Japanese-language words have been transliterated in the modified Hepburn system, except for the place-names Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and Hokkaido. Chinese-language words have been transliterated in Hanyu Pinyin. Exceptions are made for when an alternate is commonly well-known (for example, Taipei, Chiang Kai-shek, Manchuria) and for Taiwanese scholars whose names are commonly transliterated in Wade-Giles. There is no standard system for transliterating Austronesian (indigenous) names. When possible, I have used the spellings cited by other English-language scholars or the romanized spelling of the Japanese katakana cited by Japanese-language scholars. I follow the standard order of Asian names (surname first, followed by the given name) except for the names of scholars who publish mainly in English.

Though, historically, Taipei was called Taihoku under Japanese rule from 1895 to 1945, I use today’s Taiwanese place names instead of colonial-era names in the body text. Transliterations in parentheses throughout the text are Japanese terms: (dōhō). When both Japanese and Chinese terms are given, they are indicated separately: (J. dōhō, C. tongbao). The translations from Japanese and Chinese are all mine unless otherwise indicated.

I adopt the term “Taiwanese” (J. hontōjin, Taiwanjin, C. bendaoren, Taiwan-ren) as a legal term used by the Japanese for ethnic Han residents in Taiwan with colonial subjecthood. Though colonial Taiwan consisted of Han and indigenous residents, I generally use “Taiwanese” to refer to the Han Taiwanese and “indigenous Taiwanese” to refer to the latter group. I use “overseas Taiwanese” to translate the Japanese term Taiwan sekimin (C. Taiwan jimin), which referred to Taiwanese subjects residing outside of Taiwan in mainland China or Southeast Asia. The “overseas Taiwanese” included both Taiwanese subjects who had migrated abroad and resident ethnic Chinese (in China or Southeast Asia) who had naturalized as Taiwanese subjects. Contemporary Japanese terms for “South China” included Minami Shina, Nanshi, or taigan (across the [Taiwan] Strait). At its most expanded form, “South China” could include Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Yunnan, Hong Kong, Macau, and Hainan. However, I use the term as the Taiwan Government-General generally did to refer to the
narrower geographical region of Fujian and Guangdong provinces across the Taiwan Strait. Lastly, the Japanese term Nan’yō (literally, the “South Seas”) was a malleable geographic designation that referred more or less to the present-day South Pacific, Southeast Asia, or a combination of the two. After Japan occupied Micronesia (Nan’yō Guntō) in the 1910s, the Japanese often referred to Micronesia as the “Inner South Seas” (Uchi Nan’yō) or “Rear South Seas” (Ura Nan’yō) and present-day Southeast Asia as the “Outer South Seas (Soto Nan’yō) or “Front South Seas” (Omote Nan’yō). For the sake of intelligibility, I use the term “Southeast Asia” as the English translation for Nan’yō. The English term “Southeast Asia” is a wartime invention and its geographic parameters remain debated. In this book, “Southeast Asia” generally refers to Siam (Thailand) and the Western colonies of Malaya, North Borneo, the Philippines, Indochina, and the East Indies.

Unless otherwise noted in the endnotes and selected bibliography, all Japanese-language books were published in Tokyo and all Chinese-language books were published in Taipei.