

Gloriously-Glazing Spiritual Homeland, Long-Lasting Traditional Chinese Civilization—On Textile Patterns and Costume Characteristics of Taiwanese Ethnic Minorities

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Abstract: Ethnic costumes are an important part of traditional Chinese culture, and Taiwanese ethnic costumes reflect the traditional culture of Taiwan, carries symbols of Chinese culture and elements of the Chinese ethnic images. By exploring the relationship between the weaving techniques of the Atayal tribe, studying the characteristics and composition principles of fabric patterns, and exploring their module system, we can promote new materials, new technologies, and new styles in fabric design. We can also analyze the logical relationship of the Atayal tribe's fabric pattern shapes, form theoretical guidance and references for ethnic costume art, strengthen the consciousness of the Chinese nation as a community, and establish new concepts for the integration, dissemination, and education of Chinese ethnic costume culture.

Costume patterns are a special artistic way of expressing culture and emotions. They can convey specific cultural connotations and values. The traditional clothing of Taiwan's ethnic minorities has its own and unique cultural symbols, especially the patterns formed by dyeing and weaving during the clothing production process. These patterns have become one of the characteristics of inter-ethnic distribution through historical changes and ethnic exchanges. Among the ethnic minorities in Taiwan, the Atayal tribe has the widest geographical distribution, and their clothing and other fabrics have the richest variety of weaving patterns. The patterns and color combinations are mainly composed of geometric patterns, hiding a systematic organization of patterns. Through the study of Atayal tribe fabrics, we can not only understand the relationship between the structure, form, and color of Atayal tribe weaving, but also integrate their material culture, ethnic art, and fabric characteristics, providing design and craft references.

1. Research Background

The study of ethnic costume patterns not only carries the cultural function of traditional and spiritual aesthetics of ethnic societies, but also reflects the confidence of local culture. The traditional attire of the Atayal tribe reflects empirical information about Taiwan's history, geography, social

structure, and the integration and exchange among various ethnic groups in China.

1.1 Historical background of Taiwanese ethnic minorities and their traditional fabrics and costumes

The ethnic minorities in Taiwan all belong to the Austronesian ethnic group^[1]Research on Taiwanese ethnic minorities (referred to as indigenous people in Taiwan) can be traced back to the literature records of 1895-1945, such as the advocacy of 7 tribes by Ino Kanori and Kuriyama Hironosuke in 1898; the advocacy of 9 tribes by Torii Ryuzo in 1901; the advocacy of 8 tribes by Suzuki Tadashi in 1941 (Suzuki, 1999:25); and the advocacy of 9 tribes by the Department of Ethnology at National Science of Taiwan University in 1948, including the Atayal tribe (Figure 1), Paiwan tribe, Bunon tribe, Puyuma tribe, Amis tribe, Rukai tribe, Tsou tribe, Saisiyat tribe, and Yami tribe.

Ethnic minority art is also called primitive art. Morphy (1998, p.14) pointed out that ethnic minority art was proposed during the colonization process in Australia. Wang Songshan (2001:11) mentioned that because ordinary people consider primitive art to be simple, backward, and relatively primitive artistic expressions, anthropologists not only emphasize the descriptive definition of primitive, but also refer to non-Western cultures, especially tribal societies' art forms as ethnic art. The term "ethnic group" also refers to art as the basic content of social and cultural categories. Ethnic minority art, to some extent, involves difficult craftsmanship, such as the woodcarving craftsmanship of the Paiwan and Rukai tribes, and the weaving craftsmanship of the Atayal tribe. Among them, the weaving craftsmanship of the Atayal tribe is the most famous. Therefore, this research will focus on Atayal tribe fabrics to promote recognition, respect, and inheritance of traditional Chinese culture, and to form a close ethnic cohesion and sense of belonging, as shown in (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Traditional Attire of the Atayal Tribe from the Beishi Group, led by Chief Bayixiu. Baiheilu, as well as the Collection of the Shunyi Taiwan Indigenous Peoples Museum.

The composite stripes on the textiles of the Bei Shi tribe include various decorative motifs such as diamond patterns, mortar-shaped patterns, mountain-shaped patterns, circular patterns, square patterns, and other variable patterns. These patterns are classified according to their structural forms, with the horizontal repetitive structure being the most common. The analysis of the basic forms of the patterns reveals that diamond patterns are the most prevalent, and similarities between basic forms have also been observed, indicating a basic conceptual system in their forms. The color palette of the textiles of the Bei Shi tribe primarily consists of black, gray, white, red, pink, peach, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, coffee, and brown. The color of the pattern structure is divided by white (or the natural color of ramie) and is particularly used in the patterns of the upper garments. However, white is also a part of the pattern structure for the lower body garments, such as shawls and foot wraps. The

basic forms of the patterns are mainly composed of black, white, and red, often using a single color to create a single basic form. By combining the single basic forms with other colors and using a repetitive color scheme, a rich pattern effect is achieved, as shown in (Figure 2)^[2].

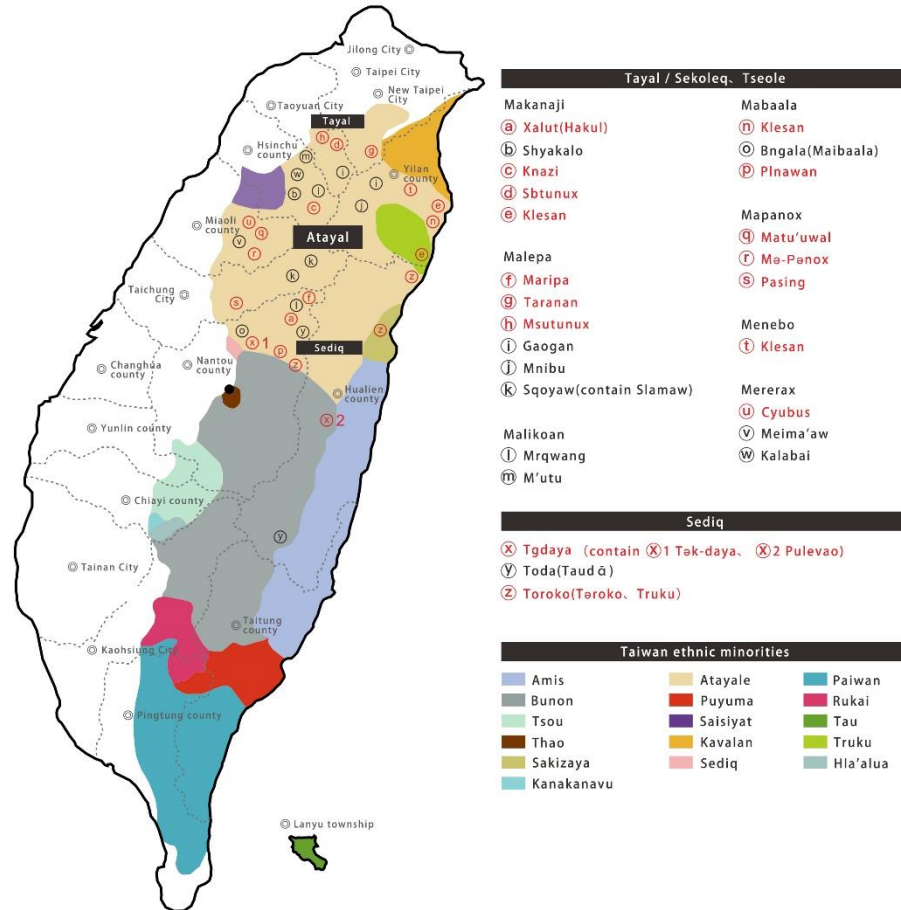


Figure 2: Analysis of the Patterns and Colors of Weavings from the Beishi Group of the Yak Tribe

2. Research Value and Significance

The sense of community among the Chinese people is the foundation of national unity, ethnic solidarity, and spiritual strength. Chinese civilization has a long history, and the blending of various ethnic groups has formed the diverse and integrated Chinese nation. The Tayal tribe's weaving craftsmanship is an intangible cultural heritage of Taiwan's ethnic minorities. Through the study of the form and color of Tayal tribe textiles, it is hoped to draw attention to the unique material culture of ethnic minorities and preserve it as a heritage to be passed down through generations. By focusing on the content and culture of Tayal tribe ethnic clothing textiles, exploring the cultural symbols and artistic laws shared by ethnic clothing, it helps to showcase the unique spiritual identity of Chinese cultural symbols. Summarizing the derived symbols and laws of traditional ethnic art in Tayal tribe textiles can promote the development of the entire industry chain. The re-creation of traditional clothing symbols helps to enhance the social educational environment for the integration of Chinese traditional clothing culture.

3. Research Methods

The study of Taiwan's ethnic minorities is closely related to anthropological knowledge. Kottak

(2005, pp.11-16) mentions the branches of anthropology. "Cultural Anthropology" studies human society and culture, describing, analyzing, interpreting, and explaining the similarities and differences in human society and culture. "Archaeological Anthropology" reconstructs, describes, and interprets past human behavior and cultural patterns through the study of various material remains. Li Lixin (2009, p.240) also mentions that field survey research methods in design are conducted using anthropological methods to study design phenomena. In anthropological research, fieldwork is the most basic and fundamental research method, as shown in (Figure 3).

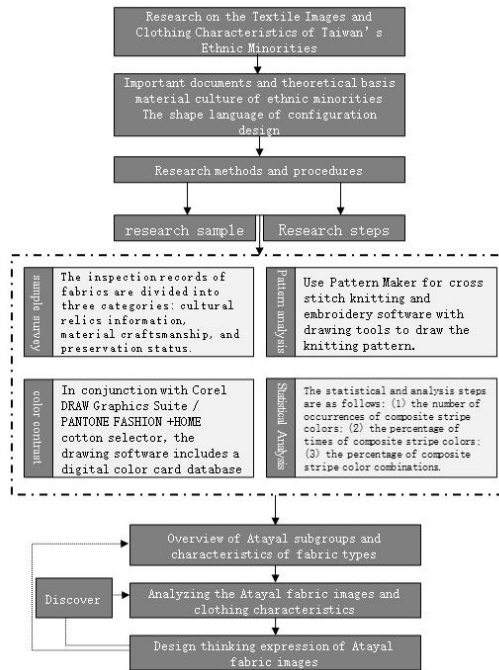


Figure 3: Technological Route

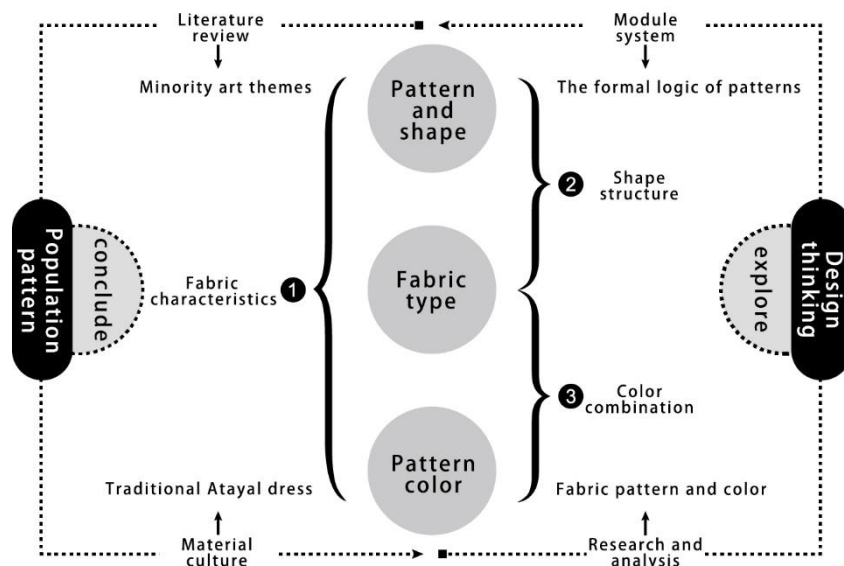


Figure 4: Research Content

Based on the above context, using an anthropological perspective as the method foundation and focusing on the detailed analysis of textiles, the "Content Analysis Method" is employed to analyze the forms and colors of textile patterns. Reference is made to the original records of cultural relics samples to understand the characteristics of the subgroups to which the research samples belong.












Content analysis is a widely accepted method for textual research. When conducting research, a set of categories is first established, and then the frequency of occurrence of each category is calculated (Silverman, 2010, p. 189). Exploring the categories of qualitative research subjects, understanding the relationship between design objects and cultural essence, and inferring their underlying design principles, as shown in (Figure 4).

4. Research on the Images and Characteristics of Ethnic Minority Textiles in Taiwan

4.1 Forms and Meanings of Traditional Textile Patterns

The production and preservation of visual materials are important aspects of overall human civilization recording. It serves as the starting point of civilization and an ongoing cyclical symbol system. The origin of human visual records is closely tied to the origin of symbols, as visual symbols are the starting point and culmination of material civilization. Bernice Martin believes that through symbolic activities, humans create a sense of self-world and order. Humans use words, objective objects, images, gestures, and other skills of symbols to engage in judgment and interpretation activities. They use concrete, specific, and secular things to explain universal, infinite, and sacred things.

Table 1: The Implicit Meaning of Weaving Patterns in the Taoyuan County, Fuxing Township, Tayal Tribe, Interpreted by Bayici

Weaving Pattern	Number	Symbolic Meaning of Marriage	Pronunciation
	1	Male	qutux
	2	Female	sajin
	3	Describes the upward and outward development of living beings (parents)	tugal, ciugal
	3	Describes the inward and deep development of living beings (children)	tugal, ciugal
	4	Male (without informing parents, the relationship is not established)	pajat
	5	Female (informing parents, the relationship is established and marriage can be discussed)	magal
	6	Mutual communication between parents	tjiu, cjiu
	7	Parental blessings	pitu
	8	Announcement of engagement	spat
	9	Marriage, establishment of kinship	qeru
	10	A harmonious relationship	mpu

Primitive patterns are not merely decorative designs; they carry symbolic meanings. In this sense, primitive patterns are also a form of language for communication and conveying messages^[3]. Stone also gives an example of how Arabic numerals and dates are sometimes woven into carpets in the form of Arabic calligraphy^[4]. Thus, text can also be a subject of decorative expression. On the other hand, the languages of Taiwan's ethnic minorities do not have a written form, but they have expressive methods similar to symbols. Regarding the decorative patterns of textiles from Taiwan's ethnic minorities, Ba Yi Ci^[5] believes that the traditional clothing of the Tayal tribe (Da Bikan group) in

Fuxing Township, Taoyuan County, contains hidden textual messages in their woven patterns, as shown in Table 1^[6]. Whether these patterns truly represent the traditional script of the Tayal tribe, as Ba Yi Ci suggests, there has been no further research, and we can only speculate. The patterns on Tayal textiles are mostly diamond-shaped variations, which the tribe generally interprets as the eyes of ancestral spirits. Relevant literature points out that different families and regions have their own exclusive pattern styles^[7]. Specific patterns can only be used and passed down by the original weavers, unless they are obtained through a ceremony of purchasing techniques through money or goods exchange. Otherwise, it is not permitted to imitate the patterns without prior notification. In the book "Investigation Report on Customary Practices of Indigenous Tribes: Volume One, Tayal Tribe," it is also mentioned that for those who imitate the design patterns without prior notice, they must pay a redemption fee with a sickle or hoe. Currently, records regarding exclusive weaving patterns have been lost, making it impossible to confirm which family or author the patterns belong to^[8]. We can only speculate on the possible regions where the patterns may exist, as shown in (Table 1).

4.2 Pattern Organization Structure

The woven structure of the pattern is a rational expression closely related to form, and it directly relates to the composition of design elements. Stone mentioned the relationship between the shape and structure of the woven pattern. The pattern is composed of vertical and horizontal intersecting grid lines. A square grid represents the same density of warp and weft. Taking a circle as an example, the more grid lines used, the more detailed the circular lines will be. In contrast, a circle with fewer grid lines will appear jagged or have a cross-shaped pattern inside^[9]. The shape of the woven pattern comes from the arrangement of grid density. Points, lines, planes, volumes, textures, and colors are the elements of design, which are the decomposed simple components that constitute the design^[10]. Lin Chonghong mentioned the methods of constructing plane graphics, which are similar to the principles of aesthetic form. However, plane graphics are expressed through visual perception, and visual acceptance can create some special images in people's minds. In visual phenomena, "form" is the most important basic object. For example, repetitive form is composed of regular and repetitive unit cells, or it can be an irregular combination, thereby expressing a unified and clear visual perception^[11]. Yang Qingtian believes that the principle of form construction is that "form" is the element that constitutes the form, while "form" is the style that constitutes the expression. Although they are two sides of the same coin, when it comes to the elements of form, exploring the essence of "form" is still the main task.

Wang Wuxie and Liang Juting further explain that repeated images can be referred to as basic forms. The concept of design often starts with a certain image as the basis, and then uses repetition or other techniques to make appropriate representations, hence the term "basic form". The basic form does not necessarily have to be repeated, it can also be approximated or gradually changed^[12]. The arrangement methods of basic forms in the formation of form can be divided into absolute repetition (repeating the arrangement of basic forms), interval repetition (alternating positive and negative arrangement of repeated basic forms), rotational repetition (changing the position of repeated basic forms in direction), and reflection repetition (arranging repeated basic forms in mirror images vertically or horizontally), as shown in Figure 2-8^[13]. In addition, there are eight ways to represent the encounter of forms (the relationship between forms), such as separation, contact, overlap, transparency, combination, reduction, difference, and nesting, each of which leads to different spatial effects, as shown in Figure 2-8^[14]. Wassily Kandinsky and Busick Snyder also give examples of the method of "creating new form compositions", where the original forms of the graphics should have similarity and unity so that they can be freely connected, such as when the graphics come into contact with each other, overlap, or divide to create new graphics.

The organization structure of patterns solves the problem of composition, emphasizing the relationship between the whole and the parts, and the arrangement of placement, with the aim of expressing the theme to the fullest^[15]. As a collection of multiple complete images, patterns are specifically manifested in solving the relationships between images in terms of hierarchy, density, reality and illusion, height and depth, and echo, and adjusting the size, shape, length, curvature, and movement of the images accordingly^[16]. From this, it can be seen that the composition of patterns reflects regularity and orderliness, creating a strong sense of rhythm and melody between images, as shown (in Figures 5 and 6).

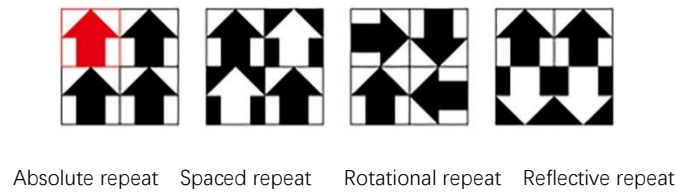


Figure 5: Combination Methods of Morphological Order

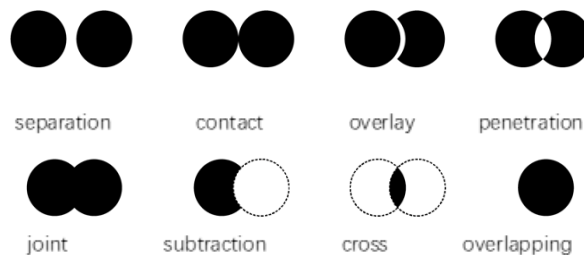


Figure 6: Eight Ways of Image Encounter

The pattern of textiles refers to the composition and layout of the weave pattern, which is also a manifestation of the organizational structure of patterns. By understanding the knowledge of form design, the expressive techniques of form design can be applied to analyze the structure of weave patterns. For example, the patterns of ethnic minority textiles often exhibit repetitive (redundant) patterns. Without the process of repetition, these weave patterns would not present a systematic and complex pattern system. In the patterns of ethnic minority textiles, progressive repetition is constructed on relatively simple organizational structures, allowing complex structures to form. Design techniques such as design elements, repetitive forms, basic forms, and the encounter of images mentioned in the above literature have similarities with the construction of patterns in ethnic minority textiles. The only difference is that the object of study is changed to ethnic objects.

4.3 Form Module System

Modularity, also known as modularization, is a structural principle that often appears in more complex morphological systems. If the overall structure is deconstructed into several small unit objects, this characteristic can be observed. The overall presentation of modular design hides the internal subtle structures, but careful observation reveals that it is based on simple forms and combined with other module units to form a larger whole^[17]. Although the indigenous peoples in Taiwan do not have knowledge of modular design, the formation of textile patterns is generally regulated through weaving or embroidery techniques, following rules and procedures of technique, resulting in many modular pattern formations. By analyzing the formal structure of indigenous textile patterns in Taiwan, these patterns have specific characteristics in their structural combinations. If the patterns are further dissected, they can be reduced to their original basic units. It is possible to discover

the combination rules for the formation of weave patterns and explore the structural relationships of patterns.

When considering the characteristics of patterns, color, another element that constitutes textiles, is also a key factor in the expression of pattern. At this point, it is necessary to exclude the factors of color in order to analyze the form of the pattern based on the principle of unity. Gombrich also mentioned that when analyzing patterns, it is important to minimize color interference and focus on the simple forms that exist in the pattern by using only one color to emphasize the structural order. Single-color patterns are easier to recognize compared to multi-color patterns^[18].

In the past, studies on form have mostly focused on morphological psychology, while the organization and management of form have received less attention. It was not until the development of technology, leading to the digital age or the era of signs, that the trend of "Future Studies of Form" gradually emerged, bringing about discussions on form knowledge that differ from the past. The transformation of systematic units^[19], starting from a basic geometric form and gradually generating new forms through the overlay of different levels of form, can create many different patterns. However, these forms have similarities or relationships with the same units. In the book "Theory of Form," it is also mentioned that the creation of form can be achieved through modularization^[20]. The evolution of systematic form consists of five stages, and the changes from top to bottom in each stage are a process from simplicity to complexity, resulting in a series of systematic forms, each containing common key elements. Knight pointed out in his research "Transformations of Languages of Designs" that in the process of formal transformation, shape grammar involves at least two separate components, which are combined according to certain operational rules to form a new combination¹⁹. Therefore, the new combination becomes a new grammar, from which new shapes can be derived continuously^[21]. Analyzing modular form requires an understanding of the detailed structure of "form." For example, the patterns of ethnic textiles in Taiwan exhibit self-similarity in form, as if hiding a kind of regular order. In fact, these woven patterns based on the order of form are composed of similar parts, which can be extended as the result of pattern operations. Taking the modular form mentioned in the previous literature as an example, by analyzing individual forms from the overall form system, it can be observed that there are similar basic forms shared among the "forms," which can be understood as the basic elements that constitute the form system. The expression of form design often involves repeating or continuous arrangement of the same form. However, although the patterns of ethnic textiles in Taiwan are different from the expression of form, the learning process of weaving techniques by ethnic minorities is passed down through generations, which is different from the study of form design. However, there are similarities between the two. Therefore, through the design thinking of systematic form, not only can the design context of ethnic textile patterns be analyzed, but it also helps in the learning and application of basic design.

4.4 Construction of Forms and Connotations

The study of the expressive forms of traditional attire of the Tayal tribe helps to explore the decorative thinking process in the development of primitive art, uncover the underlying craft techniques and logical relationships in pattern design, and summarize the stylistic features, colors, and symbolic cultural characteristics of Tayal textiles. This in turn enables the construction of a possible module system for pattern design. The stylistic features and colors of textile patterns symbolize the cultural characteristics of the ethnic group and represent their unique clothing style. Through the study of Tayal textile culture, we can highlight the distinct regional characteristics and profound ethnic cultural connotations, as shown (in Figure 7).

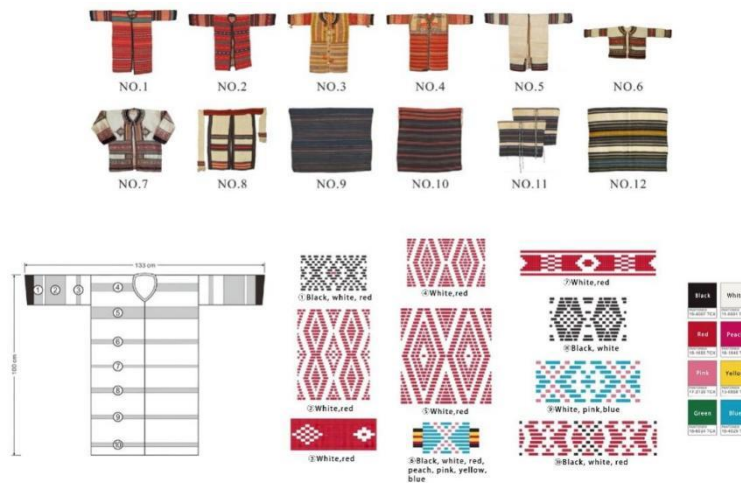


Figure 7: Weaving Textiles of the Beishi Group of the Atayal Tribe, and the NO.1 Women's Long-sleeved Dress (Front View of Bridal Attire)

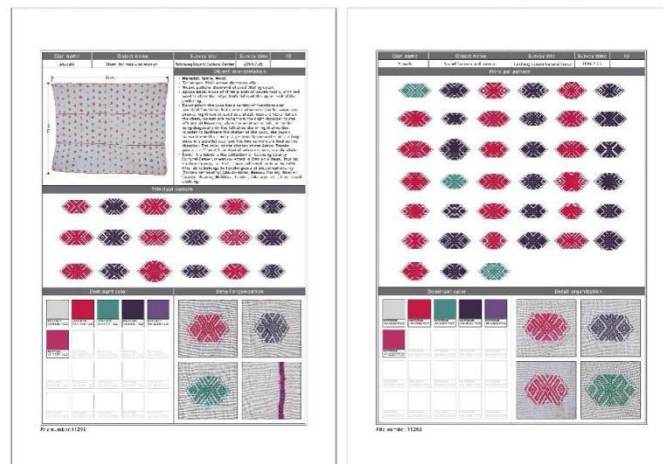


Figure 8: Documentation of Research Samples - Compilation Table of Configuration and Color Investigation of Weaving Patterns

Summarizing the various styles of textile patterns and developing designs and innovative applications that meet the aesthetic needs of the times can promote new strategies for inheritance and the multi-faceted dissemination of ethnic art. By combining the visual language of design with knowledge in categories such as decorative patterns and organizational structures, and using design thinking for module creation, we can explore the composition of textile patterns and hope to uncover systematic rules for Tayal weaving patterns. This will deepen people's understanding and recognition of traditional culture, thereby strengthening the collective consciousness of the Chinese nation, as shown in (Figure 8).

5. Breakthroughs and Innovations in Research

The textiles of Taiwan's ethnic minorities, including the Tayal tribe, have been studied by many scholars and experts, resulting in significant research achievements. This study is based on the core concept of the shared spiritual homeland of the Chinese nation and combines the needs of the new era. It establishes a digital archive and conducts theoretical reconstruction and analysis from diverse interdisciplinary research perspectives. The aim is to jointly develop textiles that combine traditional

cultural heritage with modern creative elements, and use the unique cultural connotations and artistic values to protect and inherit them, injecting new vitality and impetus into the construction of the shared spiritual homeland of the Chinese nation^[22].

5.1 Innovative Research Methods

The colors of textiles may differ due to changes in time and space. By using color comparison methods to record color ranges, we can analyze textiles from a design art perspective, explore the artistic and aesthetic forms of ethnic groups, and propose interpretations for patterns and colors. Digital research methods can be used, along with software assistance for comparative analysis, to summarize patterns and rules.

5.2 Innovative Research Perspectives

From the diverse perspectives of art, architecture, sociology, anthropology, and other interdisciplinary fields, we can explore the internal factors of ethnic changes reflected in ethnic art and aesthetic forms. By applying decorative patterns in interior and landscape design, we can involve multiple professions and activate the development of the entire cultural and creative industry chain.

5.3 Breakthroughs in Research Materials

Through field research on local textile techniques, craft processes, and pattern designs in Taiwan, as well as the collection of historical materials and recording of collections, we can compile them into digital image data and comprehensively build a database of historical materials on Tayal ethnic clothing. This will enhance the accumulation of theoretical knowledge on Tayal textile art, explore the integration of excellent traditional cultures and patterns of various ethnic groups in China, and interpret the formation and development of the Chinese nation from the perspective of textile patterns^[23].

5.4 Innovation in the Construction of the Spiritual Homeland

The Tayal people used textile patterns as a substitute for written records of their labor and daily lives. By arranging and combining basic textile techniques, they formed a vast system of pattern symbols that carry and transmit the memories of the social community. In-depth exploration and derivation of the connotations and artistic characteristics of Tayal ethnic clothing contribute to the protection and inheritance of Tayal cultural heritage. Due to Taiwan's unique geographical location and the influence of different cultures, Taiwanese ethnic clothing exhibits diversity and incorporates various cultural elements, reflecting the inclusiveness and diversity of the Chinese nation.

6. Construction of the Spiritual Homeland of the Chinese Nation

The images and costumes of ethnic minorities in Taiwan are an important part of traditional culture, reflecting the uniqueness and diversity of Taiwan's ethnic minority culture. China is a historically unified and multi-ethnic country. The history of China is the history of the integration and convergence of various ethnic groups into a diverse and unified Chinese nation, and it is the history of the creation, development, and consolidation of our great motherland by all ethnic groups. This is precisely why Chinese civilization has a long history and deep roots. As a part of Chinese culture, the costumes of ethnic minorities in Taiwan also carry the traditions and history of the Chinese nation. Researching and promoting the ethnic costumes in Taiwan is expected to strengthen the recognition

and identification of the Chinese national community among the residents of Taiwan. Through the analysis and sorting of the images and patterns of ethnic textiles and costumes in Taiwan, the important connotations and values of ethnic spirit are reflected. This plays a crucial role in promoting and inheriting the spiritual homeland of the Chinese nation. Paying attention to the images and costumes of ethnic minorities in Taiwan enhances their cohesion and sense of identity, promotes understanding and friendship between people on both sides of the strait, and facilitates cultural exchanges, contributing to the realization of the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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9) The second batch of industry-university cooperation collaborative education projects in 2021—Environmental Design Virtual Simulation Practice Base based on VR technology, project number: 202102185044.

10) Education Department Letter [2023] No. 6, the notice of the Department of College Students of the Ministry of Education on announcing the list of the second phase of supply and demand docking employment and education projects: human resources improvement project, project number: 20230110526,

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