sustained system between the centre and the frontier, dynamically transforming social structure and processing class mobility.

Mingei associates developed the term 'new *mingei*' to connect products in rural regions and their potential consumers in cities by promoting new-designed *mingei* objects satisfying demands in modern life. In the second half of the 1920s, *mingei* activists had started displaying *mingei* items to the public on many occasions of expositions before 'new *mingei*' was prosperously developed in the 1930s. A series of projects started from *mingei* associates' surveys in regional Japan and collected folkloric items for the Folk Art Museum. Aiming at "inheriting traditional value and developing genuine crafts" in the future, this museum was expected to select and conserve traditional items whose "essential beauty" can be a paradigm to follow.[92] Beyond defining objects, they also endeavoured to organise guild-like societies for manufacturing craftworks in modern life, reviving the "correct beauty *(tadashiki-bi*)" through reforming social morality.[93] In searching for 'ideal beauty' in local Japan, *mingei* activities in the 1930s framed their museological goal with three aspects: selecting folkloric items as paradigms, reshaping *mingei* objects for modern life, and disseminating *mingei* aesthetics by marketing potential objects.

---

[90] Ibid, 231.

[91] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 31.

[92] Yanagi,〈工芸の協団に関する一提案〉[A proposition concerning craft guilds], 56

[93] Ibid, 55.

With the new members Ōta Naoyuki and Yoshida Shōya (1898-1972), their projects gained more possibilities. They infused new impetus into the movement, developing new *mingei* in the San'in region. As an old acquaintance of Kawai Kenjiro, Ōta Naoyuki started cooperating with Yanagi and Kawai's exhibition project in 1927, collecting objects from Shimane prefecture of the San'in region for the *Gotairei* Memorial Exposition the following year.[94] They met each other again in 1931 at the banquet organised by Ōta in Matsue, the capital city of Shimane prefecture, which many local gentries, including Yoshida Shōya, visited.[95] Ōta's investigations on traditional techniques and local manufacturing history, dyed textiles, paper fans, pottery objects, paperwork and local kilns, for example, were recorded in the *Yearbook of Mingei in Shimane* he edited and published in 1942. In the same year, *mingei* associates organised a forum titled '*Mingei* in Shimane: the Present and the Past' with Ōta and Yoshida involved as presenters during the '*Mingei* in the San'in Region Exhibition' held at the Takashimaya department store in Osaka. Ōta applied the term *mingei* directly. His decisive role illuminated the *mingei* associates' practical engagement in the San'in regions, accelerating *the mingei* group's projects to market *mingei* objects in urban Japan.[96]

Yoshida also devoted himself to the rediscovery of local craftworks in the San'in region. He started a local clinic in 1931, serving as an otolaryngologist in Tottori after he finished his medical doctoral study at Kyoto University.[97] He played a decisive role in the rediscovery of the *Ushinoto* Kiln, a well-known case of new *mingei* transforming traditional forms into pottery utensils used in modern life. Established in the mid-nineteenth century, *Ushinoto* Kiln kept a long-lasting tradition of making daily utensils in Inaba Province, an old province in the area that today is part of Tottori Prefecture. However, the kiln's keeper encountered difficulty in carrying on business in the competitive industrial market. When Yoshida visited *Ushinoto* Kiln in 1931, this pottery studio had been inherited over several generations and passed to the fourth inheritor Kobayashi Hideharu. Viewing their current products, Yoshida found the old objects in an upstairs storeroom more admirable for the vital use of glaze and pattern designs.[98] He praised those old pieces as a superior form to Kobayashi's recent works, which were "misguided to imitate modern, western-style objects", then suggested Kobayashi innovate their products based on these old forms, added with Yoshida's own collection of *getemono*.[99] The newly designed wares were manufactured by emphasising their functional basis and traditional

---

[94] 御大礼(*Gotairei*), or 御大典(*Gotaiten*), refers the ceremony of the Japanese Emperor's enthronement, symbolising the accession to the throne. The Shōwa period began at the end of 1926 after the Taishō emperor passed away on the 25th of September. The enthronement of the Shōwa emperor was held in November of 1928 with the *Gotairei* Memorial Exposition held in March of 1928 in Tokyo. In Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 124.

[95] These people included collectors, a banker, a local minister, local representatives and managers of local industries. In Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 125-126.

[96] Ibid, 126-127.

[97] Ibid, 127.

[98] Yoshida, 〈因幡の民藝品試作〉[Trial production of *mingei* products in Inaba], 128.

[99] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 86.

methods and materials to convey a sincere connection to the local beauty. With a short-term instruction by Leach, Kobayashi developed works beyond regional characteristics, producing utensils for urban lifestyles like teacups, coffee cups, saucers, pitchers, sauce dispensers and other kinds of tableware.[100] As a piece of 'new *mingei*', a crafted object overstepped the definition of *getemono.* It gained new characters as a commodity in the nature of the modern market even as 'new *mingei*' was still celebrated for the inherited 'correct beauty' directed by selected models of *getemono*.

Besides the Kobayashi kiln, Yoshida's engagements included textiles in Inaba, a historical town for its sericulture in Edo period, and his personal interests on medical furniture. Collaborating with local carpenters, he developed several woodwork designs like chair, table, chest of drawers, carrying tray and desk lamp.[101] This adventurous man also initiated a successful marketing system for distributing new *mingei* objects. He established the Tottori *Mingei* Promotion Society, an intermediary and anonymous association to integrate financing, producing and marketing strategies with its own wholesale and retail stores known as Takumi opened in 1932.[102] Takumi eventually became the official brand of retail outlets for selling new *mingei* products.[103] The marketing chain was combined with multiple methods to promote the idea of new *mingei*. *Mingei* associates carried on *Shirakaba* members' operations, organising journal publications, exhibitions and forums integrating with a whole-scaled circulation of *mingei* aesthetics. Along with Takumi's opening, the 'New *Mingei* of San'in Exhibitions' sponsored by the prominent Takashimaya department store company launched new attractions in Ōsaka in October, and Tokyo in November.[104] In 1933, Takumi was registered as an official stock company with a new retail store opening in Tokyo and sharing the appellation founded by Yoshida. With the launch of Takumi Tokyo, *mingei* associates including Tomimoto, Kawai, Hamada and Yanagi signed a public declaration, boosting "the necessity of an intermediary vehicle" to "gather correct and healthy *mingei* products from regional places."[105]

The Takumi in Tokyo maintained the semi-museological marketing strategy, developing multiple exhibition projects. In the first year, *mingei* associates utilised the space on the first floor of Takumi to organise several small-scaled exhibitions to promote *mingei* designers' and local makers' works, such as Tomimoto's Experimental Works of Stain Textile exhibition, Keisuke Serizawa's solo exhibition of stencil dyeing, the Getemono in Tohoku exhibition and the Japanese paper exhibition.[106] Juxtaposing individual artisans' craftworks and newly designed *mingei* objects became a common strategy to deliver the concept of new *mingei* and the link to their local traditions. Moreover, these displays also aimed at communicating ideas about how new *mingei* objects were developed to accommodate

---

[100] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 128.
[101] Ibid, 130.
[102] Ibid, 136.
[103] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 110.
[104] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 138-139.
[105] Ibid, 142.
[106] Ibid, 147.

modern life. The Japanese Modern *Mingei* Exhibition held at the Tokyo Takashimaya department store is a conspicuous example. Conveying '*mingei* for the future', this exhibition demonstrated an intimacy of local manufactures by depicting how traditional techniques supported contemporary life while lifestyle perpetually developed into a Japanese-western symbiosis (*wayō kyōsei*), which was expected to become a main tendency in a middle-class family space. Leach's design of a study, Kawai's construction of a kitchen and Hamada's proposal of a dining hall communicated this climate.[107] The room Leach designed for an exhibition at the Takashimaya Department Store conveys this intimacy when objects were displayed in an interactive relation as a part of modern life, arousing curiosity to project new *mingei* in everyday experiences. (Fig. 14) The synthetic hybridity relocated tradition as a new element, reversing reuses of the old as a new language of originality in its cultural site.

Takashimaya was the first, but not the only, major company financially supporting new *mingei* products to expand their market in urban cities. Similar models were applied by the Tokyo-based emporia Mitsukoshi, Marsizakaya and Shirogiya during the 1930s.[108] Except for these retail outlets, new *mingei*'s sponsors also included news-press companies. For instance, a show-cum-sale event for promoting new *mingei* products from the San'in region was sponsored by the Ōsaka Mainichi news-press at the Osaka Mainichi Hall in 1931. Not long after that, Ōsaka Mainichi news-press organised another sale cooperating with the Tokyo Nichinichi news-press to organise a juried exhibition of industrial art and *mingei* products at the Shirokiya department stores in Osaka and Tokyo.[109] *Mingei* associates also published their own journals; *Craft* (*Kōgei*), which was published in 1931 then was reorganised as the official publication when the Japan *Mingei* Association officially established in 1934, and *Journal Mingei* (*Gekkan mingei*) published later in 1939.

'New *mingei*' projects in the 1930s engaged in a far more practical and experimental realm of cultural practice. The identity of *mingei* objects encountered a new scale of expansion with *mingei* activist's embrace of very different kinds of objects they systematically collected through widely travelling to the "hinterlands of Japan", searching for "buried" or "hidden [...] ongoing crafts production and active crafts producers".[110] Although *mingei* activists still took publication as an important vehicle to enforce the theoretical basis, their journal papers increasingly included reports of local knowledge, manufacturing traditions and vanishing techniques in rural regions. They also encountered a need to commoditise *mingei* objects into commercial products in a modern sense. That also means, to a certain level, these on-site operations and folk materials in frontiers would inevitably

---

[107] Ibid, 151.
[108] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 104.
[109] Despite *mingei* associates like Yanagi, Kawai and Hamada, the invited judges included Yamamoto, the initiate of the Peasant Art Movement, and Okada Saburōsuke (1869-1939), a professor teaching western painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Art (he was also one of the most influential teachers of Yen Shui-long when Yen studied at the school), also known as an amateur craft collector. In Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 143.
[110] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 98.

negotiate to the capital value, which Yanagi sorted as individualism and other polarised characters of cosmopolitan culture. The dualistic structure encountered a contradiction as *mingei* associates' resistance to international culture emerged with ambiguity in sorting urban capitalism as an external influence outside of 'Japaneseness'. *Mingei* theory's socialist engagement to transcend the hierarchy embodied as art-and-craft dualism was joined by the oriental-and-occidental and other dichotomies penetrating multiple cultural aspects. The attempt of transcending dualism to achieve a mutual-aid, collaborative world of composite beauty, as the theoretically ultimate goal of Yanagi's guild-like social reform through craft, was met with confusion when engaging in the market that *mingei* associates built for circulating '*getemono*'. The transcendence, which should be expected to recover the aesthetic experience in miscellaneity (an undetermined and open-ended realm to nurture individuals' autonomy), encountered an awkward paradox while involving in all well-defined dualistic frameworks.

New *mingei*'s anyminous makers' experience of cultural authenticity in modern life might be very different from their consumers in urban places. Under *mingei* associates' guidance, these '*getemono*' successfully led a trend of new taste; but the taste was more like a myth sustained by forms with ideological aura rather than a genuine appreciation toward the rustic nature of regional traditions. These 'new *mingei*' products aimed at a reform of urban material culture not through advocating a pre-industrial lifestyle but through reshaping taste to accommodate the reality of modern requirements. *Mingei* products indeed became a fashion and were successfully popular in urban marketplaces, however, they remained ambiguous for their consumers in the sense of *getemono.* It forced *mingei* associates to explain their task was 'beyond antiques collecting' and *mingei* objects need to be discerned as different from an antiquarian focus of rustic artefacts.[111] Yanagi's consistent emphasis can be seen in his public claim to clarify that *mingei* was not found in any sense of antiquarianism, but a method to rehabilitate local values, reconstructing new relationships with connected others.[112] However, Brandt believed what the new *Mingei* Movement converted was more like a "standardised genre" or "a formula for success".[113] Taking *mingei* associates' practice in Okayama prefecture as an example, Brandt indicated that a large quantity of pottery emerged as mere imitations of Hamada's works rather than regional nature.[114] He said,

> In the case of *Ushinoto* kiln, Yoshida explained that he gave the potter Kobayashi some models, which included 'good pieces from Ushinoto's old work, as well as pieces of *getemono* I had collected from various regions, along with work by Kawai, Hamada, Tomimoto, and so on'. Since, for most *mingei* enthusiasts,

[111] Ibid.
[112] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈日本民藝協會の提案〉[Proposal of Japan Mingei Association],《月刊民藝》[Mingei journal], no. 19(10), 1940; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 574-575.
[113] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 95, 97.
[114] Ibid, 95.

> good models tended to derive from the same basic group of objects, it is not surprising that new *mingei* were often conspicuously uniform in style.[115]

Undeniably, the development of new *mingei* in the 1930s relied on selected paradigms and also individual artists' viewpoints of correct beauty. For Yanagi, individual artists like Kawai, Hamada and Tomimoto, carried on a different responsibility from nameless artisans. Individual artist-craftsmen are obligated to "contribute beauty to the community", while the whole scale of "social evolution" through 'people's art' should be accomplished by numberless nameless makers.[116] Brandt's observation warned that the *mingei* associates hold an urban elite's perspective and the so-called modern taste, and their privileged social status was convenient for them to select "models" and coin a "uniform style", which might be more like an ideological product than an approach of 'craft in itself'. *Getemono*, as a commodity, might not guarantee the freedom from hierarchy and capital logic behind it yet. It was also a challenge for Yanagi and *mingei* associates to attain the access to the "daily life of people" when these products' consumers revealed a tendency to rather associate *mingei* objects with a taste related to "rustic curiosity", cultivated people's amusement or "elite female domesticity".[117]

Questioning Yanagi's claim on the entity of craft, Tomimoto held arguments related to Yanagi's notion of *getemono*. As an activist of the pattern reform movement, Tomimoto had investigated many ancient works then recognised that the birth of excellent work, even in a simple form, required devoting a tremendous amount of time and effort to overcome all difficulties encountered.[118] Yanagi and Tomimoto's division had already developed in 1929, when Tomimoto expressed his disagreement on taking craft as merely a kind of "tool-making idea".[119] Apparently, Tomimoto believed that the beauty of craft is not only the beauty of *getemono*. He found the inadequacy of '*getemono*' to represent the 'craft-in-itself' and questioned that craft-making had been narrowed to exclude individualistic expressions and creativities, which should take significant part for creating good designs. The truth is, *mingei* associates also noticed that the exclusive approach of 'craft-in-itself' seems contradictory in these new *mingei* objects when they were presented as conventional methods to copy ideas from stereotypical paradigms but give no opportunity for nurturing creativities locally.

In an overall view, *mingei* activists' rediscovery of *getemono* achieved a reversed impact in several cities by successfully circulating a new taste with a well-framed nationalist engagement in *getemono*. However, the new taste created along with the trend of new *mingei* was still far from the "reunification of art and craft", which aims at eliminating the class division between them as Yanagi

---

[115] Ibid, 95-96.
[116] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 237-238.
[117] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 108, 117.
[118] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 117.
[119] Tomimoto's unpublished letter to Leach in English dated 21 December 1929, from the archive of the Tomimoto Kenkichi Memorial Museum. in Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 212.

constantly claimed in the *mingei* theory.[120] Yanagi's approach of "craft in itself", or 'craft for craft's sake' defined 'fine art' as a divided category from the domain of composite beauty due to its individualist approach in a capitalist society.[121] The "craft in itself", along with Yanagi's notion of 'correctness' based on functional value, is a recognition of diversity within the craft kingdom to observe how beauty is embodied as a genuine attitude of life supported by all creative possibilities in material culture. However, in an art-versus-craft frame, the 'craft in itself' became an exclusive concept, converging ideas into the '*getemono*' category. New *mingei'*s marketing expansion in cities was more like a reversal, rather than reunification of art-and-craft division, as 'new *mingei*' objects emerged with the discrepancy in drawing boundaries between authentic Japanese tradition and imitative foreign value. The realistic side presents *'getemono'* as a frame to represent a specific form for 'common people', which shows a lack of awareness that culture is never a static, predetermined structure. When new practice of craft revealed itself as more like a synthesis or eclecticism of culture, the attempt to depict 'craft in craft's sake' as a purified realm would eventually become an new obstacle for 'reunification'.

The Beauty of the State: Is Yanagi's Nationalism also Imperialism?

Mingei associates' outreaching developments finally precipitated the official foundation of Japan *Mingei* Association in 1934 and the inauguration of the Japan Mingei Museum in 1936. These *Mingei* Movement's key moments occurred when Japan was in a state of political unrest and the surging right-leaning climate encouraged the nation's inclination to militarism and fascism. Then, in 1937, the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War escalated the conflict to a full-scale war, which also revealed the start of the long war-time period until the end of the Pacific War in 1945.

In the 1940s, *mingei* activists maintained their practice of reviving regional localities. However, their activity encountered a visible alteration, converging with the government's cultural policy for war-time mobilisation. Frequently, the *Mingei* association organised projects under the government's support, or ruled as a part of official bureaucratic programmes. Being uncomfortable with the Japanese government's hegemonic expansionism, Brandt has identified *mingei* activism as an aesthetic ideology of cultural politics justifying Japan's military invasions and the empire's cultural control in several colonial and semi-colonial regions under the moniker of 'Greater East Asia'.[122] In

---

[120] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 356.

[121] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 60.
Tsuchida observed *mingei* theory shows an attempt to construct the independence of craftwork by giving views access to the core, rather than framing its limited boundary reflected by art. In Tsuchida, 《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 253.

[122] With the frame of the Greater East Asian ideology and the scope of Japanese fascism, the claim of the value of folk craft was seen to play a crucial role in terms of aesthetic to deliberately manipulating spectacular forms

the juxtaposition with the imperial territory of 'Greater East Asia', which purveys a "multiethnic", "pan-Asian" structure to imagine a "non-western", "self-sufficient" civilisation, *mingei*'s emphasis on localities became a part of the imperial government's assimilation mechanism embodied as mobilisations of local culture confronting the expansion of western imperialism.[123] Under the enforced war-time Mobilisation Law, *mingei* activity's overlap with the imperial policy caused substantial mobility for Yanagi and his fellows to continue *mingei* practices in local regions. However, is Yanagi's term of 'national beauty' equivalent to the political aesthetics of 'Greater East Asia'? Or is it a nuanced slogan transformed from the original structure of 'composite beauty'? And to what degree can we confidently say the *Mingei* Movement in the 1940s supported the state's assimilation policy?

The subtle difference here will be explored in Chapter Three, where I will demonstrate the discrepancy between the ideological celebration of native culture framed as 'Greater East Asia' and *mingei* theory's revivals of locality through the case of Taiwanese craft movement. Before framing *mingei*'s aesthetic-politics against the imperialist background, I would like to identify the colonial structure which determined *mingei* theory's stance of cultural authenticity and its systemic contradiction within the essentialist belief of 'craft in itself'. In the context of 'beauty of the state' with a focus on the pragmatic operations of *mingei* theory, my exploration examines if the *Mingei* Association's approach of 'national beauty' achieved the transcendence beyond art-craft dualism with a fulfilment of 'composite beauty'. Considering *mingei* theory's socialist approach of ' the people', I will start by re-contextualising the term 'national beauty' in relation to Yanagi's attempt to recover the mobility in cultural frontiers as a resistance to the bureaucratically constructed concept of 'Japanese art history'.

The nation-made 'Japanese art history' derived from the epoch of international expositions, when expositions were organised in national and international scales for demonstrating a nation's industrial and cultural progression.[124] The Vienna Exhibition of 1873 was the first time Japan officially participated in an international exhibition (in the Exhibition of 1862 in England, Japanese objects displayed were collected by Rutherford Alcock, the first British diplomatic representative lived in Japan), and not long after that so-called 'Japonisme' emerged and Japanese 'ancient art (*ko-bijutsu*)'

---

and symbols for erecting daily necessities in life to the level of national glory. To build a united cultural sphere as an integrated entity to resist the imperial impact from the West, Japan represented imperialist controls with an ultra-nationalist ambition. This recognition of Japan's role celebrated domestic localities and also native cultures in colonised regions; such as the assimilation policy in colonies like Taiwan as in Korean coexisted with the attempts to preserve local cultures in the sense of the government's multicultural and multiethnic approach to cultural politics. In Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 125-127, 173-175.

[123] Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 174-175.

[124] Initiated from the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, London, the trend of organising fairs and expositions in national and international scale surged as a form of cultural and commercial competition among countries over the world. The success of the British exposition encouraged many countries devoting in competition with tremendous resources invested, which resulted in the establishment of the Bureau of International Expositions signed by 43 countries in 1928 to negotiate its organisation and distribution. In John E. Findling, ed., *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions: 1851-1988*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 372-374.

swept the European art and fashion world.[125] The Japanese government assigned preparatory tasks of these exhibitionary occasions to the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce to promote the national industry and manufacturing policy.[126] This exported image of 'Japanese art' was crafted with an economic-political purpose, rather than cultural, involving a nation-value-making process in selections, displays and deployments of objects to shape a tradeable image of 'national art'. The artificial knowledge delivered through exhibitionary methods was accompanied by power, which was formed within the European desire for Japanese art and their own cultural imperialism. In Tony Bennett's "exhibitionary complex", this system is embodied as a disciplinary mechanism to individualise and normalise social experience with an all-pervasive political economy of power.[127] Represented by the enormous cultural landscape in these expositions, the relations between knowledge and disciplinary power are visualised through juxtapositions of objects, which means all information delivered often relies on its position in relative views compared with others in forms of de-contextualised fragments, rather than any concept with complete history. Learning from these international experiences, Japan also developed exhibitionary methods for domestic use to promote industrial technologies and circulate knowledge through systematic classifications, examinations and hierarchical representations.[128] Yoshimi Shunya analysed this exhibitionary phenomenon as a representation of modern politics, suggesting that the advertised discipline was a synthesis compounded by "imperialism, consumptionism and mass entertainment".[129] Rediscovering craft as a form of art under the exhibitionary complex became a method to reshape Japanese identity, reflecting Japanese culture with an imagination of pre-modern beauty conveyed by crafted objects of the Edō period.

This retrospective re-contextualisation of the idea of 'national beauty' might appear to be a bit far from Yanagi's time. However, this historical survey provides an essential source to consider the art-craft dualism Yanagi confronted and its intercultural reflection, projecting a primitivised image of Japan as a 'nation of craft'. The concept of art and craft encountered an unprecedented shift in the modern era as modernity was somewhat represented as a process of westernisation. On the other hand,

---

[125] Itō, 〈万国博覧会の工芸デザイン- 陶瓷を中心に〉[Crafts design in world expositions - Focusing on pottery], 47, 53.

[126] Promoting the international market was a primary target of the *shokusan kōgyō* (promotion of industry and manufacturing) policy. Five primary purposes were set to approach in these international exposition experiences, which are selecting and exhibiting the most delicate Japanese items; learning techniques and knowledge from the western countries; preparing for further establishments of museums; accessing international markets to promote Japanese industries and investigating commodities and prices for developing trading programmes. in Nagayama Sadatomi,《內外博覽會總說 - 並に我國に於ける萬國博覽會の問題》[A general study of domestic and international expositions: problems of international exposition in Japan], (Tokyo: Suimei Shoin, 1937). 247-249.

[127] Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum : History, Theory, Politics*, 1947, (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1995), 59, 61.

[128] Lu Shao-li, 2005. *Exhibiting Taiwan: Power, Space and Image Representation of Japanese Colonial Rule.* 90.

[129] Yoshimi Shunya,《博覧会の政治学 - まなざしの近代》[Politics of expositions - gazing into the modern era], (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1992).

the *Mingei* Association's show-cum-sale model in the 1930s perpetuated this exhibitionary system to communicate the value of everyday objects. The private companies and local associations that *mingei* associates cooperated with still supported the government's propaganda via city-scaled exhibitions. Especially in urban places like Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka, specific media and news-press companies were enthusiastic, and these influential sponsors and organisers had considerable capability in mobilising resources and outreaching networks.[130] This fact is evident in cases of newspaper companies like Ōsaka Mainichi and Tokyo Nichinichi, which invested in exhibitions of new *mingei* projects.

These state-led institutional methods embodied dominance not only on the represented image and concept of Japanese culture, but also on its influence on the reconstruction of new knowledge along with the categorising system sustaining it. Within the exhibitionary complex, an inner structure was reshaped under interventional scopes and reflective connections in disciplinary forms. This disciplinary system supported a further nation-making process redefining the domain of national art in relation to its status in an intercultural modern sphere. As a consequence, the terms which had been used in the traditional domain encountered a significant shift. It also reflected this institutional mechanism's will on producing modern knowledge, projecting a 'Japaneseness' by accommodating the international context. The formation of the art-craft division under the institutional point of view demonstrates this impact to change the concept of art in the 'epoch of composite beauty' in Yanagi's term. Before the term 'fine art' (*bijutsu*) was assigned with a national mission to refer to pre-Meiji class-oriented craftworks and other skills relating to beauty, or even be used as a narrow term referring to visual art, the word 'art' (*geijutsu*) had existed for a long time to include cultivated, skilful techniques like literature, theatre, music, artisan work, martial arts and of course those fine art categories within the modern term.[131] The institutional-reforming terminology represented by this state-made disciplinary process subsequently led to a development to assign 'art' (*bijutsu*) with the creative agency of new forms, while *geijutsu*, also a synonym of craft *(kōgei*), came to symbolise the protection of history through protections and promotions of traditional art. It appeared that paintings occupied the centre of fine arts for the status it represented as cultural belongings of samurai factions; meanwhile, sculpture and craft, including *ukiyo-e*, were allocated a more "peripheral position" for their association with genres of "commoners".[132] Instead of identifying craft as commoners' art, *Mingei*'s socialist engagement adopted the more neutral and universal term 'people', conveying a rejection to the class-oriented categories processed by the nation's bureaucratic system. This approach reallocated aesthetic creativity in the general context of daily experiences, taking cultural frontiers as the site where art's energies are developed and dynamically transformed. In Yanagi's thinking, the

[130] Lu Shao-li, *Exhibiting Taiwan: Power, Space and Image Representation of Japanese Colonial Rule*, (Taipei: Rye Field Publications, 2005), 90-93.
[131] Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty*, 76-77.
[132] Ibid, 90-91.

'national beauty' is not a term to confirm the state's dominance, but a resolution for reviving 'composite beauty' generated by people.

As mentioned in Chapter One, Yanagi's guild socialism took Penty and Kropotkin's mediaeval city structures as key models, which project a similar doubt of unitary state-made collectivism. Penty's notion of 'guild' deviated from Cole's model of 'national guild'.[133] He appreciated guilds in forms of small, autonomous societies, which were locally generated with "entirely self-governing basis" and served for no "admixture of private interests".[134] Coexisting with surging democratism, the idea of 'people' revealed a negotiation with the totalitarian ideology of the state, resisting the national powers' intervention to individuals' independent will. To examine the *Mingei* Movement's nationalism within the idea of 'national beauty', the difference between totalitarian ethnic nationalism and a totally shaped civic nationalism should be discerned to judge if *mingei* aesthetics encouraged self-determined identities to maintain the liberty of making. The inclusion of the war-time circumstance might make the analysis of Yanagi's nationalism more complicated; however, exploring *mingei* activism's achievement by examining the fulfilment of its aesthetic notion is a matter to evaluate *mingei*'s transcendence of art-craft dualism.

Accompanied with the surge of new *mingei*, political repression increased with the potential occurrence of war and the waning national economy in the 1930s. The obstacles to maintaining civil liberty increased when hegemonism fermented in Japan and military tension rose to a higher level in Manchuria, China, which subsequently resulted in Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933.[135] Since Japan withdrew from the League, in order to maintain the economic order, Japan

---

[133] This can be observed from Yanagi's criticism of Douglas Howard Cole's guild discourse on Cole's inclination of economics and his tolerance of the widespread mechanism in industrial productions. In Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 9.
Nakami categorised Yanagi's guild socialism with thoughts of 'local guilds' also supported by Penty, G.R.S. Taylor, who advocated a small-scale, mediaeval form of local guilds. This faction is opposite to socialists like Alfred Richard Orage(1873-1934), John. A. Hobson(1858-1940) and Cole, who represented 'national guilds' as large-scale, nationwide socialism. In Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 164.

[134] Penty, *Post-industrialism*, 86.

[135] Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations was incited by the League's rejection to acknowledge Japan's occupation in Manchuria as legal. Known as the Mukden Incident (*Manshū jihen*), this series of military invasions derived from a detonation on a railway owned by Japan in Manchuria then resulted in China's loss of three provinces in the Northeast region. The prime mission of the League of Nations was to maintain the peace of the world. However, the organisation did not rule to give commensurable sanctions responding to this incident because of some major members' passive attitude on tackling Japan's invasion for the consideration of their benefits in other colonies. Japan's withdrawal was a tremendous setback for the League of Nations, but the organisation did not imply strict economic sanction responding to this incident.
Japanese society revealed a significant inner turmoil since the Mukden Incident in the first half of 1930s. Many crucial social incidents occurred before the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937. Known as a partisan of the constitutional movement, prime minister Inisai Tsuyoshi was assassinated by the imperial navy in the May 15 Incident in 1932, which reveals the surge of militarism. Another series of assassination occurred on February 26 in 1936 with a group of imperial military members' rebellion targeting at factional opponents and successfully assassinating many leading politicians. The occurrence of the February 26 Incident in 1936, is an indicative historical event to observe the surge of fascism in Japanese society. The inclination to hegemonism incurred criticism from England, America and France, from where Japan was motivated to make a breakthrough

embraced capital commercialism, which increased processes of urbanisation, mechanisation and commercialisation in cities. The corresponding economic crisis forced the Japanese government to develop more active policies to revitalise the economy in rural regions and rebuild industrial connections with the international market. Demonstrated through the Peasant Art Movement, the industrial revival in regional provinces had provided a possibility, which inspired new exporting policies based on the mobilisation of rural labourers and productions. Rural revivals therefore joined as a part of national capitalism. Under this national-scaled economic blueprint, Yanagi's inclination of local industries does not sound so confrontational to the national central goal, which makes *mingei* theory's resistance to hegemony ambivalent and perfunctory. In several articles Yanagi published in the 1940s, the term 'beauty of state' was used to confirm *mingei*'s alignment to the government's New Order (*Shintaisei*) war-time policy by emphasising the urgency of regenerating local industries as a solution for repairing the imitative "international feature".[136]

The New Order served as an official principle for cultural administration under the circumstance of total war along with a series of renovations launched by the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (*Taisei Yokusankai*) during the second Fumimaro Konoe cabinet (1940-1943). The second Konoe cabinet was significant for starting the epoch of a totalitarian one-party state and the union of the Axis powers allied with Germany and Italy. This wave of movement can be seen as an expansion adjusted from the existing National Spiritual Mobilisation Movement *(Kokka seishin sōdōin undō*) launched in 1937 but aimed at constructing new national culture based on substantial revivals of localities. The foundation of this new institutional system was ideologically underpinned by the philosopher Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945) and the Shōwa Research Association (*shōwa kenkyūkai*), which was founded in 1933 and then got more significantly influential on state policy in the Konoe period. Miki's cultural theory was influential for his observations of social class. He identified the hierarchical gap between 'culture life' and 'daily life culture'. "Daily life culture" refers to "absolutely everyday, ordinary things such as language, cooking, and walking", which he thought should be distinguished from the concept of "culture life" as a "high realm of art and music and literature".[137] Based on this categorisation, Miki demonstrated that the promotion of "daily life culture" was more significant for the development of a nation in the sense of social equality:

> Whereas the so-called cultural life takes the stance of receiving culture made by a small number of artists and scholars, in a daily life culture all people deepen their consciousness of the fact that they participate in

---

from the economic depression and develop a solid economic entity contending with members of the League of Nations. In Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 173.

[136] Yanagi,〈新體制と工藝美の問題〉[The New Order and the issue of craft's beauty], 252.

[137] Miki Kiyoshi, 〈生活文化と生活技術〉[Daily life culture and daily life technology], 1985;《三木清全集 - 第七巻》*Collected Works if Miki Kiyoshi,* vol. 14, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1941), 384, 390.

cultural production, and everyone must stand in a productive or creative rather than merely receptive relation to such things as art and science.[138]

Holding the belief that social members' engagement was the key to a "creative and productive" society, Miki encouraged individuals to participate as a creator, rather than a consumer, to achieve daily social productions. The notion of 'daily life culture' shows a concern for culture's class-oriented factors to suggest that culture should bring substantial productions and disparage cultural forms of consumerism. Miki's cultural studies did identify the fallacy to consider culture as a high-class commodity but not the truth of daily experience. However, the celebration of social production subsequently became a convenient ideological tool to promote the war-time mobilisation by praising the virtue of thrift and self-sacrifice for the nation's future and collective benefits.

Ironically, the government was clear that Japanese culture was a valuable commodity. Targeting the international market, the government hired consultants overseas. Under the government's commission, Bruno Taut and Charlotte Perriand arrived in Japan in 1933 and in 1937, respectively, as we have seen, providing their European consumers' perspective for the industrial policy to develop export products. Taut and Perriand's perspectives of industrial design related to the discursive climate in Europe with the influence of modernism, Weimar Bauhaus and Le Corbusier's design, especially in the applicative practices of the architectural field. They found the beauty of Japanese craftworks associated with the western art-historical context through a consideration of modern design, which was celebrated for the resistance of ornaments through forms of "impersonal", "objective", "originally collective" and "healthy qualities" and a balance in pursuing functional beauty.[139] It is worth noting that, during their stay in Japan, both Taut and Perriand expressed their similar concerns of tradition as observing the prevalent phenomenon of imitating western taste in urban culture.[140] This observation was also frequently circulated in Yanagi's justification of local value, in the sense of national beauty, which should be superior to the cosmopolitan characteristics in cities. He mentioned that the progress of ethnography and folkloristics had raised the attention of local culture through constructing knowledge of customs, traditions and languages based on systematic and taxonomic integrations of history, models and distributions. However, these notions seldom went beyond the "domain of fact" to develop "value recognition" in local Japan's representative status of national beauty.[141] Yanagi suggested that, containing diverse languages, customs, techniques and also sociality and morality, "local places" are where the Japanese value substantially survives. He pointed out that urban culture is defective in two factors:

---

[138] Ibid, 390.
[139] Bruno Taut, *Modern Architecture*, (London: The Studio Limited, 1929), 97-98.
[140] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 174, 182.
[141] Yanagi,〈地方性の文化的價値〉[Cultural value of localities], 223.

> First, the value capacity is increasingly becoming insignificant. It is not deniable that genuinely correct, beautiful and healthy things have been diminishing. The second is that Japaneseness has become weak. Many things are produced by pursuing foreign [tastes].[142]

Indicating the lack of "value capacity" in urban culture, Yanagi's *getemono* practice in rural frontiers shows an attempt to overturn the cultural dominance of urban commercialism. Elevating local handicrafts' legitimacy toward daily experiences to a nationalist sense of beauty, the appreciation of *getemono* became a cultural competition for the authenticity of 'Japaneseness', which should be purified from 'foreign' influences.

Both Taut and Perriand's tasks in Japan benefited from *mingei* associates' support. Taut developed a friendship with *mingei* activists like Yanagi, Kawai, Hamada, Tomimoto and Leach, while Perriand's investigation in the Tōhoku region relied much on *mingei* associates' surveys and examinations.[143] Under the Ministry of Economy and Industry's commission, Perriand curated the 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' exhibition, which opened in 1940 at Takashimaya department stores in Tokyo and Osaka. This exhibition aimed to demonstrate the government's investigation and official development of manufacturing industries on a national scale, and convey implications of traditional techniques in exported wares and utensils in modern life. For the exhibition, Perriand conducted a series of surveys of local traditions, which include cities like Sendai, Yamagata, Tsuruoka, Shinjo, Akita, Nagoya, Kyoto, Nara and Kanazawa, to collect items for the show, apparently with *mingei* associates' support. She also visited Kawai's studio in Kyoto and included many of Kawai's collections in her curatorial project.[144] A catalogue of this exhibition, subtitled 'Contacts with Japanese Art', was published in the same year, promoting exhibited objects as a national-standard paradigm.[145] The catalogue also claimed that this show aimed at 'selecting' excellent works from current manufacturing products and searching for things whose "authentic

---

[142] Ibid, 225.

[143] For instance, revivals of regional industries executed by the new-established Snowfall Region Farm Village Economic Survey Institute in Yamagata and the National Industrial Arts Research Institute in Sendai, where *mingei* associates made collaborative efforts in many ways. The rural condition in Tōhoku regions has its specific context with the term 'snow damage' initiated by Matsuoka Shunzō, representing the socioeconomic plight and health issues caused by the heavy snowfall climate of northern Japan such as cold-related illnesses, agriculture depression and famine. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry set up the Snowfall Institute in 1933 to provide direct support to revitalise the village economy, while the Ministry of Education also arranged funds of compulsory education for the acknowledgement of the specific burden in this area. The Industrial Arts Research Institute was established by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in 1928. It further developed a series of collaborative projects with the *Mingei* Association in the 1930s to promote new *mingei* products with a similar model of *mingei* projects in the San-in region. In Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan*, 137-139.

[144] Shiga,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*], 174-183.

[145] The catalogue《選択. 伝統. 創造 - 日本藝術との接触》[Selection, Tradition and Creation: Contacts with Japanese Art] was edited by Charlotte Perriand and architect Sakakura Junzo. The entrance of this exhibition was signed to juxtapose Japanese characters of 'selection', 'tradition' and 'creation' with setting 'tradition' in the middle to imply the relationship among these three concepts. In Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 178.

traditions" were still preserved.[146] The discursive structure of Perriand is exactly the same as *mingei* theory's approach of localities, scoping an 'original Japaneseness' with a clear cultural boundary, which is self-sufficient, purified and independent from intercultural influences. However, the modern forms demonstrated in this show were far from the idea of '*getemono*'. This exhibition demonstrated various aspects of modern life by transforming traditional techniques into modern uses in design projects, which included architecture, gardening art, interior design, domestic furniture and appliances. (Fig.15) With a specific emphasis on 'creation', this exhibition demonstrated a synthetic complex of 'Japanese modernity' via "pure" and "simple" forms, which Perriand praised as "eternal" associated with the "tremendous purity" and "transparent planar composition".[147]

The idea of 'modernity' in the 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' exhibition conveyed an eclectic connection between traditional-manufactured objects and modernist artistic expressions. Although Perriand's appreciation toward the "authentic tradition" of "Japanese art" was sincere, *mingei* associates did not entirely recognise that the modernist designs in this show were "Japanese" enough. Yanagi and Hamada published an article right after the launch of the exhibition, commenting that Perriand's view of Japanese tradition was generally valuable as a westerner's "natural and straightforward", maybe also obtrusive, interpretation of Japanese culture's "uniqueness".[148] However, they were not satisfied with the design method's intervention in natural materials, removing the originally rough, interesting features and reshaping them into modern looks.[149] Perriand's adoption of a child's doodle she collected from a local kindergarten confused them. (Fig. 16) They proclaimed that considering children's doodles' value in a modern artist viewpoint might be understandable, but "kids' works are eventually kids' work, and it is a mistake for an adult to copy it into a craft".[150] *Mingei* associates found this show failed to communicate the authentic Japanese tradition since these daily objects did not demonstrate a correct context of Japanese culture. Their original context was altered, modified and recontextualised to attain different purposes. It might be less surprising to see this child-like expression in Picaso's art. His ceramic works often used it as a metaphor of "origin" associated with ancient Greek culture, the childhood of civilisation.[151] In western modernist language, imitating children's art was celebrated as a "purified" and "unchanging" nature of humanity scoped in

---

[146] Charlotte Perriand, 〈選択伝統及び創造をこの展覧会のテーマとして掲げる〉[Revealing the theme of the 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' exhibition] in《選択. 伝統. 創造 - 日本藝術との接触》['Selection, Tradition and Creation': Contacts with Japanese art], (Tokyo: Oyama Shoten, 1941); quoted in Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 181.

[147] Tsuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 181, 188.

[148] Yanagi Sōetsu and Hamada Shōji, 〈ペリアンの展覧會を見て〉[After viewing Berriand's exhibition],《月刊民藝》[*Mingei* journal], no. 25(4), 1941, 3.

[149] Ibid, 5.

[150] Ibid, 5-6.

[151] Claude Ruiz Picasso, "The Valley of Gold: Picasso as Potter." In Elizabeth Cowling and John Golding, ed., *Picasso: Sculptor/Painter*, (London: Tate Gallery, 1994), 225.

an opposite relation to "all that does change or develop, namely, the civilised".[152] This modernist structure provided a time frame that often took non-European culture as a prompt to temporarily leave the "mature own" and enter into the "childhood" by entering into an infinite past.[153] In 'Selection, Tradition and Creation', tradition, conveying a pre-modern Japan in its timeless nature, fulfilled this temporary space for returning the 'childhood'. In the new-formed modernist context, 'tradition' was transformed into another language, serving as something unchanged. At this point, although Yanagi did not adopt the modernist language that primitivised 'adults' craft', his celebration of the "eternal", "timeless realm" of tradition projecting tradition as a "natural language" in the "undefiled wells" of making might be very similar to Perriand's romanticist primitivism.[154] However, due to a different approach of originality - in Perriand projected as an individual formalist language, while in Yanagi manifested as miscellaneous day-to-day experiences represented by 'tradition' - their stance of a purified crafted object reveals a conspicuous divergence.

It is not difficult to find out that *mingei*'s notion of tradition is bound up with the belief of 'originality', which penetrates Yanagi's insistence on rural regions' firm connection to pre-modern Japan as a solution to resist cultural assimilation. *Mingei* associates' activities in forms of local projects demonstrate a cautious engagement in preserving local culture based on an identifiable original model. To attain the 'origin' of locality, *mingei* associates tried to conserve the original material forms, which were supported by ethnographic surveys. These surveys in local communities guaranteed specific cultural references of material features, which also conveyed that there is a reasonable boundary for respecting their cultural origins while transforming traditional elements into contemporary uses. In the modern design domain, this inclination of protectionism would be a constraint to negotiate any innovation; however, in the frame of cultural assimilation, a clear boundary of 'Japanese tradition' was psychologically secured when involving in a culturally dynamic, fluid and hybrid climate of modernity. It is worth noting that the 'Japanese tradition' synthetically consisted of a diversity of local contexts which revealed no affinity to the hegemonic unity of 'Japaneseness'. Yanagi's term of 'national beauty' is not a singular concept, but a synthesis with internal heterogeneity, whose stability relies on the thriving of interbalanced local spontaneities.

At the end of the 1930s, Yanagi's perspective of locality developed new connotations with a clarified spatial structure of Japanese culture. *Mingei* activism's engagement in substantial local revivals provided a more precise view to reconstruct local discourses supporting Yanagi's concept of nation, which should be synthesised by the variety of local cultures rather than the totality of dominant value. This notion can be observed from his rejection of the government's cultural assimilation policy, especially the means to standardise Tokyo tone as the national language and

[152] Antliff and Leighten, "Primitive", 217.
[153] Ibid, 219.
[154] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 163.

suppressed "pre-modern" provincial dialects.[155] The Ryukyuan dialect of Okinawa was emphasised to convey the significance of local languages in provincial regions for preserving Japanese culture's origin:[156]

> Standard Japanese is a communal national language, while local dialects are unique national languages. […] National language should be developed with its organic synthesis representing a nation's nature, history, temperament and custom. If Ryukyuan translated their beautiful Ryukyuan songs into standard Japanese, they would lose their original tone. The abolishment of language is equal to giving up the unique forms of literature and music.[157]

Yanagi categorised two different approaches to a "national language". A "communal national language" is a unified, standard communicating form, while local dialects, also unique national languages, play a significant role to preserve local natures in their original forms. Yanagi recognised that languages matter in a wide range of cultural aspects. Since a language carries substantial cultural functions, it should not just be simplified as a communicating tool which can be unified to follow an absolute rule assigned by the government. Under the Mobilisation Law during war-time Japan, the improvement of modern lifestyle was developed with a national goal of 'Japanese purification', which forced changes and prohibitions on not only the dialect but also the local costume, hairstyle, drama, names and annual ceremonies.[158] Yanagi denounced the absurdity of enforcing a state-made culture to replace a long-term developed local entity. These localities have individual natural conditions and historical backgrounds. In Yanagi, neither northern Japan nor southern Japan could be epitomised into the state-made, standardised 'Japaneseness', which represents the value of the capital model.

Okinawa's geographical location in the South makes a substantially different landscape from Tōhoku's northern characteristics. Yanagi categorised Ryukyuan culture as a domain of the 'South' with a 'subtropical lifestyle' to consider its cultural origin in relation to regions like southern China and Taiwan.[159] For example, Okinawa has a sophisticated cultural identity contributed by its

---

[155] Yanagi's rejection of the government's assimilation policy is obscured to observe. Since the Second Sino-Japanese War started in 1937, national mobilisation law was promulgated in 1938. It was followed with a series of press restrictions to control and discipline thought and speech. These restrictions brought impact in many public spaces, which included newspapers, magazines, radio broadcasting, cinemas and even religions. Press publications concerning military secrets and strategy, and foreign relations were banned. Writing articles and expressing thoughts against the government's wish was almost impossible under the reinforced restrictions. However, his statement of locality constantly conveys a rejection of national power constraining the development of locality. In his emphasis on the significance of preserving the Okinawa dialect, this statement is obvious. in Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace,* 164.

[156] Yanagi,〈地方性の文化的價値〉[Cultural value of localities], 224.

[157] Sōetsu Yanagi,〈琉球の富〉[The fortune of Ryukyu], 1939, in《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第十五巻-沖縄の傳統》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol.15, Tradition of Okinawa*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981), 60.

[158] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace,* 217-220.

[159] Yanagi Sōetsu ,〈琉球の富〉[The fortune of Ryukyu], 70.

sophisticated trading history, which can be identified in pottery techniques with the kiln system from China and Taiwan while the glazing system came from Korea.[160] After an on-site survey in Okinawa, *mingei* associates co-edited a special volume for the *Mingei* journal focusing on Okinawa's manufacturing techniques, pottery and stencel dying for example, with an emphasis on the "unique character" of the island and its cultural connection with adjacent countries.[161] Observing the fact that Japanese culture's source is multicentric, Yanagi recognised that the national assimilation policy would eliminate the traces of these originalities. This concern included the Japanisation, also known as *Kōminka,* applied in Japan's colonies like Korea and Taiwan. Although saying Yanagi never had any agreement on Japan's imperial superiority is too perfunctory, it is still important to affirm that Yanagi was a pacifist. His pacifism was inspired by Leo Tolstoy's argument on the Russo-Japanese War, and in a letter to Leach he emotionally expressed "nothing is more shameful than the word unavoidableness [of a war]".[162] In articles published on his own responsibility, he consciously avoided expressions which might incite fighting spirit or support military invasion.[163] Yanagi's perspective of 'composite beauty' supported his denial of assimilation in colonies and occupied territories, indicating that the distinction of dialects should be recognised with knowing their cultural sources; for instance, the Okinawan language of "Japanese origin" and Taiwanese was of "Chinese and southern origin".[164] The variety of local traditions sustained by diverse origins of originality is the vital source of 'composite beauty', which guarantees the 'national beauty' in its unique forms.

Yanagi's declaration of *mingei*'s rule in the epoch of the New Order conveyed a pragmatic factor to coexist with the Mobilisation Law. He suggested a healthy economic environment should rely on "active controls of quality of productions", which should be prior to "passive controls of commodity price".[165] Moreover, he highlighted the government's significant role for establishing a 'correct institution' to rebuild a healthy society.[166] However, this statement cannot be seen as an utter and total acceptance of the imperial ideology. Efforts made to maintain local vitalities and to avoid the consequence that local agencies were annexed into the totalitarian direction of the state should be assessed in a balanced way. In the next chapter, through an observation of the colonised, I will explore this centre-periphery tension further to demonstrate how local agencies made use of the transforming imperial space and reengaging in spontaneous regenerations of local discourse.

---

[160] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 114.

[161] Yanagi Sōetsu and Serizawa Keisuke,〈琉球工藝解說〉[Introduction of crafts in Okinawa], 1939; in《月刊民藝》[*Mingei Journal*], no.8 (11), 1-3.

[162] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 177, 181.

[163] Ibid, 232.

[164] Ibid, 235.

[165] Yanagi,〈新體制と工藝美の問題〉[The New Order and the Issue of craft's beauty], 259-260.

[166] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈物と文化〉[Things and culture], 1941; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 317.

Yanagi expressed no consensus to the term 'national spirit' defined by the New Order regime. He held a sceptical attitude toward the National Spiritual Movement, questioning the bureaucratic advocacy of national spirits as an abstract and conceptual ideology which lacks specificity. He wrote,

> The Japanese spiritual movement 'in line with things' is a flag we should highly raise. Japanese spirits must not be concluded as a close-ended abstract concept; since [discussions] lack certainty and precision when deviating from [indications of] concrete objects. Rather than in the domain of language, Japaneseness is more explicitly conveyed in the tangible realm.[167]

As explored in Chapter One, Yanagi did not appreciate epistemological approaches of any "close-ended abstract concept". Yanagi identified *mingei* theory as an aesthetic notion of tangible things, which involved individuals' direct experiences of the material world. Scoping the state-made 'national spirit' as an intangible concept, he argued that aesthetic experience relies on intuitive eyes, which should be prior to cognitions of knowledge. The "intuitive" perception is a key to the Japanese spirit, which Yanagi believed must be embodied through "tangible things" for "seeing", rather than intangible things for "knowing".[168] The idea of '*getemono*' demonstrates this approach, taking frontier experiences as significant sources to resist the centralised definition of national value. That rebuilds the affinity of the miscellaneous condition of everything when perceiving tangible materials in the living context with composite complexity. This free domain guaranteed by craft is a nature for anonymity, ambiguity, instability and heterogeneity, where things are allowed to maintain their undefined meanings, dynamic functions and undivided unity.[169]

The self-sufficient miscellaneity within Yanagi's scope of 'Japaneseness' was perhaps valid and politically necessary to recover the cultural originality in an exclusive binary under the spatial structure, which was sustained by the tension between western and Japanese imperialism and a sense of crisis toward cultural assimilation. However, the cultural-essentialist myth of a static, unchanging and timeless originality usually overlooked the actual overlap, where cultures never existed as such a "juxtaposition" of "national principles", nor "simply dualistic in relation of Self and Other".[170] Beyond the exhibitionary mechanism of cultural politics, there is a domain for 'composite beauty', where cultures existed in perpetuating this development, embracing the ambiguity and hybridity in a dynamic process. New *mingei*'s perplexing embrace of the urban market in the 1930s was just one of the contradictions, which failed to frame capitalism as a value made in the West rather than as a spontaneous development within Japanese culture. The transcendence of art-craft dualism in *mingei* theory was attained within a well-defined tradition, in which 'composite beauty' was framed in an

---

[167] Ibid.

[168] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈「見ること」と「知ること」〉[The seen and the known], 1940; in Yanagi,《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 208.

[169] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the Mingei Movement], 59-62.

[170] Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences", 207.

ontological trap, where anything beyond this frame was expelled from the *mingei* aesthetics' acknowledgement of miscellaneity. Folk craft, trapped within this ontological originality, was forced to embrace the "rural peasantry" and "virtues of ethnic purity" that promised its authenticity.[171] The contradiction makes *mingei* associates' awkward repeatedness on criticising modern designers' "imitations" of "western painting" with an ambivalent emphasis on craft's essential difference from art's approach of individualistic technique.[172] The notion of anonymity, in the art/craft dualism, neutralises the "inventiveness of people" as the spontaneous "product of nature's forces" rather than justifying individuals' autonomous contributions in making daily creativities.[173]

It is necessary to reiterate here that, although *mingei* theory is not perfect in post-colonial hindsight, its humanist approach was as subversive as other modernist manifestos of the time. The philosophy derived from Yanagi's guild socialism engaged in several class-oriented symptoms within modern aesthetics' intellectualism, and achieved remarkable debates to problementise the discursive hegemony for defining what is eligible to be art. By returning to the material world of craft, the concerns of peripheral sites of cultural phenomenon deconstructed the visual-centric and conceptual rhetoric in modernist art, revealing the "pluralistic universe" hidden under the order of intellectualism.[174] Yanagi opened a post-historical space for art, resetting cultural frontiers as sites of originality, where an object's aesthetic condition could be emancipated from the dominance of any discursive power. Unfortunately, the *Mingei* Movement also negotiated with a very specific moment of human history and the tough political climate in Japan. Yanagi's ideal of 'composite beauty', the realm for transcending all human-made dualism, remained unaccomplished. However, as all other unaccomplished journeys in art history, it suggested an idealistic, utopian realm, which directed concrete actions, significantly expanding the meaning of art.

---

[171] Antliff and Leighten, "Primitive", 230-231.

[172] Yanagi Sōetsu, Hamada Shōji and Shikiba Ryūzaburō, 〈第三回文展工藝評〉[Critiques on the third official art exhibition Bunten], 《月刊民藝》[Mingei journal], no. 9 (12), 1939, 35.

[173] Antliff and Leighten, "Primitive", 218.

[174] David C. Lamberth, "*A Pluralistic Universe* a Century Later: Rationality, Pluralism, and Religion", in Martin Halliwell and Joel D. S. Rasmussen, ed., *William James and the Transatlantic Conservation: Pragmatism, Pluralism and Philosophy of Religion*, (Oxford University Press, 2014), 137.

Chapter Three

Mingei's Nuance in Taiwan

In 1943, Yanagi began a series of surveys throughout Taiwan on the behalf of the Mingei Association, aligned with the imperial government's cultural movement - the so-called 'New Order'. Associates of *Minzoku Taiwan* magazine, which gathered a group of adventurous, intellectual young people, hosted this initiative and accompanied *mingei* activists to visit local industries over the colony.[1] These visits became a significant bridge between the Japanese *Mingei* Movement and the Taiwanese craft movement advocated by the Taiwanese painter Yen Shui-long. Furthermore, it is thought of as a landmark in the convergence of these two formerly independent movements, encouraging analysis of their relationship. The 'convergence' is partially true. Yen wrote a regular column for *Minzoku Taiwan* and played a crucial role during the *Mingei* Association's survey in Taiwan. In Yen's writings after 1943, *mingei* theory evidently appealed as a crucial resource that considerably inspired his practice. However, this connection also reveals how the transmission of *mingei* theory in Taiwan followed patterns of displacement and replacement, problematising the attempt to include Taiwanese craft as a practice dominated by the imperial aesthetics of the time.

Nonetheless, it is extremely difficult to define when the Taiwanese craft movement started as Yen proposed no manifesto and launched no independent official bulletin. In the 1930s, Yen commenced a series of surveys on Taiwanese craft, which was much before he met Yanagi in person. In 1942, he published 'The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan', in which he used the term 'free craft' to explain how Taiwanese indigenous culture inspired him to perceive craft as a prototype of creativity for artistic experience.[2] At this point, Yen had already initiated and organised several revival projects of local handicraft in southern Taiwan including the Bamboo Ware Manufacturing & Sales Cooperative in Guanmiao Village, which Yanagi subsequently praised as the "ideal realm" for a handicraft organisation during his visit in 1943.[3] Yen's practice reached a certain maturity in the 1940s with his handicraft revival strategy through modern design receiving a positive response in the

---

[1] *Minzoku Taiwan* magazine was issued from July 1941 to January 1945. During this period, forty-three volumes were published in the form of monthly issues. The unpublished forty-fourth volume was republished in 1998.

[2] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝産業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan",《臺灣公論》*Taiwan Public Opinion,* vol. no.7(2), 1942; in Yen Shui-long, *Formosa Industrial Art*, 16-26. Taipei: Yuan-Liou Press, 2016.

[3] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈生活と民藝座談會：柳宗悦氏を圍んで〉[Life and *mingei* seminar], 1943; in Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, ed.,《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, (Taipei: Xiongshi meishu, 2001), 535.

market. Although Yen built up his career independently, his approach shared considerable similarity to the *mingei* theory. For example, in 'The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan', he demonstrated the significance of preserving local tradition, which he expected to construct firm connections with daily life to develop cultural resistance against the vulgar industrial products.[4] In addition, his emphasis on the "essence as a ware" and the "value of function" shows a coherence with *mingei* theory's celebration of functional beauty.[5] That makes some researchers, Lin Chen-wei for example, consider that this "conjunction" between Yanagi and Yen Shui-long might have happened earlier, around 1926, during Yen's study at Tokyo Fine Arts School when Yanagi and other *mingei* associates launched the prospectus for the establishment of the Japan Folk Crafts Museum.[6] According to Lin, Yen had very likely acquired Yanagi's aesthetics of craft far earlier than when they first met each other in 1943, and Yen's enthusiasm toward handicraft was significantly inspired by Yanagi. This connection suggests that the *Mingei* Movement has been explored as an art-historical source to trace the Taiwanese handicraft movement's origin, which also complicated the debate on the originality of Yen's practice of craft in Taiwan.

My primary intention in this chapter is to demonstrate the 'convergence' of Yanagi and Yen Shui-long, which I feel reluctant to frame as a linear transmission from Japan to Taiwan within the colonial structure. Instead, I would like to emphasise the discontinuity of this influence as I keep highlighting in the entire thesis. Anyone who believes in Yanagi's influence on Yen's revival of local handicrafts will find it straightforward to prove this assumption with the substantial amount of evidence contained in Yen's writings. So do I. However, enhancing this linear connection will not bring anything different from "isolating a central origin", which "privileges one term above all Others from within what must be a continuously reconfigured matrix of language and representation".[7] To evaluate, or to re-examine, Yen's practice of Taiwanese handicraft, with the expectation of "a particular sense of originality" tracing to the *Mingei* Movement, the linear narrative would merely project "predictable rule by system".[8] Instead of retelling the story enforcing the connection in searching for an 'origin', I would like to reveal the nuanced irregularity and discontinuity within the similarity for building the connection, by demonstrating the transmission of *mingei* theory in Taiwan as a dynamically and collectively made process, rather than an inherited legacy from one individual to another one, from an alienated predecessor to his followers.

Stating that the transmission of *mingei* theory in Taiwan was collectively made, I hope to carry on this historical narrative by analysing Yen's practice's interactions with other local discourses in

---

[4] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝產業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", in *Formosa Industrial Art*, 24-25.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Lin Cheng-Wei, "Taiwanese crafts movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", 170.
[7] Richard Shiff, "The Originality", Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, ed., *Critical Terms for Art History,* (Chicago and London: The University and Chicago Press, 1996), 147.
[8] Ibid, 146-149.

searching for alternative Taiwanese identity sidestepping from the colonial assimilation. It is necessary to scope this collective process by observing how local intellectuals reacted with the mercurial imperial government and its ideological trajectory. That means the inner heterogeneity within local society which produced multiple responses and uses of *mingei* theory should be considered as a process of local autonomy. As a result, I need to defer a direct engagement in Yen's practice until the complexity of the cultural 'resistance' projected and negotiated by both Japanese and Taiwanese local residents is clarified. In this chapter, I would like to start with *Minzoku Taiwan* associates, especially Kanaseki Takeo's role in circulating the term *'mingei'* in Taiwan.

Kanaseki's anthropologist background and his enthusiasm toward Yanagita Kunio's folkloristics conducted an alternative engagement in *mingei* aesthetics. As mentioned in Chapter One, Yanagi manifested the difference between *mingei* and folklore, taking *mingei* as an axiological and ontological approach based on concrete objects and folklore as an epistemological technique for processing conceptual and abstract logic. Kanaseki's approach presents a hybridity, taking use of these terms whose meanings were altered for accommodating the locality. It might be unusual in art-historical writing, but here it is necessary for me to temporarily shift the focus from Yen's practice to this renowned magazine and spend two sections of this chapter depicting the general acceptance of *mingei* concept, if my intention is to problematise the linear narrative in a colonial structure. My purpose is not merely to prove how *mingei* theory benefited local discourses, but to make these simulative processes visible to illustrate how local discourses thrived by resourcefully sidestepping imperial ideology.

Published in 1941 with both Taiwanese and Japanese writers participating, *Minzoku Taiwan* reshaped the climate of local discursive reconstruction by taking folklore subjects as a hinge to protect local tradition from assimilation. *Minzoku Taiwan* associates applied *mingei* theory as a method for rediscovering the beauty in traditional objects when the 'civilised lifestyle' was enforced by the colonial government. Ostensibly, *Minzoku Taiwan'*s local engagement was described as a reaction to the inevitable embrace of modernisation, which the imperial government claimed to sustain the legitimacy of ruling colonies. Utilising the imperial complex, which ideologically considered modern culture as external and westernised, *Minzoku Taiwan* researchers found a political breach to negotiate the significance of local identity in the shifting imperial structure. Instead of taking Yanagi and Yen's meeting in 1943 as a historical 'point', I hope to recover the long-term transforming 'process', which determined the nuance, the displacement and the replacement in the political idea of craft. Giving a close view into the Taiwanese locality under the tension of Japanese government's assimilation policy in the last five years of colonialism, this chapter analyses the acquisition of *mingei* theory, whose meaning was altered in concrete uses as cultural resistance.

I take the last section of this chapter as a conjunction to Yen's thought and practice of craft, which I will spend the entirety of Chapter Four demonstrating. Although Yen did not align his practice of craft to the *Mingei* Movement, his response to Yanagi's idea of 'composite beauty' was pivotal in

developing Yen's approach to craft. Yen's acceptance of *mingei* concept reveals noticeable eclecticism, integrating *Minzoku Taiwan's* folkloristic engagement identifying craft as a material medium of cultural integrity and Yanagi's aesthetic emphasis on craft's agency to transcend cultural dualism. Yen's identity formed in the ambivalence countering the interface between Taiwanese, Japanese and western cosmopolitan culture. His intercultural experience and interest in European engagement in non-European objects gave a peripheral view to consider craft as a mobility to reexamine 'fine art' as a modern aesthetic dominance. As Kanaseki, Yen's acquisition of *mingei* concept is a hybrid and eclectic approach synthetically interacting with several aesthetic sources. That made Yen's advocacy on art/craft non-dualism deviate from Yanagi's method of building an exclusive domain for craft. Yen's rejection of 'pure art' did not generate a corresponding term like 'pure craft'. Yanagi's notion of 'composite beauty' became a prompt for Yen to justify that the hierarchical categories as art or craft should be neutralised as a cultural concept for evaluating diverse dimensions of human creativity.

The Magazine *Minzoku Taiwan:* Assimilation and its Gap

In 1941, the publication of *Minzoku Taiwan* (Fig. 17) was initiated by folklore researcher Ikeda Toshio and Kanaseki Takeo, a medicine professor at the Taihoku Imperial University, who both undertook the editorship of this magazine. Published in Japanese, this revealed cooperation between Japanese and Taiwanese writers from a wide range of specialist fields, including folklorists Iketa Toshio, Kokubu Naoichi and Nakamura Satoshi, sociologists Okada Ken and Chen Shao-hsing, novelist Yang Yun-ping, and print artist Tateishi Tetsuomi.[9] Yen Shui-long also participated as the writer of the Studio Pictures column in 1943, depicting traditional techniques of several handicraft industries.[10] The term *minzoku,* translated as 'folklore', referred to a similar approach to the Tokyo school of 'folkloristics' developed by Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962) but nuanced in divergent practices. *Minzoku Taiwan* confronted the idea of modernity. Polarised by the Japanese government's ideology of colonial modernity, 'folklore' represented miscellaneous aspects of daily experience sustained by long-developed local tradition. The primary subjects of *Minzoku Taiwan* were those that needed conservatory means to survive from modern life's pursuit of 'civilisation'. Aiming at recording and introducing local customs, ceremonies, traditional techniques and cultural phenomena which might be endangered under the colonial assimilation policy, *Minzoku Taiwan*'s author group engaged in a variety of themes of local culture based on substantial surveys and investigation on the focused

[9] Abe Junichiro, 〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association],《ソシオロジ》*Sociology,* vol. 54, no.2 (2009): 72.

[10] *Minzoku Taiwan,* no. 3(4), 3(5), 3(6), 3(9), April to September, 1943.

societies and subjects. Its multidisciplinary and non-academic character embraced a broad range of readership, which revealed a majority of Taiwanese male, educated intellectuals, and reached readers overseas in mainland Japan and other occupied regions.[11] Even nowadays, *Minzoku Taiwan* is still a significant historical resource of the time for its detailed depictions of the majority's daily life during the colonial period.

Issued monthly throughout the last four years of Japanese colonialism, *Minzoku Taiwan* magazine echoed many aspects of the war-time circumstance when the government's assimilation policy, also known as the *Kominka* (Japanisation) Movement, encountered a pivotal shift in the beginning of the 1940s. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the revival of localities became a significant part of the 'New Order' mobilisation under the slogan of 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere'. *Minzoku Taiwan* to a certain degree took the convenience from the shifting political climate and utilised the new-formed imperial ideology to justify their actions. However, this resourceful move induced further scepticism on this magazine's political motivation. Some, Kawamura Minato for example, argued that their 'cultural resistance' might not be so innocent from circulating the colonial ideology through the enforced Greater East Asia cultural structure. I do not completely agree with Kawamura's notion but would like to consider this manipulation of 'Greater East Asia' as intentional. The political correctness of *Minzoku Taiwan* resistance toward assimilation policy was based on the inner paradox of the 'Greater East Asia' ideology, which might provoke nothing more than a psychological structure of an invisible imperial space. Compared to figuring out what was a real matter of this abstract 'Greater East Asia', rescuing disappearing local cultures was an obviously more urgent, concrete and imminent emergency for the elite class in Taiwan.

For a long time, *Minzoku Taiwan* had been celebrated as a cultural resistance, for its conspicuous contribution on conserving local historical materials, until Kawamura published a critical article denouncing Kanaseki's imperial inclination by analysing a symposium transcript titled 'The Foundation of Greater East Asian Folklore Studies and the Task of *Minzoku Taiwan*' published in *Minzoku Taiwan*. In 1943, Kanaseki organised a 'Greater East Asian folklore studies' symposium and hosted an interview with Kunio Yanagita, who is believed as the founder of *minzokugaku* - an academic system of Japanese native folkloristics exploring the source of Japanese culture and ethnicity. Kawamura argued Yanagita's folkloristic approach in those regions within the 'Greater East Asian' cultural sphere were framed by collecting, categorising and analysing cultural subjects based on his Japanese-centred perspective. He was concerned, that

> What Yanagita constructed was not regional folklore studies based on individual and independent themes and methods; instead, it was the folkloristics with a concentric structure taking Japan as the centre among all.

[11] Abe, 〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉 [Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association], 72.

> In other words, Yanagita's Folkloristics Study Institution in Tokyo formed a centre to gather regional researchers, educators and dilettantes, forming a centre-to-periphery network of Japanese folkloristic study.[12]

Kawamura's allegation suggested this symposium revealed Yanagita and Kanaseki's cultural relativism, which enforced a hierarchical structure to justify their Japanese centrism. He made a further point to say Yanagita's folkloristics was a Tokyo-centred discipline structured with reallocating Others - Taiwan, Korea, Manchuria and Okinawa for example - into related subunits. Under this structure, recognitions of localities were not based on each culture's unique autonomy with researchers' independent engagements, but with an intentional dominance aligned to the self-sufficient Greater East Asia ideology with relative cultural images of modern Japan, especially in Tokyo.

Kawamura's highlight on the term 'Greater East Asian folklore studies' in Yanagita and Kanaseki's conversation triggered a critical debate to reexamine *Minzoku Taiwan* magazine's political role. According to Yu Sheng-kuan, the psychological space of 'Greater East Asian' was formed within the Japanese imperial structure of Pan-Asianism, which was ideologically manipulated as an antagonism against western hegemony.[13] This antagonistic structure legitimised Japan's colonial expansion, which took a multiculturalist approach by emphasising the "equality" within the Greater East Asian domain and claiming the unified and connective feature of "oriental culture".[14] Kikuchi suggested *Minzoku Taiwan* embraced a "keen interest in the topic of vernacularisms", which was once a highly politicised idea in the 1940s.[15] This stance took the reallocated local identity as a vernacular rhetoric sustaining the 'Greater East Asian' structure for imperialist sake. Responding to the 1943 symposium, she highlighted Yanagita's emphasis on cultural similarities, ancestor worship for example, for establishing solid connections among Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese culture, suggesting that Kanaseki "effectively manipulated and used folklore studies" for "political ends".[16] She identified this vernacularism as a part of "multiculturalism with a Japanocentric nature", which was celebrated to replace the sense of "westernisation" and "stir up hostility toward the enemy".[17] Indeed, *Minzoku Taiwan* was active in emphasising the significance of locality, corresponding to which many voices were found suspicious for its ostensible harmony associated with the Greater East Asian ideology. However, instead of taking the convenient link between *Minzoku Taiwan*'s celebration of locality and the political construction of nationalist vernacularism, it is necessary to enquire what were the exact images of Taiwanese culture that this magazine created to negotiate with the idea of modernity, which,

---

[12] Kawamura Minato,《大東亞民俗学の虚実》[the artifice and the fact in the 'Greater East Asian Folklore Studies'], (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1996), 9-10.
[13] Yu Sheng-kuan, *Colonialism and Cultural Resistance: Taiwan Decolonising Literature Under Japanese Occupation*. (Taipei: Socio Publishing, 2012), 110.
[14] Okakura Tenshin,《東洋の理想》[The Ideal of Oriental World], 1903, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1986).
[15] Kikuchi, "Shui-Long Yen and Vernacularism in the Development of Modern Taiwanese Craft", 305.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Kikuchi, *Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*. 184.

embodied by the Japanese government's assimilation policy, as nothing different from western progressivism with a myth of civilisation devaluating Taiwanese culture as an 'uncivilised Other'.[18]

Minzoku Taiwan was published in July of 1941, not long after the Japanese government had founded the Japanisation Assistance Association *(kōmin hōkōkai*) in April of the same year for supporting the official Japanisation (*Kōminka*) Movement as a part of war-time mobilisation. In terms of the war-time period, the timeline should be framed beyond the common idea of taking the Pacific War in 1941 as the beginning of war. Since 1937, when the second Sino-Japan War started, the idea of Japanisation had been circulated as social promotions by local media. The term remained unstructualised until it was integrated into the Japanisation Assistance Association's role, which was submitted to the Imperial Rule Assistance Association founded in 1940 for supporting the implementation of the 'New Order' (*shin taisei*). It confirmed a new war-time system uniting political parties into an authoritarian regime. In order to maintain the stability of imperial structure, the 'New Order' aimed at a collective sense of nationalism and rejected individualist approaches. Its practical cultural tasks included "respecting local tradition and uniqueness" to make contributions to "innovation in a united sense" and no more taking state-made culture as the only path.[19] This shift determined the inner ambivalence of the new-formed assimilation policy, which gave an ambiguous space to renegotiate and reshape its political meaning.

The term '*Kōminka*' was usually used to refer to the series of policies enforced by the Japanese government to assimilate people in colonised regions, especially Korea and Taiwan, in order to integrate them into imperial subjects and transplant Japanese national identity in these areas.[20] In the domain of daily experience, *Kōminka* was a state-made cultural movement promoting Japanese lifestyle with concrete measurements like prohibitions of Taiwanese language, traditional music and drama, reorganising local religious society, enforcing Shintoism worship and using Japanese names.[21] However, under the 'New Order' structure, these cultural suppressions encountered a discursive incoherence to "respecting local tradition and uniqueness" and "innovation in a united sense".

Under this background, Kanaseki initiated a prospectus manifesting his motivation of publishing *Minzoku Taiwan,* which was subsequently included in the magazine juxtaposed with other writers'

---

[18] Yu Sheng-kuan, *Colonialism and Cultural Resistance: Taiwan Decolonising Literature Under Japanese Occupation*, 89.

[19] 〈地方文化新建設の根本理念及び當面の課題〉[Fundamental ideas and challenges in constructions of new local culture], in Akazawa Shirō and Kitagawa Kenzō, Yui Masaomi, ed.,《日本現代史*13* - 太平洋戰爭下の国民生活》[The modern history of Japan, 13 - Citizen life under the Pacific War], (Tokyo: Otsuki Shoten, 1985), 248-250.

[20] The 'New Order', also Japanisation assistance movement, was referred to cover cultural policies and movements proposed by the second Konoe Fumimaro cabinet and started being influential to the Japanese war-time cultural policy in 1941. The movement was ideologically associated with the Japanisation Assistance Association and the Shōwa Research Association, which was founded in 1933.

[21] Liu Shu-Chin,〈帝國空間重塑、近衛新體制與臺灣「地方文化」〉[The reconstructure of empire space, the Konoe New Order and the term 'Taiwanese local culture'], in Shih Wan-Shun, Liu Shu-Chin and Xu Pei-Xian, ed.,《帝國裡的「地方文化」─皇民化時期臺灣文化狀況》[The local culture in the empire: the cultural circumstance in Japanised Taiwan], (Taipei: Third Nature; Green Futures Publishing, 2009), 4.

different expectations related to *Minzoku Taiwan*'s publication.[22] Responding to the social circumstance of Japanisation, Kanakeki stated,

> Japanisation (*Kōminka*) policy on Taiwanese people should be actively accelerated. Compared with the passive attitude the government had held, the current force of Japanisation is indeed quite commendable. It immediately helps to break down those corrupt customs and benefits people with graceful modern civilisation. Thus, it deserves celebration. However, in the meantime, some harmless customs are inevitably vanishing and sacrificing naturally. They will, however, naturally fade over time even without any purposeful intervention.
>
> Nonetheless, those educated citizens who are equipped with capacities to research and archive these disappearing cultural phenomena should take the responsibilities to preserve and research. We are responsible for keeping records even of those customs which are ill and corrupt. Moreover, with the diffusion of our national influence to the South, no matter in South China or Nanyang, we should consider the significant assistant role of the Chinese ethnic. To understand them, learning about islanders in Taiwan is a primary task, and it is also accessible. That is why our nation surpasses Others and stays strong.[23]

This is a long quote but necessary for perceiving the whole context, which I will explain further later. This official prospectus shows a disturbing indifference not merely for his intellectualist arrogance, seeing "educated citizens' responsibilities" to "research and archive", and the obvious contempt in malicious terms such as "ill" and "corrupt". Moreover, Kanaseki manifested an affirmative attitude aligned to the assimilation policy and took folklore studies as an engagement to 'the South' within the cultural landscape of the Greater East Asia. It confused people when thinking Kanaseki was about to irritate many Taiwanese writers working for *Minzoku Taiwan*. However, it is certain that this piece of writing in politically accurate language would not cause too much trouble under colonial censorship if Kanaseki was testing the government's limits.

Responding to the question surrounding Kanaseki's expression in the published prospectus, fellows of *Minzoku Taiwan* gave multiple voices, which were also included in the magazine. For example, Yang Yun-ping criticised Kanaseki's so-called "rational, objective and scientific approach" for revealing a "mechanical method" lacking "love" and empathy toward the study subjects.[24] As a

---

[22] This prospectus was a joint statement released on the *Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpō* (Taiwan Daily News) with five other people affiliated. Most of them were scholars from the Taipei Imperial University. This statement is accepted as Kanaseki's original motivation by researchers considering his role as a leader editor of this magazine. He also quoted from this prospectus in the magazine co-writing with Yang Yun-ping who criticised his statement. See Kanaseki Takeo, 〈本誌發刊の趣意書を繞る：論爭の始末(上)〉 [About the prospectus of the publishment of this magazine: the whole argument], *Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 1, no. 2(8), (1941): 42-43.

[23] Kanaseki Takeo, 〈本誌發刊の趣意書を繞る：論爭の始末(上)〉 [About the prospectus of the publishment of this magazine: the whole argument], 42-43.

[24] Kanaseki Takeo; Yang Yun-ping, 〈本誌發刊の趣意書を繞る：論爭の始末(上)〉 [About the prospectus of the publishment of this magazine: the whole argument], 43; Yang Yun-ping, 〈本誌發刊の趣意書を繞る：論爭の始末

medicine scholar specialising in physical anthropology, Kanaseki might be a 'mechanical' researcher; however, his enthusiasm toward study subjects was far more than 'lacking love', with the knowledge that he was also an amateur detective novelist who enjoyed using folklore material in plots.[25] The chief director Iketa Toshio reminded readers that *Minzoku Taiwan* encountered an unusual political circumstance, which gave no choice to use more diplomatic language to survive censorship along with the imperial policy, and what Kanaseki said was a necessary "defence" by quoting official terminology since this magazine did not really satisfy the imperial climate.[26] With hindsight, allegations of Kanaseki's indifference might underestimate the political uncertainty and the pressure from the speech suppression of the time. This uncertainty determined the ambiguity within *Minzoku Taiwan*'s cultural resistance, which disguised their autonomy as neutral 'folklore' mythologies engaging in local discursive reconstructions. It is very easy to overlook this magazine's initiative negotiating for cultural autonomy in an interdependent process, unless we stop applying the dualistic structure representing these Japanese activists as colonisers and polarising Taiwanese participants as passive objects of imperialism. Ignoring the mutual-made hybridity of colonial culture would also lead to misinterpretations on local reactions, Yen Shui-long viewing Taiwan as a new-formed centre of the South for example, to the 'Greater East Asia' ideology, by consolidating them into the entire imperial structure.[27]

As Liu Shu-chin suggested, criticisms on vernacularism in any nationalist term, no matter Japanese or Chinese, are "equally problematic" when a cultural operation is merely seen as a kind of "cultural damage or split in the frame of nationalism".[28] This cultural-essentialist myth celebrates terms of "cultural resistance", however, it tends to neglectfully overlook the pivotal mobility operated as "the inherited, the expanded and the transformed" in forms of reunified continuity.[29] In other words, there is a necessity to inspect *Minzoku Taiwan's* internal mobility before asserting its external harmony connected to the Greater East Asian ideology. That means immediately interrogating any potential collusion with the colonial force will not clarify anything this magazine projected, since culture never existed as a static, undeveloped, predefined authenticity.

Regardless of whether the public relations crisis caused by Kanaseki's diplomatic tone was solved or not, the emergency to conserve cultural objects this prospectus revealed was a mutual plight when

---

(下)〉 [About the prospectus of the publishment of this magazine: the whole argument], *Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 1, no. 3(9), (1941): 39.

[25] Kanaseki used the pseudonym Lin Xiong-sheng to publish detective novels, such as Mr Cáo in Lungshan Temple series, which were published between 1943 and 1947. Kanaseki Takeo,《龍山寺の曹老人》[Mr, Cáo of Lungshan Temple]. (Taipei: Dongning, 1943).

[26] Iketa Toshio,〈植民地時期の民俗雑誌〉[Folklore magazine in the colonial period], 1982, in《台湾近現代史研究》[Taiwan Modern History Studies], no. 4, 141-142.

[27] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝產業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", in *Formosa Industrial Art*, 18-19

[28] Liu Shu-chin, 2008.〈帝國空間重塑、近衛新體制與臺灣「地方文化」〉[The Reconstructure of Empire Space, the Konoe New Order and the term 'Taiwanese Local Culture'], 3.

[29] Ibid, 4.

local initiatives were strictly constrained under the assimilation policy. In this sense, Kanaseki's engagement in the idea of modernity was very practical, as modernity had been manipulated to legitimise the elimination of local customs which were seen as "outdated" and "uncivilised". Kanaseki's celebration of *Kōminka* showed respect to the "graceful modern civilisation". Ostensibly flagging *Kōminka* as a "graceful civilising process", *Minzoku Taiwan's* real intention was to equally treat folklore subjects, even the "ill and corrupt" ones, which would contribute to the local resilience toward the colonial assimilation.

Kanaseki might be genuine when stating that modernisation would lead some local customs to "naturally fade with time even if there was no purposive intervention". This stance signified a mutual sentiment shared by Taiwanese people. *Kōminka* enacted a forced lifestyle, such as the control of language and religion; on the other hand, its policy also offered improvements in many social factors. The paradox is that *Kōminka*, which was bound with the idea of civilisation through colonisation, was never a requirement of these occupied areas' social progress. However, these assimilation measures, to a considerable degree, were legitimised and celebrated as a process of civilisation. Moreover, it was unfortunately persuadable in public life supported by institutional propaganda. Some precise cases related to a regedor's role and obligation at supporting the implementation of the *Kōminka* can be found in publications issued by the Police Association of Government-General. A handbook issued in 1941 mentioned some prohibited customs, like trading young girls among low-income families, child marriage, deprivations of female labourers, and "baseless folk beliefs like divination and prophecy".[30] Some vernacular literature works depicted details of transforming modern images like urban landscapes and cultural experience associated with the idea of civilisation. They celebrated the material wealth in cities and criticised the outdated feudal system and low social status of women, urging a conscious demand for modernisation to improve humanity.[31] Juxtaposed in the opposite side of 'civilisation', folk beliefs and ritual ceremonies, which potentially had considerable power to mobilise local society, were seen as extravagant and unnecessary. These forced constraints, as a part of war-time policy, were also prevalent in rural Japan. Circulated with slogans like "exploit resources, economise consumptions, develop diligence and set deposits", the "civilised lifestyle" also encouraged thrifty behaviour, minimising unnecessary expenditure and consumption.[32]

The imperial mechanism benefited from the convenience of manipulating ideas of modernity, which were deceitfully interpreted as an affirmation of assimilation based on the artificial dualism

---

[30] Regedor was a figure who played a part in administrative control to implement the mutual censorship and social surveillance. It functioned with *baojia* system (保甲制度), which organised with a certain amount of household units and cooperated with police organisations. In Chang Hsiu-Sheng,〈戦時下台湾における「郷土意識」と柳宗悦の民芸思想 - 雑誌『民俗台湾』と『月刊民芸. 民芸』との比較〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Taiwan Folkway* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association],《桃山歴史・地理》*Momoyama History and Geography*, no. 47 (2012): 45.

[31] Ibid, 42-44.

[32] Ibid, 45.

between the civilised Japan and primitive Taiwan. Within this frame, impartial evaluation of cultural phenomena was rare. The government usually deliberately selected cultural subjects to magnify the "heresy" and "superstition", enforcing an image of "uncivilised other" onto Taiwanese identity.[33] The assimilation aimed at a homogeneity never guaranteed an equal relationship through its discursive power. For example, allocated at the opposite of "Japanese modern medicine", Taiwanese traditional medicine was never evaluated in an equivalent dialectic process in the way "Japanese modern medicine" was theorised.[34] What made Taiwanese medicine "brutal" were the fractional and stereotypical images like religious sacrifice or ritual fanaticism, which were circulated as a generalised view of Taiwanese's barbarism.[35] As Foucault raised, the "unreason" of the uncivilised reappeared as a "classification" and had been "relegated to the distance of confinement with a new power of interrogation".[36] Behind the 'heresy' and 'superstition', the civilisation though *Kōminka* was an arbitrary value system classifying cultural contents based on a monopolised discourse of modernity. In this sense, Kanaseki's appropriation of *Kōminka*, ironically reversed the contradiction within the modernity projected by the government, querying the entity of cultural progression in local societies.

To rediscover the hybridity underneath the state-made colonial modernity, *Minzoku Taiwan* engaged in intercultural interface, demonstrating the miscellaneous truth of Taiwanese culture. This provided a methodological basis for accommodating Yanagi's *mingei* aesthetic, whose rejection of dualism was also based on practical investigations of folklore objects in local communities. However, *Minzoku Taiwan*'s folklore interest was not only driven by questions of beauty. This also determined the further craft movement in Taiwan developed a more open stance embracing the ambiguity of the material world rather than shaping craft as an opposite entity of art. Moreover, this magazine encouraged scientific methodologies for describing Others and cultural differences, which in aesthetic discussions were often appreciated in exotic or primitive senses of beauty. This ethnographic tendency is evident in Yen Shui-long's practice.

Minzoku Taiwan's writers conducted surveys for neutral engagements in folklore phenomena and published detailed depictions on observed cultural subjects. Their investigation also included those "scientifically baseless types", such as folk rituals and psychic beliefs, which were identified as prohibited by the government.[37] For instance, Kokubu Naoichi 's study of the psychic body demonstrates how the incantation originated from ancient languages and mythologies in China,

---

[33] Yu Sheng-kuan, *Colonialism and Cultural Resistance: Taiwan Decolonising Literature Under Japanese Occupation*, 88.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid, 88-91.
[36] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, 1967, (London : Routledge, 2001), 190.
[37] Naoichi Kokubu's article about psychic bodies (乩童, tâng-ki) as media for communicating with deities; and Toshio Ikeda's research about psychic rituals (椅仔姑 í-á-ko, and 觀三姑 koan-sam-ko) for communicating with spirits of the dead. in *Minzoku Taiwan.* 1(1): 10, vol.1 no. 2 (1941): 2, 36; vol. 1, no. 3 (1941): 22.

emphasising its function as an agency in relation to the mysticism in forming a ritual space.[38] Rather than connecting to the geographical-politics of Greater East Asia, these Chinese-oriented cultural subjects were recorded with precise contexts for social-scientific sake to represent how they functioned in daily life. With a detailed view of articles in *Minzoku Taiwan*, a diversity of local discourse is seen in its embrace of a broad field beyond academia approaching "all aspirants regardless of occupation - agriculture, forestry and fishery - over the island" encouraged to submit their proposals.[39] To a certain degree, *Minzoku Taiwan*'s approach in cultural frontiers nearly attained Yanagi's non-dualistic ideal, which is achieved by revivals of discrete, multicentric self-fulfilled communities. As suggested by Yanagi, this multicentric structure provided a sustainable resilience resisting cultural assimilation.

According to Wu Mi-Cha, although in the 1941's symposium Yanagita and Kanaseki mentioned some comparative terms connected to the idea of 'Greater East Asian folkloristics', Yanagita was still conservatively hesitant to apply this term to refer to the tremendous domain of folklore studies. Wu concludes that even though Kaneseki was enthusiastic, the concept of 'Greater East Asian folkloristics' was still far from developed and could not be captured by most of *Minzoku Taiwan*'s writers.[40] Instead, *Minzoku Taiwan* created an interface where a generation of folklore researchers and amateurs interacted with their multiple approaches to localities. In forms of reportage, many articles focus on specific cultural materials preserved in local communities. As a result, the general feature of *Minzoku Taiwan* was determined by writers' interests and specialised areas, such as solar terms, legends, mythologies, genealogies, life ceremonies, historical memories, industrial techniques and daily utensils. These investigations were frequently organised as small-scale projects focusing on a specific community, industrial group or local history. These researchers acted independently and flexibly, concentrating on local phenomena, whose materials never cooperated with the comparative view in the scale of pan-Asian studies.[41]

This magazine's success also benefited from the shift of assimilation policy. In the 1940s, the *Kōminka* integrated with the 'New Order' launched by the new-formed Konoe cabinet, advocating the necessity to respect local heterogeneities for promoting imperial expansion and cultural governance in the expedition of the 'South'. Taiwan was relocated as a new centre of Japan's global network in connection to other tropical and Chinese regions. Relatively, the 'New Order' movement should be seen as an adjustment developed from the previous official campaign called the National Spiritual Mobilisation Movement, launched in 1937. In Taiwan, this official campaign applied *Kōminka* by enforcing a series of cultural restrictions. However, it did not attain its expected effects since there

[38] Kokubu Naoichi, 〈乩童の研究〉[A study of psychic bodies], in *Minzoku Taiwan,* no. 1(1), (1941): 10.

[39] 〈編輯後記〉[Postscript by editors], in *Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 1, no. 1(7), (1941): 48.

[40] Wu Mi-Cha,〈《民俗臺灣》發刊的時代背景及其性質〉[The Historical Background and Characteristic of *Minzoku Taiwan*], in《帝國裡的「地方文化」- 皇民化時期臺灣文化狀況》[The Local Culture in the Empire: The Cultural Circumstance in Japanised Taiwan], 75-81.

[41] Ibid.

was “a large gap between the concept of culture defined by the campaign and people’s daily cultural requirements”.[42] With the frame of *Kōminka,* this social-scaled mobilisation also encountered difficulty due to its impractical ambition to change Taiwanese culture, which had a long-term basis of cultural tradition. The reformed Konoe cabinet in 1940 brought the new governor-general, Kiyoshi Hasegawa, and a new *Kōminka* policy, supporting the Japanisation Assistance Association’s operation of the ‘New Order’ policy in Taiwan. The new bureaucratic structure altered the previous restrictive assimilation strategy; instead, it pursued cultural creativity in collective forms through encouraging and respecting diverse localities and practices in daily life.[43] The new political climate suggested the significance of local uniqueness and vernacular physiological mechanisms, which should be respected as a united part of the whole cultural structure within Japanese territory. Since eradicating local culture was no longer realistic, this assimilation movement should be redirected in searching for eclectic solutions to accommodate cultural differences.[44] As a result, the so-called Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere was proposed to reshape an unprecedentedly massive united imperial space, taking Japan as a leading figure to maintain the ‘prosperity’ of all ruled sub-localities.

The complexity of Taiwanese colonial culture sustained a resilience for considering culture as a non-dualistic domain. Far from a ‘convergence’ into the imperial ideology in forms of nationalist “vernacularism” as Kikuchi suggested, *Minzoku Taiwan* resourcefully took an advantage from the policy gap and the inner contradiction of the assimilation movement when the imperial climate shifted to embrace local agencies as a potential resource for the expansion of cultural colonialism. Beyond preserving those “inevitably vanishing and sacrificed traditional customs”, this magazine facilitated energetic mobilities to reconstruct localities and successfully survived from the government’s censorship over the last four years of war-time colonialism. I would like to reiterate the need to distinguish the difference of this bottom-up nationalist process from the state-made imperialism and its affiliated bureaucratic nationalism and ‘vernacularism’. Through a state-made imperialism, the approach of locality can be artificial due to its political motivation. Its paradox existed when operating pre-defined ethical relativism, structuralising the duality between Self and Other but failed to see culture in a dynamic, ambiguous and eclectic process. If only emphasising nationalism as a static structure, our stance would evaluate nothing alternative beyond dual options between submission and resistance. Abe Junichiro proposed that the idea of Greater East Asia enabled a historical space for decentralising the colonial structure, which loosened its imperial control and gave opportunities for local autonomy. Although what was expected from the Greater East Asian structure was making use of “sub-localities” with a concentrical sequence of different ethics within the imperial space. Abe reminds us that perceptions of “multi-localities” and “trans-localities” formed simultaneously and are

[42] Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sōetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 224.
[43] Wu Mi-Cha,〈《民俗臺灣》發刊的時代背景及其性質〉[The Historical Background and Characteristic of *Minzoku Taiwan*], 66.
[44] Nakamura Akira,〈文化政策としての皇民化問題〉[Questions about *Kōminka* as a Cultural Policy],《臺灣時報》[Taiwan News], January, 1941, 6-12.

equally important to see the transition of the "intercolonial connection" between Japan and Taiwan.[45] That means colonial culture was mutually made based on recognition of cultural differences, which were never easy to categorise within the coloniser-colonised frame. This plurality, rather than duality demonstrates intercultural influences as a dynamic process rather than a static structure. Abe's insight opened a possibility to reinterpret the revivals of locality in colonial space. In consistently regenerated local discourses, the state-made "multiculturalism" in its discursively "pre-given applicability" was replaced and transformed by reconstructed cultural framing and its hybridity.[46]

Mingei Circulated via *Minzoku Taiwan*

In 1943, Yanagi visited Taiwan, conducting a one-month survey. To support the government's policy, the Japan *Mingei* Association and the Toyo International Art Research Association also commissioned a series of investigations in Korea, China and Ryukyu.[47] *Minzoku Taiwan* associates hosted this visit. Kanaseki, Yen Shui-long and artist Tateishi Tetsuomi (1905-1980) accompanied Yanagi to many different cities and local villages.[48] Yanagi also visited Yen Shui-long at his house and his handicraft centre in Guanmiao village, where Yen had been promoting bamboo handicrafts and their trading cooperative.[49] According to Yanagi, this village deserved further study for its "approach to the essence of craft" through an "idealised community" system for crafts manufacturing.[50]

In the last two decades, this trip has been driving substantial attention among researchers, and this conjunction between Yanagi and *Minzoku Taiwan* associates gradually formed the linear narrative scoping scope *mingei* theory's transmission in Taiwan. This connection triggered significant interest and was expanded to a broader historical frame, which commonly juxtaposed Yen and Yanagi, added

---

[45] Abe,〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association], 82-84.

[46] Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences", 206.

[47] Yanagi's stay in Taiwan was from 14th March to 16th April 1943 including a field trip over the island, reaching cities including Keelung, Taipei, Hsinchu, Taichung, Changhua, Lukang, Chiayi,Tainan, Anping, Kaohsiung, Pingtung, Chaozhou Taitung, Hualian and Yilan, as well as aboriginal tribes including Paiwan, Ami and Atayal. Yanagi,〈臺灣の生活用具について〉[About daily utensils in Taiwan],《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第十五巻 - 沖縄の傳統》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 15, Tradition of Okinawa*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981), 614.

[48] Tateishi Tetsuomi (1905-1980) was a Japanese artist specialising in creative prints with representations of Taiwanese folklore subjects. He was born in Taiwan but afterward returned to Japan with family when was eight then visited Taiwan again at the age twenty-eight. His early academic training equipped him as an excellent painter specialising in gluten colour and oil paintings; also, he was active in the artist social circle in Taiwan.

[49] Yanagi carried out a one-month survey commissioned by the Toyo International Art Research Association in Taiwan accompanied by Kanaseki, Yen Shui-long and artist Tateishi Tetsuomi. During this investigation, they also visited the Guanmiao village, where Yen was promoting bamboo handicrafts and their trading cooperative. in Yanagi Sōetsu,〈臺灣の民藝に就いて〉[About *mingei* in Taiwan],《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第十五巻 - 沖縄の傳統》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 15, Tradition of Okinawa*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō), 607.

[50] Ibid.

with the British Art and Craft initiator Morris.[51] The comparative structure including the British Arts and Crafts Movement, the Japanese *Mingei* Movement and the Taiwanese craft movement became a dominant scope for identifying craft's role in social engagements. This framing is initially derived from one of Yen's students, Chiang Shao-ying's unpublished conference presentation 'On New *Mingei*: Prospects of Future *Mingei* through Retrospective Views on Historical Cases of Three Folk Art Activists' in 1998, which built up the connection between these three protagonists. However, Chiang's initial intention in this presentation was not to build up a historical linear structure, but to clarify the terminological origin and transformation of 'new *mingei*', which he thought sometimes was misinterpreted or inconsistent to its historical context at the time.[52] He mentioned that the term *mingei* in studies within the folklore scope had been changed in the three decades since Yanagi's visit to Taiwan, and tended to be polarised from the idea of modern culture.[53] Chiang referred to Yanagi and Morris in a relative but independent context, demonstrating how the term '*mingei*' projected a profound engagement in daily functional objects in 1940's Taiwan.

In this presentation, Chiang gave a more detailed context of what exactly happened during Yanagi's visit. This material complements Yen's role in this trip, which was seldom mentioned in Japanese sources. He described how Yanagi and Shōji Hamada conducted the survey throughout the island in Yen's company. They appreciated crafted objects like the simply decorated bronze and horn ornament on knife handles and its 'functional beauty' in Shilin and pottery wares they found in Nantou.

> They saw Taiwanese bamboo furniture in Lutsao, and were astonished by the simple but efficient structure and resourceful designs of tenons and mortises. With admiration, they invited twelve bamboo makers to demonstrate bamboo craft's techniques in Japan. Then they arrived in Guanmiao, praising the village as the 'ideal realm' and 'craft kingdom', in which everybody, regardless of their gender or age, are able to do bamboo craft and weaving. They had been looking for a place like this for a long time. Mister Yen was gratefully honoured, excited and inspired. After the guests left, Yen published his drawings of bamboo work with an introductory text on *Minzoku Taiwan*, followed by his other articles on Taiwanese handicrafts such as fabric dyeing, horn crafting and traditional brush making.[54]

The image of Yen in this description sounds more active and independent. Yen only issued one column for *Minzoku Taiwan* with four short articles and pictorial demonstrations on these handicraft

---

[51] *Craft,* a quarterly issued by National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute, organised a series of discussions from William Morris (no. 19, 2004), to Yanagi and Yen Shui-long (no. 21 and no. 22, 2005).

[52] Chiang Shao-ying,〈論新民藝 - 從三位民藝運動者的歷史回顧展望民藝的未來〉[On new-*mingei*: prospects of future *mingei* through retrospective views on historical cases of three folk art activists], 1998, 台灣傳統民俗與民藝學術研討會 [Taiwan traditional folklore and folk art studies conference], unpublished article, courtesy of the writer.

[53] Ibid, 1-3.

[54] Ibid, 9.

industries. Except for this, Yen gave substantial support to this trip, and to a considerable degree the *Minzoku Taiwan* associates relied on Yen's experience and knowledge of material and technique distribution over the island. Although Yanagi and Yen had a positive interaction during the trip, Yen did not play a dominant role in *Minzoku Taiwan*'s stance on Taiwanese craft. Including Yanagi, Kanaseki and Tateishi, five speakers participated in the Life and *Mingei* Symposium following right after Yanagi's survey in 1943 were all Japanese male intellectuals.[55] Yen was not included.

The Life and *Mingei* Symposium included some discussions about *mingei*'s role in the 'New Order' epoch. According to Yanagi, *mingei* aesthetics met the social terrain in shaping war-time material and spiritual life. He also took the climate of the new national policy as "a great opportunity to practise the ideal of *mingei*".[56] Demonstrating the 'essential nature of *mingei*', Yanagi advocated the 'simple beauty' for 'common people', which he polarised as the opposite of 'individualistic' expression of making ornamental works. Yanagi's anti-individualism projected craft as a collective approach, whose value in the Life and *Mingei* Symposium was explored with a concern of locality for national needs. Responding to the public's impressions of *mingei* objects as a high-class taste for antiques, Yanagi declared that *'mingei* does not share the same concept with luxuries as it has been misunderstood'. Instead, *mingei* refers to things which are beautiful but also direct, simple, cheap and functional, resulting from which 'it should be an ideal under the war-time circumstance'.[57] He explained that due to the current policy, the government had constrained the exploitation of natural resources. Thus, the traditional techniques would encounter obstacles to survive due to the lack of raw materials, steel and iron for example.

> However, at a national statement, the war should be considered with a full view to see these battles in this entire picture. If the nation only relies on the military department to solve the problem and overlooks those unique but vanishing techniques in Japan, in a certain sense, the national power will be getting weaker.[58]

Promoting 'national power', this symposium demonstrated *mingei* as a kind of supportive energy regarding the deployment of the 'New Order' by emphasising the 'reasonable' and 'healthy beauty' in daily life which was bound to the protection of local techniques. From Yanagi's perspective of 'battles in an entire view', protecting localities meant easing the state's economic depression through renovating local industrial autonomies.

Divergent acquisitions of the *mingei* concept emerged in their conversation. Emphasising the urge of local revivals in Taiwan, Kanaseki's view might derive from his personal interest in the notion of Greater East Asian folkloristics. He criticised those who still hold a retrospective concept of Japan,

---

[55] Yanagi (etc.), 〈生活と民藝座談會：柳宗悦氏を圍んで〉[The life and *mingei* symposium], 520.

[56] Yanagi,〈新體制と工藝美の問題〉[The New Order and problems of craft's beauty], 29.

[57] Yanagi, (etc.),〈生活と民藝座談會：柳宗悦氏を圍んで〉[The life and *mingei* symposium], 531.

[58] Ibid.

which lacked a forward-looking vision to perceive the significance of Taiwan. 'The concept of Japan should include Taiwan within the structure of the Greater East Asia', Kanaseki claimed, 'and attaining and developing those techniques which are insufficient in Japan' should be considered as a practical path for that very time.[59] However, Yanagi's response in this conversation showed less interest in interpreting Taiwan's connection to the frame of Greater East Asia; instead, he reiterated Taiwan as one of the localities deserving protective measures, just as he had emphasised the developments in other regions of rural Japan.[60] Although Yanagi's viewpoint of 'composite beauty' expected interactive corporations among multiple cultures based on "equal respects to the individuality of each nation", which shared similarity at a superficial level on the notion behind the ideology of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, his emphasis was constantly focussed on tangible things, rather than on abstract definition on *mingei*'s position in relation to the concept Greater East Asia.[61] His emphasis on cultural diversity developed differently compared to the state's demands for local mobility in a national sense. Responding to Kanaseki, Yanagi drew Taiwan's crucial character for expanding influence to 'the South' as a cultural approach.

> Taiwan is indeed an experimental field. Successful cases here can also be successfully applied in the South, while unsuccessful cases here would also fail there. In other words, in order to establish new lifestyles in the South, many things should be tested in Taiwan.[62]

Instead of a direct agreement on Kanaseki's use of 'Greater East Asia', Yanagi emphasised the cultural difference, which Japan needed to treat differently. This conversation reveals a new deployment of imperial space, where Taiwanese locality was reshaped and reallocated to a new global network. They rejected Japan, especially Tokyo, as a model of ultimate value; instead, they advocated to maintain the diversity and took a more practical path to develop independent forms of modernity. Yanagi's term of 'South' also reflects the climate that Taiwan was taken as a new-formed centre, also, an interface for negotiating with cultural differences and accessing other southern cultural zones, which were seen to be different from Japanese culture represented as the 'North'. The new-formed spatial structure reallocated Taiwan as an outpost, rather than an isolated colonised subordinate, whose sophisticated cultural, economic and political requirements mattered to connect others.

---

[59] Ibid, 532.
[60] Ibid.
[61] In this symposium, the discussion of Greater East Asia fell within Kanaseki's interests of the folkloristic school developed by Yanagita Kunio. Even though Yanagi responded Kanaseki's scope of the Greater East Asia in a positive way, their perspectives were still distinguished from the core of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere concept, which was founded with Japan's "special mission as the leader of Asia and that superior imperial Japan should guide the other developed nations of Asia". In contrast, both Yanagi and Kanaseki stressed Taiwan as a subject to learn from. Yanagi saw Japan as a superior nation which could be a leader but "he did not believe that Japan was the best in every aspect of the field". in Nakami, *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, 233.
[62] Yanagi, (etc.)〈生活と民藝座談會：柳宗悅氏を圍んで〉[The life and *mingei* symposium], 532.

Observed from this symposium, a focus on aesthetics for war-time circumstance revealed an emphasis on revivals of locality, with which the prosperous material performances should be maintained as a cultural power. Yanagi and Kanaseki shared an agreement on improving the taste in everyday experience by rebuilding the intimacy in daily wares, which nurtures spirit through the firm connection to local materials and techniques. In a general view, *Minzoku Taiwan*'s writers, such as Kanaseki and Tateishi, applied *mingei* as a useful, aesthetic and resourceful strategy, to interpret the importance of maintaining traditional forms of handicrafts with simple designs in daily objects. *Mingei* theory and *Minzoku Taiwan* also converged in their criticism of modernisation in urban places. Therefore, there was no coincidence that Kanaseki's regular column, *Mingei Kaisetsu* (Introducing Folk Crafts), shared a very similar structure paralleling the Japan *Mingei* Association's journal projects. This volume included two genres of articles - one introduced craft items and the beauty of utensils crafted for daily use, and the other one examined spiritual consciousness in craft. *Mingei Kaisetsu* articles conveyed a clear intention to rebuild the connection of daily beauty, promoting the vitality of local culture and criticising urbanised tastes in standardised forms and rough imitations.[63] Yanagi and Kanaseki had known each other. Kanaseki was a fan of *Shirakaba* magazine during his time at high school, and their contact was confirmed to be earlier than 1935 according to a private letter from Yanagi to Kanaseki, mentioning the actual location and the construction of the Japan Folk Art Museum in Tokyo.[64] However, it deserves a detailed analysis of *Minzoku Taiwan*'s folkloristic methodology which reveals an independence in its engagement in general cultural performance beyond the material focus. Kanaseki's application of '*mingei* objects' should be seen as an eclectic appropriation rather than an inheritance from *mingei* theory.

In contrast to Yanagi's ontological and tangible engagement, Yanagita Kunio's folkloristic influence shaped this magazine's epistemological and intangible aspects. Stating 'non-academic', *Minzoku Taiwan*'s writers made considerable efforts on collecting original data in textual, material and oral forms in an urgent consciousness of conservation. These preserved cultural objects reflected this magazine's concern with 'common people' triggered by the class structure and state capitalism. Yagagita's categorisation for field materials, which consisted of "tangible culture", "language and art", and "psychological and inner phenomenon", provided concrete methods for local studies among *Minzoku Taiwan*'s writers.[65]

---

[63] Abe, 〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association], 76-77.

[64] Lin Cheng-Wei, "Observe Effect of Folk Crafts on Germ of Taiwan Craft From Writing of Folk Crafts by Kanaseki Takeo: Emphasis on 'Narration of Folk Crafts' in the Magazine 'Folk Taiwan'", *Taiwan Literature*《臺灣文獻》vol. 61, no. 2 (2010): 39-42.

[65] Qiu Shu-Zhen, 〈柳田国男と台湾民俗学〉[Kunio Yanagita and ethnology in Taiwan],《国文学：解釈と鑑賞》*Japanese Literature: Interpretation and Appreciation,* vol. 72, no. 12 (2007): 44, 46.

Yanagita and Kanaseki's contact can be traced back to 1928 when Kanaseki attended a conference in Tokyo during his investigation and physical measurement in Ryukyu, Manchuria and Korea.[66] Kanaseki's interdisciplinary engagement was conspicuously derived from his alternative anthropological approach through folkloristics. His doctoral thesis submitted in 1930 was also focused on Okinawa's Ryukyu cultural system. This was about ten years earlier than Yanagi's survey on Okinawa's language and material culture with a similar interest in searching for the origin of 'Japaneseness'.[67] Kanaseki's approach conveys a firm connection to Yanagita's folkloristics, under the surging notion of 'common people' in a socialist sense, which concerned culture not in the frame of social-hierarchical structure, instead, in a domain of "common sense" beyond the class-oriented literal expression of culture.[68] According to Saya Makito, in searching for the "essence" of Japanese culture, Kanaseki's folkloristics projected a resistance against the "monistic cultural dominance" and centralised value determined by the state, and encouraged rehabilitating "independent diversity" in local culture.[69]

Yanagita's investigations in Taiwanese indigenous communities and adjacent islands surrounding Japan echoed his attempt to reconstruct the cultural lineage based on the continuity of folklore phenomena among Japan and its environs.[70] Focusing on the intangible system and primal forms like mythological and religious beliefs, he believed the existence of an inner structure for processing and sustaining formations and transformations of cultural history.[71] This belief determined the scope to observe and interpret cultural phenomena based on analytical data and its connection with historical sources. In the 1930s, folklore studies attained an interdisciplinary integration with a connection to the archaeological tradition of anthropology under the nationalist demand for describing Japanese ethnicity and its cultural-geographical sources.[72] Folkloristics, parallel to the western use of ethnology or ethnography, scope a subject of "cultural studies on ethnographic comparisons of politics, economics, law, religion and language with Others", taking historical and psychological phenomena as a united process.[73] Nationalism stimulated discussions to define the ethnographic and cultural boundary of 'Japaneseness' by reconstructing systematic connections of cultural characteristics in a lineage relation. This belief in 'origin' might be a myth in the way to identify cultural boundaries

---

[66] Ibid, 39.
[67] Ibid, 43.
[68] Saya Makito,《民俗学・台湾・国際連盟：柳田國男と新渡戸稲造》[Ethnology, Taiwan, International Federation: Kunio Yanagida and Inazo Nitobe], (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2015), 168-170.
[69] Ibid, 166.
[70] Qiu Shu-Zhen,〈柳田国男と台湾民俗学〉[Kunio Yanagita and ethnology in Taiwan], 43-44.
[71] Chang Hsiu-Sheng,〈戦時下台湾における「郷土意識」と柳宗悦の民芸思想 - 雑誌『民俗台湾』と『月刊民芸. 民芸』との比較〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Taiwan Folkway* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association], 48.
[72]〈日本民俗学会設立趣意書〉[Prospectus for the establishment of the Japan Ethnography Association], released in March, 1935,《民俗学研究》*Ethnology Studies,* vol. 1, no.1: 219-220.
[73] Ibid.

rather than confirming Japanese culture's hybridity. However, is the nationalist pursuit of the 'origin' and the 'essence' of the Japanese nation an equivalent approach to the Greater East Asian ideology, which demonstrated Japan as a centre of the imperial structure, as Kawamura Minato suggested? Even though Yanagita's cultural essentialism and relativism sustained a structure, which offered convenience for shaping a politically united Greater East Asian sphere, the connections built still provide substantial possibility beyond the imperial hierarchical structure.

Minzoku Taiwan is a case embodying a deviation from the imperial structure. It engaged in concrete cultural materials in local complicity, tracing how human culture had been developed and connected when cultural phenomena gained homogeneity from urban capitalist culture. Yagagita has suggested that with a reliance on the international capital market, the state tended to sacrifice local diversity and deprived local autonomy to satisfy the central-defined monotonous economic policy.[74] In Kanaseki's *Mingei Kaisetsu* column, he demonstrated his criticism of Japanese modernity by judging that products made to "modern standards" were "clumsy" and "dull".[75] He indicated that these mechanical Japanese modern products, which "had nothing to do with beauty and strength", were pervasively consumed in Taiwan.[76] *Mingei Kaisetsu* therefore developed a similar approach as Yanagi, emphasising the cultural resistant character of traditional handicrafts against the urban taste generated by the capitalist economic system. In the initial prospectus, Kanaseki celebrated assimilation for the modernity it brought; however, criticised imitation of Japanese modern products and praised the autonomous approach of locality in his own column. This shows that he was more confident in the validity of his discourse in the new political climate and was less worried about using correct language to dodge censorship.

Minzoku Taiwan offered a vehicle for circulating *mingei* theory as an everyday movement of beauty. However, it is important to see how these writers altered *mingei*'s meaning and aesthetic methodology for their own sake. Yanagi's *mingei* theory was introduced to Taiwan via the juncture of *Minzoku Taiwan,* which also determined its convergence into folklore studies with synthetic approaches to local discourses. Kanaseki grasped the concept of *mingei* due to its similarity to folklore studies, deciding to mix these two concepts in a reconstructed terminological context. This ethnographic approach clashed with Yanagi's original intention of the exclusive aesthetics though 'beauty' of craft. In several articles, Yanagi demonstrated methodological differences between *mingeigaku* (folkcraft study) and *minzogaku* (folkloristic). He identified *mingeigaku* as an

---

[74] Saya,《民俗学・台湾・国際連盟：柳田國男と新渡戸稲造》[Ethnology, Taiwan, International Federation: Kunio Yanagida and Inazo Nitobe], 167.

[75] Abe,〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association], 77.

[76] Ibid, 82-84.

"axiological" approach, while *minzogaku* as a "descriptive" approach.[77] Their intrinsic difference can be explained through classifying the philosophical terminology of "empirical sciences" (*keikengaku*) referring to descriptive facts of reality, while that of "normative sciences" (*kihangaku*) deals with what ought to be.[78] Folklore studies fall into the former category, *mingei* studies the latter.

> Folklore studies present an attempt to investigate and depict all aspects of inherited folk culture. The most significant task of this discipline is to collect and record things objectively and honestly. Even when perspectives and theoretical views are required, the tasks should support correct descriptions of the fact. […] However, involving questions of beauty, *mingei* studies are not satisfied with explanations based on the fact. […] The idea is to approach the ultimate essence of things (*mono*), which should be for example correct, authentic, beautiful and sacred. Since *mingei* study involves subjects of this field, it will not end with descriptive approaches but needs to access the field of axiology, especially the value of beauty.[79]

Yanagi distinguished *mingei* study and folklore studies by identifying that *mingei* theory takes a direct view on tangible things (*mono*) and pursues a value system beyond 'empirical' descriptions "based on the fact". By connecting to "the field of axiology", Yanagi stated that *mingei*'s aesthetic experience relies on intuitional experiences rather than descriptive knowledge. In comparison to intuitional experiences of tangible things, *Minzoku Taiwan*'s folkloristic approach emphasised scientific methods to construct descriptive information of intangible things (*koto*), for cultural conservation purposes. According to Yanagi, *mingei* identifies value in metaphysical forms with the accessibility of correctness, authenticity and beauty, which are related to individuals' intuitive engagements to develop aesthetic judgements.[80] Through the interface of *Minzoku Taiwan*, *mingei* theory was introduced as a method to deal with subjects with tangible forms and their interpretive value of locality. However, Kanaseki's folkloristic studies never conveyed subjects in known-knowledge axiology.

Through Kanasei's interpretation, the *mingei* concept was embodied within his criticism of modernity in a modern/traditional dualistic frame. It simultaneously overlapped with the cultural outsider/insider dualism, demonstrating Japanese urban culture as an invasion of local authenticity. This discursive structure is also seen in the 1930's new *mingei* practice, stating that 'morality for making' bestowed manufactured products in rural Japan with a connection to local tradition, while commercial products in cities were tainted by "international trend" under capitalist utilitarianism and individualism.[81] According to Yanagi, with the shelter of cultural tradition, manufactured objects will

---

[77] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈民藝學と民俗學〉[*Mingei* study and folklore study], 1941; in《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 274.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid, 275.
[80] Okamura,《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動 》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the *Mingei* Movement], 36.
[81] Yanagi,〈地方性の文化的價值〉[Cultural value of localities], 231.

not be “spiritually ill” and be “correct” and “healthy”.[82] Yanagi’s criticism of ‘imitated’ international culture along with the ‘imported’ capitalism and commercialism, accommodated in *Minzoku Taiwan*’s outsider/insider dualism, was transformed into Taiwanese culture’s resistance against colonial modernity. This modern/traditional dualistic structure framed judgements of daily objects with two categories: the former, urban, alienated and ugly; the latter, local, authentic and beautiful.

Another *Minzoku Taiwan* writer Tateishi Tetsuomi was very critical of the pursuit of cosmopolitan culture. Irritated by those blind imitations of urban fashion from Japan, he condemned those modern products as “decadent flowers” spoiled by “tasteless, vulgar, inharmonious” and “poor senses of beauty”.[83]

> These daily utensils surrounding us are connected to our vital spirit. We should take an introspective view to examine any weakness and sickness within them, especially excessive ornamentation. Moreover, being aware of these daily utensils sustaining and nurturing our inner spirit, we should stop the wrong over-ornamentation and make an effort to keep our daily tools away from vanity, making them more gentle and intimate to our life.[84]

Tateishi’s health-related terms such as “weakness” and “sickness” shows a similarity to Yanagi’s argument on foreign commodities’ influences on domestic manufacture’s aesthetic quality. Moreover, Tateishi also mentioned a concern of “inner spirit” as Yanagi stated to emphasise *mingei* theory’s moral approach. In terms of “sickness”, Tateishi made a similar statement on the ‘overuse’ of ornament, which he identified as unhealthy ‘vanity’ derived from utilitarian desire for visual stimulus. This stance met Yanagi’s notion that excessive decoration occurs when the desire of individualistic expression or financial interest surpasses the need for functional beauty, then the ornamental element would be applied for satisfying eyes but serves nothing for the pleasure of use.

Tateishi attempted to recover the taste nurtured by local tradition, rejecting the illness of modern design he observed from those ‘imitations’ of Tokyo fashion. This proposition, on the one hand, projects a relativist myth which recognised modernity as an external structure; correspondingly, on the other hand, it scoped an essentialist engagement in Taiwanese tradition which was expected to maintain its authenticity by rejecting these external interventions. Modernity, defined as external structure rather than internal process, became a part of the progressivist ideology along with the damages of commercialism and utilitarianism. With an advocacy of locality, international value was polarised to the opposite end of vernacularism in the frame of modern/traditional dualism. Applying

---

[82] Ibid.

[83] Tateishi Tetsuomi, 〈荒凉たる眺め〉[The bleak scene], 1940; in Yen, Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta, Takeyoshi, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol 2. 140-141.

[84] Tateishi Tetsuomi,〈生活工藝品への反省〉[A reflective thinking about crafted products in life], 1943; in Yen, Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta, Takeyoshi, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art*, vol 2, 539-540.

this dualistic structure, Tateishi encountered a similar essentialist paradox as Yanagi's *mingei* practice in the 1930s, which overlooked the ambiguity and fluidity of miscellaneous daily experience.

Minzoku Taiwan, as a vehicle circulating the *mingei* concept in Taiwan, generated plural and nuanced engagements in Yanagi's aesthetics of craft. Derived from divergent interests among *Minzoku Taiwan*'s writers, interpretations of *mingei* theory were transformed, displaced and replaced to utter for different sakes. For example, Kanaseki's folkloristic method to preserve Taiwanese cultural origin conveyed a different approach from Tateishi's belief of cultural authenticity in traditional material life. The continuity of *mingei* theory in Taiwan shows a discontinuity. Even though *Minzoku Taiwan* shared a similarity with the *Mingei* Movement's revivals of local culture in the 1930s, terms of *mingei* emerging in different contexts did not maintain the original meaning in Yanagi's term of 'beauty of craft'. *Mingei* was rather an alterable semantic signifier, by taking that which *Minzoku Taiwan's* writers found the convenience to extend the legitimacy in their discourses of locality.

Yen Shui-long's Acceptance of Composite Beauty

So, what was Yen Shui-long's role in relation to *Minzoku Taiwan* society's activities? While *Minzoku Taiwan'*s writers showed divergent adoptions of *mingei* theory, how did Yen's engagement react to these discussions? And how did Yen interpret *mingei* theory?

As mentioned, Yen's practice reveals a certain degree of independence from the *Minzoku Taiwan* society's activities. His interest in craft started quite early when he studied in the western painting program at the Tokyo Fine Arts School. He might have had a chance to acquire Yanagi's *mingei* activities in the 1920s, however, his research supervisor Okada Saburōsuke's influence was more direct in this period.[85] Teaching western painting and pattern design, Okada was an amateur craft collector, especially of textiles, who had studied in Paris, investigating the Art Nouveau style and later applying it in teaching.[86] During his study at the arts school, Yen was very close to Okada, who inspired him in both art and craft studies.[87]

Since 1936, Yen had enthusiastically devoted himself to investigations of craft's institutions and potential materials and techniques in Japan and Taiwan. In 1941, in an art exhibition organised by the Taiwan Plastic Arts Association (Yen was also a member), Yen exhibited twenty handicraft objects including bamboo furniture and sedge-woven baskets. In the following year, Yen founded the Sedge

[85] Lin Cheng-wei, "Taiwanese crafts movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", 172-173.

[86] Yoshida Chizuko,〈東京美術学校デザイン教育略史〉[A brief history of education at the Tokyo Fine Arts School], in Nagata, Hida and Mori, ed.,《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s*, 310.

[87] Chuang Po-ho, 1997.〈建立臺灣藝術風貌的顏水龍〉[Yen Shui-long, who founded the Taiwanese feature in art], in《顏水龍九五回顧展》[Yen Shui-long's 95 Years Retrospective Exhibition - Local Emotion of Taiwan.]. 11.

Cooperative in Tainan and the Bamboo Ware Manufacturing & Sales Cooperative in Guanmiao.[88] After Yanagi conducted a survey in Taiwan and organised a *mingei* exhibition in the City Public Hall of Taipei, some of the collections contributed by Yen were collected by the Japan Folk Craft Museum in Tokyo, and some of them carried on their exhibitionary function in demonstrating the model of war-time lifestyle in many governmental-sponsored displays such as the Life in War-time exhibition launched in 1944.[89] In this exhibition, Yen's designs of bamboo furniture and sedge-woven wares were included as prominent cases to convey the ideal of "culture in daily life".[90] Yen cooperated with *Minzoku Taiwan* society and played a supportive role in several projects they organised, including hosting Yanagi's investigation in Taiwan and several exhibitionary projects related to the survey. However, taking *Minzoku Taiwan* society as conjunction between Yen's approach and Yanagi's *mingei* practice is inadequate to explain Yen's further activity and his engagement in modern design.

Mingei associates' interest in Taiwanese bamboo craft had developed before they met via *Minzoku Taiwan* society's arrangement. Their attention was still focused on these wares' functional factors and did not really see them as objects of modern design. In the 1940's 'Selection, Tradition, Creation' exhibition, a Guanmiao bamboo stool collected by *mingei* potter, Kanjirō Kawai (1890-1966), was exhibited with Kawai's designs of bamboo crafts in Tokyo and Osaka.[91] *Minzoku Taiwan* reported Kawai's Taiwanese bamboo collection in detail, addressing that Taiwanese bamboo artisans were invited to Kyoto and supported Kawai's bamboo craft making. Guanmiao village also appeared in the *Mingei Kaisetsu* column, demonstrating the "new-formed lifestyle" of "Japanese who live in Taiwan".[92]

The 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' exhibition triggered divergent responses to the dualism between the ideas of tradition and modernity embodied as material influence in daily experience. This exhibition projected a modern reform based on the approach of 'tradition'. The term 'tradition' referred to local-originated cultural phenomena in relation to creative sources in making everyday production. As discussed in Chapter Two, commissioned by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Charlotte Perriand organised this exhibition to demonstrate the possibility to develop Japanese traditional manufacturing techniques into commercial products for the international market. Objects

---

[88] "Shui-Lung Yen: A Timeline", in *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 356-357.

[89] Abe,〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association], 79.

[90] Ibid.

[91] 'Selection, Tradition, Creation' is an exhibition organised by Charlotte Perriand, who was invited by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce in 1940 to promote the industrial manufacture in Japan. This exhibition took place in Takashimaya department stores in Tokyo and Osaka to present possibilities of traditional materials and demonstrate new-designed craft works for modern lifestyle. In Tuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 178.

[92] Abe,〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association], 78.

selected for this exhibition should be "authentic and purely traditional", still produced in Japan and could be directly used in modern life.[93] Responding to the westernisation and urbanisation in Japan, this exhibition attempted to rediscover and illuminate tradition's liberal value for assessing cultural authenticity, emancipating local autonomy and mobility from the commodity order of international capitalism. Tradition was represented as no more passive and conservative. It conveyed progressive connotations, promoting local culture in the modern era. As the 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' project, Yanagi's folk craft investigation in rural Taiwan aimed at creating new values for reviving local tradition in modern life.

Yen Shui-long appreciated Perriand's works. Derived from the notion of 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' along with Perriand's operation via modern design, Yen's engagement revealed a divergent perspective from *mingei* associates on craft's modern forms. The former emphasised 'creation', while the latter celebrated the inmutable 'tradition'. In contrast, Perriand's interpretation of 'Japaneseness' did not completely convince the *mingei* associates. Yanagi and Hamada published a critique of this exhibition on *Mingei* Association's institutional Journal, saying that the ministry had "accomplished the task" but this project failed to demonstrate the "joyful taste" of craft.[94] They thought Perriand's design did not respect natural characters of raw materials, and she committed a significant mistake when "cutting a whole piece of modern panel into two pieces" and satisfied the originally conspicuous beauty to fit her design.[95] This critique focused on Perriand's unfamiliarity and superficial appreciation of Japanese materials.

> Western people usually find Japanese architecture and crafts impressive, especially from those vivid and simple crafted wooden and bamboo works. Even lacquer works are seen as minor. Taut and Perriand agree on this point. It might also be true in other westerners' eyes. Bamboo is not a material that can be seen in the west; that is why it is so charming and unique.[96]

Unfortunately, they did not approve Perriand's 'selection' of Japanese 'tradition' since they thought her "western eyes" were never trained to admire these local materials. Adding onto this, they also disagreed with Perriand's interpretation of Bamboo, even though they did not think Japan had developed enough maturity in using Bamboo as Taiwan had. Kawai praised Taiwanese Bamboo craft, saying these techniques inherited from southern China were "as self-evident as generating naturally from bamboo itself", while Japan merely used bamboo in limited ways.[97] *Mingei* Associates identified that, intervened by modern design techniques, the natural quality retained by materials might lose its authenticity. In searching for an ideal taste of bamboo crafts, their appreciation on Taiwanese bamboo

[93] Tuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 181.
[94] Yanagi and Hamada Shōji,〈ペリアンの展覧會を見て〉[After viewing Berriand's exhibition], 4.
[95] Ibid, 5.
[96] Ibid, 5.
[97] Tuchida,《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time], 190-191.

handicrafts displayed in this exhibition led *Mingei* associates' further visits to Yen's practice in Guanmiao.

In comparison, Yen embraced the idea of modern design and highly praised Perriand's use of modern visual elements. (Fig. 18) The 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' exhibition inspired Yen directly in a way to perceive modernity as a visible form. He adopted modern elements from the exhibition, such as lower-based and multiple-seater designs, to figure relaxing positions which a comfort piece of furniture could project. In his later article, he emphasised the significance of performing "traditionality" by transforming "plastic culture" into "forms of new era".[98] In Yen, forms change when culture transforms with time, and 'creation' subsequently processes tradition's new role in modern society.

> According to Madam Perriand, the well-known international decorative designer, 'Selection, Tradition, Creation' matters. It represents the vitality of essential tradition by selecting practical objects serving for modernity to create new works in futuristic senses.[99]

It is worth noting that Yen identified Perriand's architectural modernism as 'decorative' as Perriand's design language was in forms of modernist simplicity. Yen's term of "decoration" might refer to a broader performance of visual elements, which in Perriand's design was a solution of beauty synthetically applied to create a sense of modern taste, transforming traditional forms into contemporary looks. The modern taste demonstrated by the 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' exhibition provided a pivotal prompt, which resulted in Yen's eclectic acquisition of *mingei* aesthetics when the idea of decoration became so notorious under the wartime circumstances. Instead of adding subordinate ornamental components onto an object, Yen's view of decoration, by taking design as a method, was to create forms by integrating structural and functional factors in a new balance. (Fig. 19) Responding to 'Selection, Tradition and Creation', in a different way to *mingei* associates' inclination towards a purified 'tradition', Yen's approach reveals a focus on the possibility of 'creation'.

The comparison between Yen's language of daily beauty via design and Tateishi's criticism of "excessive ornamentation" demonstrates Yen's craft practice with a visible gap from the *mingei* taste advocated by *Minzoku Taiwan*.[100] Tateishi indicated that those "over-decorated" products did not help to increase the "refinement" in daily life if their makers did not treat the "essential nature of

---

[98] Yen Shui-long,《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*, 1952;〈臺灣區的造形文化〉[Plastic culture in Taiwan],《歷史文物》*Bulletin of National Museum of History*, vol. 7: no.9(12), (1997); in《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art,* 138-141, 222.

[99] Yen Shui-long,《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*, 1952, preface 12-13; in 2016,《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*, appendix.

[100] Tateishi,〈生活工藝品への反省〉[A reflective thinking about crafted products in life], 539-540.

materials" properly to cultivate one's "inner spirit".[101] In terms of "over-decorated", Tateishi appreciated those cheap bamboo wares which grabbed "functional property in simple structure" for their effortless "intimacy", while deprecating those products produced with excessive artistic interventions by describing them as a "meaningless waste".[102] Visiting an exhibition at the Governmental-General Industrial Hall in Taipei, he indicated that paintings on sage-woven handbags demonstrated this bad influence.

> Those painted bags look very uncomfortable and dazzling. The motifs are usually vulgar sailboats, rose or grape, which sound very clumsy. In terms of clumsiness, I am not saying they are not painted with good technique. Painting on these handbags itself is problematic. Even any great art master will be the same.[103]

In pointing this out, Tateishi was probably not referring to Yen's sage-woven design (Fig. 20) in the South Asia Handicrafts Association, since Yen did not use pictorial motifs like rose or grape to decorate those products. What could be true, in terms of the "over-decorated", is that Tateishi expected a self-sufficient expression of material to meet the function, exclusively rejecting any forms for artistic purposes. To a certain degree, the suppression of decoration conformed to war-time aesthetics by minimising use of material and labour. Tateishi commented, when encountering shortage of raw materials (even painting on canvas was restricted), that using pigments to decorate handbags was a "meaningless waste".[104] The wartime circumstance and "correctness" in choosing daily objects, discussed in the 1943 symposium, determined some *Minzoku Taiwan*'s writers' engagement in *mingei* aesthetics with a focus on Yanage's statement of "anti-artistification".[105] Mentioned in Chapter One, Yanagi criticised Morris's Red House by describing it as "more a painting than a residence".[106] Yanagi's emphasis on functional beauty and rejection of visual stimulation were also seen in Tateishi's essentialism on expressing material nature serving functional beauty. Simple, plain and even slightly ascetic, his respect for "material" shows a discipline on choosing forms and techniques, which should sustain the original nature of material.

In contrast to Tateishi, Yen embraced the idea of decoration, though he also valued functional beauty as the most significant factor in daily objects. Yen and Tateishi cooperated in several exhibitions. Tateishi apparently was not satisfied with Yen's designs:

> Yen made considerable efforts in his new designs of table and chair. However, they are still not good enough. Inevitably, there are differences among different species of bamboo. Yen's design is not sufficient yet and

---

[101] Ibid, 540.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Yanagi, (etc.)〈生活と民藝座談會：柳宗悦氏を圍んで〉[The life and *mingei* symposium], 531-532.
[106] Yanagi,《工藝の道》[The way of Craft], 200.

> still far from the realm of silence, far from the realm of 'hearing nothing from making'. In general words, Yen operates a kind of modern taste, which sometimes fails to accommodate his use of materials.[107]

Tateishi did not further explain the "kind of modern taste" in Yen's design which "failed to accommodate his use of materials". Tateishi considered the "modern taste" as something with a different nature from the essential expression of material, which therefore needs to be "accommodated" in the design process. His acoustic analogy idealised a pure material beauty as a "realm of silence" without any superfluous sound (perhaps Yen's immature use of 'modern taste') intervening the pure expression of the material. Decoration for Tateishi must be a kind of noise, or rumble, which are too distracting for anyone to cultivate their "inner spirit". It is noteworthy that Yanagi also praised simple forms for their expressions of 'essence'. He said, "being simple does not mean merely simplifying or reducing, but crystallising the essence of things".[108] Similarities between Tateishi and *Mingei* associates are evident when perceiving their essentialist approaches to the nature of material, from Tateishi's judgement on Yen's modern design and Yanagi's criticism of Perriand's furniture in the 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' exhibition.

Emphasising their divergent engagements with the concept of 'decoration', my statement is far from identifying Yen's practice as a resistance toward the deprivation of ornamental beauty, enforced along with the wartime aesthetics' suppression of decoration. Neither does my notion have anything to do with juxtaposing Yen's artistic approach as an antithesis of Yanagi and Tateishi's rejection of 'artistifying' crafts. In Yen's practice, there was a process of cultural displacement and replacement through mimicry, re-engaging in the idea of craft by taking an alternative path in the way to applying modern aesthetics in craft design. By taking this approach, Yen's practice resonated with many aspects of *mingei* theory's socialist non-dualistic notions, which were even more precise and close to *mingei*'s aesthetic orbit than Kanaseki and Tateishi's situational uses of the *mingei* concept in the frame of war-time policy.

As observed in 1943's symposium, *Minzoku Taiwan* represented an acquisition of *mingei* as 'crafts for people' with an expectation of "social enlightenment", in which Yanagi also emphasised the diversity created by people who vitally accommodate different natural and geographical characteristics in daily creativity.[109] In the theoretical realm, Yanagi's notion of 'people' problematised the class-oriented hierarchy of recognitions of art and craft, by associating the former to the aristocratic taste flattered as the privileged 'fine art', and the latter referring to 'craft' objects produced

---

[107] Tateishi Tetsuomi,〈生活文化振興會覺書〉[Comprehending life and cultural promotion],《民俗臺灣》*Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 4, no. 4 (1944): 27.

[108] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈人形と人間〉[Forms and people], 1938; in《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9*, 168.

[109] Mizuo Hiroshi,〈民藝運動の展開〉[The launch of the *Mingei* Movement]; in《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9*, 586.

in daily life.[110] Embodied by *mingei*'s practice in the 1930s, this class-oriented dichotomy between art and craft evolved into a broader struggle of modernity, intertwined with a series of dualistic aspects of Japanese culture such as domestic/foreign, rural/urban, local/international, traditional/modern and authentic/imitated. Directly applying this frame, *Minzoku Taiwan* writers' criticism on the overuse of ornament took *mingei* as a convenient influence to frame their material essentialism as an approach of tradition and local authenticity. However, Yanagi's aesthetic scepticism of 'fine art', as the core of the *Mingei* Movement, seldom appeared in these *mingei* discussions in *Minzoku Taiwan.* What Tateishi demonstrated was merely his preference of original material, which ended up with his myth of a paradigm for promoting wartime spiritual life. Yanagi's original motivation in the term *getemono*, carried the density of miscellaneous life and "reality of labourer's work", in this context seems to be simplified as a choice against imitation of foreign culture.[111] It is understandable that *Minzoku Taiwan*'s authors made good uses of *mingei* aesthetics, but might not have been really interested in *mingei*'s original aesthetic approach. However, in a comparative view, Yen's alternative acceptance of *mingei* theory, inspired by Perriand's modern design, reveals less convergence in forms but resonates in his interpretation of Yanagi's notion of 'composite beauty'.

In Yen's writing, he used the term '*mingei*' consciously when referencing Yanagi's *mingei* theory, while in his own expressions keeping the general term 'craft'. That reveals not only Yen's awareness of the terminological resource which he should avoid misusing or mix-using with his own terms, but also suggests that Yen never considered *mingei* as an equivalent term of 'craft'. In a manuscript for a speech, he clarified the concept of *mingei* was created by Yanagi, and this term was commonly misused to refer to "national art" or "vernacular art".[112] He identified *mingei* as revolutionary since Yanage redefined the "miscellaneous" and "rough" beauty of daily objects when beauty was only considered in aristocratic works and fine art.[113] He described *mingei* in the following words:

> Free from superfluous ornaments, they are crafted for use. Simple, sober, functional, tenacious and honest, these things are made through natural methods, which were inherited from traditional techniques supported by wisdom, sufficiency and experiences from the past. Unlike artists' masterpieces, they are mass produced by proficient makers and sold for low prices to the proletariat. They are natural and healthy, not shaped in novelty and sick forms. These things were generated from people's life, so they contain forms of the locality, which also reveals unique colours of nationality.[114]

---

[110] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈工藝の性質〉[The characteristic of the *Mingei* Movement], 1937; in《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9*, 128.
[111] Ibid, 107.
[112] Yen Shui-long,〈民藝的哲理與生活美感〉[The philosophy of *mingei* and the beauty of life], 1983, collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 2-3.
[113] Ibid, 2.
[114] Ibid, 3-4.

Two facts I would like to address here are Yen's attention to *mingei*'s philosophical source and Yen's engagement in the relationship between art and craft derived from this philosophical source. In the same context, Yen mentioned the Buddhist philosophy behind the structure of *mingei* aesthetics, identifying that the celebration of 'health' and 'nature' denoted Yanagi's pursuit of "nothingness" and intuition, which had been interpreted by Yanagi with a link to the Buddhist term "other power".[115] Tracing the philosophical source of *mingei* theory, Yen agreed with Yanagi in the way of problematising the division of art and craft by looking back to the historical context of these terms. However, Yen's interest in aesthetic differentiation between art and craft did not lead to a direct adoption of the predefined dichotomy between art and craft to interpret their divergent material and formative performances.

Another of Yen's articles, 'The History of Art and Craft', demonstrated Yen's aesthetic approach of Yanagi's *mingei* theory in more detail. 'The History of Art and Craft' is an unpublished manuscript written in Japanese. The draft date is unknown. However, observing the language, style and content of this article, I believe that Yen produced this text in 1944 when he started the lecturer role for an architecture programme at Tainan Technical College.[116] The title 'The History of Art and Craft' seems to be adopted from a course title directly (Yen included Yanagi's *Craft Culture* published in 1942 in the required reading list for this programme).[117] In this programme, Yen taught in two subjects, 'design' (the terminological source of the translated Japanese title should be the French term 'dessin') and 'The History of Art and Craft', as well as in another 'Design Methods'.[118] Another document titled 'Design Methods' is also collected in the same archive. Yen mentioned this piece of text as a lecture document (*kōgi*), considering I conjectured it was a note or annotated materials for teaching. In the content, he mentioned architecture as the "mother-body of art" which unifies painting, sculpture and craft, and clarified that he did not see architecture as an independent discipline but would prefer recontextualising it into the historical context of craft and art.[119] All the evidence suggests that this manuscript was produced in 1944 .

Through this article, it is evident that Yen took Yanagi's *Craft Culture* as a significant material to develop his thought of craft along with his concern of art history. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that Yen's acquisition of 'composite beauty' from Yanagi is a synthesis accommodating multiple resources. Yen included a considerable length of writing directly transcripted from multiple authors; in addition to Yanagi, Yen also included Yasushi Yamagiwa's comment on German architecture

---

[115] Ibid, 4.

[116] After the war, Tainan Technical College was reorganised and renamed as Taiwan Provincial Tainan Junior College of Technology in 1946, specialising in industrial education. Then, Yen became an associate professor until his resignation in 1949. Now, it is National Cheng Kung University.

[117] Lin Cheng-Wei. "Taiwanese Crafts Movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", 178.

[118] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], [1944?]; 〈デッサン描法〉[Design methods], [1944?], collection of the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

[119] Yen Shui-long, 〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], 3.

aesthetician Paul Frankl (1878-1926), French philosopher Alain (Émile Chartier, 1868-1951)'s art categories in *Système des beaux-arts,* and Kimura Motomori's structure of art forms. In an overall view, this text is more like a literature review with his annotations, rather than his original writings. However, this text is adequate to see Yen's thematic concern in the term of 'history of art and craft' with relatively quoting multiple authors' perspectives. Analysing his mediated reorganisation in these literature materials provides sufficient clues to clarify his perspective and belief in the idea of craft. Benefited from his editing strategy, 'The History of Art and Craft' retains an analytical structure for tracing different sources he adopted and comparative concepts he juxtaposed to demonstrate his thought. In particular, Yen's citation from Yanagi's *Craft Culture* took more than a quarter of space in this article and was allocated with decisive connotations for building Yen's statement. Yen never identified his practice as a part of the *Mingei* Movement. However, Yanagi did inspire him in many ways, especially the historical fallacy of the art/craft division.

The term 'history of art and craft' was represented as 'craft as art history' (*Bijutsu Kōgei-shi*) with an avoidance of the existed term 'artistic craft' (*kōgei bijutsu*), what Yen demonstrated in this article is more like the history of 'art as craft' rather than a neutral juxtaposition of 'art and craft'. "Before asking what is the history of art and craft, we need to figure out what made the existence of the history of art", he said.[120] Yen implied that one's understanding of craft is an indivisible part of one's idea of art. Thus the craft issue is essentially an art issue. Responding to the idea of 'history', Yen did not organise this article in a chronological order; instead, his intention was to point out that the division between art and craft is a historical problem. In other words, 'The History of Art and Craft' reveals a resistance interrogating the structural paradox he observed from the so-called 'history of art' as an antithesis of 'history of craft' sustained by the current art-historical discipline.

At the beginning of this article, Yen said the definition of craft should be recognised as an art-historical issue in relation to the concept of 'fine art'. He suggested, taking painting and sculpture as examples, the 'fine art' (*bijutsu*) is a narrowed domain divided from 'arts' (*geijutsu*), which in its original context refers to a broader field of techniques beyond visual-oriented expressions. "Fine art" is such a definite category, whose value is based on their spatial and temporal properties.[121] This description reveals Yanagi's influence. Yanagi's categorisation allocates creative activities into three different dimensions: spatial art, represented by architecture, painting, sculpture and craft; temporal art, represented by literature and music; and temporal-spatial art, represented by theatre, dance, animation and film.[122] Yanagi's spatial/temporal categories demonstrated that the so-called "pure" art, or fine art, searching for a "free" domain of expression, is a narrow path exclusively acknowledging painting and sculpture as "free art" but expelling those in "functional" dimension.[123] Adopting

[120] Ibid, 1.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], 3; Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉 [Craft culture], 342-343.
[123] Ibid.

Yanagi's linguistic analysis of the art/craft antithesis in English by citing Morris's definition of craft in 1888, Yen agreed that this division had been a modern phenomenon derived from the western context.[124] Before this division, the term 'art' had referred to a wide range of works requiring high manual techniques. Identifying this division as a current development in western art history, Yen suggested that art in eastern culture should work with a more accommodative concept beyond the boundary of 'pure art'. However, Yen did not identify 'pure beauty' in fine art as an individualistic approach which is absent in craft-making as Yanagi did. Instead, Yen manifested that this 'free domain' can be attained through either art or craft, or others. It covers a variety of technical expressions and performances rather than restricted by simplified categories of fine art such as painting and sculpture.

Taking calligraphy as an example, Yen explained the current concept of 'fine art' failed to connotate all artistic forms in Asian culture.[125] In Yen, this incompatibility resulted not only from the cultural barrier, but also generated from the hierarchy within the western art history. Different from Yanagi, Yen suggested that artistic experience can be obtained from both art and craft. Or, more accurately, his doubt was due to the dissatisfaction with the categorisation dividing art and craft by partially claiming art's faculty of free beauty. In Yanagi, the free domain of fine art guarantees an artist's individualistic path to maintain uniqueness and eccentricity, which is far from the harmony a craftsman serves for common people. Yanagi polarised art and craft by identifying fine art's "free beauty" as subjective, "individualistic" "heroic" and "abnormal" while craft's "functional beauty" as "ordinary", "regular", "communal" and harmony.[126] In contrast, Yen believed that subjectivity exists in both art and craft (if this categorisation is applicable in this discursive context); thus, the acceptance and expression of artistic beauty should be equally discovered in multiple forms created by men. He emphasised the concept of art in the eastern world has its own cultural context and should not be undervalued within the western frame of fine art since beauty should be perceived from "concrete" objects, rather than "abstract" thoughts or theories.[127]

In searching for artistic beauty in multiple forms including craft, Yen's method did not aim at the essence of craft as Yanagi did. Yen's means was to reveal how art monopolised the definition of free beauty, which he thought plays a crucial role in craft-making. Yen was not satisfied with the arrogant definition of 'fine art' embodied as few categories, such as painting, sculpture and architecture, extracted from infinite possibilities of forms in generality. He borrowed Paul Frankl and Alan's perspectives in 'The History of Craft and Art' to challenge this categorisation by looking for the mutual aesthetic source of beauty, which he interpreted as dynamic and fluid both in forms of art and craft.

---

[124] Ibid, 6; 362.

[125] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], 11.

[126] Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉 [Craft culture], 342-343.

[127] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], 11-12.

The term ‘fine art’ (*bijutsu*) represented by painting, sculpture and architecture was not sufficient to build the concept of art (*geijutsu*), which Yen considered overflowing the term ‘fine art’. Interested in divergent perspectives sustained by different categorisations, Yen developed his definition of art from Yamagiwa Yasushi’s Kantian demonstration of Paul Frankl’s categories of aesthetic phenomena, which was illustrated with the following structure.[128]

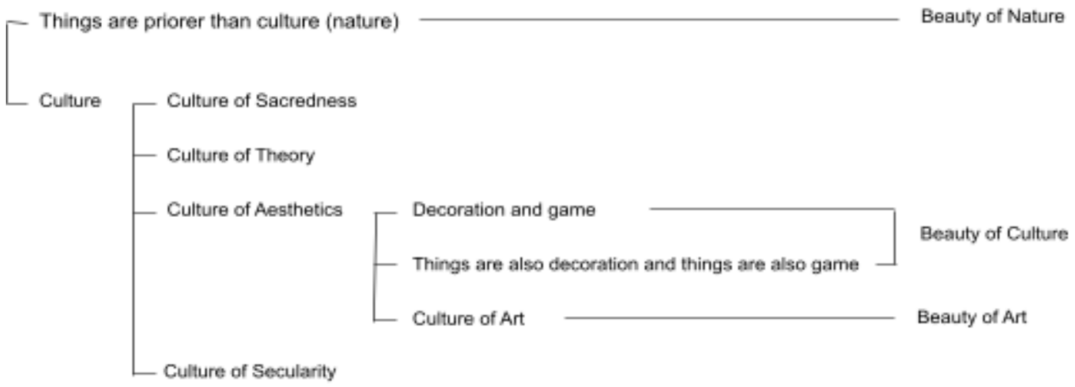

Chart 2. Paul Frankl’s categories of aesthetic phenomena.

According to Frankl, cultural-related experiences are artificial and distinguished from the domain of natural beauty that represents material originality, while artistic beauty is allocated in the category of cultural aesthetics referring to humans’ composite complexity. In the zone of culture, aesthetics refers to human’s sensibility in forms of purified subjectivity, which is different from other engagements in sacred, theoretical and secular forms.

Based on Frankl’s theory, Yen illustrated these four types of cultural performances in relation to the interaction between the subject and the object embodied as in the diagram below.[129]

[128] Yamagiwa Yasushi, 1941.《美學- 日本美學への理念》[Aesthetic: the philosophy of Japanese aesthetics], (Tokyo: Asakura Publishing, 1941), 7.
[129] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 17; Yamagiwa,《美學- 日本美學への理念》[Aesthetic: the philosophy of Japanese aesthetics], 11-13.

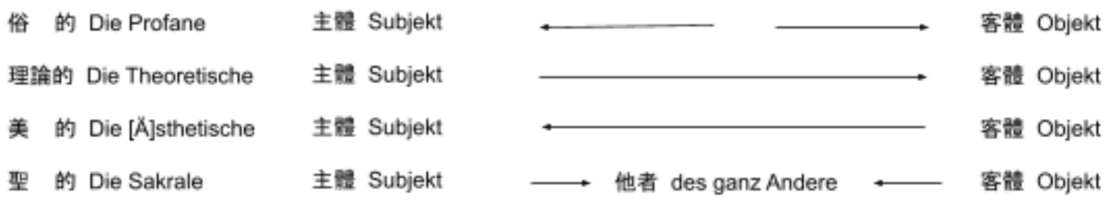

Chart 3. Yen Shui-long's notes of Paul Frankl's four types of cultural performances.

This psychological structure demonstrates Frankl's explanation of one's inner experience working in the subjective/objective duality. Sorted as secular, experiences acting with economic, political or social intention rely on mutual interaction between subjects and objects. In contrast, experiences identified as sacred present a transcendence, engaging in a third, united statement that falls in neither objective nor subjective domains. In this structure, the 'culture of theory' and 'culture of aesthetics' are antithetical. The zone of theory is a cognitive domain requiring a neutralised mind to objectise the observed world, while in the zone of aesthetics, an utterly subjective statement functions on the judgement of beauty. This 'purified subjectivity' guarantees the exclusion of utilitarian elements which were seen as obstacles intervening in aesthetic processes. This belief of "purified subjectivity" was derived from Immanuel Kant's aesthetic discourse, which claims that universality exists in subjectivity of beauty if one's subjectivity is generated without any intervention of utilitarian value, or "adherent beauty" as Kant wrote.[130] Aesthetic experience, thus, splits from cognitive value in searching for the pure domain of emotional sensibility. According to Frankl, art falls in the zone which relies on the engagement of 'purified subjectivity' but it is still necessary to identify the difference between artistic beauty and other aesthetic experiences such as "game" and "decoration". Their difference is that art requires transformations of forms, which Frankl called "mutation".[131] Demonstrated by Yamagiwa's analysis, the occurrence of artistic experience should be satisfied by at least two conditions. Firstly, artistic sensibility is not cognitive; it requires one's absolute subjectivity eliminating the intervention of utilitarianism in any forms. Second, artistic experience works with active intention to invent, compose or transform expressive forms.

Yanagi's interpretation of craft's beauty via the buddhist term 'other power' overlaps this Kantian explanation of aesthetic value in their mutual emphasis on subjectivity based on intuitional perceptions rather than epistemological or utilitarian concepts of an object. He asserted that the universality within craft's beauty is superior to artistic beauty, since modern art's demonstration of

[130] Paul Guye, ed., Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[131] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 18; Yamagiwa,《美學- 日本美學への理念》[Aesthetic: the philosophy of Japanese aesthetics], 14.

beauty is conceptually pre-determined rather than intuitional. In Yanagi, the category of 'artistic craft' (*bijutsu kōgei*) appearing under the development of 'modern craft' was a corresponding term of 'fine art', which failed to demonstrate the entity of craft's beauty in the Japanese art-historical context. He indicated that 'fine art' communicates with 'conceptual senses' under the development of modern aesthetics in the West. While, craft does not take conceptual paths like fine art does; rather, the beauty of craft relies on 'concrete' forms and direct experimental engagements to attain the sense of beauty.[132] According to Yanagi, artistic craft aims at gaining freedom via individualistic expression and hence it does not satisfy the condition of non-utilitarian value, which he defined as communal. He believed that there should be a universal value within craft, which cannot be approached by individualistic views of conceptual value, but a purified, intuitional subjectivity engaging in the kind of beauty objectively shared among common people.

Similarly, Yen's evaluation of artistic value also involves a judgement of non-utilitarian beauty; however, he did not consider craft's specificity by taking Yanagi's resolution of *getemono* to build the aesthetic boundary devising art and craft. Craft, in Yen, can be valuable in an artistic form without sacrificing its functional beauty. Yen perceived the division between art and craft as a taxonomic fallacy caused by the narrowed idea of 'art' represented by few visual categories like painting, sculpture and architecture. Rather, he indicated art as a process of "mutation" which can happen in a variety of forms and be launched by a broad range of media.[133] In both Yanagi and Yen's aesthetic perspectives, obstacles exist when taking the concept of 'fine art' to identify the substance of Asian art. Compared to Yanagi being resolute on claiming craft's independence, Yen's hesitation was obvious in his unwillingness to deprive artistic value from crafted works. In this circumstance, Frankl's clarification of art's aesthetic property in relation to cultural structure suggested to Yen a logical strategy beyond categorisation. "Categorisation is a convenient method", Yen manifested; however, how an individual experiences beauty from natural materials, then transfers objective concepts into subjective expressions is a more complicated process, which cannot be roughly framed with a pre-defined category. Frankl's structure inspired Yen with this experimental process in its "transitional" motion between object and subject rather than static boundaries for classifying things.[134]

Paraphrasing this idea, Yen extended art's boundary by referring to Alain's taxonomic demonstration of the art world represented by dance, poetry, music, drama, architecture, sculpture, painting, design and literature.[135] In Yen's view, Alain's perspective of the art world, based on René Descartes' term of creative imagination penetrating in multiple forms of works, engaged in aesthetic

---

[132] Yanagi, 〈「白樺」と「工藝」〉[White birch and craft], 184.

[133] Yen Shui-long, 〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 18.

[134] Yen Shui-long, 〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 15-16; Yamagiwa,《美學- 日本美學への理念》[Aesthetic: the philosophy of Japanese aesthetics], 4-6.

[135] Yen Shui-long, 〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 20; Alain,《芸術論集：文学のプロポ》[Collection of art theory: literature report], 1941, translated from *Systèmes des Beaux-Arts* by Kuwabara Takeo and Sugimoto Hidetarō, (Tokyo: Chūōkōronshinsha, 2002).

judgements as a process, rather than a product or structure.[136] This perspective recovers the concrete factor of art conveyed by the plurality of the material world, not via critical frameworks furnished by intellectual judgements'.[137] The function of these art forms is to transfer metaphysical thoughts and spiritual statements into universal languages, which communicate to potential participants and audiences. Based on the aesthetic universality, artworks involve multiple and interrelated expressions represented via more than a single medium. "There is no independent type of art", Yen concluded by taking Alain's terms to stress that art is never isolated from its social forms.[138] All represented forms required a shared unity to act interdependently. Artistic quality in the cultural domain is seen in interdependency between architects and artisans, music players and composers, dancers and costume designers, even authors and audiences.[139] From this scope, Yen perceived art in Asian culture, in theatre, garden art and ceremony, as a composite entity where concrete and abstract forms - visual, vocal and actional - cooperate with each other.[140]

Rejecting the dominance in forms of categorisation, Yen also adopted Motomori Kimura's model, allocating various forms of artistic expression into a spectrum embodied with both spatial and temporal dimensions.[141] According to Kimura, one's intuitional sensibility of art relies on substantial forms to embody it.[142] These forms are sustained by different quantities and also qualities of spatial and temporal requirements. For example, in the domain of concrete forms, visual art can be sustained in the spatial dimension, but drama relies on both spatial and temporal requirements to embody the performance. While, in the abstract zone, literature and music are both conceived in forms of symbol, but music takes more quality from the motion of time to accomplish the complexity.[143] Considering formations of diverse artistic expressions in their spectral locations rather than static substance in categorised domains, Yen retained his statement of artistic value in crafted forms without drawing the dividing line between art and craft. This supported Yen's alternative engagement in Yanagi's non-dualistic approach of "the epoch of composite beauty".[144]

In 'The History of Art and Craft', Yen included Yanagi's notion of 'composite beauty' as a significant perspective clarifying how fine art had developed from a craft-related origin. Yen accepted Yanagi's analysis, identifying that the Renaissance marked the change. "Once upon a time, literature,

---

[136] Yen Shui-long, 〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 19-20.

[137] Kate Kirkpatrick, "Beneath the Surface: Whose Phenomenology? Which Art?", in Helen Appleton and Louise Nelstrop, ed., *Art and Mysticism: Interfaces in the Medieval and Modern Periods*, (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2018), 27-29.

[138] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts]. 21; Alain,《芸術論集：文学のプロポ》[Collection of art theory: literature report], 47.

[139] Ibid, 20-22; 48.

[140] Ibid, 24; 28-31.

[141] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 28-31.

[142] Kimura Motomori,《美のかたち》[The figure of beauty], (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1941), 15.

[143] Kimura,《美のかたち》[The figure of beauty], 10-11, 17.

[144] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 359.

music and dance were unified, and so was architecture, painting, sculpture and craft-making. They gathered and cooperated, forming the magnificent unity of all creativities".[145] Reallocating 'fine art' into the genealogical relation between art and craft, Yanagi's demonstration of 'composite beauty' suggested precisely that the birth of 'fine art' is a phenomenon along with the development of modernity. In Yanagi, the occurrence of modern individualism caused the split of 'fine art' from a general domain of art, inclining to ideas of genius, talent and the individualistic freedom of expression. Yanagi indicated that, before the modern definition of 'fine art' emerged, there had been an 'epoch of composite beauty' when crafted works were seen to be no different from artworks. Artistic objects could be functional things in the past but now unfortunately only refers to those created for visual stimulations. Yen included Yanagi's description of the siting Maitreya status in Chūgū temple to demonstrate the 'composite beauty'.

> [These works were not created merely] for visual purposes. They must be things as a part of daily life. They are not based on expressions of individualistic freedom but in forms of traditional complexity with specific conventions. [The makers] relied on the homogeneity within forms rather than the heterogeneity of personalities. […] They are not 'fine art' standing for 'freedom', but art supported by principles.[146]

Besides this, Yen also included Yanagi's interpretation of Hōryū temple to show how multiple human creativities were united as composite beauty, which was sustained by the power of tradition guided by principles.

> Here, paintings, music, scripture, furniture and utensils, all things are aggregated with the whole architecture. Thus, these things were created for a complete unity based on religious requirements to represent the genuine religious life of the time authentically. Beyond this life of faith, there was nothing that could be named as religious architecture, painting or sculpture.[147]

Referring to these two temples in Nara, Yanagi applied the term 'composite beauty' to emphasise the complexity and synthesis of art forms in the past, which should not be deprived of their material contexts and specific functions. Whereas, 'fine art' with its visual dominance failed to cooperate with the synthesis sustained by various forms. Quoting Yanagi's stance of 'composite beauty', obviously, Yen consistently resonated with Yanagi's criticism on 'fine art' with a focus on its inadequacy to accommodate art forms in the past due to its cramped claim of 'free expression'. Yen's acceptance of 'composite beauty' was due to his dissatisfaction of 'fine art' as a term categorising 'architecture, painting or sculpture' individually detached from the synthetic cultural context. With the application of Yanagi's perspective, 'The History of Art and Craft' identified the historical moment of division

[145] Ibid, 376.
[146] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 33; Yanagi, 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 360.
[147] Ibid, 34; 361.

between art and craft as the division of 'composite beauty' and the so-called 'free beauty', which contributed 'fine art' dominance in modern aesthetics. Projected as a structural category, the modern concept of art deviated from the judgement based on the purity of subjectivity which was manifested in Yamagiwa's Kantian definition of art. In Yen, this gap between the claimed 'free beauty' and its obviously constrained articulation in limited forms encouraged him to consider the free beauty, not as an obstacle within craft, but something that should be recovered in both art and craft.

In many of Yen's articles, he applied the term "plastic art" (*zōkei geijutsu*) or "plastic culture" to convey a more accommodative concept replacing the more socialist expression of 'art', whose connotation Yen concerned had been dominated by 'fine art'. Yen's term of "plastic art" was derived from Yanagi's structure of the art world included in his publication in 1941. The structure was presented with the categorisation below.[148]

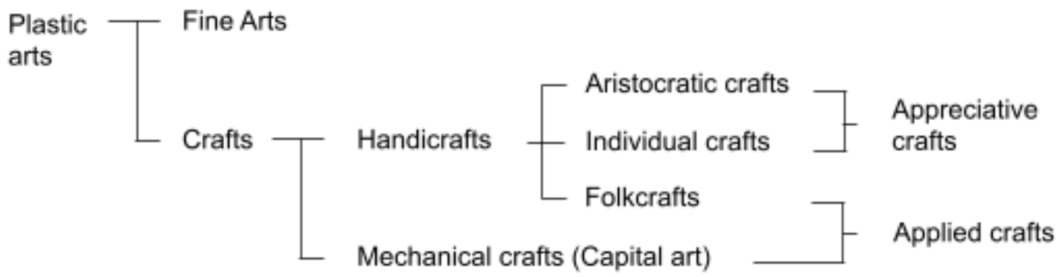

Chart 4. Yen Shui-long's notes of Yanagi's categories of plastic culture.

Through representing 'plastic culture' by identifying the difference between art and craft, Yanagi's intention was to emphasise craft's capacity and its independence from 'artistic beauty', which was associated with 'visual' amusement and free expressions of "individuality".[149] Inspired by this model, Yanagi tried to explain how the concept of fine art contributed to misinterpretations and disparagements of considerable works functioning with both visual and functional pleasure in the material world. He indicated that specialisation in the modern era brings the defect of division. Through establishing boundaries, one's specialist occupation is alienated from a coordinated relationship. Yanagi explained, "literature, music and dance were once a unity, and so were architecture, painting and sculpture; they were united to present a tremendous world of composite techniques".[150] He agreed that this division contributes to profession and progression but if this

[148] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 356.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 376.

division is accompanied with "hierarchicalism", it could be a disaster.[151] The 'free domain' of 'pure art' becomes paradoxical when art should be 'purely visual' then expels functional beauty, which plays such a crucial role in the material world. Yanagi thus affirmed that 'fine art' is a finite path when the freedom claimed lacks universality. Since fine art is usually represented as one's "individuality, freedom and critique" to pursue abstract value, the conceptual statement created by an artist is often alienated from universal value shared by the majority of people.[152]

When Yen adopted this diagram in his manuscript, he explained the term 'fine art' further to include architecture, painting and sculpture, then sorted painting and sculpture as 'pure art'.[153] In the term 'pure art', painting and sculpture aim for visual appreciation as an independent value distinguished from functional approaches. Recognising the defect of categorisation, Yen agreed with Yanagi's opinion that art should not be discursively monopolised as 'fine art'. However, Yen did not take the path identifying the beauty of craft as a unique domain apart from art, as Yanagi asserted. In contrast, his alternative use of the term 'plastic arts' shows an emphasis on unity, rather than division. Synthetically considering 'composite beauty' in conversation with other resources such as Frankel and Alain, Yen believed that appreciating a beautiful object means one's inner construction processing to shape the aesthetic meaning. The cognitive classification of things is an external epistemological value system which stimulates nothing aesthetic, unless an individual recovers an object's non-dualistic ambiguity in an experimental sense. Beyond their plausible hierarchical antithesis, art and craft share mutual sources, which imply that promoting any of them will eventually benefit each other. Yen demonstrated this in the following quote:

> To accelerate the development of fine art, the priority is promoting those arts which are related to our daily life. That is to say, beautifying daily utensils, living spaces and landscapes for nurturing simple and elegant taste is an initial work for introducing the idea of fine art.[154]

Inspired by Yanagi, Yen manifested the mutuality between art and craft, which historically shares a united technique and material complexity in the cultural context. Yen's aesthetic approach took this link as a conjunction, perceiving artistic value as a penetrative agency, which can be embodied in any form, including craft.

Both Yanagi and Yen considered 'composite beauty' as a matter to attain the free domain of craft. Yen's aesthetic approach recovering the ambiguity of art provided an alternative possibility beyond Yanagi's dualism in a western-eastern and art-craft dichotomies. In *mingei* theory, craft's beauty is

---

[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid, 370-371.
[153] Yen Shui-long,〈談臺灣手工藝問題〉[A talk about problems of Taiwanese handicrafts], 1959, collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 2.
[154] Yen, Shui-long,〈我與臺灣工藝：從事工藝四十年的回顧與前瞻〉[Myself and the Taiwanese crafts: a forty-years retrospective view of my craft engagement and its prospect], 181.

represented through Yanagi's socialist discovery of *getemono*, whose quality as 'free beauty' was polarised by a series of western-related concepts, such as individualism, utilitarianism and capitalism, that Yanagi sorted as imported values.[155] That project craft's 'free beauty' as a purified cultural originality free from the cognitive process of fine art, engaging in the essential lifestyle and beauty generated by local everyday experience. Responding to the unsatisfied 'artistic beauty', Yanagi's resolution was to create an aesthetic discursive domain exclusively for the 'free beauty' of craft. This path takes the 'beauty of craft' as a static essence within craft-making, to discover craft's faculty distinguished from the pursuit of art. In contrast, although Yen perceived the fallacy within the art-craft division, he did not develop an essentialist approach to scope craft's beauty as an exclusive principle. Instead, the idea of 'composite beauty' inspired him to observe the dynamic forms in relation to the complexity and flexibility of human sensibility. If artistic experience required a 'purified subjectivity' involving in the occurrence of 'mutation' without any cognitive intervention, then any one thing's artistic quality should be determined by individuals' aesthetic initiatives, regardless how an object is cognitively categorised. Yen's understanding of 'free beauty' encouraged him to consider artistic beauty's universality, which can be penetratively explored in multiple forms. Yen did not apply Yanagi's 'non-dualistic' approach which suggests the purity of craft 'free' from utilitarian motivations developed within modern art. The discrepancy of Yen's acquisition of *mingei* theory determined an independent approach of non-dualism: Yen's aesthetic discourse was altered through embracing craft as art, taking modern design as a method to reshape art-historical locality.

By the end of this chapter, I would like to reiterate the discontinuity within the convergence of *mingei* theory and local discourses. Several protagonists included in this chapter eloquently confirmed their practices' connections to *mingei* theory. However, none of them circulated *mingei* theory as its original notion by Yanagi. Each of them demonstrated alternative approaches with altered meanings for the specific sake of negotiating with colonial control. The case of *Minzoku Taiwan* serves as a cultural interface, embodying the complexity and ambiguity camouflaged by the ostensibly well-defined colonial structure. This gives us a chance to observe its initiative to displace and replace the colonial structure, resisting its assimilation by utilising the inner paradox within the Japanese imperial ideology. While perceiving Yanagi's struggle with the clash between his ideal of non-dualism and the nationalism which had been politically applied to justify Japan's cultural-essentialist division between the Self and Others, Yen Shui-long's approach embraced an alternative path to approach the free beauty in non-dualism explored by Yanagi. The discontinuity guaranteed the local autonomy, which in the original design of *mingei* theory had been emphasised as the eccentric mobility in cultural frontiers, the bottom-up agency generated in miscellaneous, ambivalent daily experience. Yen's idea of craft reengages in the core of art by illuminating a post-historical space, a breakthrough

[155] Yanagi, *The Way of Craft*, 254-255.

from art's European-centric theoretical basis in a Hegelian tone, relocating the occurrence of 'artistic mind' in an intersubjective relation between the object and the subject.[156]

[156] Yen Shui-long, 〈台灣に於ける「工藝產業」の必要性〉[The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan], 20-21.

Chapter Four

Yen Shui-Long's Approach to Art through Craft

In the previous chapter, I examined perspectives on Yanagi and Yen Shui-long's meeting in 1943 as significant for building up the connection between the Japanese *Mingei* Movement and Yen's revival of Taiwanese handicrafts. By revealing the dislocation within the attempt to accomplish linearity, my intention is to clarify that these connections under the colonial circumstance render more disconnected displacements and replacements, rather than a static structure of power. In this chapter, I would like to analyse these displacements and replacements in their process by pulling back the time maybe a decade earlier than 1943 with a detailed view on Yen's craft practice and its hybridity and eclecticism. By doing so, my narrative strategy might therefore inevitably overflow the frame of the Arts and Crafts Movement in its international transmission, since many pivotal materials I am dealing with do not fit the current frame in the way of scoping predetermined genres and connections. However, it is necessary to reconsider Yen's practice by retrospecting his early career as a painter, which made his art and his craft indivisible throughout his whole life.

In 1932, Yen finished his study at La Grande Chaumiére and Académie Art Moderne in France then returned to Japan. During his study in Paris, his *Park Montsouris* and *La Jeune Fille* (Fig. 21, 1931) were accepted for the Salon d'Automne.[1] Between 1933 and 1936, Yen was substantially active in the Taiwanese artist circle. In 1933, He held several solo exhibitions and symposiums on his sojourn in Europe in Taipei, Taichung and Tainan. In these shows, Yen demonstrated a solid technique trained in the academy. Alongside paintings he had created in Paris like *Park Montsouris,* which Taiwanese audiences had already learned about from newspapers, he also included his copy works of masterpieces such as *La Source* by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) and *La Femme au Miroir* and *Conjugal Allegory* by Tiziano Vecellia, or Titian (1488-1576).[2] (Fig. 22) Visiting this exhibition, Japanese artist Shiotsuki Tōho (1886-1954) praised Yen's use of 'unique colour' and 'solemn and classical form of beauty' in his academic approach.[3] After returning from France, Yen frequently submitted artworks to the government-sponsored Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition, also known as Taiten, almost in the following four consecutive years. His artworks in this period include *Miss K*

[1] Lin Pan-long, 〈顔水龍氏の繪が巴里サロンドオトンヌに入選〉[Yen Shui-long's painting were accepted for the Salon d'Automne in Paris], 1931; in Yen and Tsuruta, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art, Volume 2*, 423.

[2] Shiotsuki Tōho, 〈顔水龍君の滞歐作品展に就て〉[Yen Shui-long's exhibition on his sojourn in Europe], 1933; in Yen and Tsuruta, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art, Volume 2*, 425-426.

[3] Ibid.

and *Miss Shimon* in 1933, *Lily* and *Indoors* in 1934, *Girl of Orchid Island* and *Evening Tide* in 1935, and *Girl of Danan Village* in 1936.[4] Out of the governmental field, Yen and several Taiwanese artists organised local societies, co-founding the Taiyang Art Association in 1934 in search for alternative practices of painting beyond the national-made aesthetics and also bypassing the censorship dominated by the Taiten committee. The creation of the Taiyang Art Association was a prominent event when their first public exhibition launched in 1935, which marked a new page of art history in Taiwanese artists' negotiation for autonomy within the official exhibitionary system.

However, in 1936, Yen turned his life focus from a painter to an initiator promoting Taiwanese handicrafts. He started from a series of surveys on handicraft educational facilities and curricula. Aiming at founding an educational organisation and institution in the future, Yen's survey included several major commercial college programmes in crafts and design in Japan.[5] As an outcome, Yen drafted a plan to found an arts and crafts school and submitted this project to two different departments of the Japanese Colonial Government: the Industrial Development Bureau and the Cultural and Educational Bureau. Apparently, this project drove more attention from the former. The Industrial Development Bureau commissioned Yen as a consultant and financially supported him to conduct another survey to record characteristics and distributions of Taiwanese handicrafts and materials. This survey was followed by a two-year research project for the Industrial Art Research Institute in Japan under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce. When he returned to Taiwan in 1939 and submitted a survey report to the Industrial Development Bureau, the government postponed the plan to promote an industrial arts research institute in Taiwan due to the 'impact of war'. Instead, Yen started his handicraft work and promoted local manufacturing products in South Taiwan. In 1941, he participated in another artist society 'MOUVE', also known as Taiwan Plastic Arts Association, and co-organised the society's first exhibition, in which Yen submitted seven oil paintings and about twenty items of handicraft design.[6]

1936 marked a watershed moment in Yen's eventful artist life. Nonetheless, when referring to Yen's participation in handicraft revival, most researchers did not identify these projects as a part of Yen's artistic practice, although they more or less agreed that his exploration of local handicrafts and materials benefited his career as a 'fine' artist. For example, Chuang Po-ho indicated "the unique brightness carrying the fragrance of soil" in Yen's painting, as inspired by craft, was derived from his enthusiasm toward local culture.[7] Chuang Su-o identified Yen's "sudden shift" as an important stage

---

[4] Taipei Fine Arts Museum, *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 355-356.
[5] Taipei Fine Arts Museum, "Shui-Lung Yen: A Timeline". *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 357.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Chuang Po-ho, 〈建立臺灣藝術風貌的顏水龍〉[Yen Shui-long, who founded the Taiwanese feature in art], in《顏水龍九五回顧展》[Yen Shui-long's 95 Years Retrospective Exhibition - Local Emotion of Taiwan.], (Taichung, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, 1997), 16.

for Yen to develop an "individual style of painting" by adopting "folklore themes" and "localised colours".[8] She stated that 1936 was a pivotal year:

> Not long after Yen came back from France, with reaching a glorious peak of his fine art career, suddenly he turned to devote all his efforts to promoting craft. Doubtlessly, this shift made a pivotal change in his painting, which tore his contribution to art into two parts throughout his life.[9]

Apparently, Yen's decision to turn his focus from painting to craft surprised many people who believed that fine art and craft were two different paths. Chuang Su-o's phrase, "sudden shift", implies the split between "two parts", maybe interrelated but more opposite inclinations, rather than taking Yen's practice of arts and crafts as a unified methodology of art. However, Yen's motivation is always consistent. As he stressed in 'The History of Craft and Art', by demonstrating the history of 'craft as art', his practice through craft, which I will argue in this chapter, conveys a firm stance that craft should be considered as 'art', not in other subordinate terms such as "industrial art", "applied art" or "decorative art".[10]

In other words, Yen's devotion to the field of craft in the mid-1930s was far from a 'shift', but rather an embrace of his belief, which was never explored in such a revolutionary way by any of his fellows who believed art should be considered a different approach from craft. Tracing when and how this belief and the thought of founding an arts and crafts school emerged might be difficult. However, it is clear that during his study in Paris Yen had already presented considerable interest in various forms of material culture. He did some amateur investigation into several industrial facilities, including the Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres and textile and dyeing factories in Paris and Lyon.[11] Simultaneously, non-western ethnographic objects from the International Colonial Exhibition attracted him greatly.[12] Yen recognised that non-western cultural objects had triggered formalistic innovations in his generation even when his study of art in Paris mainly focused on the conventional academic training of western oil painting.

By pulling back the time from 1943 to the middle 1930s, my narrative intention is to deviate my focus from the conjunction between Yen's practice and Yanagi's *mingei* theory to emphasise the independence of Yen's method. Rather than identifying their difference through a comparative approach, focusing on independence recovers the material's context in-site. In this regard, Yen's contribution is not merely based on what he accepted or rejected from the *mingei* theory but his autonomy from the art-versus-craft debate. Recovering this independent narrative also means

---

[8] Chuang Su-o, 〈純藝術的反叛者〉[A rebel of fine art - Yen Shui-Long], 33.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Yen Shui-long, 〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], 2.
[11] Chuang Su-o, 〈純藝術的反叛者〉[A rebel of fine art - Yen Shui-Long], 20.
[12] Yen Shui-long, 〈臺灣に於ける「工藝產業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", 21-22.

clarifying the complexity of Yen's practice along with its ambiguity and hybridity, which I think should be retold under a postcolonial context.

It is also worth turning back to 1935, one year earlier than the 'pivotal' 1936, when Yen Shui-long started applying indigenous themes on his canvas. Yen visited Orchid Island (Redhead Island was its old name in the colonial period) and the Yami tribe for the first time in 1935.[13] Since then, Orchid Island became Yen's dreamland which inspired Yen's practice in both art and craft aspects, and this enthusiasm lasted for his remaining life. Orchid Island was an isolated island to the South-East of mainland Taiwan, to which the only transport is a boat arriving twice a month, and beyond that "there is no means of contact with the outside world whatsoever".[14] Before his visit in May, he had carried out a series of pre-studies at the Anthropography Studio of Taipei Imperial University (now the Department of Anthropology of National Taiwan University) since March.[15] After the survey, he published an article titled 'Primal Realm' in September, vividly introducing multiple aspects of Yami tribal culture, including its geography, natural environment, customs of religion, marriage, birth and death, music and dance, clothing and food, as well as their annual ritual ceremonies.[16] In October, Yen submitted two paintings, *Girl of Orchid Island* and *Evening Tide,* to Taiten, which are all based on his observation during this trip.

Challenging but inevitable, my analysis of Yen's craft practice involves his interpretation of indigenous culture, which projects the interface of these two fields with an engagement of exotism under the eyes of Others. Examining Yen's application of 'aborigines' means rechecking these interpretations in the platitudinous frames of civilisation and its myths sustained by sets of dualism - between the civilised and the primitive, the artificial and the authentic, the modern and the traditional - which originally formed with a psychological structure of colonialism. Colonialism mentioned here was not just in the frame of Japanese imperialism but involved in the international scale of a hierarchical world structure. Embodied through this structure, what ruled the value system was an artificial sequence of civilisation, which gave power to those who have "full knowledge", the "ability" to explain the essence of the 'Other' based on their "insight and thinking".[17] Taiten's oriental-style painting section is a prominent case which identified Taiwanese artists' representations of "local colour" as a "diligent type" of "realism", suggesting their pursuit was a "foundational discipline" while Japanese artists were good at producing "conceptual works".[18] Modernity,

---

[13] Known as Tao people, Yami is an old name which is not used today. Anthropologist Ryūzō Torii (1870-1953) named aborigines in Orchid Island as 'Yami' in his report of field survey in 1897. This name was used until 'Tao' was officially acknowledged by taking voice from the tribe.

[14] Yen Shui-Long, "Primal Realm: the Land and People of Orchid Island", 1935; Brent Heinrich, trans., collected in Taipei Fine Arts Museum, *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making,* 374.

[15] Yen Shui-long,〈畫家眼中的蘭嶼 - 期待一塊永久的樂土〉[Orchid Island in artists' eyes - looking forward to an foreverland of happiness], *Lionart Journal* 75(5), (1977): 66.

[16] Yen Shui-Long, "Primal Realm: the Land and People of Orchid Island", 374-381.

[17] Liao Hsin-tien, "The Beauty of the Untamed: Exploration and Travel in Colonial Taiwanese Landscape Painting", in Kikuchi Yuko, ed., *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, 43-44.

[18] Yen Chuan-ying, "The Demise of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan", 100-101.

represented as a western value of progression, became a genre which Japanese artists used to suggest that the "Japanese use their head when painting, while Taiwanese use only their hands".[19] The imbalanced colonial structure bestowed the power to rediscover the 'modern value' in primitive themes, which usually mixed with colonialist reflections of exotism, nostalgia along with a set of representations appreciating certain kinds of gender, cultural class and natural landscape. Examining Yen's primitivism requires a careful treatment toward the ambiguous identity within colonial modernity, which enforced the cultural hierarchy among different 'races' in Japan's imperial structure. In an art historical context, I would like to retrace this myth of primitivism back to European modernity, which infantilised non-European objects then celebrated their 'primal nature' to make transgression in forms. This connection between modernism and primitive themes, developed through the Japanese modern language of art, conveyed a 'conceptual approach' in representations of Taiwanese local colour.

In his 1942 article, 'The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan', Yen firstly used the term "free craft". This term, under this historical context, seems to be suspicious as he identified clearly that "free craft" refers to tribal craftworks created by indiginous people.[20] Nonetheless, a quick judgement of ostensible primitivism is not adequate when even Yen himself did not define this term clearly in any of his articles. After learning Yanagi's criticism on fine art's free beauty, Yen's use of 'free craft' became quite catchy. However, Yen's term differs from Yanagi's term 'beauty of craft' which identified craft's aesthetic engagement in liberty independently different from the freedom in 'fine art'. With a connection to indigenous culture, 'free craft' refers to a more universal boundary of creativity, including the functional demand of daily objects as well as the abstract realm. In Yen's view, 'free craft' refers to the general performance of ornament. It is worth noting that "free craft" suggests that Yen's practice has more to do than its allocation as "industrial" within the scope of "local handicraft's economical contribution to the state and common people" by the Japanese bureaucracy and art historians who treated Yen's art and craft practices as separate parts.[21] Yen took 'ornament' as a significant expression of craft that also carries articulate cultural meanings. Rather than taking 'free craft' as a sign to trace the source of Yen's primitivism, my analysis of this term focuses more on his representation of cultural images of Others as a method to redefine craft's nature as artistic value in its universality. Yen's representation of "aborigines" deviated from the language of conceptual abstraction, which in modern art had been used to celebrate human nature in its originality, in its liberty emancipated from the iron cage of reason. His exploration of liberty in craft, oriented by

---

[19] Ibid, 101.

[20] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝産業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", 16-26

[21] Chiang Su-e, "A Case Study on the Conception of the Continuation of "Aesthetic Education" of Yen Shui-long and Liu Chi-Hsiang: An Approach to the Perspective of Life History", (Master's thesis, Nanhua University, 2008), 35.

his question into the unity of art and craft, reveals his detailed observations of the material world and 'plastic culture'.

Returning to Yen's design works that usually fall in the category of industrial art, I would like to conclude my examination on 'free craft' by analysing Yen's hybrid language as a practice of modern art. Considering the value of the term 'modern art', my intention is to reallocate this case into the context of early twentieth-century modernism but also illustrate Yen's rediscovery of ambiguity within the abstraction of modern art, on which artists relied when differentiating between the subversive and the traditional. Yen's design juxtaposed the modern and the traditional in hybridity. He embraced modern language manifested by Charlotte Perriand in her 1940's show 'Selection, Tradition and Creation', which I have mentioned in the previous chapter. In this chapter, with an overall view of Yen's art and design, I trace possible resources of Yen's forms back to the tradition of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, including its development in the late nineteenth century as well as the later design revolution defined as the Bauhaus Movement. Not only in its alternativity but also in its replacement in a more transgressive sense, Yen's art through craft shows independence; it negotiates with colonial realism, bypassing the diversity defined by the ideological structure of Greater East Asia and engaging in an ambiguous and hybrid view of culture.

On Craft's Liberty

Yen's definition of craft always projects a relationship with art. In his book *Formosa Industrial Art* published in 1952, he identified "craft", as in a narrow sense meaning "objects with technical expression created for decorative purpose", while in a broad sense, refers to "daily functional objects crafted with beauty".[22] In the same context, Yen specifically explained the relationship between craft and "fine art".

> Generally, the so-called fine art refers to objects, painting, sculpture and music for example, which concentrates on the author's ideal, transcended functional and utilitarian purposes free from any restrictions. In contrast, crafts need to satisfy aesthetic emotion and also functional value, which is technically constrained by economic requirements. However, it is difficult to distinguish them as fine art sometimes also confer utility. Regarding the relationship between fine art and craft, since they are all involved in the property of beauty, craft making therefore should technically rely on what fine art can achieve.[23]

This definition maintains an ambiguity in its relationship with craft, as Yen suggests that since they are all "involved in the property of beauty" their boundary is sometimes blurred. Approximately, he

[22] Yen Shui-long,《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*, 66.
[23] Ibid, 69.

indicates that craft carries functional purposes, which he considers as a reason that craft is not as "free" as art. Functional beauty with a "utilitarian purpose" determines the restrictions in making craft. Yen drew a further question on the freedom of craft's beauty by enquiring how to maintain the free beauty in functional objects. In other words, if 'fine art' is a foreign culture that we learned as a part of modernity, then how can we define craft's beauty as local creativity in the modern era? If craft shared an aesthetic value with art in a universal sense, what is craft's possibility to be free?

Yen might not be the first one who developed the term 'free craft' in relation to aboriginal material culture. In 1924, the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce commissioned Yamamoto Kanae to conduct a survey on the commercial value of Taiwanese handicrafts, especially in indigenous culture, in the international market. He proposed to build an educational infrastructure for craft in communal studio form, which subsequently contributed to the establishment of the Crafts Education Center in Taichung in 1928.[24] Yamamoto organised Taiwanese crafts into three categories: "self-use craft, pure craft and industrial craft".[25] He also indicated that in the category of "industrial craft", the "artistic value" should be compromised when clashing to the "economic value" so a maker should consider costs of ingredients and labour force. By contrast, 'pure craft' engages with the opposite side of "industrial craft" in a way of pursuing beauty without considering these costs. Yamamoto's comments on Taiwanese handicrafts were quite harsh by saying they were "inferior", "childish" and "undeveloped":

> Before I arrived in Taiwan, I expected no [good] crafts in industrial and pure types, and now I think I was right. Industrial crafts, like furniture and wares, lacked technical value so it is limited to trade them. However, their self-use crafts created by aborigines with 1.3 million populations reveal unexpected prosperity.[26]

Yamamoto made a disappointing conclusion saying the quality of pure crafts and industrial crafts lacked technical value as he had anticipated. However, he praised aboriginal craftworks for their extraordinary skill in weaving and carving, suggesting 'pure ones among these craftworks can be selected as models' to accelerate innovations of industrial handicrafts in Taiwan.[27] Yamamoto asserted Taiwan had no requirement to develop "pure" craft; but he thought those self-use types of crafts created in daily life were potentially valuable commodities if they could be manufactured in industrial ways.

---

[24] Yang Meng-zhe,《日帝殖民下台灣近代美術之發展》[The development of Taiwanese modern art under the Japanese colonisation], (Taipei: Wu-nan Press, 2013), 120.
[25] Yamamoto Kanae,〈有望之臺灣工藝的產業〉[The prospective industry of Taiwanese craft], 1924; in Yen and Tsuruta, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, 492.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid, 492-493.

The category of "free craft", in Yen's 1942's article 'The Importance of Handicraft Industry in Taiwan', refers to crafted works from the aboriginal culture in *takasago* tribes.[28] In *Formosa Industrial Art*, Yen used the term "crafts in mountain regions" to categorise eight different tribal cultures and their craftworks, which is distinguished from other chapters organised by categories of material and related techniques in the industrial realm.[29] Yen's definition of tribal craft is independent of industrial types, emphasising tribal craft's cultural unity rather than applications in industrial productions. With the term "free craft", he urged:

> The free craft from aboriginal *(Takasago)* groups is an essential foundation for developing handicraft industries on this island. Unfortunately, these days they are losing their uniqueness. Even a few surviving forms are misused by merchants. Aboriginal people's domain of joyful manufacture has been invaded, and the authentic value of free craft is being contaminated. Since some local administrators ignore the necessity, their genuine life is constrained from developing.[30]

He enumerated protective policies of Scandinavia and Madagascar, and his experiences of primitive art from colonies of France in the Paris International Colonial Exhibition in 1930, to demonstrate that domestic aboriginal arts were also excellent and deserved further cultural and industrial promotions by the government. According to Yen, an ideal policy should reasonably consider the nature of indigenous life and its relationship to the natural conditions for their art.[31] Yen noticed that the connection with their inherited natural lifestyle is significant for sustaining the temperaments of "joy" and "freedom" in their works, and the application of modern concepts like capitalism and academic methods of art might intervene this connection. In this context, it is also interesting to see that the cases of primitive form Yen referred to were not only daily functional tools but also decorative patterns and ornaments, which were embodied as a part of the plastic culture.

'The Importance of Handicraft Industry in Taiwan' makes me believe that Yen's term 'free craft' was very likely developed based on Yamamoto's categorisation. In short, 'free craft' is a category Yen created to compensate for his dissatisfaction with Yamamoto's categories. The first sentence of this article shows a very similar structure and statement to Yamamoto.

> There is no commendable pure craft on this island, but there are many crafts made for practical purposes in daily life. Besides this, another well-known fact is that unique and excellent tribal crafts here would win appreciation all over the world.[32]

---

[28] 高砂, *takasago,* in Japanese was an ancient name of Taiwan. In Yen Shui-long's context it was referred to as a general signification to identify all groups of aboriginal people in Taiwan.
[29] Yen Shui-long,《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*, 72-141.
[30] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝産業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", 20.
[31] Ibid, 22.
[32] Ibid, 16.

In this article, Yen manifested the 'excellence' of Taiwanese crafts, prompting positive reviews and substantial attention to their economic potential. Like Yamamoto, Yen also found nothing 'pure' about the craft terrain in Taiwan. Moreover, Yen indicated that indigenous tribal culture kept the legacy that was confronting an urgency to protect. In Lin Chen-wei's analysis of Yen's article, he mentioned Yen's categorisation of crafts in three types - "life craft, pure craft and free craft" - and juxtaposed Yen's term of "pure craft" as an antithesis of "life craft". Observing Yen's categorisation, Lin interprets that "pure craft" renders non-utilitarian motivations away from "daily need", which means its purity relied on the demolishment of utility.[33] In Yamamoto, the non-utilitarian property of the purity of craft was more related to the independence from capitalist value and commercial benefits. By considering the category of 'pure craft', which may cover the 'artistic beauty' in craft-making, the category of 'free beauty', as Yen's new term, prompts a further question: in Yen's perspective, being 'pure', or 'non-utilitarian', is perhaps not being 'free' yet in craft's domain.

'Free craft' projects a recognition of 'composite beauty' in daily practices of cultural engagement; however, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, in Yen, this approach is still different from Yanagi's stance through *getemono*. In short, free craft scopes a shared aesthetic property where artistic beauty engages in the cultural domain in forms of composite unity. Embodied through aboriginal cultural fields, 'free craft' refers to ethnographic objects Yen considered significant in their connections between "spiritual life" and the natural environment.[34] Examples he gave, such as carved animal motifs from Madagascar and exquisite embroideries and relief carving from Taiwanese tribal cultures, were not really valuable in any functional aspect when Yen emphasised their decorative quality specifically.[35] To cultivate 'free beauty', Yen said "fostering people's inherent, natural artistic mind is significant" and this nature is based on "liberty" in developing lifestyles based on natural and cultural requirements.[36] Observing how this "natural artistic mind" loses firm connections with life, Yen was concerned about the continuity of this spiritual property in the modern era through educational methods:

> Considering the nature requirement as a part of one's art concept, we should no longer teach people art's principles and techniques in repetition. We should encourage trainees to develop insight based on daily incidents, things, objects, people, whatever seems intimate for them. Specialised education might merely give them mechanical skillfulness and superficial proficiency. Correspondingly, methods focused on their

[33] Lin Cheng-wei, "Taiwanese Crafts Movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", 177.
[34] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝産業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", 22.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid, 20-21.

> aesthetic insights and creativities, can help to promote their substantial understanding of plastic culture, even in crude expressions.[37]

In contrast to Yanagi, who assigned craft's freedom as a passive reliance on the 'other power', Yen considered craft's liberty as an individual matter. However, this individual matter does not mean capacities trained mechanically in their principles but competencies developed internally. The "natural artistic mind" requires an active perceptual engagement in surrounding visual materials. In terms of education, on the one hand, Yen's method had nothing to do with the "modern fine art" discipline; on the other hand, his approach apparently considered these ethnographic objects in a conceptual domain of craft beyond the industrial practice he demonstrated in his design products. Rather than identifying social rules for craft-making, Yen's education projected artistic motivation as an inner process.

> For them, an equipped working field should not be merely seen as an occasion for vocational training but a centre of art activities. It should inspire artistic impulse. Through creating in generality, the endangered vernacular techniques should be able to revive and thrive.[38]

Building the connection between one's "artistic impulse" and crafted objects representing the daily material world, Yen identified the site of art education beyond 'fine art' and its modern rules. Art retains its liberty emancipated from the monopolised concept of 'fine art'. For Yen, art competence can be accomplished by taking genuine but multiple paths, which respond to the inner need for beauty. Both Yanagi and Yen emphasised that craft communicates one's 'spiritual agency' benefited from traditional domains. However, Yen did not recognise the 'spiritual agency' as any reliable 'other power' as Yanagi suggested but, in contrast, encouraged individuals to develop aesthetic consciousness, solidly connecting with one's surroundings. This divergence determines their differences in allocating art's character and function in craft. Yanagi saw art as an ideological force, which makes obstacles to maintain a virtuous motivation in craft; for Yen, art's agency was aesthetically converted as an original impulse motivated by beauty, processing vitalities for creating. Yanagi took fine art as an ideological product, a cultural result of individualism. Yen brought the point to the initial psychological need of beauty in a reverted view, identifying art in visual materials' universality with a shared impulse with all human creativities.

In 1978, Yen published the article 'Myself and the Taiwanese Crafts: A Forty-years Retrospective View of My Craft Engagement and Its Prospect' which drew considerable attention from researchers studying Yen Shui-long's art.[39] In the middle of his seventies, Yen epitomised his eventful life in this article, retrospectively explaining his motivation and expectation related to his practice of craft.

---

[37] Ibid, 21.
[38] Ibid, 21-22.
[39] Yen Shui-long,〈我與臺灣工藝：從事工藝四十年的回顧與前瞻〉[Myself and the Taiwanese Crafts: a forty-years retrospective view of my craft engagement and its prospect], 174-199.

> Even now, with sufficient economic conditions, people still focus too much on their material life but pay no attention to the spiritual quality. When people do not care about visual performances along with material forms in religious ceremonies, ancestor worships or even divinations, the comprehension of fine art is not expectable. […] In this situation, I have found that the development of fine art in Taiwan is still so long to go. To accelerate the development of fine art, improving those arts related to daily life is a primary task to nurture the charm in daily taste. That is to say, beautifying daily objects and residential spaces and landscapes is required to introduce fine art in people's life.[40]

Yen identified "spiritual quality" as a crucial requirement for appreciating fine art; however, this non-utilitarian intention became rare when people were losing aesthetic interests in their material life. He mentioned that, in the traditional domain, forms of beauty existed in many ceremonies' material performances, which had played a significant part in sustaining spiritual value in the past but no longer drew people's attention. Thus, craft became his method to bridge this "spiritual" realm, which in Yen is a shared domain between arts and crafts. Manifested in this text, craft is involved in miscellaneous forms in culture-bound contexts, which scope a discrete, fluid and dynamic domain of craft demonstrating beauty in infinite forms.

Yen frequently emphasised craft's forms determined by their cultural context, as demonstrated in his explanation of free beauty, which reveals his concern of craft's role of recovering liberty in a sense of ethnographic diversity from the modernist monoculture in 'fine art'. In Yen, visual expression of craft matters in the way of sustaining cultural meanings. Like Yanagi, Yen also valued functional beauty to a certain degree but not as an absolute essence. For Yanagi, 'use', as the essence of craft, contains spiritual factors of beauty, which ultimately resulted in Yanagi's passive interest in the visual factor of form. In contrast, Yen took a "more active positive attitude" toward visual effects when encountering "aesthetic ideas of beauty in substantial forms".[41] For Yen, decorative expression in craft is equally important as function. In his discursive context of 'free craft', sometimes his focus on ornament prioritised meanings of pictorial motif rather than how ornamental elements cooperate with material essence. Yen considered ornament to be an embodied "style of identity", an expressive mechanism, a "powerful tool of ethical and cultural self-definition"; forms of 'free craft' can be "a bridge between cultures, and between elite and popular strains".[42] As a bridge, craft's liberty based on ethnographic-bound nature conveys meanings in their expressive process above its traditional identity which is seen as timeless and canonical. Yen's path embraced the idea of national beauty praised in the *Mingei* Movement but refused to anchor it as any predefined form as the essence of nationality. In the term tradition, Yen consistently referred to dynamic creativity based on ethnic nature rather than a

[40] Ibid, 181.
[41] Lin Cheng-wei, "Taiwanese Crafts Movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", 175-176.
[42] James Trilling, *Ornament: A Modern Perspective,* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003), 3.

static principle from the past. In this context, ornament became something 'spiritual', something autonomous in its utterance, rather than something passive or subordinate to function.

For Yen, tradition is not an antithetical value of modernity. In contrast, tradition is a powerful source for creating new mobilities when the modern cosmopolitan culture dominates with its monotonicity and homogeneity. He celebrated Charlotte Perriand's show 'Selection, Tradition and Creation' with an obvious emphasis on 'creation', which dominates the way of selecting tradition. This inclination is also reflected in Yen's resonance to the stream of New *Mingei*. Material life is always changing, which means crafted objects prosper, transform and decline with the dynamic ways that people accommodate daily needs.[43] Yen praised new *mingei* objects for their accommodation of modern taste. He said, "as *mingei* objects manifest the substance of daily use, the need for new *mingei* just embodies the accommodation of modern lifestyle".[44] Yen applied the term 'new *mingei*' to organise his communal association, which was inspired by the Japan *Mingei* Association's series of projects in the 1930s. Yen scoped new *mingei* based on the beautiful objects in the past, which Yen identified as "old *mingei*" requiring "proficient traditional skills" and "artisans' competence" to fulfil the "healthy beauty".[45] However,

> products created based on individualistic consciousness of beauty are intrinsically different from 'old *mingei*'. Thus, new-created things are rarely better than old *mingei* works. However, the beauty of *mingei* should not remain at this nostalgic taste. New *mingei* has the mission to develop new models based on old *mingei* objects, enlightening our life in the modern era.[46]

Yen indicated that crafted works in the modern era are not as excellent as old things in the past, whose healthy beauty was sustained by tradition and artisans' "competence". Yen maintains that the reason for the loss of this competence was the surge of 'commercialism' and the decline of 'spiritual' properties.[47] Thus, recovering 'spiritual' properties of these commercialised products, rehabilitating daily objects' aesthetic value serving with cultural meanings beyond as capital commodities, became such an important task for artisans. Yen's model of new *mingei* was the series of projects proposed by the Japan *Mingei* Association in the 1930s, especially the series of practices organised by Yoshida Shōya in Tottori Prefecture. Yen's explanation of the role of instructors in a craft-creating community

---

[43] Yen Shui-long, 〈臺灣民藝 - 臺灣民藝及臺灣原始藝術座談第三次會議紀錄〉[Taiwan *mingei* - extracted from the record of the third conference of Tanwan *mingei* and primitive art symposium], 《臺灣風物》*The Taiwan Folkway* 28(3), (1987); in *Formosa Industrial Art*, 204.
[44] Ibid, 216.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.

is almost the same as Yoshida Shōya's idea when making a comparison of the requirements they listed to identify abilities an instructor should equip.[48]

> I recognised that people who promote or conduct mingei-making projects should be equipped with (1) the ability to judge beauty; (2) the ability to design; (3) techniques to make which are also able to gain support from other people; (4) the ability to compose projects and practice.[49]

Yoshida was a significant figure who accelerated *mingei*'s practical engagement in substantial productions and marketing strategies, embodying Yanagi's ideal of a 'guild' which had been theoretically structured in the 1920s. Although the concept of a 'guild' projects an ideal that connects common people's contributions collectively and communally, it still requires individuals to identify possible directions. Yanagi noticed the role of an artist, who should be a talented individual but also concerned with how to restrain individualism, which might deviate from the joy of making shared by the majority. He suggested that artists should contribute by "bridging" the essence of beauty rather than in their expressions of it.[50] Then the essence of beauty, with a "pure" and "simple" faith can be accomplished by thousands of hands of common people.[51] Yen apparently considered himself as an artist who has the "ability to judge beauty and to design"; also, as a mentor promoting handicrafts, the ability to generalise artistic value into practical methods for everyone is also important. He agreed with the artists' role in making use of tradition but also considered tradition to be a changing entity, not a static essence. Among 'Selection, Tradition and Creation', the *Mingei* Movement constantly polarised their interest in Selection and Tradition from the property of 'Creation', claiming an essence of craft away from artistic intention, whose individualism is always bound with utilitarianism in a capital sense. In contrast, Yen's inclination for 'creation' looks into more organic and active energy within tradition to transgress defined boundaries and to generate identity based on interactive engagement with one's surroundings.

'Free craft' aims to create active connections which consistently bring questions of beauty back to their cultural contexts. Yen's stance on liberty not only applies to his statement on 'craft' but also a statement on 'art', or a statement questioning the current structure of 'fine art'. With an emphasis on fine art's purity in its representation of beauty emancipated from functional beauty, craft engaged an antithetical myth of function polarised from the claim of artistic non-utilitarianism. In *mingei* theory, Yanagi created an exclusive aesthetic domain, scoping craft by transposingly interrogating the purity and the non-utilitarian property, the freedom, that 'fine art' guarantees. However, Yen refused to

---

[48] Lin Cheng-wei, "Taiwanese Crafts Movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", 181.

[49] Yen Shui-long, 〈臺灣民藝 - 臺灣民藝及臺灣原始藝術座談第三次會議紀錄〉[Taiwan *mingei* - extracted from the record of the third conference of Tanwan *mingei* and primitive art symposium], 217.

[50] Yanagi, 《工藝の道》[The way of Craft], 234-235.

[51] Ibid, 235-236.

enforce the boundary and identified the conceptual difference between art and craft as a cultural issue. The liberty in craft, as the liberty in art, is ultimately bound to one's intention to create, to transform natural materials into beautiful and meaningful forms. Yen's ethnographic approach engages in craft's visuality in its cultural domain, tracing visual sensations in plural definitions of artistic beauty before modern aesthetics occupied with its non-utilitarian narrative that also created its antithesis. 'Free craft' also aims at the universality of artistic agency that Yen refused to identify as non-art; even craft does not share the same value of individuality as fine art. In fine art, individuality is bound with a definition of originality as an individual property to create something new, something that has never been done before. By constructing individuality in craft, Yen engaged in the idea of originality with ethnic sources in terms of tradition, which are associated rather with the inherited than the created. As originality in craft encounters difficulty when forms gradulately change with a long-term acceptance, individuals' roles seem to be vague and invisible.[52] However, Yen greatly valued individuality in selecting and transforming the inherited, since he never saw tradition as a static source. As he demonstrated through design, craft communicated with tradition not merely for conserving a traceable origin, but for reshaping identity in its dynamic process.

Yen Shui-long's Ethnographic Localism

The 'rediscovery' of artistic property in ethnographic objects has an art-historical context, which now is seen as politically incorrect under postcolonial reexaminations. The transmission of 'fine art' triggered a sequence of art objects bound with a series of dualities used to scope the structure of civilisation. These narratives of civilisation along with the myths of modern art were not made in a self-evident structure. They existed with the demand for the attendant term 'primitive', which sometimes in modern art was celebrated as a positive valence.[53] The relationship between the primitive and the civilised involved a hierarchical structure that evaluates Others through more than one set of symbol systems. The primitive nature of an observed Other is made by synthetic dichotomies of race, gender, class and time, forming the psychological location of modern art and its territory relying on the interpretations of 'non-art'. To a certain degree, the claim of craft's liberty as an essential, timeless domain of tradition, somehow involved this dichotomy in the way of polarising fine art's individualism as a consequence of modern civilisation. This primitivised zone seldom dealt with crafted objects in a clarified cultural context when emphasising their opposite tendencies against the symptoms of civilisation. That also forced an infantilised property of nature, which failed to claim its contemporary agency in a transgressive process to resist the firm structure of 'high art'.

[52] Trilling, *Ornament: A Modern Perspective*, 123.
[53] Antliff and Leighten, "Primitive", 217.

Aboriginal themes, as a part of Taiwanese 'local colour', were encouraged by the Japanese government's exhibitionary mechanism which founded the criterion to use modern art education as a means for cultural control. As an oil painter trained in the academy system, Yen's interpretation of 'aborigines' echoes many aspects of his representation of Taiwanese handicrafts. His interest in local uniqueness was derived from his enthusiasm toward ethnographic objects, especially from tribal culture, which involved a reflected view of exoticism tangled with the Japanese empire's desire of untamed Others in the colonial structure. However, with a juxtaposition among European artists' representations of non-European subjects and Japanese artists' representations of primal themes, Yen's paintings revealed a different approach in his engagement of cultural details. Through an understanding of Yanagi's notion of 'composite beauty', the visualised cultural details in Yen's painting convey a clarified intention to select and document things in a unified material world.

In The History of Arts and Crafts, Yen expressed his appreciation of Tao society on the Orchid Island based on his observation of the tribal culture.

> I am surprised by things I saw on the isolated island, Orchid Island. A historical past which we thought remote from us was represented in front of our eyes again. Here, the original form of any creative works is perceivable and conceivable. […] Songs are created not only for singing. People dance while singing. They are never singers, nor musicians, nor dancers in terms of specialists. They carried on the epoch when literature, music and dance acted as a whole before those occupations respectively engaged split professional fields.[54]

This quoted section is not originally from Yen. Through a brief comparison, it is easy to find out that Yanagi had described Ryukyu Island's 'composite beauty' in the same way in his book *Craft Culture*, then Yen transcribed it in his own article.[55] Yen directly uses all Yanagi's words apart from changing the name of place 'Ryukyu' into "Orchid Island" where he had visited a few years ago. As mentioned in the previous chapter, The History of Arts and Crafts is not a published article but a manuscript Yen produced for teaching in an architecture programme. This document shows how Yen took Yanagi's notion of 'composite beauty' for his own use to interpret his observation of aboriginal culture. Mentioning the synthetic realm where all arts, singing, dancing and composing, work in a unified relationship, which is different from our experience of modern art in categories of painting, sculpture and architecture, Yen celebrated multiple performances of creativity in their prototype, accommodating daily culture in forms of synthesis. This "prototype of creativity" engages in a unified domain bridging artistic value in daily experience, which is shared with people even who are "non-specialists".[56]

---

[54] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 32.

[55] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 359.

[56] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 32.

Yen's use of composite beauty implied a regressive attempt to recover humanity's original sensibility, which is significant to sustain the variety and complexity of art forms. By requesting 'modern art' in several simplified categories, Yen's attempt confronted a common symptom reflected in modernist aesthetics' stance of rationalism, which led to the institutionalisation and disciplinisation of art in forms such as painting and sculpture. From a Kantian perspective of beauty, art experience should communicate with "impersonal" interests to access a philosophical stance of universal rationality.[57] However, in modernist art's pursuit of reason, discourses of impersonality are often reduced to linguistic performances of the "final court of developed language" rather than "the putative lived experience of the subject who encounters it as a tabula rasa".[58] Artistic beauty, with an elimination of personal interests through institutionalised aesthetic methods, in many cases is merely uttered as repeatedness of artistic language rather than the empowerment of perceptive objectivity. Yen's representation of aboriginal culture reversed to observe cultural phenomena, peripheral sites of modern art's core language, exploring the visuality on sites of the material world before modernist language crystallised them into formulated visual forms. By returning to the material world of craft, the concerns of peripheral sites of cultural phenomenon deconstruct the visual-centric exploration of art to reveal the "pluralistic universe" hidden under the order of intellectualism.[59] Yen's representation of aboriginal themes' 'composite beauty' illustrated material aspects in detail, which was often seen as unnecessary in modern art's interpretation of irrational, naive and childlike nature of 'the primitive'.

In a postcolonial structure, unfortunately, Yen's representation might be not eligible for being delisted from the racial ideology due to his pluralism from an outsider's perspective, which encouraged conservations based on his belief in local authenticity under the dominance of colonial modernity. However, Yen's stance of the plurality of culture was a significant recognition when the authority of art's claim of an "authentic vision of the world" failed to convey the "uniqueness or singularity" since the authority was based on "the universality modern aesthetics attributed to the forms utilised for the representation of vision".[60] Before a quick political judgement on Yen's primitivism, the difference he made to resist the hierarchy in visual forms triggers perspectives that reconsider art as an enunciative apparatus, which gave energy for Yen to figure out craft's artistic value through transgressions of modern aesthetic language.

Yen's pluralism has an anthropological source. After he graduated from Tokyo Fine Art School in 1929, he gained a job in tribal regions and met some anthropologists who worked in the same workplace. Inspired by the anthropologists he worked with, he recognised the necessity of preserving original forms of aboriginal works. Benefiting from this occupation with a licence to access and teach

---

[57] Kirkpatrick, "Beneath the Surface: Whose Phenomenology? Which Art?", 28-29.
[58] Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, (London: Bloomsbury, 1997), 465.
[59] Lamberth, "*A Pluralistic Universe* a Century Later: Rationality, Pluralism, and Religion", 137.
[60] Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Pstmodernism", in Donald Preziosi, ed., *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 336.

art in aboriginal tribes, he found there was no necessity to change the original creating methods in aboriginal culture. Modern art education was meaningless there because these people "create not with pens or brushes on a flat surface".[61] "Conservation, rather than intervention" became his core belief to deal with aboriginal materials in his art and craft practice, while modern art implied a domain of reason to solidify the truth and eliminate the chaos.[62] Subsequently, this enthusiasm resulted in his further participation in ethnographic surveys, working with a group of anthropologists commissioned by the Japanese colonial government's Industrial Development Bureau.[63] Although Yen was not trained as an anthropologist, interacting with specialists in different themes equipped him with methodological techniques for observing and recording in the field. He sometimes helps his anthropologist colleagues with executing surveys in several tribes, including the Tsou and a few Atayal branches. Also, he started contacting the people of Tsalisen and Paiwan during this period.[64] These young age experiences are crucial for developing Yen's enthusiasm toward indigenous culture and his statement on aboriginal subjects' artistic representations.

Yen's engagement provides a multicultural landscape by looking into Taiwanese culture's inner heterogeneity from his Han ethnic statement under the colonial context. Yen's use of 'primitive' images can be analysed by considering two aspects. On the one hand, the exploration of Taiwanese culture of the time involved the pursuit of 'local colour' and the Japanese imperial perspective of the tropical South, which derived from a desire of the untamed within the colonial structure. On the other hand, reacting to this desire, Yen's representation of Taiwanese culture conveyed a divergence from the genre of 'the untamed', which deserves further examination. Here, Yen created an interactive site between the desire for 'local colour' and expressed subjectivities, engaging the complexity of civilisation by requesting the ideological hierarchy solidified within the modern art's visual apparatus.

The idea of the 'South', as an artificial ideology that surged with the Japanese empire's celebration of 'local colour', was promoted in the domain of art through the officially sponsored Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition, also known as Taiten.[65] This exhibition was initiated by the Japanese artists, Ishikawa

---

[61] These anthropologists represent a generation which is earlier than the generation of Yanagi and Kanaseki. They even did not link to Yanagita's folkloristics. Working with this group of anthropologists, Yen managed to access many tribes which were remote and tough to contact in his twenties. So it is persuasive to believe that, before Yen participated in promotions of folklore and *Mingei* with Kanaseki and Yanagi's influences, Yen had developed interests of aboriginal studies inspired by anthropologists of the previous generation. Face-to-face interview with Chiang Shao-ying on 7 May 2019. A vocal record kept.

[62] Face to Face Interview with Chiang, Shao-ying, Yen Shui-long's student and associates of his craft projects. Recorded in Taipei, 7 May 2019. A vocal record kept.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Incepted in 1927, the officially sponsored Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition was technically the only authoritative art exhibition in Taiwan. It was naturally seen as an extension of the existing Imperial Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition, also known as Teiten, in Tokyo by Taiwanese artists, who took it as a main channel to obtain notices from potential sponsors. Initiated by Taiwan-based Japanese artists like Ishikawa Kinichiro(1871-1945) and Shiotsuki Tōho(1886-1954), Taiten followed the same system as Teiten in Tokyo and frequently invited judges from the Tokyo Fine Arts School. However, as demonstrated by Taiten, modern art was scoped by only two categories, oriental-style paintings and western-style paintings(seiyōga). Notably, the oriental-style(tōyōga) painting section, showing an ideological preference to Japanese-style paintings(*nibonga*), provided no space for

Kin-Ichiro, Goubara Kotou and Shiotsuki Tōho, who were prestigious in the Taiwanese artists' circle. In the second Taiten, some invited judges from Japan suggested that a general goal of this exhibition was to "develop Taiwan's unique colour and heat", which should be different from that in other places like Kyoto, Tokyo and Korea.[66] Taiwan's characteristics of the 'South' were emphasised. Represented in artworks, Taiwanese culture and natural landscapes provided a desirable exotism for building an imagined boundary between the Japanese and Taiwanese, and also between the modernised and "the untamed".[67] Thoughts associated with the idea of the untamed are accompanied by relative perspectives examining the value system of civilisation, which was associated with the rapid urbanisation and capitalisation in urban Japan. Seen as the opposite of modernised Japanese culture, the image of Taiwan centred on the interest in local colour and the nature of the island as tropical, which also sustained an imagined boundary between the 'South' Taiwan and the 'North' Japan politically and also culturally.[68]

Serving for the desire of exotism, the Taiwanese landscape was unanimously represented with an imagination of the 'tropical South' under a comparative scope reflected by Japan's centralised viewpoint. The 'tropical' nature was correspondingly equal to a few settings of visual characters in painting such as bold outlines, strong colours and the deliberate elimination of expressive complexity. Ishikawa Kin-Ichiro, one of the initiators of Taiten, frequently used the term 'South' to juxtapose Taiwanese and Japanese landscapes as opposite categories. He claimed a "tropical nature" of Taiwanese landscape offered an "unambiguous beauty" with plentiful sunlight, but provided nothing undetermined to develop further contemplation beyond that visual stimulation:

> This nature provokes an intensive feeling sustaining no flexibility for viewers to interpret it in mind. We appreciate the beauty of nature, then represent it by filling a canvas with bright colours. However, there is nothing more than deployments of pigments, which is difficult to prompt any profound spiritual meaning. It is a shame that the Taiwanese landscape merely stimulates one's admiration of superficial beauty but lacks inspirational elements to provoke spiritual thoughts.[69]

Ishikawa demonstrated his superior capability to appreciate the unique nature of the Taiwanese landscape and his style was considered straightforward and "unambiguous", implying that the

---

local artists who specialised in ink painting and calligraphy inherited from the Qing dynasty. in Yen Chuan-ying, "The Demise of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan", 90-91.

[66] Yen Chuan-ying, "The Demise of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan", 89-90.

[67] Liao Hsin-tien used the term 'untamed' to associate colonial Taiwanese landscape painting with an 'imperial desire' sustained by expansionism. This desire is derived from 'a symbolic triumph of modernity' by undertaking a journey into the wildness, accomplished conquest physically and psychologically. Liao Hsin-tien, "The Beauty of the Untamed: Exploration and Travel in Colonial Taiwanese Landscape Painting", 39.

[68] Watanabe Toshio, "Japanese Landscape Painting and Taiwan: Modernity, Colonialism, and National Identity", in Kikuchi, *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, 74.

[69] Ishikawa Kin-ichiro,〈臺灣の山水〉[Taiwanese landscapes], 1932; in Yen and Tsuruta, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, 69.

straightforward beauty should be evaluated in a divergent way from civilised Japan's 'spiritual' beauty.

This perspective, which suggests that the Japanese landscape conveys meanings in a more "spiritual" sense than Taiwan, was prevalent in art critiques of the time. Many paintings in Taiten depicting local species of plant and flora were categorised as works of the "diligent type" by celebrating, also depreciating Taiwanese artists' physical efforts.[70] Kinoshita Seigai, as a judge of the Taiten, made comments on realism in representations of local colour, considering them "in contrast to the mostly conceptual works by Japanese artists".[71] "Obviously, the Taiwanese produce predominantly realistic works; as a result", he continued, "many exquisite realistic paintings appear, and the Japanese paintings (*nibonga*) in the Taiten seem like an illustrated catalogue of a botanic garden".[72] Kinoshita suggested that Japanese artists were superior since they compose art conceptually while Taiwanese artists merely relied on exquisite depictions of superfluous semblance. In either Ishikawa's sense of 'unambiguity', or Kinoshita's term of "predominant realism", characteristics of the Taiwanese landscape were associated with an infantilised and primitive nature lacking complexity to develop artistic value in spiritual, or conceptual senses. A hierarchical consciousness assigned closed ends of the alienated natures, whose predetermined features were invented to present the sequence of beauty with an imagined progressive process of civilisation. Under this model allocating Japan as a civilised centre, the Taiwanese landscape became the desirable and inspiring 'untamed South', whose geographical position and visual experience polarised as a differentiated other.

Fujishima Takeji, Yen's teacher during his study at Tokyo Fine Art School, identified the difference between "Taiwan island" and mainland Japan by appreciating Taiwan as an inspiring "virgin land".[73] "Harmonious colours" of "the sky, the vegetation, architecture and people": these Taiwanese elements aroused an emotional feeling that Fujishima made an analogy with "the landscape of Rome suburbs and scenes in Italy and Spain".[74] From Fujishima's angle, tropical Taiwan provoked exoticism as if in a foreign country, as well as a desirable nostalgia as if in an untamed domain. His observation of Taiwanese women, as a part of this landscape, reveals a similar sentimentality:

> I made many sketches to capture prostitutes' lifestyles there. Also, buildings and interior settings there feel like factories or school dormitories. Compared with expressions of civilised people, the peculiarity of people who live in unrefined districts strikes my mind much more. I found the Greek prostitutes whom Socrates had talked to was just in front of my eyes. That inspired many thoughts.[75]

---

[70] Yen Chuan-ying, "The Demise of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan", 97-100.
[71] Kinosita Geigai,〈台展の日本畫に就いて〉[About the Japanese painting in the Taiten], 1939; Yen Chuan-ying, "The Demise of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan", 101.
[72] Ibid, 310-312.
[73] Fujishima Takeji,〈藝術眼に映る臺灣の風物詩〉 [The poetic Taiwanese features in artistic eyes], 1935; in Yen and Tsuruta, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, 135
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid, 136.

Although Fujishima depicted many urban subjects such as streetwalkers and waitresses, he still took metropolitan Tokyo as the typical sample of developed civilisation and appreciated Taiwan locality for its untamed purity. Despite the fact that Taipei had been rapidly urbanised since the 1920s, he still extracted the city's exotic aura of untamed purity reflected by the over-modernised Tokyo. In *Aboriginal Girl* (Fig. 23, 1936), he captured this "pure" Taiwanese woman with "bold colours and figures", saying they were more "desirable" than women he saw in Tokyo.[76] With rough brushstrokes and a pale background, Fujishima depicted no detail of this desirable girl. With a direct front-facing angel without any physical or expressional interaction, the composition of the painting is not even a portrait with the intention to capture the sitter's character. Except for its expressive brush and vivid colour referenced from modern artistic languages such as fauvism, this image of an indigenous girl shows no individual temperament but is more like a lifeless picture from an encyclopaedia's catalogue of human races.

It is very likely that Fujishima never saw this girl in person. Nonetheless, he might have seen images captured by anthropologist Mori Ushinosuke (Fig. 24, 1917), who captured aborigines 'scientifically', presenting appearances of different genders and tribal traditions. Serving for colonial purposes, the first generation of anthropologists in Taiwan produced masses of images for ethnographic studies to build the model of the colony's population structure. These images became desirable resources when aboriginal themes became a popular solution to satisfy Japanese judges' taste of Taiwanese 'local colour' reflected with the myth of civilisation. Yen also used these old ethnographic images in his practice even though he did have aboriginal friends in real life. His *Family Portrait of Aboriginal Friends* (Fig. 25) shows a significant similarity to Mori's photo of tribal people (Fig. 26, 1905). As traditional domains rapidly changed due to the intervention of modernity, these old photos kept when anthropologists had first encountered these Others provided enormous wonder for imaginations.

In contrast, Shiotsuki Tōho's *Atayal Girl* (Fig. 27, 1933) projected a more complex perspective. Although Shiotsuki used abstract expressions that eliminated most of the cultural details. *Atayal Girl* contains more pictorial information and actively conveys an emotion led by the girl in the painting. A journalist at Osaka Asahi newspaper appreciated Shiotsuki's engagement in the "daily beauty of Taiwanese aborigines" by mentioning his works *Mother* and *Atayal Girl* respectively submitting to the 1932 and 1933 Taiten.[77] The report praised these two paintings for the "poetic beauty" of aboriginal culture:

---

[76] Ibid.

[77] Unknown Journalist, 〈素晴らしい洋畫部の進境〉 [The excellent progression of the western-style painting sector]. *Ōsaka Asahi news-press*, 1933; in Yen and Tsuruta, *Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, 277

> *Atayal Girl* is indeed a genuine artwork that is intensively emotion-charging. In a faintly illuminated tribal house, a woman with healthy dark-brown skin lying prone on a bamboo bed covered by a blue textile. She stares at the spectators with her sparkling eyes. On the wall above her are another red textile and some antique pots on a shelf. Shiotsuki rediscovers the modern colour. In textiles weaved by the primitive, he finds beauty for modern people like us.[78]

Regardless of the artist's original intention, this critique adopted the dualistic model, categorising aboriginal subjects as the primitive, which is different from "us" allocated as the "modern." The primitive served as an Other, while the artist will contribute the "modern colour" and "discover" the beauty in primal themes. Obviously, the desire for exotism was combined with a fantasy sustained by primitive images, like skin colour, textile, furniture and wares, whose beauty was artificially defined under the "modern" sense of civilisation. The glance looking into an infantilised other naturalised the inequality as a part of colonial psychological mechanism shielded in the linguistic logic of modern art.

Shiotsuki's fauvist expression of a primitive motif in *Atayal Girl* conveyed a deformation of tangible truth to attain a formalistic unification. Composed by subjectivised strokes, colours and the unproportionate body figure, the artistic language is intuitive rather than epistemological. The represented subject charges audiences' emotions through formalistic simplicity rather than cultural complexity. The primary intention of *Atayal Girl* might be far from the so-called "daily beauty of Taiwanese aborigines." *Atayal Girl* made a specific reference to Paul Gauguin's *Spirit of the Dead Watching* (Fig. 28, 1892). Borrowing Taiwanese aboriginal imagery, Shiotsuki's *Atayal Girl* referred to colonialism in the disguise of progressive modernism in the western art-historical context. However, this reference to Gauguin merely shows Shiotsuki's criticism of modernist expressions of civilisation but has nothing to do with the cultural matter of the represented Other. Gauguin's aboriginal image in this painting, alternating "naturalistic and anthropological accuracy", adopted piecemeal celebrations to explore the "origins of the central human symbol system" considering animistic or totemic symbolism as an "initial utterance to developed language".[79] This idea of primitive humanity relies on an ambiguity; lacking cultural discernment, it enforces the belief of "unsophisticated mind" linking to an imagined "initial process of thought" and "the origins of culture".[80] Apart from Shiotsuki's modern artistic expressions connected to willful and naive beauty, *Atayal Girl* communicates nothing more than the artist's subjective engagement of the tribal culture. Shiotsuki's *Germination* (Fig. 29, 1927) conveys the same idea through his artistic interpretation of Taiwanese landscape, which is no different from his aesthetic perspective in *Atayal Girl. Germination* demonstrates a chaotic deployment of pigments, using the canvas as a material surface rather than reflecting the wildness of thriving spring. Flowers, trees and maybe sunshine, instead of being

[78] Ibid.
[79] Kirk Varnedoe, "Gauguin", in William Rubin, ed., *Primitivism in 20th Century Art*, volume 1, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1984), 199-200.
[80] Ibid, 200.

pictorially articulate in botanic characteristics, convey Shiotsuki's eloquent abstraction via barely emotion-charged brushes and colours.

It was not a coincidence that two years after Shiotsuki's *Atayal Girl*, Yen's Taiten work *Girl of Orchid Island* (Fig. 30, 1935) made another reference to Gauguin's *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* (Fig. 31, 1897-8)[81] Japanese and Taiwanese artists knew Post-impressionist painters and many other contemporary artists from the western world. However, European artists' acquisitions of Japanese art did not equally reflect the same attention on Japanese modern art. Behind Gauguin's primitivism, there is also a relative perception on how Japanese art supplied a foreign resource for its primitive spectacle. The British Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 turned over a historical page, starting the era of exposition. Since the International Exhibition of 1862, Japanese art has impressed the western world for its mysteriousness and exquisiteness. However, this version of 'Japanese art' had nothing to do with Japanese artists' engagement in modern art of the time. The 'Japanese art' in those exhibitions was made under Japan's commercial policy, instructing exported products to be manufactured with a link to pre-modern artworks. While "Japanese art" triggered European artists' formative changes, such as the flattened spatial expression, elimination of shadows and willful arrangements of modelling, these Japanese prints were commonly treated as "childlike perception" and "drawings of the untutored".[82] The simplification of techniques was appreciated for the "primaeval qualities of honesty", which were found as a useful alliance to subvert the western tradition under "naturalism's reign".[83] Rediscovered as a form of simplicity, Japanese art was assimilated into the conceptual circulation of art language. In either case of Taiwan as a tropical South or the 'primaeval quality of honesty' in Japanese art, compressed with a cultural preconception of Others, the reallocated nature served as a desirable, untamed historical stage of civilisation rather than conceiving histories in multiple horizons and the equally complex minds of Others.

Although Yen might be more familiar with European artists like Gauguin and Cézanne during his student life in Tokyo Fine Art School, when he arrived in France in 1930 to continue studying art at the Acadèmie Art Moderne, the current art trend of this primitive view in Paris was more related to the generation of Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966). Non-western objects - not only Japanese artworks but also ethnographic objects from other regions such as Africa and Oceania - were gathered in museological and private collections and stimulated a further reconsideration art by introspectively reshaping ideas of the modern mind in the twentieth century. (Fig. 32) Modern art's new tendency attempted to create new motifs combined with primitive sources from African and Oceanic ethnographic objects. Awkwardly, these non-art objects were rediscovered and celebrated for their potential "artistic profile" with artists' and critics' acceptance of those

[81] Yen Chuan-ying, "The Human Spirit of the Taiwanese Landscape: the Oil Paintings of Shui-Long Yen", in *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 289.
[82] Varnedoe, "Gauguin", 185.
[83] Ibid.

materials as "works of art".[84] For example, Giacometti's *Spoon Woman* (Fig. 33, 1926-7) was conjectured as structural assimilation of six spoons collected by Paul Guillaume, which had been included in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs's massive exhibition of African and Oceanic art at the end of 1923.[85] With a new simplicity of abstractive and reduced form implied in the "aestheticised view of primitivism", this work was thereafter noticed by editors of the magazine *Documents*, also known as "dissident surrealists" committed to the development of ethnographic theory.[86] As an action responding to this surrealist vogue, those selected ethnographic objects were analogically juxtaposed with daily domestic equipment in many sculptures and installation artworks with the surge of surrealist aesthetics as a method to associate ethnographic concepts of "bodily engagement" as a form of artistic agency.[87] Julia Kelly's analysis of Picasso's *Profile* of 1931 demonstrated how ethnographic resources were conceptualised to engage in discussions of material representation, as "functional" things, in modern aesthetic terms.

> The problems of 'use' and 'utility' signalled by Picasso's inclusion of a piece of domestic equipment played a crucial role in the formulations of the surrealist object. As the result of deliberately 'anti-art' activity, surrealist objects in all their diversity shared too some of the characteristics of the ethnographic objects sought and collected by the Dakar-Djibouti expedition. Both could be seen as the fragile, ephemeral and obscure fragments of processes and performances.[88]

In the process of surrealist transformation, these objects' potential artistic quality aimed at conceptual engagements which ended at the artist's "anti-art" avant-garde, putting forward the resistance of taking artworks as closed-end results finished by artists. Due to a bias of mimetism, objects were involved in a semiotic alteration, "a process that has to do with conception and not with resemblance".[89] By manipulating their functions, their vague but also infinite connotations were built with the surrealist ephemerality and obscurity, revealing the hostility of predetermined concepts and mimicry of things' nature. In forms of deliberate juxtaposition, these non-western objects were involved in discourses of modern art through the procedures of de-contextualisation, dematerialisation and de-functionalisation from their original contexts. Still, this identified artistic quality has nothing to do with the culture which generated these objects. The celebration of such an anti-art agency was grounded in the conceptual circulation of art language produced by European-centric art history.

Dividing from objects' cultural contexts to attain positions of undetermined and meaningless in an avant-garde sense, the represented 'artistic profile' corresponding to the desire of the untamed

---

[84] Julia Kelly, *Art, Ethnography and the Life of Objects*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 25-26.
[85] Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 1985), 48.
[86] Ibid, 56.
[87] Kelly, *Art, Ethnography and the Life of Objects*, 123.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Krauss, *The Originality of Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, 53.

demonstrates hostility against the predetermined value in the subversive tradition of modern art. In the case of Picasso, the primitive image can be from any random tribal culture without specificity; even if it were not from Africa, the meaning of his surrealist approach would not change. Along with this "anti-art" principle, the rediscovered subversion was generally accompanied with uses of terms like "childlike", "anti-rational", "willful" and "naive" to emphasise their makers' liberated instincts, which were seen closer to human nature than civilised bodies suffering from a highly capitalised society.[90] The invented 'instinct' was perceived as "the joint possession of children of all races" whose "aesthetic impulse" was initiated by "an absolute freedom and pleasure".[91] These terms reveal a tendency to deal with the unfamiliarity of Others by claiming a universality of original impulse, which reforms subversive languages to resist the value of rationalism. The fermentation of this ethnographic surrealism also contributed to the "counter-colonial" exhibition promoted by surrealist groups and the Trocadéro Ethnographic Museum, which coincided with the Colonial Exhibition in 1932 and opposed the "scientific" principle and the colonial oppression of imperialism.[92] Due to the absence of historical context, these objects were represented by the reflective views of outsiders with inverted images: their makers are not professionally-trained; their works show "no signs of normal intentionality or of progress in its development"; they are usually "either anonymous or else do not claim any personal responsibility".[93] This reversed admiration of primitive forms was associated with a "European-centred ideology" derived from the "whole issue of imperialism" and the accompanying hierarchical structure, the frame of which was built without an awareness of "autonomous people" and "self-representations" of Others.[94] Generated through the desire of the untamed, this myth of primitivism reveals a psychological demand for identifiable differences to consolidate the hierarchical structure of imperialism, which was also expected from the Taiwanese landscape within the colonial context. However, when these identifiable differences were represented in artworks, seldom were they uttered with their own voice but through the monotonous channel of modern art and the enforced logic of civilisation.

In searching for an 'absolute freedom', intellectualism became a target of primitivist art which aimed at the recovery of anti-rational power in human's nature. Yanagi's recovery of rural Japan also fell in this belief against the artificial reason processed by capitalism in urban culture. If the rediscovery of *getemono* determined the reversive stance toward modernity in *mingei* theory, Yen's ethnographic exploration of aboriginal culture is equally decisive to his engagement in "Taiwanese craft" in a similar sense.[95]

---

[90] Ibid, 52-54.
[91] Ibid, 52-53.
[92] Kelly, *Art, Ethnography and the Life of Objects*, 31-32.
[93] David Maclagan, "Outsiders or Insiders", in Susan Hiller, ed., *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art*, (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 1991), 35.
[94] Guy Brett, "Unofficial Versions", in Hiller, *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art*, 114.
[95] Yen's demonstration of craft was consistently bound with his interpretation of Taiwanese culture, which can be seen in his earliest publication related to his thought of craft in 1942. This stance remaining the same is seen

This tendency might resonate with the desire of non-western objects under imperialism's global context. Yen's term "Taiwanese craft" referred to the aesthetics of daily life with a cultural-based connotation, rather than directly constructing craft as the antithesis of art. Taking aboriginal culture as an indispensable part of Taiwanese culture, Yen perceived how these primal resources played a significant role in doubting modernism as a response to western art history.

> In the cultural life of the twentieth century, people in Euro-American countries have started losing interest in current mechanical and chemical products and increasing the appreciation of primitive arts. For instance, fauvism, one of the most trendy streams in modern culture, was grounded in aborigines' arts. Elements in those fauvist paintings can be found in symbols represented in Yami people's boats and the snake figures, geometric patterns carved by the Paiwan people.[96]

Yen conceived how the "appreciation of primitive arts" was derived from the weariness towards modern industrial products. Then he immediately identified the visual link between fauvism and Taiwanese tribal culture by suggesting on a psychological level that they might share a universal principle engaging in the issue of modern culture. Yen could be right when taking fauvism as a subversion that reused non-European elements as a resource of universal humanity; however, this aestheticised humanity is never reversible in a sense of cultural diversity. Cultural specificity in Fauvism is never as discernible as its artistic language. From Yen's statement, it is clear that he knew how 'primitive arts' engaged in a reactionary domain invented as a source of modern art.

Yen did use the term 'primitive' in his articles related to aboriginal subjects. In his field records of Orchid Island in 1935, he described how indigenous people "lived a primitive life not yet exposed to civilisation," and also appreciated this 'primal state' as the "ideal subject matter for painting".[97]

> The eating utensils, bowls, water jars, cooking pots and even the toys, figurines and boats are all made from clay, with very few tools. Among these objects, the terracotta figurines exude the most childlike aura, and are for this reason the most special. The Tao fire them unglazed and without decoration, unpretentiously expressing what they see with their eyes. This is truly where the value of their works lies.[98]

---

in his articles in the 1970s. Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝産業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", 16-26; Yen Shui-long,〈我與臺灣工藝：從事工藝四十年的回顧與前瞻〉[Myself and the Taiwanese Crafts: a forty-years retrospective view of my craft engagement and its prospect], 176-199.

[96] Yen Shui-long,《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*, 141.

[97] Yen Shui-Long, "Primal Realm: the Land and People of Orchid Island", 374-376.

[98] Ibid, 378.

In the article Primal Realm in 1935, Yen included a sketch work of a parent and child statue made by Tao people. Unlike those exquisite carving works on Tao's boats and architectures, these small terracotta figurines were sculpted in simple shapes. Sometimes in this parent-child form, the parent and child are separable instead of being shaped in a single piece. Tao people usually used the remaining clay from making daily utensils to create small sculptures in themes of animals, boats and ceremonies, primarily for decoration and entertainment. In the colonial period, they could craft these works to exchange clothing materials from the local government. Collection number 2017.043.0196. "Tao Parent-Child Terracotta Figures", online catalogue is available (13012021): https://collections.nmth.gov.tw/CollectionContent.aspx?a=132&rno=2017.043.0196

Yen's description is full of details. He identified that terracotta objects (Fig. 34) did not function as ritual objects but due to an "interest" or "entertainment".[99] Nobody would doubt Yen's appreciation and enthusiasm based on abundant investigations of material substances. His celebration of the "childlike aura" of those "unpretentious" unornamented objects was also genuine. Yen observed a "peaceful enjoyment with full bellies and days of leisure" and suggested that Tao people seem to "have no active ambition to progress" since "there is no gap between rich and poor, nor any competition for survival".[100] He realised that those exquisite carvings on boats must have taken a tremendous amount of time, then gave his comment by saying "this achievement" required the "absence of the concept of time" in terms of pure craft.[101] His appreciation of Tao's excellent techniques, in simple or complex form, was tangled with his reflections of modernity, such as "competition for survival" and "active ambition to progress" which he associated as characters of a capitalist society.[102] In looking for a "lost authentic experience", the "untamed" served as an extraterritorial realm, an escapism from progressivist values with capitalist interests.[103] As the "crystalised essence", "purification of human nature", and other innocent values which had been explored in *mingei* theory through *getemono*, the desire of the untamed revealed a mutual melancholy derived from the distrust of progressivist modernisation among intellects.[104]

Here are some questions we should ask when examining Yen's enthusiasm toward aboriginal cultures as a primitivist desire. What artistic language did Yen use to express this language and what did it articulately deliver when responding to the subject it engaged? Did his method consolidate the duality between the civilised and the primitive? The insider-other position Yen stated sustained an observational distance that polarised aboriginal culture as an Other within Taiwaneseness. However, could we conclude this position as nothing more than the 'desire of the untamed' eventually celebrating observed substance in civilisational terms rather than for its cultural subjectivity?

Yen's *Girl of Orchid Island* refers to Gauguin's notorious painting *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?*.[105] Shiotsuki Tōho's reference to Gauguin in the aforementioned *Atayal Girl* is barely recognisable, but the juxtaposition of Yen and Gauguin's paintings furth demonstrates this link. Represented with striking outlines, flattened space, mass volume of colours in bulk-forming density rather than loose brushes, Yen's expression resonates Gauguin's technique to a certain similarity. Yen did a thorough study of Gauguin's use of colour, also impressed by his

[99] Yen Shui-Long, "Primal Realm: the Land and People of Orchid Island", 374-376
[100] Ibid, 378.
[101] Ibid, 375.
[102] Ibid, 378.
[103] Kelly, *Art, Ethnography and the Life of Objects*, 16.
[104] Yanagi,〈人形と人間〉[Statues and humans], 166-168.
[105] Yen Chuan-ying, "The Human Spirit of the Taiwanese Landscape: the Oil Paintings of Shui-Long Yen", 289.

"self-exile from civil culture" to Polynesia.[106] However, Yen was also clear that he was not a follower. He found in Gauguin's "primitive dream" a bystander's view that failed to convey his motivation to preserve aboriginal culture's complexity.[107] In Gauguin's *Where Do We Come From,* a facade of half-truth was suggested to examine his representation of Tahiti, which was actually a hybrid with applying non-Polynesian sources fabricated from images in photo albums and guidebooks.[108] Via the Eden motif, he appears to be more interested in conveying the belief in "man's natural fulfilment prior to modern corruptions" than original discoveries of a foreign culture.[109] To shape the antithesis of modern corruption, these exotic images were deployed to represent a unified, but also vague human nature. Yen's conservational realism suggests a belief in human nature; however, the humanity he suggested is a dynamic unity with an inner heterogeneity and mobility rather than one that is defined by pre-determined language in art.

Yen's emphasis on unity did not result in elimination of cultural complexity and discernibility. He asserts that functional tools and decorative patterns, as artworks, matter to individuals' impulses of creativity embodied in plastic culture. "All things produced are meaningful for aesthetic purposes," he claimed.[110]

> Painting and drawing are mutual aesthetic activities among all aboriginal groups. Yami people produce works by combining painting and drawing with line-carving, which can be seen everywhere like patterns on boats and interior ornaments. However, paintings in forms of fine art are very rare.[111]

By mentioning "all things", Yen attempts to demonstrate how 'composite beauty' works in a free domain, where creativities accommodate daily life before engaging in the exclusive narrative of modern art. It requires immersion in "all things" to gain a complete perspective from the material domain of forms, including arts not on paper or canvas. This statement of 'all things matter' is parallel to Yanagi's axiological concern of *getemono* based on tangible truth. For Yen, this 'tangibility' is a key point to rebuild the universality of visual pleasure in the term 'plastic culture' without allocating 'pure art' as conceptual while functional objects as adherent. He embodied a concern of 'correctness' by demonstrating tangible details of material life. Being scrupulous about the tangible representation of "all things", Yen articulated with impressive precision the ethnographic discernment in his painting,

---

[106] Hsieh Li-fa, "Art through Life and Life through Art - Considering the Role of Yen Shui-Long in Taiwanese Art History", in *Retrospective Yen Shui-Long: Image of Taiwan through Aboriginal Civilisations*, (Taichung: National Taiwan Fine Arts Museum, 1999), 9.

[107] Yen Shui-long,〈畫家眼中的蘭嶼 - 期待一塊永久的樂土〉[Orchid Island in artists' eyes - looking forward to an foreverland of happiness], 66.

[108] Varnedoe, "Gauguin", 180.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Yen Shui-long,〈畫家眼中的蘭嶼 - 期待一塊永久的樂土〉[Orchid Island in artists' eyes - looking forward to an foreverland of happiness], 68.

[111] Ibid.

which demonstrates a diversity that includes at least eight different tribal cultures identified by him.[112] He manifested observations by using accurate references and precise depictions of material information, especially in his adoption of symbolic totems.[113] In order to understand how the totemic system functions in indigenous society, his broader studies included Frank Byron Jevons' semiotic explanation of kinship and social connection in forms of animism.[114] This mindfulness of accuracy is related to his proficiency in ethnographic methods nurtured from his anthropologist circle and immersion in the folkloristic climate enhanced by *Minzoku Taiwan*.

This correctness, for Yen, is a pursuit of authenticity through aesthetic and ethnographic means. Comparing Yen's *Landscape of Orchid Island* (Fig. 35, 1978) and a postcard with a photo of the same place (Fig. 36), one can tell how Yen was serious in his depictions of the natural and cultural landscapes. In the postcard, people are pushing their boats back to the shore, while Yen's depiction was the beginning of a fishing journey when people were pushing the boat into the sea. Observing the shape of the mountain, it is quite likely that Yen drew the same site from a different angle. It is common that artists sometimes transferred images from pictures they acquired from other published resources, as Gauguin did from tourist books.[115] However, through drawing, Yen could capture (or imagine) even more details than photography could, such as the precise pattern on the boats and a house by the sea, which are not recognisable in the photo.

With a concern for 'all things matter', Yen's engagement in local colour, regardless of whether the approach is artistic or folkloric, was embodied with an enthusiastic concern for the original context. Yen submitted *Girl of Orchid Island* and *Evening Tide* (Fig. 38, 1935) to Taiten in 1935 after his visit to Orchid Island. Painting for the Taiten usually entailed negotiations with academic tastes and choices of theme which were desirable for colonial rulers. In this aspect, Yen made good use of local images by partially adding a boat, which should be a taboo for females, in *Evening Tide.* The awkward combination of a Tao girl and the remote boats at the seaside seemed to be arranged for judges' taste. However, the precise uses of material information are seen in the way he engaged in the material

---

[112] Yen's categorisation of Taiwanese aboriginal population was approximately based on the structure established by anthropologist Kanor Inō, who arrived Taiwan to commence a series of investigations and field surveys supporting the Japanese government's understanding of the new colony along with the commencement of colonisation in 1895. The initial categorisation of Taiwanese tribal culture was established with eight categories, which included Atayal, Tsalisen(Rukai) Vonum(Bunun), Tsou, Paiwan, Puyuma(Peinan), Ami, and Pepo. Developed further by later researchers like Utsurikawa Nenozo (1884-1947), Yen's categories in 1952 included Atayal, Vonum(Bunun), Say-Siyat,Tsou, Paiwan, Ami, Yami and Pepo. Later, this structure can be seen to include Bunun and Peinan in Yen's writing.
Matsuda Kyōko,〈領台初期における台湾原住民調査 - 伊能嘉矩を中心に〉[Initial Aboriginal survey in Taiwan during the Occupation: a study of Kanor Inō] ,《台湾史研究》[Taiwanese History Studies], 14 (1997): 135-148.
Yen Shui-long,《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*; Yen,〈臺灣區的造形文化〉[Plastic culture in Taiwan], 138-141; 223.

[113] Interview with Chiang Shao-ying, Yen's student who was also an associate of his craft project. Now he is a Retired Professor of Taipei University of the Arts. 7th of May 2019, 14:00, Note and vocal record.

[114] Yen Shui-long, "Totem", an anthropological analysis of aboriginal totemic images, uncertain time, original manuscript collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

[115] Varnedoe, "Gauguin", 180.

unity, including material resources, manufacturing techniques and functions, which can be affirmatively supported by ethnographic evidence. (Fig. 39) The axe-shaped pendants and the weave-framed water pot in *Evening Tide,* for example, were represented with a full material investigation of decorative art of traditional garments.

> Among the black plant seeds, they had strung together were interspersed white ceramic buttons, big fish teeth, animal fangs, and occasionally shells ground down into quadrangular shapes, producing quite a fashionable effect. Their earrings were equally refined. They had ground down shell fragments into cocoon shapes and hung them from their ears with silk threads. When I looked closely at the silver-coloured pendants, about three inches in diameter, which hung in front of their chests, they turned out to be tin cans sliced into circular shapes.[116]

In this short text, Yen included at least seven materials. His observation of decorative elements is meticulous. His precision lies not only in shape and colour, but also in material resources, which reflects people's relationship with nature. His *Rukai Girl* (Fig. 40) is another example of preserving pictorial clues of material culture. Concerning the ways that materials were transformed into composite social meanings, Yen observed how represented objects exchanged symbols, which communicated with conventional rules beyond utilitarian functions in practical daily operations. His description of agate beads with social meanings is quite impressive.

> When the prospective husband agrees to be married, he will present a gift, known as a tangdan - for example, a necklace of agate beads - as proof of his commitment. On the day of the wedding, the groom's family will send the bride's family necklaces, goats and other gifts. The necklace is passed on to the bride, while the other things are shared in a big feast at which the families gather. But prior to the wedding, if the parents, the bride or groom disagree to the marriage, bringing it to an end all that need be done is for the agate to be returned to the groom, and the engagement is dissolved without any troubles.[117]

He observes things, focusing not only on exterior elements but also their social function in a whole material system. Considering the methodological difference between Yanagi's *mingeigaku* (folkcraft study) and *Minzoku Taiwan*'s *minzogaku* (folklore study), Yen was more eclectic in his approach when attaining ethnographic meanings in art forms. On the one hand, Yen's art-oriented attitude toward authenticity coordinated with an empirical science to build descriptive value through immersing in the reality of aborigines' daily experience. On the other hand, his emphasis on a 'tangible' representation of material culture led him further than objectively using correct references to deliver images based on knowledge; simultaneously, it signifies the value system sustaining the material phenomenon in

[116] Yen Shui-Long, "Primal Realm: the Land and People of Orchid Island", 376.
[117] Ibid.

aesthetic terms. Yen's depiction of aboriginal subjects is solidified in his applications of simple composition and precise colours supported by the firm academic training in Tokyo and France; however, art-making for Yen is neither an objective embodiment of an epistemological system nor a romantic expression of desire without a cultural understanding of Others. His crystalised expression affirmatively required not only a solid competence but also a genuine empathy sustained by substantial ethnological connotations, which respectively required equal efforts to engage in the value system of unfamiliar Others.

The psychological structure of primitivism required an artificially allocated centre to draw the culture/nature distinction, which is usually superficially applied to express in an analogous way the civilised/savage hierarchy as an instrumental control.[118] The same structure was pointed out to conceive an allocated "essential human nature pivoted upon comparable conflicts between relativism and universalism."[119] This structure existed as a political space to observe how individuals develop self-recognition and apply them to allocate Others. Yen's primitivism might be confirmed due to his relativism. However, his artistic language refused to take the modernist solution that relied on the civilised/savage duality to blur up the cultural matter involved in the discussions of civilisation.

The desire of 'the untamed' was essentially generated from the melancholy toward progressivism, with capitalism accompanied by a whole generation losing faith in modernisation. Intellectuals of this generation learnt firsthand how wars caused irretrievable defeat in human history. Illusive progression ended up in absurdity with miserable sacrifices, both physically and spiritually. The desire of 'the untamed' also reveals how artists took unfamiliar Others as a possible solution, or escapism, to negotiate the lingering melancholy in the modern era. However, since the symptom was internally developed with an enlightenment rationalism in western modernity, the represented Others were rarely involved in conversations with an equal position. They were generally assimilated then converged into the value of modernity, in the term of so-called revolution or civilisation, but were seldom represented with autonomous subjectivities. What can be found in Picasso and Gauguin's primitivism are images of infantilised Others possessing no specific history. The ideology of progressivism celebrated these 'rediscovered beauties' in a timeless realm. In contrast to Picasso and Gauguin's attempt, Yen was involved in another cultural climate to develop the experience of 'untamed subjectivities' further, leading narratives to a different story. Yen took aborigine's 'primitive art' as indispensable for engaging in the idea of 'Taiwanese craft', by seeing the inner heterogeneity and continuity within the concept of "Taiwaneseness". This whole scene of modern spectacle provides chances to perceive the energetic agency in so-called peripheries, which is equally expressive and articulate in a way to define beauty as artistic power.

---

[118] Jonathan Friedman, "Civilisational Cycles and the History of Primitivism", *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 14, no. 12 (1983): 33.
[119] Daniel Miller, "Primitive Art and the Necessity of Primitivism to Art", in Hiller, *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art*, 57.

Hybridity, Eclecticism, and Replacement

Negotiating with forms, Yen Shui-long embodied his practice of craft through design. As a process, his idea of design involved two ends of visual fields: the unified 'plastic culture' in a communal sense and the expressive ornamental details generated by individuals. In *mingei* associates and Minzoku Taiwan's engagements of craft, the former was praised with a connection with local tradition, while the latter was depreciated as ingratiation of marketing value. The attitude toward decoration is the crux determining Yen's divergence from Yanagi and his followers. Engaging in the visual quality of a functional object, Yanagi held a passive stance on ornament, which he considered to be an appendant, a superfluous "individualism" added onto the originally completed satisfaction of use.[120] In contrast, Yen treated ornament as a natural process for creating, including producing functional objects. Ultimately, although Yen conveyed a certain agreement on 'use' as the essence of craft, he never eliminated artistic beauty from this essence as Yanagi did.

I would like to start from Yen's engagement of 'ornament' by reconsidering his acquisition of free beauty through Yasushi Yamagiwa's Kantian approach. For Yen, what matters in constructing aesthetic experience within craft does not wholly concern the quality of an object, which should be purified from utilitarian interests. This purified process is based on one's perceptual mechanism: in other words, a prepared subject that is able to conceive anything with artistic form as a potential aesthetic object. This regression to subjectivity, which for Yen can be cooperated with satisfied functional beauty, engages a realm of the free beauty of craft that departs from the restriction of ornament framed by the art-versus-craft dualism. This subjectivity in European modernism was often bound to the development of abstractionism which promised the elimination of pre-determined concepts from an object.[121] In Picasso and Giacometti's adoption of non-European objects mentioned in the previous section, this abstractionism also means the elimination of a functional context to sustain a purified visual semiotic system. This focus on a non-utilitarian abstraction projects an awkward position of an object's functional beauty as adherent and of the decoration added onto a functional object as an adjunction.

Yen's criticism of the division of art and craft evolved his solution by dealing with the division of artistic beauty and functional beauty in their aesthetic origins. The concept of 'plastic culture' extends the cultural domain of ornament, emancipating decorative elements from the frame of 'adherent beauty'. Yen's ethnological engagement in decorative art refound the collective base for ornament,

---

[120] Yanagi,〈秩序の美と自由の美:天才主義への抗議〉[The beauty of order and the beauty of freedom], 201.

[121] For example, Diarmuid Costello, "Kant and the Problem of Strong Non-Perceptual Art", *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol. 53, no. 7 (2013): 277-298. Jane Forsey, *The Aesthetics of Design*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

rehabilitating the universality of ornamental expression, which had been rejected as an individualist approach in *mingei* theory. Tracing Kant's position toward the aesthetic value of an ornamental object never reached any confirmed conclusion. Kant mentioned ornamental objects more than once in different contexts and valued their aesthetic beauties in divergent ways. For example, describing the component of a building and the frame of a painting, ornaments are "adjunct", or in Kant's new term "ancillary", for their supportive function but not a main part of the work.[122] However, Kant was still optimistic about an ornamental object's aesthetic value. Mentioning domestic decoration, he indicated that those ornamental patterns were objects of "free beauties" as they reveal no intrinsic meaning, no object under a definite concept and communicate with no consideration of "internal purposiveness".[123] Kant's judgement on ornamental objects' beauty needs not to ally with functional beauty. An ornamental object's aesthetic value can be barely based on their visual qualities. This indicates that forms of a useful object with functional inwardness can still project aesthetic value independent from their predetermined functions. However, the modernist interest tended to treat function and ornament as 'adherent' with an inclination of the former statement of 'ancillary'. Correspondingly, the latter notion of ornament's property of 'free beauties', unfortunately, drew diluted attention.

As mentioned, Yen Shui-long's appreciation for modern design is demonstrated in the 'Selection, Tradition, and Creation' exhibition. By tracing this connection of European modern design further, I seek to consider how Yen's Kantian engagement approached ornament's property as 'free beauties' when the current modernist climate polarised decoration to the opposite end, which they recognised as 'adherent beauty'. Extending from *mingei* theory's war-time strategy and Japan's imperialist aesthetics, I believe that this resonated a shared myth within modern art in the European context.

In the twentieth century, Adolf Loos's association between ornament and capital rule in *Ornament and Crime* contributed to the complete antithesis between modernity and decorativeness in the further developments of Bauhaus and Corbusier design.[124] The intentionality within the preference of minimal, purified and simplified geometric forms projected a surging hostility toward decorative expressions. To a certain degree, this rejection of ornament was related to commodity culture in an amplified capitalist society. For example, seen as an indispensable part of fashion, decorative elements were associated with "exchange value", which circulated and fluctuated in systems of production and consumption.[125] The commercial market treated them as a short-term stimulation promoting products, determining their arbitrariness which failed to develop into any long-term cultural value.[126] The social-grounded idea of style from the Werkbund to Bauhaus conveyed an expectation to attain the coherence and consistency between visuality and essential needs based on cultural principle before

[122] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, James Creed Meredith, trans., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 68.
[123] Ibid, 72.
[124] Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime", in *Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays*, (Riverside, California: Ariade Press, 1998), 167-176.
[125] Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 35.
[126] Ibid.

visual amusement became a part of capitalist spectacle in forms of distributed, marketable commodities. Ornament, in forms of modern design, received its new life from the extended connotation with cultural contexts, which in modern design was pursued as "the universal", the "shared model" existed in "multiples", the "quantitative expression of its functionality".[127] This concept of ornament was crystallised as the self-evidence of material function by avoiding performing styles as merely appendant decorative forms. With this transcendence in the utopian historicism of modern culture, forms of 'free beauty' were fostered with an emphasis on an abstractive unity that does not communicate a Kantian internal purposiveness. Eventually, this sociological approach of ornament was converted into the "stylistic unity" that had been sacrificed due to "the obsession with singularity and difference" in their eternal search for novel experiences.[128]

Establishing style through design, Yen's embodiment of ornament engaged in visual transformations that rendered culturally-meaningful elements in aesthetic experiences. Re-engaging in the Kantian myth of functional objects, I would like to consider whether Yen's design can sustain the perceptual process of extending connections beyond functional satisfaction, the utilitarian end, the 'adherent beauty'. As crafted forms are usually considered within the frame of function, their free beauty is not imaginable. They are designed for an "end" with a final purpose, a "product", determining its definite condition with predetermined executions, material applications and forms.[129] However, as an aesthetic object, the capacity for this "end" to project an internal purpose that determines its satisfaction and is grounded on a predefined concept should be further considered.[130] Or, by contrast, these objects' functional natures never terminate at their given purposes if their forms carry on prompting experiences that operate with "no grounded value" and presuppose "no concept" - which is, in Kant's term, the "pure satisfaction".[131] If operations of no "grounded value" promised expressions of 'free beauty', how did Yen approach the detachments of pre-determined meaning from their original material and social contexts?

With an inclination of 'creation', Yen treated tradition as a resource rather than a paradigm. As a paradigm, tradition tends to be bound with a certain representation of culture with an expectation of authenticity. Demonstrated through industrial activities, the Mingei Association's inventions of local tradition in rural Japan, as I have discussed in Chapter Two, projected the standardised 'correctness' of forms in daily products. Taiwanese materials, bamboo for example, as a fast-growing and wide-distributing plant in tropical regions, also projected a desirable local value mobilised by the imperial ideology. "Simple, thrifty and healthily beautiful", these new-discovered materials became

---

[127] Ibid, 64-65.
[128] Walter Gropius, *Programm zur Gründung einer allgemeinen Hausbaugesellschaft auf künstlerischer einheitlicher Grundlage m.b.H,* 1910; reprint in Probst Hartmut and Christian Schädlich, ed., *Ausgewählte Schriften*, (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1987), 19.
[129] R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1938), 26.
[130] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, Guyer Paul, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 115.
[131] Ibid.

prominent substitutes to alleviate the shortage of precious materials like metal and leather during the war-time period.[132] This image of bamboo communicated an idea of tradition scoped in *mingei* theory as a rejection of complexity beyond its functional end. Its compressive utterance was restricted from decorative uses of materials. In comparison, Yen's embrace of creative value sustained his forms that deviated from this paradigmatic language. Tradition, as a source for creation, can end at any form with expressive purposes, or, end at 'no end'.

In 1940, with the establishment of the South Asian Handicraft Association in Xuejia Village, Yen developed a series of sedge products like handbags, slippers and floor mats.[133] These attempts reveal Yen's thoughtful engagements in creating new designs that accommodated local natural materials and inherited industrial techniques. Located in a basin, Xuejia Village's soil salinity contributed to acute poverty due to the difficulty in developing agriculture. However, a species of sedge (cyperus tegetiformis, also known as saltgrass in local) survived from this poor soil quality and enabled villagers to manufacture sedge-woven products and a considerable number of residents in Xuejia were equipped with relevant weaving techniques.[134] Accommodating the local requirement, Yen revamped and redesigned the current products into new forms which struck the urban market by cooperating with contemporary lifestyle. Traditional carrier baskets, *qieqi*, for example, used to be manufactured with a rectangular base and round body to carry sacks of rice or salt; redesigned by Yen in 1941, the new look had a narrow rectangular, oval shape and the delightful patterns were a handy and appealing option for females. (Fig. 20) These bags once became very popular among housewives when shopping for groceries.[135] The case of sedge products reflects that Yen's practice did not take any traditional object as a concrete model but revealed that creative innovations are the key to "exploit traditions then regenerate them" in contemporary value.[136]

> This is a vital but usually ignored consideration. We have neglected the importance of educational and constructive tasks. Our tradition relies on the raw materials and techniques we have available to support the manufacturing process. For example, mats and hats in Dajia were developed by people who found the specific fibre material around the upstream of the Dajia River. They discovered the plant's charm, then developed skills to cut and weave the raw material into mats and hats.[137]

---

[132] Kikuchi, "Refrected Colonial Modernity: Vernacularism in the Development of Modern Taiwanese Craft", in *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, 233.
[133] Chuang Su-o,〈純藝術的反叛者〉[A rebel of fine art - Yen Shui-Long], 21.
[134] Chen I-fan, "Shui-Long Yen's Road to *Formosa Industrial Art*: the 1950s vision of Modern Craft", translated by Yvonne Kennedy, collected in Taipei Fine Arts Museum, *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 315.
[135] Ibid, 316.
[136] Yen Shui-long, interviewed by Yen Chaun-ying and Lin Po-ting, "Appendix: Full Transcripts to Three Interviews with Shui-long Yen, 1988-1989", in *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 402.
[137] Ibid, 403.

For Yen, tradition is an organic entity shaped by skilful hands and resourceful minds. It demonstrates the intimate connection between individuals' creativities and the given requirements of natural surroundings. This connection contributes to the 'free beauty' he observed in indigenous tribes, where people embraced traditional material culture fulfilled by nature. He believed the revival of this connection requires "educational and constructive tasks", whose initial step is to involve practical operations based on "raw materials".[138] Then, the necessary techniques will be spontaneously generated. With much attention on operational factors, Yen's research reflects a focus on the nature of a chosen material's relevant techniques and potential applications in substantive designs. Sufficient knowledge of materials, to Yen, is firm assistance to a creator. As a painter, Yen conducted similar studies in the material operations of different pigments. Inspired by Van Dongen's uses of white colour, he spent several years exploring white colours in different combinations on canvas.[139] This extends to other colours, and his experimental study of black and green took another three years to specialise.[140] Likewise, his design of bamboo furniture explains his knowledge of material including sustainability, flexibility and endurability with techniques like bending, drilling, reshaping and joining, supported by bamboo's material qualities. (Fig. 14, 15)

Decoration, demonstrated in ethnographic objects, highlights that cultural visuality can be extremely exquisite and complex. However, through design, Yen transformed complexity into simplicity, in his own artistic language and in his interpretation of modernity. In terms of modernist aesthetics, Perriand's influence on Yen was direct. Perriand's idea of materiality, along with the hostility toward decorative expressions triggered by *Ornament and Crime*, provides a corresponding subject to the category of 'artistic craft' for rebuilding comparative models. Perriand claimed the target of the 'Selection, Tradition, and Creation' is "nationwide" - "not only about Tokyo".[141] Through a nationwide variety of craft-making, she intended to recover the integration between material and technique, which in Tokyo had been defeated by capitalism. Identifying the so-called "pattern on paper" rather than design for "practical life", Perriand did not appreciate the exquisite style developed in the academic system of fine arts schools in urban culture along with internationalism.[142] Due to Tokyo's cosmopolitan temperament, the decorative style based on studies of patterns educated in academic institutions of Tokyo was, for Perriand, equivalent to the short-term visual pursuit of fashion in commodity culture. Aiming at the 'nationwide' approach of Japanese craft, along with the urban/rural, foreign/domestic and imitative/authentic dualism, Perriand relocated the interface between 'Japaneseness' and modernist simplicity by searching for the 'style' crystallised from the essence of materials. Through 'Selection, Tradition, and Creation', Perriand demonstrated a visuality

---

[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid, 396.
[141] Charlotte Perriand; Sakakura junzō, trans.,〈日本工藝について：第二回貿易局輸出工藝圖案展の講評より〉[About Japanese crafts: commentary of Trade Bureau's 2nd exported crafts' pattern exhibition], 28.
[142] Ibid, 28-29.

based on culture, or 'tradition' in her term, which oriented from a material and also fulfilled the material. A low table Perriand selected for the show conveys this approach. This table consisted of a three-leg bamboo stand which was designed barely for sustaining a round-woven rush tabletop. These two parts are detachable. Such an ingenious design provides a handy solution for saving domestic space when it is not in use. Patterns applied to demonstrate the simplicity of repeatedness, which developed from techniques needed to gather, shape and functionalise the furniture.

Yen designed a low table (Fig. 19, 1954) that shares similarities with an item (Fig. 43) chosen by Perriand. For example, the combination of a detachable round-shaped tabletop and a foldable stand represents a similar negotiation with space. Yen also enjoyed operating repeatedness in his design although he adopted a more decorative pattern from the bamboo-weaving tradition. Due to its durability, bamboo is available for bending and reshaping into exquisite and delicate patterns while maintaining its original characteristics. Yen even deliberately kept the bamboo nodes in his furniture designs, utilising nodal rings to reform delightful rhythm in patterns.

However, as Yen's acquisition of *mingei* theory, Perriand's oriental modernism was not the only resource of Yen's modern design. Reiterating the modern design derived from Yen's stance of craft, I would like to clarify that the hybridity in Yen's works was an internal process, which determines that any attempt to allocate specific external influences would only build connections with limited, discontinuous, fragmental and discrete sources. Displaying the discontinuity and inconsistency in an overall view is still meaningful only if our desire for a great narrative stops being trapped by the predetermined structure of historicism. Then the displacement and replacement in Yen's practice can be properly explained without detracting their autonomous values.

Yen embodied materiality in forms of design, which in his artistic language resonated the unified realm through abstraction in modern art. The 'composite beauty' he found in craft, became what Yen claimed as a "prototype of creativity" in his interpretation of design.[143] In the twentieth century, the idea of 'style' was involved in a pursuit of cultural embodiment in abstract performances of visuality. Revealing the material facts of art, instead of pursuing realistic resemblance, modern artists explored painting's 'essence of flatness' by experimentally exposing the pigment's and the canvas's materialities. In twentieth-century modern design, this trend was embodied as a new politics of perception by building linguistic regulation for the material itself, rather than representing picturesque meaning. For instance, as a long-standing historical material in western art, glass gained radical connotations with the development of modern architecture. This transparent object was praised as a "sober" material, to which "no aura can be fixed"; as the "enemy of possession", it stands for the realisation of social transparency.[144] In this surge of minimalism, Yen did not completely give up his

[143] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 32.

[144] Walter Benjamin, "Experience and Poverty", 1933; in Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith, ed., *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings 1927-1934*, vol. 2, (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 734.

use of ornament, which he considered to be connected to universality in art. However, the idea of ornament had deviated from the supplemental use of decoration to embrace ornament as a visual principle, a universal phenomenon of expressive impulse.

Unlike his direct response to Perriand, Yen mentioned no specific work from the British Arts and Crafts Movement or Bauhaus, even though he did (I believe) borrow elements from designers who had been active in these fields. This may sound platitudinous; however, it would be awkwardly incoherent to include Yen into the completed narrative of the International Arts and Crafts Movement. In these cases, Yen's obvious 'imitation' shows various possible sources of his form in craft practice, including Ernest William Gimson (1864-1919), Margarete Willers (1883-1977) and Marcel Breuer (1902-1981). There is also evidence to prove Yen's interest in German manufacturing institutes and the history of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, as well as the Werkbund and Bauhaus. However, it is easier to interpret Yen's work with his own purpose than to build up these European connections to explain the influence.

It is very likely that the British Arts and Crafts Movement's development, nuanced by Ernest Gimson in the late nineteenth century, once came to Yen's mind when he designed the Woven Rope Chair (Fig. 44). Gimson's preference of straight lines and geometric elements in balanced proportion was inspired from England countryside handicrafts.[145] This inclination to simplicity consciously rejected the international style developed in the South Kensington Museum in London, which had founded the Department of Science and Art to promote public aesthetic education by accommodating exquisite decorative elements from India, Persia, Japan and China.[146] As Yen's 'imitation' of Gimson's work, Gimson's rush seat Armchair (Fig. 45, 1988) is neither 'original'. The ladder-back design was first made in the mediaeval period and became widespread furniture in rural communities. Traditionally, it was common to steam bend the back into a slight reclining curve. Alternatively, Gimson's design made an uprightly straight back and in detail slightly narrowed endpoints of the legs.[147] Yen's operation of these elements is self-evident in his oak chair design. However, Yen focused his attention on the chair surface, for which he also tried other different ways to weave hemp ropes into repeated patterns.

Another example is Yen's pattern designs for sedge weaving products (Fig. 46, 1945). He reconstructed reduced units with a geometric arrangement by using grids to manage patterns in order. This strategy is comparable to samples of Bauhaus designs (Fig. 47) by Margarete Willers. This principle can be multiply applied in weaving techniques by following a pattern plan and organising patterns with depositing grid units into a linear, cross or alternative zigzag arrangement. With rigour calculations, the geometric logic can be applied by random executions of sequence and repetition, which can be processed by instrumental rationality with the shared mechanism. Compared with actual

[145] Mary Greensted, "Nature and the Rural Idyll", 100-102.
[146] Tim Barringer, "The South Kensington Museum and the colonial project", 14-15.
[147] "Armchair", online catalogue of Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed Aug 23, 2021: https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O15900/armchair-gimson-ernest-william/

sedge weaving products embellished by simply interspersing two different colours of dyed sedge strips, these design diagrams look much more complex. Delightful and appealing, these designed patterns might be experimental attempts to deploy coloured units into multiple visual compositions; however, these designs are quite difficult to apply in the actual manufacturing process of weaving. Although the grid diagram is an ideal tool to compose patterns for weaving, the arrangement of colours seems to not fit well with the weaving structure. Some colours need to be applied afterwards. Unfortunately, it is unclear how Yen considered the technique to turn these designs into concrete objects, since he never put them into any practice of substantial products, not even in forms of mass-produced commodities. It is reasonable to believe this playful attempt was conceptually or visually inspired by Willers, since they did not really follow the nature of technique and the material with which he was working.

Identifiable similarities to Bauhaus works are also seen in Yen's furniture. (Fig. 48, 1954) He designed chairs with modern appearances by deploying a wide and low chair seat. Arranged with a rectangular back and the one-piece design of armrests, complete with extended chair legs that adopt geometric shapes, the entire structure reveals a modern temperament sustained by integrated simplicity. The reclining back design was common in Taiwanese furniture for a relaxing sitting position; however, the seat's oblique-down design was rare. This arrangement, deliberate or not, can be linked to Perriand's early design *Armchair with a Tilting Back* (Fig. 49, 1928), and Marcel Breuer (1902-1981)'s prominent *'Wassily' Armchair* (Fig. 50, 1925) with a playful structure of geometric configuration. However, Yen also developed various nuanced designs in a similar style. In these nuanced attempts, Yen summarised Taiwanese plastic culture in his expressive adoptions of traditional motifs, such as window grilles, tracery and lattice walls from Han buildings and embroideries and carvings from aboriginal textiles and wares. To formalise these motifs into modular patterns used in modern designs, Yen extracted elements, reconstructing reduced units into new forms.

Yen's acceptance of the Bauhaus is self-evident but nuanced, part of an eclectic view of modernism. This might sound familiar to the previous discussion on Yen's acceptance of the *mingei* theory. However, by focusing on Yen's case with an ideological independence - from the colonial structure and pan-politicised judgements of beauty - Yen's acceptance and nuance is never equivalent unless we take a reverse view to rebuild the influence. This is a so-called bottom-up process, as if there is something that can be seen as a centre. In an aesthetic end, Yen rejected the simplicity defined by *mingei* theory but embraced the simplicity constructed in the Werkbund and Bauhaus. However, this result was derived from Yen's alternative explanation of Yanagi's 'composite beauty', which determined Yen's eclectic and hybrid language in his craft practice as well as his art practice. His preference for geometric simplicity rather than curvy and splendid complexity projects the 'unity' of ornament, which he considered as the prototype of creativity, the emancipation of craft as art.

Yen's acquisition of Bauhaus is the 'Bauhaus' considered to follow William Morris and the Werkbund, a movement believed to bring the predetermined conclusion of craft. For Yen, Bauhaus

represents an approach of "rationalism", which amended Morris's "romanticism".[148] In Morris, Yen recognised the division between art and craft that resulted from artistic beauty's departure from daily experience; yet Yen was inspired by Bauhaus to reform the unity between art and craft by rebuilding the interface between free beauty and adherent beauty, in an industrial era.[149] Yen referred to the Bauhaus frequently in his academic lectures and public speeches. No precise resource determines when and where Yen exactly learned about Bauhaus. However, it is affirmed that Yen included an investigation of the Bauhaus's system in his original arts & crafts school project in 1936.[150] He immediately found that the Bauhaus movement shows an affirmative attitude toward machinery. Tracing the beginning point of the Bauhaus movement, he noticed how the transmission of the arts and crafts movement in Germany was initiated by Hermann Muthesius (1861-1927) and Peter Behrens (1868-1940), who contributed to the establishment of Deutscher Werkbund in 1907 and prompted a new design movement that converged with mechanical rationality.[151] Yen stated that this organisation, beyond the British model, "actively accelerated the unification of modern techniques and art".[152] With a focus on the unification of art and industrial products, Yen indicated that a further development in the Bauhaus movement was to "eliminate the boundary between fine art and applied art".[153]

> Based on this aspiration, Gropius allocated a position of 'composite art' for all arts and techniques, directly demonstrating an overall domain of architectures and plastic activities in response to the universal sensation of our time. Thus, as advocated in the Bauhaus manifesto, a unity of new architecture requires integrating all artistic, industrial and engineering techniques.[154]

Yen observed the same aspiration from the Hermann Muthesius inherited by Walter Gropius (1883-1969), who revealed "an overall domain of plastic activities" responding to a worldwide, universal sensation for developing the domain of "composite art". He believed eliminating the division would bring a unified realm, where integrated techniques can rehabilitate in a liberal domain of all arts. From the Bauhaus model, Yen perceived the possibility of composite beauty in modern industry, which Yanagi had asserted as incompatible due to his hostility toward mechanisation. In contrast to Yanagi's pessimism on individualism and mechanicalism, Yen's affirmative view of

---

[148] Yen also noticed similar responses from other 'pioneers', including American architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1958), Austrian architect Otto Wagner (1841-1918) and German architect Peter Behrens (1868-1940), who were also active in the field of industrial design. Yen Shui-long,〈設計人的地位與責任〉[The status and responsibility of designers], n.d., ca. 1960-1970, collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1-2.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Chuang Su-o,〈純藝術的反叛者〉[A rebel of fine art - Yen Shui-Long], 21.

[151] Yen Shui-long,〈Bauhaus的理念與組織〉[Bauhaus's idea and organisation], 1-2.

[152] Ibid, 2.

[153] Ibid, 3.

[154] Ibid.

individuals' aesthetic competence projected a positive expectation on the relationship between machines and their users, who have the autonomy to manage any applied technique. In forms of Yen's modern design, the crystallised essence of the material gained its utterance by rejecting the ornament culture for the privileged narrative and by embracing the style determined in unified universality.

These sources, as organic and transitional influences, contributed to the hybridity and eclecticism in Yen's design. None were kept without displacement or replacement. Yen's exploration, both within and beyond the colonial circumstance of the time, represented a dynamic process for negotiating, rather than a predetermined static structure of aesthetic politics. Grounded in visual variety, which in Yen's eventful journey ranges from the most exquisite to the most simplistic, 'composite beauty' conveys the fluidity in craft's material world where human minds are firmly connecting to art's prototypes, the surroundings. Yen's approach demolished the mythology of several entities, which had been seen as static, such as the belief of originality in tradition, the belief of purity in art, the belief of authenticity in Taiwanese identity, and other beliefs that relied on any form of central/peripheral dichotomy to maintain their shapes. The final realm of unity in Yen's craft practice, in his term 'free craft', projects liberty in all arts, all art makers, emancipated from the frame of an unsatisfied art history, which was designed to maintain its narrative power, rather than to embrace differences.

Conclusion

Non-dualism: Art History through Craft

Yanagi's *mingei* theory and Yen's craft practice shared a similar motivation: to eliminate the hierarchical barrier between art and craft. They embraced a non-dualist domain of material worlds, where creative activities take place in integrated interrelation before they are defined in any theoretical ground. However, these two cases simultaneously demonstrate divergent approaches respectively in defining craft as a reversed method to problematise the hierarchy within art history. The positions they took diverged in their different ways to engage in the myth of 'fine art', which scopes a purified aesthetic domain excluding utilitarian intentions in making. This determined Yanagi's insistence on preserving pre-modern forms, which in Yen's practice was seen as an alterable factor in modern design, rather than an unchangeable tradition.

Yanagi's non-dualism eventually reformed a dualistic structure, which he applied to suggest craft as a socialist solution to amend the hierarchical division in art. He defined the aesthetic entity of craft as 'composite beauty' to embody the miscellaneous fact of the material world. Creative activities for satisfying essential needs are generated in daily experience, which Yanagi described as "the heaven grounded on the earth".[1] In contrast, 'fine art' scopes a heavenly realm, celebrating beauty as a high-cultural pleasure that Yanagi associated with the individual's intellect for abstract expressions. Within this antithesis, *mingei* aesthetics is more like Yanagi's socialist theory rather than an art theory as Yen suggested. *Mingei* objects are concrete and tangible, while artistic works are abstract and intangible. Yanagi categorised art and craft through his socialism, which responded to a long-term issue in Japanese art history that scopes art in a class-oriented frame. Craft, in this structure, plays a significant role in recovering beauty as a universal grace. *Mingei* objects trigger aesthetic experience based on 'intuitional' experience, which Yanagi considered an intrinsic connection to surroundings rather than educated rules of beauty. As a result, *mingei* theory scopes Yanagi's aesthetic of craft as an equally purified realm. Associating 'fine art' with individualism, intellectualism and utilitarianism, *mingei* aesthetics on the one hand affirms the significance of functional beauty in an experimental sense; on the other hand, it rejects abstractive creativities from any epistemological basis.

To a certain degree, Yen might fulfil the non-dualism that Yanagi did not achieve. Yanagi's 'composite beauty' is exclusive to craft. He did not include art as an option to attain the authentic freedom promised by universality. In comparison, Yen appreciated 'composite beauty' as a unity of all

[1] Yanagi,《工藝の道》[The way of Craft], 215.

aesthetic experiences, including art. He rejected the purified idea of 'fine art', which he did not draw a parallel with the term 'art'. Yen indicated that the term 'fine art' refers to a limited concept of art recognised as few academic subjects such as painting and sculpture. He suggested that this discrepancy might result from a cultural difference, as these academic categories did not accommodate the fact that people in the East recognised art, such as calligraphy and garden art. Yen's solution for the art-craft dualism was, therefore, more focused on subsiding the cognitive gap of art instead of creating an exclusive aesthetic principle for justifying craft's unique value. This approach to non-dualism has less to do with the socialist structure but took an aesthetic path to explore art's formative possibilities emancipated from the dualistic structure. Yen suggested that art required formative "mutation", which should also be possible in functional objects.[2] As a result, Yen's delightful design did not represent craft as non-art. His modern design conveys his practice of 'composite beauty', which enables interactive relations between art and craft. For Yen, craft making can be both modern and traditional since tradition is not a legacy of the past but a dynamic entity that develops with time.

Mingei aesthetics scope a domain for 'craft in itself', or craft for craft's sake, interrogating 'pure' art's individualistic expression as opposition to 'composite beauty'. However, for Yen, 'composite beauty' was pursued as the unification of the divided art and craft. Their interpretation started from the same concern. However, they ended up manifesting non-dualism in divergent practices.

Their contact in 1943 marked the conjunction of these two protagonists. Therefore, their practices formed an interrelated story for fulfilling the art-historical narrative. This was achieved by exploring their respective dedications to reviving local handicrafts and confronting the social division caused by mechanical productions in the capitalist era. This connection does not merely mark the influence on Japanese imperial space. It also brings together discrete incidents, the whole picture of which responds to the art-historical context of the International Arts and Crafts. This overall view draws on several crucial moments that demonstrate intercultural similarities and shared dilemmas in expectations of making 'art' a possibility for social equalities. However, this connection connotes more than the inherited legacy. Perceiving the discontinuity of this narrative link is equally important for evaluating these movements within the International Arts and Crafts context. The rearrangements and the altered meanings produced with initiatives in these cultural sites do not mean splitting influence on mapping the locations of historical incidents. What is demonstrated here is the plurality of the art history, which needs to be revealed in a non-dualistic structure for reallocating these influences. The conjunction in 1943 expands the history, revealing the coexistence of connections and disconnections, depicting details within the magnificence of their perpetual transition.

Non-dualism played a significant part in both Yanagi and Yen's practices, which explored several settings of values involving a dichotomous view of the world. In addition to 'art versus craft', these

[2] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 18.

dichotomies include individualism versus collectivism, modernity versus tradition, cosmopolitanism versus localism (which stimulates cultural debates on discerning uniqueness and universality), abstraction and concreteness, originality and imitation, authenticity and artificiality, freedom and constraint, and finally emancipation and oppression. These confronting arguments interweave in a matrix, in which value systems consistently shift and exchange for re-engaging in material cultures and their historical roles.

I will conclude my examination of these fascinating dialectical arguments by highlighting two of the most important dichotomies - 'imperialism versus localism' in relation to 'art versus craft' - to demonstrate how art history negotiates discursive dominances. In the British Arts and Crafts Movement, the concern for social hierarchy and division signifies the other side of the coin in the art-versus-craft debate. The movement conveyed Morris's socialist pursuit of equality by eliminating the social barriers shaped by the class system.[3] By extending this model, the tension within International Arts and Crafts embodied by two cases in this thesis projects the hierarchical structure forced by global capitalism, which substantially sustained a sophisticated imperial space. In the term 'imperialism versus localism', I attempt to demonstrate how social struggle developed a new form of dominance for shaping cultural Othernesses within the international structure, which determined the locations of the imperial centre and its peripheral localities. Involved in the new hierarchical relationship, the Otherness of craft reflected by art overlapped with Othernesses in wider cultural and social domains. 'Art versus craft' no longer merely projected the original confrontation between intellectual brains and technical hands, but converged with the myth of civilisation and the located primitive mind. In this scope, art-historical studies and craft studies simultaneously supply interchangeable energy with other humanities subjects, such as ethnography in dealing with non-European objects and folkloristics in searching for a nation's cultural source mentioned in this thesis.

Representing the Otherness of art, craft negotiates with the boundary between ideas of art and non-art, engaging the miscellaneous complexity of material worlds. We need to ask what art could be if the art-craft dualism is no longer valid to sustain this artificial structure. Would art become nothing different from everything else? Or would everything have the potential to be art? These two cases demonstrate the mobility of craft in conversation with an interchangeable value system of art. It manifests the fact that the dualistic structure and its dominance are mutually made, rather than intrinsically tenable. As a situational background of these two cases, Japanese imperialism reflected craft's mobility and enforced a shape for reengaging in art's rule. Beyond this imperial space, this relation keeps reshaping and perpetuating with encountered tension and possibility.

---

[3] William Morris, "Socialism and Anarchism", 1889; in A. L. Morton, ed., *Political Writings of William Morris*, (London: Lawrence and Wishart International Publishers, 1979), 210.

Art and Craft

Both Yanagi and Yen started their craft journey due to their interest and scepticism toward art, which can be concluded in this question: who are the people participating in those creative activities that we call art? This inquiry was derived and nuanced from the International Arts and Craft Movement's pursuit of 'art for the people' in searching for collaborations between "painters, sculptors, architects, designers and craftsmen" to rescope the relationship between arts and crafts and industry.[4] The two cases in this thesis respond to this inquiry by separating the question of 'art for the people' into two factors: who are the people? And, what is the 'art form' for the people?

Yanagi's *mingei* theory suggests that the 'people' should be considered with the approach of "universality", which he associated with material and spiritual fulfilments in daily experience.[5] This interpretation of the 'people' is opposite to fine art's participants, either art's creators or spectators, which Yanagi associated with individualistic capacities to appreciate intellectual uniqueness. Art is something special but has nothing to do with the universality of everyday materials, while craft can be a very ordinary object (*getemono*) but sustains intimacy in daily use. By denying fine art's capacity to engage in 'universality', Yanagi affirmed craft's ability to represent 'people's art'. He explored 'universality' as 'everyday experience', firmly connecting it to the idea of 'functional beauty', which in *mingei* theory is represented as opposition to ornamental beauty. Yanagi's criticism of Morris's Red House project manifests this intention. He said, "The Red House is more a painting than a residence, and it is for beauty rather than for use".[6] The comment clarified Yanagi's statement on the difference between 'functional beauty' and beauty for the sake of the visual. An over-decorated house does not fulfil the function as a residence, which Yanagi pursued as a purified function without any visual intervention. It is clear that *mingei* aesthetics drew a self-sufficing boundary of craft's beauty, converting different values from art. The 'people' as a subject of this self-sufficing beauty, no matter as a maker or a user, should maintain the functional universality of things rather than prioritise individual expressions.

As a result, *mingei* theory enacted a dividing line between art and craft by clarifying their respective features and aesthetic roles. *Mingei* theory, therefore, scoped a precise standard of craft's forms to minimise the use of ornament, which Yanagi recognised as an individualistic desire in a utilitarian framework. It aimed to maintain the purity of function by eliminating non-experimental elements, sustaining the tangible domain of material culture. In comparison, art engages in an integrable field, where individuals' intellects dominate the language for communicating. Yanagi recognised art's conceptual and epistemological approach as intellectualism, which is not a universal value accessible for all people. This aesthetic trajectory of craft reversed modern art's notion of purity.

---

[4] Crawford, "The importance of the City", 62.

[5] Yanagi,〈地方性の文化價値〉[Cultural values of localities], 229.

[6] Yanagi,《工藝の道》[The way of Craft], 209-215.

For example, Alberto Giacometti's surrealist manipulation of ethnographic objects operated to defunctionalise objects and purify and mutualise the conceived intention.[7] Free beauty in surrealist art was explored as a conceptual "pure pleasure" of visuality with "no desire to render reality", while in craft, this free request purified tangible reality to attain.[8] *Mingei* theory conveys an exclusive value system for shaping craft's aesthetic independence mirrored by modern art. The hybridity of Yanagi's theoretical reconstruction echoes several myths of western aesthetics, which he used to convert the value of craft into reversed interpretations. However, *mingei* theory did not aim to undermine modern aesthetics' practice of intellectual realism but alternatively created a reflected domain to justify that the tangible beauty created by 'common' people should be seen as equally valuable.

Yen Shui-long's response to 'art for the people' presents his resolution, which was more focused on redefining 'what' the art form is for people instead of identifying 'who' art's participators are. His practice was less critical of questioning the eligibility of art but more concerned with problematising the aesthetic methodology applied to define the conceptual division between art and craft. He conceived art and craft in the unity of culture, and this proposition is manifested in both his paintings and design works. Yen believed all forms, regardless of art or craft, are determined by an integrated material culture interacting with human creativities. Due to this, he more so considered how these forms conserve and represent this universal property of the "plastic culture".[9] Yen's term of plastic culture was derived from Yanagi's concept of "plastic art".[10] However, its conception is closer to the notion of 'Style' proposed in the Werkbund cultural study. Style was posited as a 'visual consistency' of the "integrated culture" - "the quality of unity between form and the spiritual imperative of the time".[11] In order to convert Style, plastic culture offers infinite possibilities of forms, affecting material presentations with a connection to the united model. Yen stated, "all things produced are meaningful for aesthetic purposes".[12] He allocated 'composite beauty' on a cultural scale, identifying a visual totality navigating creative uses of figurative motives.

Although Yen considered 'function' as a significant factor of craft, he conceived universality on a visual basis for representing cultural elements. He was enthusiastic about the idea of ornament and explored decorative culture as an embodiment of the united 'Style', rather than additional attachments of functional objects for merely visual entertainments. In Yen, ornamental objects communicate cultural matters. The aesthetic value of a creative object is not determined by the category of form, regardless of art or craft or others, but by the quality of the cultural meaning it conveys. This attitude is very different from the concept of *mingei* theory, which considers decoration as an artificial

[7] Krauss, *The Originality of Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, 42-71.
[8] Ibid, 52-53
[9] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝産業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", 21.
[10] Yanagi,〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 356.
[11] Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, 18.
[12] Yen Shui-long,〈畫家眼中的蘭嶼 - 期待一塊永久的樂土〉[Orchid Island in artists' eyes - looking forward to an foreverland of happiness], 68.

intervention to intrinsic expressions of nature and tradition. As shown in Yanagi's criticism of the Red House, he thought this artisticalised uniqueness was insincere and failed to retain pure satisfaction by function and the liberty benefited by nature. Decoration is excluded from Yanagi's 'composite beauty', while responding to which Yen took an alternative approach to rebuild connections between functional form and decoration by affirming certain symbols' cultural-bound "universality and immutability" as a "collective nature" of humanity.[13]

Tateishi Tetsuomi's comment on Yen's design revealed an interestingly displaced confrontation. He said Yen's design was far from the realm of "hearing nothing from making", and the "modern taste" he applied failed to accommodate his use of materials.[14] Decoration is like the noise of an industrial time, the intervention of natural essence. Tateishi revealed his essentialism in using materials that he thought should remain unchanged in the making process. In *mingei* theory, this essentialist attitude was approached to respect human creativities based on the long-term relationship with nature, which Yanagi also called tradition. This static relation with nature, or tradition, is a timeless domain which never develops with time. It is immortal and "forever new".[15] Tateishi assigned Yen's "modern taste" as a divergent approach from tradition. This complex toward ornament does not always engage in the other side of tradition. In modern art's history, ornament was repudiated as a genuine form, which some social theorists anachronistically associated with "a holdover from an earlier stage of social evolution".[16] Tateishi's analogy of noise arouses an art-historical deja vu. Adolf Loos's association between ornament and crime enhanced the misconception of ornamant's moral flaws bound with criticism of capitalist rule.[17] In modernist art, function was praised as transparent and democratic by eliminating decorations, a purified form celebrating the integrity of modernity. As Tateishi suggested, Yen's design embraced a 'modern taste', but not in a didactic tone. His ornamental elements are simplistic in form but descriptive in conveying the unity of Style. This eclecticism is fascinating for the coexistence of tradition and modernity, which replaces the dichotomous structure in modernist politics. He adopted geometric form from modernist design, which integrated joyful elements cited from the Taiwanese cultural landscape. Yen's idea of "free craft" was inspired by ethnographic objects of indigenous culture, which Yanagi admired as spontaneous "artistic minds" in an intersubjective relationship with nature.[18] The notion of 'free craft' is not a self-sustained domain in opposition to 'pure art', but the initiatives in all making processes hinged on the unity of the art world. 'Free craft'

---

[13] James Trilling, *Ornament: A Modern Perspective*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003), 86.

[14] Tateishi Tetsuomi, 〈生活文化振興會覺書〉[Comprehending life and cultural promotion],《民俗臺灣》*Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 4, no. 4 (1944): 27.

[15] Yanagi Sōetsu,〈正しき工藝〉[The Correct Craft], 1927. In《工藝の道》[The Way of Craft]. 2005. 62-63.

[16] Trilling, *Ornament: A Modern Perspective*, 132.

[17] Loos, "Ornament and Crime", 167-176.

[18] Yen Shui-long,〈臺灣に於ける「工藝產業」の必要性〉"The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan", 20-22.

marks Yen's divergence from Yanagi's notion of '*getemono*'. It scopes craft's flexibility in forms, converting exchangeable value with art through the unity of culture collectively made by all people.

Imperialism and Cultural Frontiers

The art-versus-craft debate overlapped with the imperialist structure that demanded the construction and maintenance of otherness. This demand for otherness triggered a series of ideological requirements for defining an essential self with cultural originality and authenticity. In forming imperialism, folklore materials could serve as a source of origin for securing the sense of nation, which politically manipulated the legitimate value for locating cultural experiences within an imperial frame.[19] In the new-formed occidental-oriental structure in Japan's imperial framework, craft was a pivotal site, where different discursive powers competed to reshape Japanese identity in the modern era. *Mingei* theory engaged in this imperial terrain in conversation with the state-made national culture by creating an alternative spatial structure for exploring Japanese identity. Confirming 'common people' as a legitimate subject of national culture, *mingei* theory interrogated 'where' these common people are in a central-peripheral tension.

The urban-rural dualistic structure mirrors Yanagi's nationalism in an imagined boundary of native Japanese culture. Yanagi's nationalism was based on a centre-versus-periphery tension, which I explore to identify the difference between his nationalism and state-made imperialism. The 'where' question in the context of the *Mingei* Movement served as a socialist intention distanced from the imperial government's centralised hegemony. The difference between these two ideologies is subtle, especially when their methods of reviving local handicrafts to shape the national identity look ostensibly the same. Yanagi stated that rural handicrafts sustained the domain of authentic Japanese culture, which in urban cities had been replaced by cosmopolitan taste floating with capital rules. This antithesis represents Yanagi's divergence from the government's industrial mobilisation, which took local craftworks as a commodity to support the national economic policy. The theoretical model of craft's peripheral agency and the scepticism of national force is derived from Arthur Penty's guild socialism, which praised local-scale industries against national-scale industry's artificial collectivism and its deprivation of local mobilities. To answer 'where' the 'art for people' is, Yanagi emphasised the accessibility of concrete materials and the substantiality of crafted objects from local communities. Reflected by urban modernity and 'imported' capitalism, rural Japan embraced the authenticity of tradition, the source of Japanese cultural origin. According to Yanagi, with the shelter of cultural tradition, manufactured objects will not be "spiritually ill" and be "correct" and "healthy".[20] Local

[19] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* (London: Verso, 1983), 12.
[20] Ibid.

culture contains the ‘universality’ of daily experience connected to tradition, and therefore represents the cultural ‘uniqueness’ for developing national identity.

This centre-peripheral tension gained substantial complexity when encountering imperial spatial politics in colonies. The complex existed as a contradiction within the government’s perplexity in defining Taiwanese identity. Is Taiwan an insider of Japanese culture or an outsider? The contradiction was enlarged when imperialism required a more plausible legitimacy to force colonial power, which became more complex than mobilisation through nationalism in the Japanese countryside. The government needed a new narrative on the inclusion of Taiwan so that it could legalise cultural mobilisation as a political strategy. However, the inevitable assimilation in this process would undermine Taiwanese locality, which the Japanese government considered as significant for transferring imperial influence to the South. The government’s contradictory imagination of insider otherness unexpectedly provided an ideological gap for negotiating the substance of Taiwanese identity.

Minzoku Taiwan society thrived by utilising this gap. Kanakeki’s prospectus of this magazine implied several conjectures of this shift, including the government’s hesitation toward modernisation and the vacillating policy toward local customs. He stated the magazine’s function was to ‘research and archive’ folklore subjects which were inevitably diminishing under the current assimilation policy, which Kanaseki alternatively described as a result of a double-side ‘modernity’ that sidesteps political sensitivity.[21] Ostensibly, this magazine aligned with the imperial government’s Greater East Asian ideology, perhaps partially due to Kanaseki’s admiration of Yanagita and his interest in folkloristics. However, *Minzoku Taiwan* society is far from a school of political speculators. Emphasising non-academic approaches, this magazine brought together congenial and adventurous young minds who produced articles for *Minzoku Taiwan* independently from multiple humanities fields with diverse interests. The discrete energy enabled multitudinous small-scale local studies based on concrete folklore materials, distancing from the original intention of the Greater East Asian imperial structure.

Minzoku Taiwan society also marked several key incidents related to *mingei*’s transmission in Taiwan, such as the *Mingei* Association’s survey in 1943 and a series of war-time handicrafts exhibitions cooperated with *Minzoku Taiwan* associates, and most importantly, the contact between Yanagi and Yen. Some critics consider this conjunction equivalent to the transmission of an imperial aesthetic ideology in Taiwan. These criticisms reflect Benedict Anderson’s concern that folklore subjects tend to be manipulated as ideological tools for shaping an imagined community to support the expansion of nationalism.[22] Evidence in this thesis shows that, although it is true that the

[21] Kanaseki, 〈本誌發刊の趣意書を繞る:論爭の始末(上)〉 [About the prospectus of the publishment of this magazine: the whole argument], 42.
[22] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 196.

assimilation in Taiwan was sometimes celebrated as a progression of modernity, it does not mean the accepted Japanese identity would take the place of the Taiwanese identity. Colonial culture conveys a kind of hybridity, which can be demonstrated by *Minzoku Taiwan* associates' alternative uses of *mingei* theory by altering and transforming its original meaning for their own sake. As a result, *mingei* theory in Taiwan had multiple faces, all coexisting with embracing colonial culture's ambivalent, dynamic and hybrid uses of cultural concepts to interpret local materials. One of these cases is the difference between Yen and Tateishi's approach to ornamental elements in daily objects.

Representing the polarised imperial centre and local peripheries, mingei theory structured the dualism between East and West, while in Yen's practice, this confrontation is subtle. However, his cultural resistance is visible as a series of displacing and replacing processes, recovering utterance in forms of ambivalence, fluidity and hybridity. As an interface of cultural diversity, Yen embraced western modern art forms as methods to depict local culture consisting of Chinese immigrants and indigenous people. His enthusiasm for indigenous culture led to considerable attention on the ethnographic materials in his paintings and design works. I juxtapose Yen and Shiotsuki Tōho's representations of indigenous culture to explore primitivism and modernism in their paintings, respectively. Shiotsuki's fauvist expression shows no intention to depict ethnographic details in his representation of *Atayal Girl* in 1933. Shiotsuki was an empathetic painter; however, his interest was more in the use of modernist language rather than the narrative fact of cultural subjects. Atayal Girl's composition also references Paul Gauguin's *Spirit of the Dead Watching* in 1892. The connection to European sources is also an attempt to engage in western modernist aesthetics. Shiotsuki's reference to Gauguin was deliberate. Their primitivism is similar in the approaches to indigenous culture, which convert observed primitive nature into the criticism of modern civilisation by transforming ethnographic subjects into modernist art language. Coincidentally, Yen also referred to Gauguin's painting *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* in his *Girl of Orchid Island*.[23] However, he represented a very different operation of Gauguin's style by depicting ethnographic materials in exquisite detail with semiological accuracy. Using modernist language, Yen conveyed an anachronistic insistence on representing reality in pictorial narratives, which were unappreciated as copies of nature in modernist art. This visual hybridity might be derived from Yen's approach to 'composite beauty' and respect for the united Style demonstrated as cultural symbols in ethnographic objects. The interpretation restored the "unity of human life", which had been divided as modernist "primitive and radical opposition".[24] Yen and Shiotsuki demonstrated divergent uses of European sources of modern art, altering meanings and displacing contexts for engaging in cultural frontiers.

This imperial structure cannot be simplified as any Japan-Taiwan or the coloniser-colonised dichotomy. In a colonialist scope, imperialism represents a "subject making" moment for identifying

[23] Yen Chuan-ying, "The Human Spirit of the Taiwanese Landscape: the Oil Paintings of Shui-Long Yen", 289.
[24] David Brett, *Rethinking Decoration*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 27.

the "distance between political repression and individual neurosis" that differs across cultural and psychological locations.[25] This thesis reallocates cultural frontiers as all multivalent moments responding to imperialism by engaging in the "material exigencies" of colonialism "at the level of the local", where "oppressions are always complex". These multivalent entities are difficult to observe in bare operations of academic language, which remains "at the best a description of global relations and not a script for their change".[26]

Concluding these two dualistic factors in this thesis, craft, as an otherness of art, perpetuates dialectic processes by enacting the other side of the coin. This thesis intends, beyond revealing both sides of the dialectic, to emancipate creative possibilities from the dualistic structure. Craft is not the opposite of art, nor an isolated entity. In the case of global imperialism, craft engages in a post-colonial domain, locating the interface of cultural differences for identifying the myth of civilisation. However, in global art history, craft reveals a post-historical space for reconsidering the universality and the uniqueness of human creativities in their unity of life, and also in the infinity of forms. Indicating the myth of "free inspiration" of fine art, David Brett prompted the questioning of this very idea as an "epiphenomenon of a particular socioeconomic world".

> Now whatever subjectivist aesthetic do for the 'fine' arts, as a critical orthodoxy they are a disaster for the highly conditioned and commissioned role of the decorative arts, and for decorative values in art and architecture and design generally. They are cut off from philosophically based criticism. They begin to parody, in their social presentation and critical language, the stance of the expressive art of 'aesthetic experience' (Which already exists in a lower cognitive status than conceptual knowledge.)[27]

There are interesting connections in the juxtaposition of Brett's text and Yen's The History of Arts and Crafts, written sixty years earlier than Brett. Yen suggested the idea of 'fine art' has a discrepancy in identifying 'art' in eastern culture, and it seems that 'fine art' is only valid in the western context, although beauty should be perceived in 'concrete' objects rather than 'abstract' thoughts or theories.[28] Yanagi also emphasised that craft does not take conceptual paths like 'fine art' does; instead, the beauty of craft relies on 'concrete' forms and direct experimental engagements to attain the sense of beauty.[29] Conceiving fine art as painting, sculpture and architecture, Yen stated that "categorisation is

[25] Stephen Slemon, "The Scramble for Post-colonialism", in Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson, ed., *De-Scribing Empire: Post colonialism and Textuality,* (London: Routledge, 1994); in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, 51.
[26] Ibid, 52.
[27] Brett, *Rethinking Decoration*, 24.
[28] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], 11-12.
[29] Yanagi, 〈「白樺」と「工藝」〉[White birch and craft], 184.

a convenient method".[30] However, subjective expressions are a more complicated process which cannot be roughly framed with a pre-defined category. He explained that the art world is a composite entity, where concrete and abstract forms - visual, vocal and actional - cooperate to shape aesthetic experiences in both spatial and temporal dimensions.[31] As frontiers of aesthetic experience, these conceived material forms should be prioritised before concrete materials are dominated by cognitive orthodoxy. These concrete experiences locate the origin of art historical sites, which can take place on anything and anywhere.

[30] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 15-16; Yamagiwa,《美學- 日本美學への理念》[Aesthetic: the philosophy of Japanese aesthetics], 4-6.

[31] Yen Shui-long,〈工藝美術史〉[The History of Arts and Crafts], 24; Alain, *Systèmes des Beaux-Arts.* Translated by Kuwabara and Sugimoto,《芸術論集：文学のプロポ》[Collection of art theory: literature report], 28-31.

Glossary

bijutsu 美術
fine art(s)

bijutsuka 美術家
fine artist(s)

Bunten 文展
Monbushō Bijutsu Tenrankai
文省部美術展覧会
Ministry of Education Art Exhibition

bunjinga 文人画
literrati painting

chokkan 直観
intuition

ema 絵馬
picture-horse

geijutsu 藝(芸)術
art(s)

getemono 下手物
ordinary thing(s)

heimin 平民
commoner(s)

Kano 狩野
Kano School of painting

keikengaku 経験学
empirical science(s)

kihangaku 規範学
normative science(s)

kōgei 工藝(芸)
craft(s)

kōgyo 工業
Industry; industrial

Kōminka 皇民化
Japanisation; imperialisation

koto こと
intangible thing(s)

mingei 民藝(芸)
folk art(s); folk craft(s)

minshū 民衆
common people

*minzok*u 民俗
folklore

minzogaku 民俗学
Folkloristics; folklore studies

mono もの
tangible thing(s)

mushin 無心
no-mindedness

musō 無想
no-thought; thoughtlessness

nanga 南画
southern painting

shasei 写生
sketch(es) from life

Shintaisei 新体制
The New Order

Shirakaba 白樺
White Birch

shokusan kōgyō 殖産興業
promotion of industry and manufacturing

sōshoku 装飾
decorative; decoration(s)

soya 粗野
rustic

shibusa 渋さ
astringency

Taiten 台展
Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition
台湾美術展覧会

Takumi たくみ
craftsman; craftsmen

tariki 他力
the other power

Teiten 帝展
Teikoku Bijutsuin Tenrankai
帝国美術院展覧会
Imperial Fine Arts Academy Exhibition

tzuriki 自力
the self power

ukiyo-e 浮世絵
picture(s) of the floating world

wenrenhua 文人畫
literrati painting

yamai 病い
illness

zuan 圖案
pattern

Reference

Abe, Junichiro.〈戦時下台湾における三つの「地方文化」構想 -『民俗台湾』と日本民芸協会の民芸保存活動を事例として〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Minzoku Taiwan* and the Japanese *Mingei* Association],《ソシオロジ》*Sociology,* vol. 54, no. 2 (2009): 71-88.

Adamson, Glenn, ed. *The Craft Reader.* Oxford and New York: Berg, 2010.

Adorno, Theodor. *Aesthetic Theory.* London: Bloomsbury, 1997.

Akazawa, Shirō and Kitagawa Kenzō, Yui Masaomi, ed.《日本現代史*13* - 太平洋戦争下の国民生活》[The modern history of Japan, 13 - Citizen life under the Pacific War]. Tokyo: Otsuki Shoten, 1985.

Alain,《芸術論集:文学のプロポ》[Collection of art theory: literature report], 1941. Translated from *Systèmes des Beaux-Arts* by Kuwabara Takeo and Sugimoto Hidetarō. Tokyo: Chūōkōronshinsha, 2002.

Amuta, Chidi. "Fanon, Cabral and Ngugi on National Liberation". From 'A Dialectical Theory of African Literature: Categories and Springboards' in *The Theory of African Literature*, 1989. In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, 158-163. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, 1983.

Antliff, Mark and Patricia Leighten. "Primitive". In *Critical terms for Art History, edited by* Robert S. Nelson and Richard shiff, 217-233. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Armstrong, Isobel. "The Pre-Raphaelites and Literature". In *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites,* edited by Elizabeth Prettejohn, 15-31. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Asai, Chū. 1904.〈図案の線に就て〉[About the line of pattern].《小美術》*Small Art:* 1(5) (1904). In Tsuchida, Maki.〈明治三〇年代の図案 - アール・ヌーヴォーあるいは琳派〉[Pattern design in the Meiji 30s - The Art Nouveau and the Rinha]. In《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* edited by Nagata Ken-ichi, Hida Toyorō and Mori Hitōshi, 100-119. Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006.

Ashcroft, Bill; Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, ed. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

Barringer, Tim. "The South Kensington Museum and the Colonial Project". In *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, edited by Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, 11-27. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

Beechy, James. "Defining Modernism: Roger Fry and Clive Bell in the 1920s". *The Art of Bloomsbury: Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant,* 39-52. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Benjamin, Walter. "Experience and Poverty", 1933. In *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings 1927-1934*, vol. 2, edited by Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith, 731-736. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999.

Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*, 1947. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1995.

Berkowitz, Elizabeth. "The 1910 'Manet and the Post-Impressionists' Exhibition: Importance and Critical Issues." *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*, edited by Dino Franco Felluga, 2017. Accessed Jul 24, 2020. https://branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=elizabeth-berkowitz-the-1910-manet-and-the-post-impressionists-exhibition-importance-and-critical-issues.

Bhabha, Homi K.. *The Location of Culture.* London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

Bhabha, Homi K. "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences". From 'The Commitment to Theory' *New Formations* 5, 1988. In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, 206-209. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

Brandt, Kim. *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

Brett, David. *Rethinking Decoration.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Brett, Guy. "Unofficial Versions". In *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art*, edited by Susan Hiller, 113-136. London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 1991.

Carpenter, Niles H. "The Literature of Guild Socialism". *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 34, no. 4 (1920): 763-776.

Chang, Hsiu-Sheng.〈戦時下台湾における「郷土意識」と柳宗悦の民芸思想 - 雑誌『民俗台湾』と『月刊民芸．民芸』との比較〉[Three ideas of 'Local Culture' in wartime Taiwan - a case study of *Taiwan Folkway* and the Japanese Mingei Association].《桃山歴史・地理》*Momoyama History and Geography*, no. 47 (2012): 38-67.

Chen, I-Fan. "Shui-Long Yen's Road to *Formosa Industrial Art*: the 1950s vision of Modern Craft", translated by Yvonne Kennedy, collected in *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 314-323. Taipei: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2012.

Chen, I-Fan. "Enlightening the Art in Life: Shui-long Yen's Formosa Handicrafts Movements from the 1930s to the 1950s". Master's thesis, The National Taiwan University, 2013.

Chiang, Shao-Ying,〈論新民藝 - 從三位民藝運動者的歷史回顧展望民藝的未來〉[On new-*mingei*: prospects of future mingei through retrospective views on historical cases of three folk art activists], 1998. 台灣傳統民俗與民藝學術研討會 [Taiwan traditional folklore and folk art studies conference]. Unpublished article, courtesy of the writer.

Chiang, Shao-Ying. Face-to-face interview by Yang Yu-jui on 7 May, 2019. A vocal recording was kept.

Chiang, Su-E, "A Case Study on the Conception of the Continuation of 'Aesthetic Education' of Yen Shui-long and Liu Chi-Hsiang: An Approach to the Perspective of Life History". Master's thesis, Nanhua University, 2008.

Chuang, Po-Ho.〈建立臺灣藝術風貌的顏水龍〉[Yen Shui-long, who founded the Taiwanese feature in art]. In《顏水龍九五回顧展》[Yen Shui-long's 95 Years Retrospective Exhibition - Local Emotion of Taiwan.], 8-16. Taichung: National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, 1997.

Chuang, Su-O.〈純藝術的反叛者〉[A rebel of fine art - Yen Shui-Long]. In《臺灣美術全集》*Taiwan Fine Arts Series 6: Yen Shui-Long*, 17-43. Taipei: Artist Magazine, 1992.

Clifford, James. "On Ethnographic Surrealism." In *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* vol. 23, no. 4, 539-564. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Clunas, Craig. "China in Britain: The Imperial Collections". In *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, edited by Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, 41-51. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

Collingwood, R. G. *The Principles of Art*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1938.

Costello, Diarmuid. "Kant and the Problem of Strong Non-Perceptual Art". *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol. 53, no. 7 (2013): 277-298.

Crawford, Alan. "The importance of the City". In *International Arts and Crafts*, edited by Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry, 62-81. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2005.

Cruise, Colin. "Pre-Raphaelite Drawing". In *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites,* edited by Elizabeth Prettejohn, 47-61. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Danto, Arthur Coleman. *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

De Waal, Edmund. "The Culture of Collecting and Display". In *International Arts and Crafts*, edited by Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry, 328-337. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2005.

Diderot, Denis. *Diderot on Art, Volume I: The Salon of 1765 and Notes on Painting*, 1765(?). Translated by John Goodman. Yale University Press, 1995.

Duro, Paul. "Why Imitation, and Why Global?" In *Art History,* vol. 37, no.4 (2014): 696-627. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2014.

Faulkner, Rupert. "A New Generation of Artist-Craftsmen". In *International Arts and Crafts*, edited by Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry, 312-327. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2005.

Findling, John E. ed. *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions: 1851-1988*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990.

Forsey, Jane. *The Aesthetics of Design*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization*, 1967. London : Routledge, 2001.

Fried, Michael. *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Friedman, Jonathan. "Civilisational Cycles and the History of Primitivism". *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 14, no. 12 (1983): 31-52.

Fry, Roger. "Impressionist Painters". In〈アンリ．マテイスと後印象派〉[Henri Matisse and Post-Impressionism], translated by Yanagi Sōetsu, 1913.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第一巻 - 科學、宗教、藝術；初期論集》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 1, Science, Religion and Art; Early Works,* 706-716. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Fujishima, Takeji,〈藝術眼に映る臺灣の風物詩〉 [The poetic Taiwanese features in artistic eyes], 1935. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 135-136. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Greensted, Mary. "Nature and the Rural Idyll". In *International Arts and Crafts,* edited by Livingstone and Parry, 92-121. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2005.

Gropius, Walter. *Programm zur Gründung einer allgemeinen Hausbaugesellschaft auf künstlerischer einheitlicher Grundlage m.b.H,* 1910. Reprint in *Ausgewählte Schriften*, edited by Probst Hartmut and Christian Schädlich, 18-25. Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1987.

Hanyū, Misao.〈談巴黎遊學中的畫人顏水龍〉[About artist Yen Shui-long studying in Paris], 1931. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 421-422. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Hart, Imogen. "The Designs of William Morris". In *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites,* edited by Elizabeth Prettejohn, 211-222. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Hewetson, John. "Introductory Essay: Mutual Aid and the Social Significance of Darwinism", 1987. In Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution,* 1902. London: Freedom Press, 1987: VII-11.

Hsieh, Li-Fa. "Art through Life and Life through Art - Considering the Role of Yen Shui-Long in Taiwanese Art History". In *Retrospective Yen Shui-Long: Image of Taiwan through Aboriginal Civilisations*, 7-12. Taichung: National Taiwan Fine Arts Museum, 1999.

Iketa, Toshio.〈植民地時期の民俗雑誌〉[Folklore magazine in the colonial period].《台湾近現代史研究》[Taiwan Modern History Studies], no. 4 (1982): 121-145.

Ishikawa, Kin-Ichiro.〈臺灣の山水〉[Taiwanese landscapes], 1932. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 63-69. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Itō, Yoshiaki.〈万国博覧会の工芸デザイン- 陶瓷を中心に〉[Crafts design in world expositions - Focusing on pottery]. In《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* edited by Nagata Ken-ichi, Hida Toyorō and Mori Hitōshi, 47-61. Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006.

Kanaseki, Takeo; Yang Yun-Ping.〈本誌發刊の趣意書を繞る：論爭の始末(上)〉[About the prospectus of the publishment of this magazine: the whole argument]. *Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 1, no. 2(8), (1941): 42-45.

Kanaseki, Takeo.《龍山寺の曹老人》[Mr, Cáo of Lungshan Temple]. Taipei: Dongning, 1943.

Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Judgement*. Translated by James Creed Meredith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.

Kant, Immanuel *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. Edited by Guyer Paul. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Kawamura, Minato.《大東亞民俗学の虚実》[the artifice and the fact in the 'Greater East Asian Folklore Studies']. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1996.

Kelly, Julia. *Art, Ethnography and the Life of Objects*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Kirkpatrick, Kate. "Beneath the Surface: Whose Phenomenology? Which Art?". In *Art and Mysticism: Interfaces in the Medieval and Modern Periods*, edited by Helen Appleton and Louise Nelstrop, 27-40. London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2018.

Kikuchi, Yuko. *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism.* London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004.

Kikuchi, Yuko. "Refrected Colonial Modernity: Vernacularism in the Development of Modern Taiwanese Craft". In *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, edited by Kikuchi Yuko, 217-247. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

Kikuchi, Yuko. "Shui-Long Yen and Vernacularism in the Development of Modern Taiwanese Craft". In *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 300-313. Taipei: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2012.

Kimura, Motomori.《美のかたち》[The figure of beauty]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1941.

Kinosita, Geigai.〈台展の日本畫に就いて〉[About the Japanese painting in the Taiten], 1939. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 310-312. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Kita, Takuya.〈大正時代の工芸とユートピア思想 - 富本憲吉とウィリアム・モリス〉[Craft in the Taishō perios and utopianist thoughts: Tomimoto Kenkichi and William Morris]. In《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* edited byNagata Ken-ichi, Hida Toyorō and Mori Hitōshi, 184-197. Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006.

Kohl, Stephen. *The White Birch School (*白桦派 *Shirakabaha) of Japanese Literature: Some Sketches and Commentary.* Occasion paper no. 2. Eugene: Asian Studies Committee University of Oregon, 1975.

Kokubu, Naoichi.〈乩童の研究〉[A study of psychic bodies]. *Minzoku Taiwan,* vol. 1, no. 1(7), (1941): 10-13.

Krauss, Rosalind E. *The Originality of Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 1985.

Kropotkin, Peter. *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, 1902. London: Freedom Press, 1987.

Kropotkin, Peter. *The Conquest of Bread*; *The Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, 1907. Cambridge: Great Britain at the University Press, 1995.

Lamberth, David C. "*A Pluralistic Universe* a Century Later: Rationality, Pluralism, and Religion". In *William James and the Transatlantic Conservation: Pragmatism, Pluralism and Philosophy of Religion*, edited by Martin Halliwell and Joel D. S. Rasmussen, 133-150. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Lavery, Grace. *Quaint, Exquisite: Victorian Aesthetics and the Idea of Japan.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.

Leach, Bernard, ed.; Yanagi, Sōetsu. *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*. New York: Kodansha USA Publishing, 1972.

Liao, Hsin-Tien. "The Beauty of the Untamed: Exploration and Travel in Colonial Taiwanese Landscape Painting". In *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, edited by Kikuchi Yuko, 39-65. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

Lin, Cheng-Wei. "Taiwanese Crafts Movement of Yen Shui-Long and Yanagi Muneyoshi -The Folk Crafts (*Mingei*) in a Comparative Perspective", *Arts Review,* no. 18 (2008): 167-195.

Lin, Cheng-Wei. "Observe Effect of Folk Crafts on Germ of Taiwan Craft From Writing of Folk Crafts by Kanaseki Takeo: Emphasis on 'Narration of Folk Crafts' in the Magazine 'Folk Taiwan'". *Taiwan Literature* 《臺灣文獻》vol. 61, no. 2 (2010): 35-55.

Lin, Pan-Long.〈顔水龍氏の繪が巴里サロンドオトンヌに入選〉[Yen Shui-long's painting were accepted for the Salon d'Automne in Paris], 1931. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 423-424. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Lin, Yu-Chun.《進入世界藝壇的先驅：日據時期留法畫家研究》"The Pioneer to the International Art World - A research of Artists Study in France During the Japanese Period". Master thesis, National Taiwan University, 1991.

Liu, Shu-Chin.〈帝國空間重塑、近衛新體制與臺灣「地方文化」〉[The reconstructure of empire space, the Konoe New Order and the term 'Taiwanese local culture'].《帝國裡的「地方文化」- 皇民化時期臺灣文化狀況》[The local culture in the empire: the cultural circumstance in Japanised Taiwan], edited by Shih Wan-Shun, Liu Shu-Chin and Xu Pei-Xian, 1-48. Taipei: Third Nature; Green Futures Publishing, 2008.

Livingstone, Karen and Linda Parry, ed. *International Arts and Crafts.* London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2005.

Loos, Adolf. "Ornament and Crime", in *Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays*, 167-176. Riverside, California: Ariade Press, 1998.

Lu, Shao-Li. *Exhibiting Taiwan: Power, Space and Image Representation of Japanese Colonial Rule.* Taipei: Rye Field Publications, 2005.

Maclagan, David. "Outsiders or Insiders. in Susan Hiller". In *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art*., edited bySusan Hiller, 32-49. London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 1991.

Matsuda, Kyōko.〈領台初期における台湾原住民調査 - 伊能嘉矩を中心に〉[Initial Aboriginal survey in Taiwan during the Occupation: a study of Kanor Inō] .《台湾史研究》[Taiwanese History Studies], 14 (1997): 135-148.

Miki, Kiyoshi,〈生活文化と生活技術〉[Daily life culture and daily life technology], 1985.《三木清全集 - 第七巻》*Collected Works if Miki Kiyoshi,* vol. 14, 384-401. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1941.

Miller, Daniel. "Primitive Art and the Necessity of Primitivism to Art". In *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art*., edited by Susan Hiller, 50-71. London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 1991.

Mizuo, Hiroshi.〈民藝運動の展開〉[The launch of the *Mingei* Movement].《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 581-591. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Moeran, Brian. "Bernard Leach and the Japanese Folk Craft Movement: The Formative Years". *Journal of Design History* 2, no. 2/3 (1989): 139-144.

Morris, William. "The Lesser Arts", 1878. In *Political Writings of William Morris*, edited by A. L. Morton, 31-56. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1979.

Morris, William. “Socialism and Anarchism”, 1889. In *Political Writings of William Morris*, edited by A. L. Morton, 209-213. London: Lawrence and Wishart International Publishers, 1979.
Morris, William. “How I Became a Socialist”, 1894. *Political Writings of William Morris*, edited by A. L. Morton, 240-145. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1979.
Nagata, Ken-ichi.〈日本のアプライド. アート-大正期における工業と美術の再接近〉[Applied art in Japan - re-approaching industry and art in the Taishō Era]. In《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* edited by Nagata Ken-ichi, Hida Toyorō and Mori Hitōshi, 150-165. Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006.
Nagata, Ken-ichi.〈「美の国」NIPPONとその実現の夢 - 民芸運動と「新體制」〉[‘Nation of beauty’ NIPPON magazine and the reliased dream: the mingei activity and the ‘New Order’]. In《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* edited by Nagata Ken-ichi, Hida Toyorō and Mori Hitōshi, 348-370. Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006.
Nagayama, Sadatomi.《内外博覽會總說 - 並に我國に於ける萬國博覽會の問題》[A general study of domestic and international expositions: problems of international exposition in Japan]. Tokyo: Suimei Shoin, 1937.
Nakami, Mari. *In Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Sôetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace.* Tokyo: Trans Pacific Press, 2011.
Nakamura, Akira.〈文化政策としての皇民化問題〉[Questions about *Kōminka* as a Cultural Policy]《臺灣時報》[Taiwan News], January, 1941, 6-12.
Nakayama, Shuichi. “The Impact of William Morris in Japan: 1904 to the Present”. *Journal of Design History* 9, no. 4 (1996): 273-283.
National Museum of Taiwan History. “Glass Bead Necklace”. Online catalogue of the National Museum of Taiwan History is available, accessed Jan 13, 2021: https://collections.nmth.gov.tw/CollectionContent.aspx?a=132&rno=2003.001.1035
National Museum of Taiwan History. “Rukai Woman’s Traditional Garment”. Online catalogue of the National Museum of Taiwan History is available, accessed Jan 13, 2021: https://collections.nmth.gov.tw/CollectionContent.aspx?a=132&rno=2003.012.0092
National Museum of Taiwan History. “Tao Parent-Child Terracotta Figures”. Online catalogue of the National Museum of Taiwan History is available, accessed Jan 13, 2021: https://collections.nmth.gov.tw/CollectionContent.aspx?a=132&rno=2017.043.0196
National Museum of Taiwan History. “Tao’s Boat Postcard”, Online catalogue of the National Museum of Taiwan History is available, accessed Jan 13, 2021: https://collections.nmth.gov.tw/CollectionContent.aspx?a=132&rno=2001.008.1475
National Museum of Taiwan History. The Catalogue of Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition. Online database of the National Museum of Taiwan History is available, accessed Jan 5, 2021: https://ndweb.iis.sinica.edu.tw/twart/System/database
Nagel, Alexander. *Medieval Modern: Art Out of Time.* London: Thames & Hudson, 2012.
Okakura Tenshin.《東洋の理想 》[The Ideal of Oriental World], 1903. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1986.
Okamura, Kichiemon.《柳宗悦と初期民芸運動》[Sōetsu Yanagi and the beginning of the *Mingei* Movement]. Tokyo: Tamagawa University Press, 1991.
Ōkuma, Nobuyuki.《社会思想家としてのラスキンとモリス》[Socialists Ruskin and Morris], 1927. Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 2004.
Owens, Craig. “The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Pstmodernism”. In *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, edited by Donald Preziosi, 335-349. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
Perriand, Charlotte.〈選択伝統及び創造をこの展覧会のテーマとして掲げる〉[Revealing the theme of the ‘Selection, Tradition and Creation’ exhibition].《選択. 伝統. 創造 - 日本藝術との接触》[‘Selection, Tradition and Creation’: Contacts with Japanese art]. Tokyo: Oyama Shoten, 1941. In Tsuchida Maki.《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time]. Urayasu: Sofukan, 2008.
Perriand, Charlotte; Sakakura junzō, trans.,〈日本工藝について：第二回貿易局輸出工藝圖案展の講評より〉[About Japanese crafts: commentary of Trade Bureau’s 2nd exported crafts’ pattern exhibition].《月刊民藝》[*Mingei* journal], no. 25(4), (1941): 26-33.
Penty, Arthur. *The Restoration of the Gild System*. London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co, 1906.
Penty, Arthur. *Post-industrialism*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1922.

Picasso, Claude Ruiz. “The Valley of Gold: Picasso as Potter.” In *Picasso: Sculptor/Painter*, edited by Elizabeth Cowling and John Golding, 223-227. London: Tate Gallery, 1994.
Physick, J. “From Iron Shed to Marble Hall”. Unpublished PhD dissertation, London: Royal College of Art (on deposit in National Art Library, Victoria And Albert Museum), 1982, 117. Tim Barringer. “The South Kensington Museum and the Colonial Project”. In *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, edited by Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, 11-27. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.
Qiu, Shu-Zhen.〈柳田国男と台湾民俗学〉[Kunio Yanagita and ethnology in Taiwan].《国文学：解釈と鑑賞》*Japanese Literature: Interpretation and Appreciation,* vol. 72, no. 12 (2007): 42-49.
Ruskin, John. *Modern Painters*, vol. 1. London Smith Elder and Co., 1857..
Ruskin, John. *The Stones of Venice,* vol. 2. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1874.
Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Group, 1978.
Satō, Dōshin. *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State - The Politics of Beauty.* Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 1999.
Saya, Makito.《民俗学・台湾・国際連盟：柳田國男と新渡戸稲造》[Ethnology, Taiwan, International Federation: Kunio Yanagida and Inazo Nitobe]. Tokyo: Kodansha, 2015.
Schwartz, Frederic. *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture Before the First World War*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996.
Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
Sharpe, Janny. “Figures of Colonial Resistance”. In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* edited by Ashcroft, Bill; Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, 99-103. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.
Shiff, Richard, “The Originality”. In *Critical Terms for Art History,* edited by Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 145-159. Chicago and London: The University and Chicago Press, 1996.
Shiga, Naokuni.《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*]. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2016.
Shiotsuki, Tōho.〈顔水龍君の滞歐作品展に就て〉[Yen Shui-long’s exhibition on his sojourn in Europe], 1933. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 425-426. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.
Slemon, Stephen. “The Scramble for Post-colonialism”. In *De-Scribing Empire: Post colonialism and Textuality*, edited by Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson, 27-44. In *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, 45-56. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.
Taipei Fine Arts Museum. “Shui-Lung Yen: A Timeline”. *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 353-365. Taipei: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2012.
Tateishi, Tetsuomi.〈荒凉たる眺め〉[The bleak scene], 1940. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 140-141. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.
Tateishi, Tetsuomi.〈生活工藝品への反省〉[A reflective thinking about crafted products in life], 1943. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 539-541. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.
Tateishi, Tetsuomi.〈生活文化振興會覺書〉[Comprehending life and cultural promotion].《民俗臺灣》*Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 4, no. 4 (1944): 26-27.
Taut, Bruno. *Modern Architecture*. London: The Studio Limited, 1929.
Thistlewood, David. “A. J. Penty and the Legacy of 19th-Century English Domestic Architecture”. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 46, no. 4 (12), (1987): 327-341.
Tomimoto, Kenkichi.〈ウィリアム・モリスの話 (上)〉[A story of William Morris].《美術新報》*Art News,* vol.11, no. 4(2), (1912): 14-20.
Tomimoto, Kenkichi.〈模様雑感〉[Some thoughts about pattern].《美術新報》*Art News,* vol.13, no.12(10), (1914): 8-9.
Trilling, James. *Ornament: A Modern Perspective.* Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003.
Tsuchida, Maki.〈明治三〇年代の図案 - アール・ヌーヴォーあるいは琳派〉[Pattern design in the Meiji 30s - The Art Nouveau and the Rinha]. In《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* edited by Nagata Ken-ichi, Hida Toyorō and Mori Hitōshi, 100-119. Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006.
Tsuchida, Maki.《さまよえる工藝 - 柳宗悦と近代》[Wandering crafts: Sōetsu Yanagi and modern time]. Urayasu: Sofukan, 2008.

Tsuda, Seifū. 〈うづら衣三巻を出すに就て思う儘を記す〉[A note of thoughts with the third volume of *Uzuragoromo*]. In《うづら衣》[*Uzuragoromo*], vol. 3 (1903).

Unknown Journalist.〈素晴らしい洋畫部の進境〉[The excellent progression of the western-style painting sector]. *Ōsaka Asahi news-press*, 1933. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 276-277. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Varnedoe, Kirk. "Gauguin". In *Primitivism in 20th Century Art*, volume 1, edited by William Rubin, 178-209. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1984.

Victoria and Albert Museum. "Armchair". Online catalogue of Victoria and Albert Museum. Accessed Aug 23, 2021: https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O15900/armchair-gimson-ernest-william/

Watanabe, Toshio, "Japanese Landscape Painting and Taiwan: Modernity, Colonialism, and National Identity". In *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, edited by Kikuchi Yuko, 67-81. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

Wu, Mi-Cha.〈《民俗臺灣》發刊的時代背景及其性質〉[The Historical Background and Characteristic of *Minzoku Taiwan*],《帝國裡的「地方文化」- 皇民化時期臺灣文化狀況》[The local culture in the empire: the cultural circumstance in Japanised Taiwan], edited by Shih Wan-Shun, Liu Shu-Chin and Xu Pei-Xian, 49-82. Taipei: Third Nature; Green Futures Publishing, 2008.

Yamagiwa, Yasushi.《美學- 日本美學への理念》[Aesthetic: the philosophy of Japanese aesthetics]. Tokyo: Asakura Publishing, 1941.

Yamaguchi, Makoto; Mitsuhashi Toshio and Miyasaki Kiyoshi, "Endogenous Doctrines of Peasant Art Movement by Yamamoto Nanae: On Endogenous Development of Rural Craft at Taisho and the First Half of Showa Era". *Bulletin of Japanese Society for the Science of Design*, vol. 42, no. 2(1995): 57-64.

Yamamoto, Kanae,〈有望之臺灣工藝的產業〉[The prospective industry of Taiwanese craft], 1924. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 492-494. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈革命の畫家〉[Revolutionist painters], 1912.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第一巻 - 科學、宗教、藝術;初期論集》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 1, Science, Religion and Art; Early Works,* 543-567. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈生命の問題〉[Questions of life], 1913.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第一巻 - 科學、宗教、藝術;初期論集》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 1, Science, Religion and Art; Early Works,* 272-324. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈中世紀の藝術〉[Mediaeval art], 1913.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第一巻 - 科學、宗教、藝術;初期論集》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 1, Science, Religion and Art; Early Works,* 599-615. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Yanagi, Sōetsu, trans.〈アンリ. マテイスと後印象派〉[Henri Matisse and Post-Impressionism], 1913.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第一巻 - 科學、宗教、藝術;初期論集》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 1, Science, Religion and Art; Early Works,* 706-716. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈工芸の協団に関する一提案〉[Prospectus for establishing the Japan Folk Crafts Museum], 1926.《柳宗悅全集 - 第八巻 》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 8,* 46-57. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈日本民藝美術館設立趣意書〉[Proposition concerning crafts guild], 1927.《柳宗悅全集 - 第十六巻》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 16,* 3-12. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1982.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.《工藝の道》*The Way of Craft*, 1928. Tokyo: Kodansha, 2005.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈民藝と農民美術〉[*Mingei* and peasant art] in《工藝》*Craft*: 51(3), (1935), 57-63.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 182-191. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈新しき美の標準〉[New criterion of beauty], 1937.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 235-241. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈工藝の性質〉[The characteristic of the *Mingei* Movement], 1937.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 105-151. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈人形と人間〉[Forms and people], 1938.《柳宗悅全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 163-169. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu and Serizawa Keisuke.〈琉球工藝解說〉[Introduction of crafts in Okinawa].《月刊民藝》[*Mingei Journal*], no.8(11), (1939): 1-6.

Yanagi, Sōetsu, Hamada Shōji and Shikiba Ryūzaburō, 〈第三回文展工藝評〉[Critiques on the third official art exhibition Bunten].《月刊民藝》[Mingei journal], no. 9(12), (1939): 30-36.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈琉球の富〉[The fortune of Ryukyu], 1939.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第十五巻 - 沖縄の傳統》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 15, Tradition of Okinawa*, 47-84. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Yanagi, Sōetsu. 〈「白樺」と「工藝」〉[White birch and craft] *in*《工藝》*Craft*, no. 94(3), (1939).《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 182-191. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈秩序の美と自由の美:天才主義への抗議〉 [The beauty of order and the beauty of freedom], 1940.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 198-206. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu. 〈地方性の文化價値〉 [Cultural value of localities], 1940.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 223-234. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈「見ること」と「知ること」〉[The seen and the known], 1940.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 207-214. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu. 〈新體制と工藝美の問題〉[The New Order and the Issue of craft's beauty],《月刊民藝》[*Mingei* journal], no. 10(10), 1940.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 242-261. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈日本民藝協會の提案〉[Proposal of Japan Mingei Association],《月刊民藝》[*Mingei* journal], no. 19(10), 1940.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 573-577. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu. 〈復古主義に就いて〉[About Archaism], 1941.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 64-69. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu. 〈民藝學と民俗學〉 [*Mingei* study and folklore study], 1941.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 272-287. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu. 〈物と文化〉[Things and culture], 1941.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 316-325. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu. 〈工藝文化〉[Craft culture], 1941. In《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第九巻-工藝文化》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 9, Craft Culture*, 343-542. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980.

Yanagi, Sōetsu and Hamada Shōji. 〈ペリアンの展覽會を見て〉[After viewing Berriand's exhibition].《月刊民藝》[*Mingei* journal], no. 25(4), (1941): 2-6.

Yanagi, Sōetsu, (etc.)〈生活と民藝座談會:柳宗悦氏を圍んで〉[The life and *mingei* symposium], 1943. In《風景心境》*Landscape Moods: Selected Readings in Modern Taiwanese Art,* vol. 2, edited by Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsuruta Takeyoshi, 520-538. Taipei: Xiongshi Meishu, 2001.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈臺灣の民藝に就いて〉[About *mingei* in Taiwan], 1943.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第十五巻 - 沖縄の傳統》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 15, Tradition of Okinawa*, 601-613. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Yanagi, Sōetsu.〈臺灣の生活用具について〉[About daily utensils in Taiwan], 1943.《柳宗悦全集 - 著作篇 第十五巻 - 沖縄の傳統》*Complete Works of Yanagi Sōetsu, vol. 15, Tradition of Okinawa*, 614-618. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1981.

Yang, Meng-Zhe.《日帝殖民下台灣近代美術之發展》[The development of Taiwanese modern art under the Japanese colonisation]. Taipei: Wu-Nan Press, 2013.

Yang, Yun-Ping. 〈本誌發刊の趣意書を繞る:論爭の始末(下)〉 [About the prospectus of the publishment of this magazine: the whole argument]. *Minzoku Taiwan*, vol. 1, no. 3(9), (1941): 39-41.

Young, Edward. *Conjectures: On Original Composition*. Leeds: The Scolar Press Limited, 1759.

Yen, Chuan-Yin. “The Demise of Oriental-style Painting in Taiwan”. In *Refracted Modernity: Visual Culture and Identity in Colonial Taiwan*, edited by Kikuchi Yuko, 83-108. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007.

Yen Chuan-Ying, “The Human Spirit of the Taiwanese Landscape: the Oil Paintings of Shui-Long Yen”. In *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 286-299. Taipei: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2012.

Yen, Shui-Long, “Primal Realm: the Land and People of Orchid Island”, 1935. Translated by Brent Heinrich. Taipei Fine Arts Museum, *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 374-381. Taipei: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2012.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈臺灣に於ける「工藝産業」の必要性〉“The Importance of the Handicraft Industry in Taiwan”.《臺灣公論》*Taiwan Public Opinion,* vol. 7, no. 2 (2), (1942). In Yen, Shui-long, *Formosa Industrial Art*, 16-26. Taipei: Yuan-Liou Press, 2016.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈工藝美術史〉[History of Arts and Crafts], [1944?]. Original manuscript, 1-41. Collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈デッサン描法〉[Design methods], [1944?]. Original manuscript, 1-9. Collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Yen, Shui-Long. “Totem”, n.d. Original manuscript, 1-6. Collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈Bauhaus的理念與組織〉[Bauhaus’s idea and organisation], n.d. Original manuscript, 1-4. Collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Yen, Shui-Long.《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art*, 1952. In Yen, Shui-long, *Formosa Industrial Art*, 62-173. Taipei: Yuan-Liou Press, 2016.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈談臺灣手工藝問題〉[A talk about problems of Taiwanese handicrafts], 1957. Original manuscript, 1-6. Collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Yen Shui-Long,〈設計人的地位與責任〉[The status and responsibility of designers], n.d., ca. 1960-1970. Original manuscript, 1-6. Collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Yen, Shui-Long〈畫家眼中的蘭嶼 - 期待一塊永久的樂土〉[Orchid Island in artists’ eyes - looking forward to an foreverland of happiness]. *Lionart Journal* 75(5), (1977): 66-68.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈我與臺灣工藝：從事工藝四十年的回顧與前瞻〉[Myself and the Taiwanese Crafts: a forty-years retrospective view of my craft engagement and its prospect],《藝術家》*Artist 33,* vol. 6, no.3 (2), (1978). In Yen, Shui-long, *Formosa Industrial Art*, 174-199. Taipei: Yuan-Liou Press, 2016.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈民藝的哲理與生活美感〉[The philosophy of *mingei* and the beauty of life], 1983. Original manuscript, 1-5. Collected by the Taiwan Archival Information System, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Yen, Shui-Long,〈臺灣民藝 - 臺灣民藝及臺灣原始藝術座談第三次會議紀錄〉[Taiwan *mingei* - extracted from the record of the third conference of Tanwan *mingei* and primitive art symposium],《臺灣風物》*The Taiwan Folkway* 28 (3), (1987). In Yen, Shui-long, *Formosa Industrial Art*, 200-221. Taipei: Yuan-Liou Press, 2016.

Yen, Shui-Long, interviewed by Yen Chaun-ying and Lin Po-ting, “Appendix: Full Transcripts to Three Interviews with Shui-long Yen, 1988-1989”. In *Shui-Long Yen: The Public Spirit, Beauty in the Making*, 394-414. Taipei: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2012.

Yen, Shui-Long.〈臺灣區的造形文化〉[Plastic culture in Taiwan],《歷史文物》 *Bulletin of National Museum of History*, vol. 7, no. 9 (12), (1997). In《臺灣工藝》*Formosa Industrial Art,* 218-237. Taipei: Yuan-Liou Press, 2016.

Yoshida, Chizuko.〈東京美術学校デザイン教育略史〉[A brief history of education at the Tokyo Fine Arts School]. In《近代日本デザイン史》*A History of Modern Design in Japan: 1860s - 1970s,* edited by Nagata Ken-ichi ,Hida Toyorō and Mori Hitōshi, 302-318. Tokyo: Bigaku Shuppan, 2006.

Yoshida, Shōya.〈因幡の民藝品試作〉[Trial production of *mingei* products in Inaba], in《工藝》*Craft*, vol.10, (1931). In Shiga Naokuni,《民藝の歴史》[History of *Mingei*]. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2016.

Yoshimi, Shunya.《博覧会の政治学 - まなざしの近代》[Politics of expositions - gazing into the modern era]. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1992.

Yu, Sheng-kuan. *Colonialism and Cultural Resistance: Taiwan Decolonising Literature Under Japanese Occupation*. Taipei: Socio Publishing, 2012.

〈編輯後記〉[Postscript by editors]. *Minzoku Taiwan,* vol. 1, no. 1(7), (1941): 48.

〈日本民俗学会設立趣意書〉[Prospectus for the establishment of the Japan Ethnography Association], released in March, 1935.《民俗学研究》*Ethnology Studies,* vol. 1, no.1: 219-220.