

## Color Database Establishment and Color Rendering Analysis of Taiwanese Floral Fabric

Hui-Chun Hsiao<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

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Traditional Taiwanese floral fabric was the fabric produced by printing and dyeing technique after the rising of textile industry in Taiwan during 1950s. Taiwanese floral fabric was originated from the imitation of Japanese textile and curtain cloth. An image of its own has later been developed with local visual experience and cultural memories after a 30 years' time. The study aims to study colors of traditional Taiwanese floral fabric, collect and conduct systematic research and analysis on structure of color elements as well as color combinations for establishing a dedicated cultural color database of Taiwan. In the meantime, in-depth interviews were also conducted to find out the color rendering as well as social and cultural meanings of traditional floral fabric in order to deepen the meanings of those cultural colors.

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**Keywords:** Taiwanese Floral Fabric, color design, cultural memory, cultural color database

Culture stands for the accumulation of art and life experience in a country. In recent years, states around the world have realized that cultural force would be an integral part of national strength. As a result, cultural policies were formulated and implemented to develop creative economy and industries that carry cultural characteristics in the hope that culture could incorporate with inspirations and originality to bring new possibilities and industrial values. Although the idea of "culture is a good business" is commonly agreed while culture is regarded as the best value-created capital or a magician that adds value for industries (Chang, 2004, we have to think of and search for unique cultural meanings as well as value of thoughts for either highlighting distinctions or positioning of our own culture in the wave of cultural globalization. Culture is defined as the brainchild of thousands of years of a race as well as the totality of human life and social values. Therefore we have to consider our own cultural phenomena as well as the meanings and contents generated from the time, space and social context they exist when exploring cultural characteristics. When we look into our life, many of the cultural phenomena, life patterns and products of a time that we get used to could be shifted to cultural dynamics. The Taiwanese traditional floral fabric that is being lime lighted in recent years would be a perfect example.

Floral fabric is usually associated with the image that red cloth with floral patterns and bright colors are fluttering in the wind on a clothes drying field under the blue sky and white clouds that is visually contrasted (**Figure 1**). The bed sheets with a pattern of large peony flowers spreading on were joyfully accompanying us while adding colors to our life during our childhood. Their forms and colors seen everywhere in our culture as visual existence have incorporated with our life experience and emotional memories to be deeply imprinted in our minds. Splendid floral fabric symbolizes people's expectation of flourish life as well as affordable luxury and sweet delight in daily life.

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<sup>1</sup>University of Taipei, Taiwan, Hsiao888@gmail.com

The durable and prevalent floral fabric had, however, being forgotten as a yesterday memory since Taiwanese people desired a higher quality of life under economic growths in a prosperous society.



**Figure 1:** Traditional Taiwanese floral fabric

Yet once again, the seemingly faded traditional floral fabric that had been accompanying Taiwanese people for half a century reappears with a nostalgic and stylish look. People are gradually picking up the past emotional memories and cultural connections from those lost memories. It is now no longer a daily supply now. Instead, it has become a fashion, a new product with cultural meanings and creative ideas by representing bold colors (Wu, 2010).

Among new looks of floral fabric, the most renowned one would be the artwork created by artist Michael Lin for 2000 Taipei Biennial-The Sky Is the Limit He cleverly utilized floral fabric to imply a visual impact of private space on public space and stun everyone by the beauty of traditional floral fabric.(**Figure 2**). After finishing this exhibition with huge success, he adopted a method of “enlarging, rearranging and wisely positioning” the elements of floral fabric to impress viewers in prestigious exhibition halls such as The Hague City Hall, Palais de Tokyo and MoMa PS1 while collaborating with fashion brands including Chanel and Louis Vuitton to display his works and successfully present Taiwanese traditional floral fabric on world stage. In addition to the meaning borrowing from an object in real life, for Lin, floral fabric also serves as the existence of life, identification and memories.



**Figure 2:** Michael Lin's art works in Taipei Biennial (2000). Image from <http://news168159.blogspot.tw/2014/02/blog-post.html>

Moreover, an exhibition of Fabulous Floral Fabric-Aesthetics of Hakka Women's Life held by Hakka Affairs Council in Taiwan, Executive Yuan in 2002 also marked a start of a relationship between official Hakka activities and floral fabric. Plenty of floral fabric patterns have been applied to community empowerment to create a variety of works by many Hakka communities and also being used by lots of artists and designers on their works that were seen everywhere since. A distinctive cultural meaning of an ethnic group is thus found in the representation of such strong visual experience from both traditional and modern perspectives.

Taiwanese floral fabric was originated from the imitation of Japanese textile and curtain cloth. An image of its own has later been developed with local visual experience and cultural memories after a 30 years' time. The revived floral fabric signifies nostalgia or attachment. It is therefore displayed by another cultural meaning and life aesthetics for modern people to retrieve the lost collective memories and affections. Floral fabric is lime lighted again and gets scholars' attention to study from the perspectives of visual culture, ideological identification and acknowledge of subjective culture in Taiwan (Chen, 2011; Liu, 2009; Lee, 2009). As a result, "another wave of searching Taiwanese subjective culture was surged while a new cultural vision of this land has also been opened" (Wu, 2010, P9).

In addition to patterns, colors of floral fabric play a more significant role in people's visual experience for either reminding us some cultural memories or arousing our emotions since "DNA of color memory is in our brain from the moment of birth and has been passed down for thousands of years" (Chen, 2008). Colors of floral fabric that were already there when we were born and accompanying us in every stage of our growth have a huge influence on our life. Those bright red beddings, window curtains and clothe used in occasions of home moving, wedding, religious festival, birth celebration and lunar New Year's holiday were part of our mutual memories. These traditional colors are elements of cultural memories which can bring our deep memories back in the future. They desperately need to be collected and preserved in this regard.

However, the existing studies of Taiwanese traditional floral fabric lack systematic records, preservation and research. Only few books published for this topic such as *Taiwanese Treasure of Design-150 Traditional Patterns of Floral Fabric* (2008) and *Taiwanese Floral Fabric* (2010) by Wu Ching-Gui; Chen Zong-Ping's *Taiwan Chintz Pattern* (2012). Most of the studies above were based on the rise and fall of floral fabric in the history without much attention paid to its visual presentation. Almost no color rendering and cultural meaning of colors were mentioned except for few patterns on the fabric. In addition, aging painters of traditional floral fabric were also retiring.

The fabric stores that used to be prosperous were closed down one by one while the owners had either changed their career path or retired due to the shifts of economics and life style. It thus would be hard to collect all relevant data and research materials without omission after the older generation stepped down the industrial stage.

For building research foundation on cultural colors in Taiwan, this study was supported by MOST's program to study colors of traditional Taiwanese floral fabric, collect and conduct systematic research and analysis on structure of color elements as well as color combinations for establishing a dedicated cultural color database of Taiwan. In the meantime, in-depth interviews were also conducted to find out the color rendering as well as social and cultural meanings of traditional floral fabric in order to deepen the meanings of those cultural colors; explore their affection values and code of combinations; and provide future cultural and creative workers with references of cultural color application.

### **Development of Traditional Taiwanese Floral Fabric**

Also known as "Far Eastern fabric", "grandma's red floral fabric" or "Taiwanese floral fabric", traditional Taiwanese floral fabric was the fabric produced by printing and dyeing technique after the rising of textile industry in Taiwan during 1950s. It was the product in the age of poverty after retrocession of Taiwan when most living supply was supported by the US. The cotton yarns supplied by the US were exclusively distributed by the government to some manufacturers in textile industry for the industry to grow. Far Eastern Textile was the most iconic one among these privileged manufacturers and it was also why "Far Eastern fabric" was called at that time (Wu, 2010). The name of "grandma's red floral fabric" was given by modern people to point out that floral fabric, in particular the popular bright red ones with peony flowers on, was the product in grandma's time.

Born with such background and being part of people's daily life, nonetheless, the traditional floral fabric had later been replaced by chemical fibers and other types of fabric since 1970s; faded out of our life after the industry falling; and being forgotten as a wide variety of fabric was getting available. However, the history and cultural meanings of floral fabric should not be deleted, since "we have witnessed the history of floral fabric that has created an environment of beauty as well as a mutual memory for Taiwanese people. Memories are part of our life; our expression of emotions; and formation of cultures" (Wu, 2008, P.3).

### **Method and Process of Printing and Dyeing Floral Fabric**

Floral fabric was handmade with printing and dyeing technique which took a lot more time and efforts in the early days. For meeting the growing demand of market, the technique was later replaced by the semiautomatic rotary printing machine that was faster in speed while more saturated colors were printed. Dyestuff of two or three (less than six) colors was painted on the drum screen of the machine to roll and dye floral patterns that were smaller and darker. It was difficult to keep colors on because the thicker and harder woven fabric was applied without being processed by hot water steaming. A visual effect of "indirect color mixture" that is close to grey tone was presented by those patterns of small fragmented flowers to resist stains. This kind of fabric was massively applied to female farmers' cloth, over sleeves and leaf hats due to its lower price.

As social and economic conditions in Taiwan were getting stable, cotton cloth was also more demanded. In addition to developing better fabric, suppliers also introduced new technique to meet the need of this promising market. The most common traditional floral fabric in this period was made by automatic screen printing machine introduced from Japan by Far Eastern Textile in 1965.

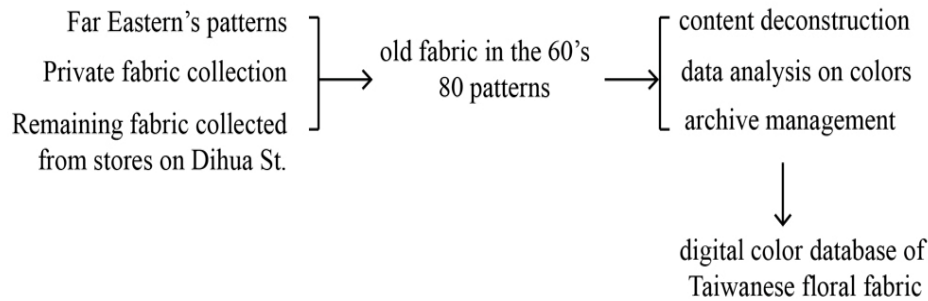
The machine features a capacity of printing larger patterns, mainly large red peony flowers or bunches of flowers that visually look three-dimensional with over 16-color register instead of flat and fragmented (interview with Lin, 2012). The fabric used is finer with better performance in color fastness, richness and brightness after being processed by high-temperature steaming; hot water washing and calendaring to resist fading. Moreover, a series of procedures from spinning, weaving, scouring, bleaching, singeing, mercerizing, printing and dyeing, setting to calendaring was all processed by Far Eastern Textile itself to secure the quality of fabric. Therefore its products occupied the largest pie in the market (Wu, 2010). Floral fabric as such was applied to bedding products like duvet and drapery by seaming large pieces of cloth together as the "grandma's red floral fabric" we remembered the most.

Fabric suppliers who are in charge of every step from choosing patterns, deciding tones, determining quantity to evaluating market mechanism play a core role throughout the production of traditional floral fabric (interview with Lin, 2012). Taking products of Far Eastern Textile as an example, the production of its floral fabric started from supplier's choice of suitable fabric and followed by painter's pattern drawings. Next step was to follow the procedure of silk screen printing that individual screens for different colors were made for printing professionals to make proofs with several more set of colors for suppliers to choose from. After double checking with each other, a small batch was printed based on the chosen colors of proof. The dyed and printed fabric was then processed by over 100°C high temperature is steaming; 95°C hot water washing; Setting; calendaring and packing to be sold in the market.

### **Research Methods and Process**

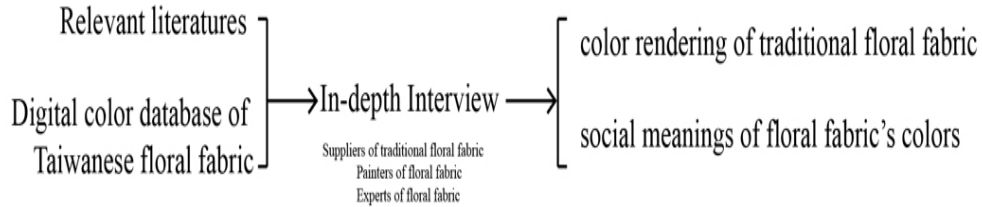
The concept of this study was inspired and defined by research motive and purpose. The study was conducted to review literatures regarding the origin and development of traditional Taiwanese floral fabric. The old Far Eastern's floral fabric was collected and digitalized and followed by quantitative analysis on its colors and structure of color elements to establish a color database of Taiwanese floral fabric. In-depth interviews with industrial players were then conducted to conclude the principle and considerations of color rendering for Taiwanese floral fabric. Lastly, conclusion and suggestion in regard to social meanings and cultural value of Taiwanese floral fabric were proposed in the end of the research.

The study was carried out in two phases. Research works in phase one were concentrated on data collection, digital color calibration, content deconstruction, and data analysis and archive management for traditional floral fabric. Content of floral fabric was then extracted and filed by systematic and scientific methods and converted from qualitative data into quantitative data. After that, colors of floral fabric were categorized, cataloged and analyzed for a further study and analysis on structure of color elements and color combinations (**Figure 3**).



**Figure 3: Flowchart of Phase One-Color Database Establishment of Taiwanese Floral Fabric**

The second-phase of research was set to clarify the principle of color rendering of traditional floral fabric and its social meanings for a deeper exploration on cultural trend and historical background of floral fabric's colors. Workers and experts in the field were chosen by purposive sampling to interview during this phase. Suppliers of traditional floral fabric (interview with Lin & Hsu), painters (interview with Huang & Yang) and an expert (interview with Wu) were the key interviewees who were guided to express their feelings with less limitation in semi-structured in-depth interviews. As the wholesalers in the early days, fabric suppliers were also the key persons who choose patterns, decide tones, determine quantity and evaluate market mechanism during the production. Therefore two suppliers Lin and Hsu were also included in respondents of interviews for us to collect more direct data (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: Flowchart of Phase Two-Social Meanings of Colors of Taiwanese Floral Fabric**

**Data Collection of Colors of Floral Fabric**

There were about 400 floral fabric patterns provided by private collectors (Wu and Lin) and collected from remaining cloth of fabric stores and Far Eastern's fabric that were mainly produced by planographic printer or auto roller printer between 1960 and 1970. The 3-meters wide Iron Bull in the old days that was easy to fade due to poorer quality of fabric and dyeing technique was excluded in the study. The 400 collected patterns were filed after being digitalized and color-calibrated. After comparison and discussion, 80 classic non-Japanese patterns that were well-preserved with adequate size for content deconstruction were then picked out of 400 to allow content deconstruction, data analysis of colors and archive management being carried out in phase two. Numerical values of colors were then categorized and filed to complete the basic frame of color database established for Taiwanese floral fabric.

## Photo Shooting and Filing

Calibration of cameras and monitors were carried out by the equipment of Eye-One Xtreme manufactured by X-Rite before shooting. Icc Profile<sup>1</sup> was then input into Photoshop after calibration. Photo shooting was carried out in a professional studio by using professional tools such as 140-patch chart (X-RITE Digital Color Checker SG), strobe lighting (w) with two soft boxes, tungsten lighting (W), umbrellas and light meters.

All shooting files were uploaded to a computer and converted by Photoshop CS5 into a customized color profile before being coded and saved as new files. In view of patterns of floral fabric that were printed repeatedly toward four directions, contents of the 80 chosen patterns have to be deconstructed for further color analysis (**Figure 5, 6**).

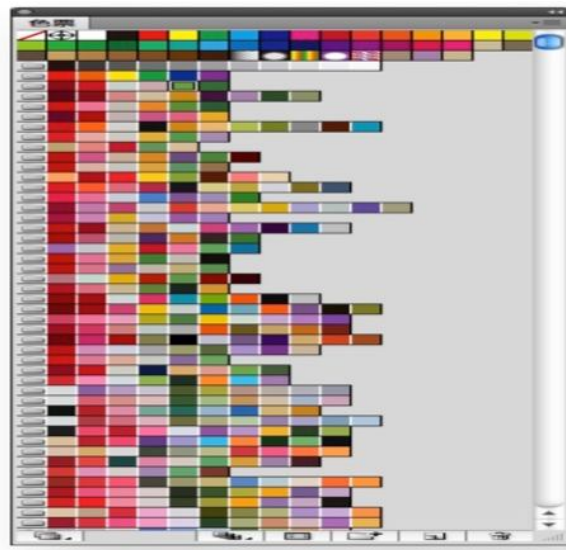


**Figure 5: Photo Shooting and File Saving of Floral Fabric**



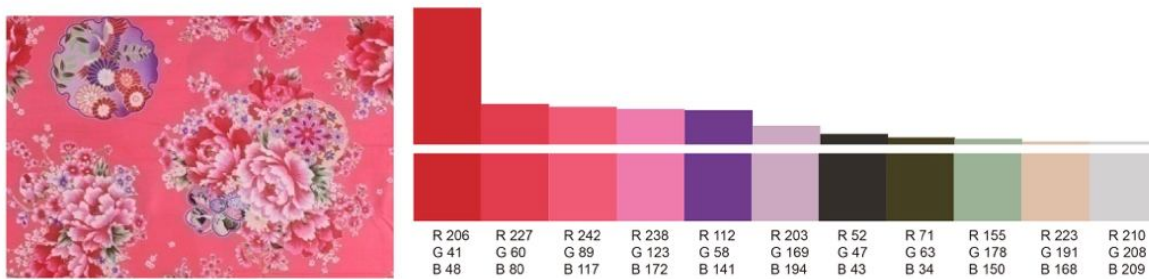
**Figure 6: Content Deconstruction of Patterns**

In terms of color analysis and recording, Color Munki, color management software Color Munki Photo, Adobe Photoshop and Office 2011 Excel were used. The color management software Photo Color Picker was used to deconstruct the color of content from each pattern. If the colors selected by the software were too close or some colors were missing after being matched with each other, every color on floral fabric would then be checked and picked manually. In addition to being saved in database, the colors of the extracted 80 patterns were also converted to palette formats (.ase, .aco) that can be used by graphic software for further color matching (Figure 7).



**Figure7: Color of Floral Fabric and Patch Chart of Graphic Software**

Next step was to calculate the ratio of each color on the fabric and get numerical values by using measurement tools. Values of RGB, LAB and color ratios were listed and saved in Excel (Figure 8, 9). Features, darkness, area and contrast of each color element on fabric were analyzed by color mode and color analysis program to complete the frame of color database for Taiwanese floral fabric in the end.



**Figure8: Color Elements and Color Ratio Analysis of Floral Fabric**

Color	R	G	B	Area	Ratio
LIN 12	51.4	232	62.7	234	81.6
LIN 16	51.5	12	34	122	54.3
LIN 18	36.4	167	63.7	206	72.5
LIN 21	40.6	191	31.9	152	74.7
LIN 22	35.2	167	50.3	192	74.1

**Figure 9: Numerical Values of Colors on Floral Fabric**



## Patterns and Color Rendering of Taiwanese Floral Fabric

According to Liu's study (2009), history of floral fabric can be dated back to Indian hand-dyed cloth in the 17th century. The cloth was brought together with spices and tea to those maritime powers in the West through prosperous trading. New technique and equipment were developed to improve printing and dyeing process for the purposes of mass production and export during British industrial revolution. Some regional patterns were also created for meeting the needs of Japanese and Chinese markets. After the technique being introduced, Japan started to develop patterns of their own called "Yin-hua Fabric" that was later introduced into Taiwan during Japanese colonization. It was regarded as luxurious imported good until cotton yarns supplied by the US were exclusively distributed by R.O.C. government to designated manufacturers to meet large demand of people's daily life in 1950s. A new era of Taiwanese floral fabric had commenced since.

Except for being directly imported from Japan, most of local Taiwanese floral fabric was also made with reference to patterns of kimono or Japanese drapes in the early days (interview with Yang & Hsu, 2012). Fabric suppliers would usually go to Japan to procure materials for painters to imitate, redraw, replace elements or collage those patterns in order to meet the requirements of printing equipment and market demand of Taiwanese floral fabric. As the market growing, suppliers had also invited Japanese specialists to train Taiwanese painters who could pass their skills down after being trained. In the same time, there were some talents who used to work for a fabric pattern design company in Japan returning to Taiwan and creating innovative Taiwanese floral fabric with local styles (Chen, 2011).

Fabric pattern painter was a well-paid profession at that time. For instance, there were fabric suppliers carrying remuneration and waiting outside the house of "Master of Peony Flowers" Huang Chi-Long for acquiring his drawings. Mr. Huang Kuang-Nan, the former Senior Presidential Advisor who used to be a part-time painter mentioned that it was enough to cover one-month expenditure by selling four drawings only on those days. It shows that the popular floral fabric had a huge market in which suppliers could greatly profit from just one best-selling drawing. However, suppliers could also suffer from huge loss if the pattern drawings were not favored by the market. It was fabric stores to decide whether the patterns drawn by painters were marketable or not (interview with Yang, 2012). The patterns and colors of floral fabric printed were selected by suppliers based on their preference and experience.

In the beginning of the development, there were not many patterns to choose from in the market so that consumers would buy anything available. Later, when economy was booming and the market was also growing, suppliers were searching for college students majored in arts to draw fabric patterns to compete with each other. These students took advantage of their cultivation on oriental and western aesthetics as well as well-trained skills of traditional birds and flowers ink painting to draw fabric patterns that combined Chinese, western and Japanese styles. A peak of Taiwanese floral fabric fashion was found in this period.

These skillful painters' works were influenced by the patterns and values introduced from China while various Japanese patterns were imitated. Patterns of large peony flowers, bunches of daisy, garden balsam and mandarin ducks and phoenix which stand for wealth and honor were the most popular among others (interview with Hsu, 2012). As floral fabric being bought not just for weddings and festivals, a lot of fresh fusion patterns such as a large bunch of peony flowers with Japanese wheels added beside; daisy accompanied by phoenix's feather; or lace flowers with a background of Chinese floral windows were launched in the market other than the flowers, plants or animals that symbolizes fortune. These fusion patterns were quite popular and had become a fashion of fusion as soon as they were marketed.

They marked a trend that floral fabric “was turned from Japanese style into Taiwanese style”. In this stage, the patterns of floral fabric were associated with the styles of Art Nouveau and Art Décor developed in the end of 19th century and in the 20th century which shapes of plants, animals and protist were arranged in asymmetric or organic lines to display a glamorous, highly creative and energetic temperament. This would also be a sign that people were set free from the conventional, reserved old society and looking forward to the coming new era. After this stage, many other patterns of plants, animals, western images or cartoon were being developed for different age groups to meet the needs of market.

In addition to pattern design, color setting and rendering for traditional Taiwanese floral fabric would also be a major task. After patterns being determined, the drawings were sent to factories for pattern makers to work on color separation, plate making, color scheme and pattern making while number and allocation of colors were determined in this stage. Color mixing specialists were responsible for making right judgments on the accuracy of colors and orders of register to produce the best result as a heavy duty. Taking Far Eastern’s floral fabric as an example, each pattern required over 10-color register. Color mixing specialists have to bring each color into register one by one until all colors of this fabric were done. Generally speaking, color mixing specialists would usually try five to six sets of colors for fabric suppliers to choose from (interview with Hsu & Lin, 2012). They therefore have to possess sense of fashion on colors as well as experience to produce colors that are favored visually by modern people. In the meantime, fabric stores would select and adjust color scheme based on their experience. Two to four sets of colors would be printed in small batches as fabric supplier’s requested. After being adjusted and eliminated by suppliers based on responses from the market, the fabric would go into the stage of mass production.

The popular color settings at that time had been through market test so that those colors and patterns could be regarded as the ones that were preferred by the public. They were also carrying the message of social values and identification of the time. Taking the popular bright red floral fabric as an example, people in the less wealthy years would not make new curtains, beddings or drapes until special occasions such as lunar New Year or weddings. Therefore they preferred to choose the colors that look joy and fortunate like scarlet, peach, crimson or magenta to celebrate in these occasions while reflecting their imagination and expectation of a wonderful future (interview with Lin, Wu, & Hsu, 2012 ).

### **Popular Floral Fabric Colors and Social Values**

After analyzing color database of Taiwanese floral fabric and the result of interviews, it was found that red, pink, light yellow and dark red were seen as mainstream colors of floral fabric in the market at that time, in particular the large area of red or light colors set as under tone with various patterns on would be the most popular color scheme (interview with Lin, Wu, & Yang, 2012). Red is the color positioned in the end of long wave of visible spectrum and defined as one of three primary colors as well as psychological primaries. In oriental world, red color is believed to have power of expelling evils and therefore is prevalently applied to beams and columns of temple buildings. Also, red color stands for cheerfulness, passion, liveliness, warmth, happiness, luckiness, joy and celebrations and therefore is seen the most in weddings. In addition to creating happy and fortunate atmosphere, Taiwanese floral fabric was used to produce beddings for newlyweds to give blessings. Red floral fabric with a pattern of pink peony flowers was the most common one to highlight the idea of fortune and abundance as a function. Light yellow was adopted for different age and gender groups. As another warm color family, it represents a safe, neutral feeling of earth after lowering brightness and color intensity. The fabric that had an under tone of light yellow with smaller flowers on would be a perfect choice for the elderly and males (interview with Lin & Hsu, 2012).

As economic condition was improved and prices were stabilized, the floral fabric which used to be applied exclusively to wedding supplies had later been seen on the new duvets purchased for New Years and festivals. Yet people were still regarding red fabric as the symbol of happiness therefore floral fabric with red tone was preferred while bright red, dark red and pink started to appear in the market and became popular (interview with Lin & Wu, 2012). Dark red and pink are the colors of red tone that are mixed with black and white. Dark red colors give a feeling of maturity, understated luxury and sophistication with an introverted and stable tone. Pink colors combine the sense of happiness of red color with a feeling of fantasy to be used in the leisure occasions for younger generations (interview with Yang, 2011, Wu, 2012). In addition, dark red, pink and light yellow beddings provide a more stable, soft and peaceful feeling during sleep in comparison to bright red colors. In the theory of Perceiving Color, these three color tones are also better for human eyes to look at for a long period of time.

Although the under tone of red was fine-tuned into different darkness based on special needs, the mainstream pattern of floral fabric remained to be peony flowers. Other patterns such as daisy were also appeared. In this stage, more color schemes were applied by painters and fabric suppliers to display different darkness and a more three-dimensional look while drawings of patterns were getting more delicate (interview with Yang, 2011, Wu, 2012). Products of Taiwanese floral fabric had also become part of daily supplies in this stage. Floral fabric was then applied to many other objects such as beg, over sleeves, curtain, tablecloth, and cloth covers with many colors available such as black, peach, cherry, mauve, and light blue. In terms of patterns, there were more and more flowers or designs to choose from such as rose, Chinese hibiscus, camellia, cartoon images and geometric shapes. However, red colors were still the dominant ones in general. After all, these colors have been applied out of people's instinct and preference for long and imprinted in their emotional memories that incorporate imaginations of a wealthy, happy and prosperous future.

The floral fabric kept being circulated in the market and being part of people's daily life until updated, better printing and dyeing techniques were introduced to Taiwan. It was then being forgotten and left in the corners of warehouses in old lanes.

## **Conclusion**

Taiwan has built economic foundation well under the support of the US in 1950s which led to a prosperous textile industry for a golden age of Taiwanese floral fabric to come. Taiwanese floral fabric used to be part of general public's daily life in that period of time. Large areas of strong colors were applied on floral fabric to reflect people's affections and values which the use of colors like bright red, peach or dark red revealed social values and people's expectations on an affluent life at that time. Floral fabric was applied to the production of beddings to show blessings to newlyweds. That is why the bright red colors with a pattern of peony flowers that symbolizes wealth and fortune were so popular while a connection between Taiwanese floral fabric and feelings of richness, luckiness and happiness was thus formed.

Later when people's life was getting better, buying new beddings for family in festive occasions has become a symbol of abundance as bright red fabric was still associated with the ideas of luxury, wealth and happiness and seen everywhere in our daily life. The options of floral fabric in either dark red or pink colors were provided to satisfy people's desire of affluence. As economic condition kept being improved, more options of floral fabric color with less visual intensity were developed to meet the needs of different age groups such as light yellow, light purple and light blue. In this stage, the meaning of floral fabric colors was less related to the values of wealth and fortune; instead, it was rather defined as a daily supply. Without the social meanings and values it used to carry, floral fabric was soon replaced by new textile technique and materials afterwards.

## Reflection on Cultural Colors

Taiwanese floral fabric became a limelight once again and gained artists and designers' attention as a strong visual element after being promoted by cultural authorities and reported by media. Its patterns and images of bright colorful flowers were vastly duplicated and applied to cultural and creative spaces as major factors of old days; the projection of nostalgia as well as the display of Taiwanese value. However, it would inevitably be superficial rearrangement and stack of cultural objects if cultural spirit and memorial symbols are constructed on the surface of a culture without deeply looking into its context. It seems that cultural spirit will be generated by this sort of simple technique of duplication that represents an old object (floral fabric) and scene while those touching memories in people's mind will also be recalled. There might be, undeniable, some special feelings attached to an object or a scene. However, those younger generations who did not involve in the culture of this period would never be deeply touched but only perceive a skin-deep meaning. The returned floral fabric and its once again fading away would be nothing but a phenomenon of "short culture" created by such simple and easy technique.

After realizing the history and social context behind floral fabric, now we cannot easily regard the representation and reviving of floral fabric as a cycle of nostalgia and fashion and passively wait for another cycle to return. On the contrary, we should proceed with further thinking and review by extracting the visual elements out of its cultural meanings and emotional memories before examining and comparing them in the historical and social context to retrieve the original meanings and social values of floral fabric. By doing so, a culture can be allowed to be reviewed completely while its creative application can be built upon a more solid foundation. Cultural elements would thus not be abused, randomly combined and duplicated to be called as creative application of a culture.

The study aims to provide a chance for the public to understand cultural colors of our own by establishing a cultural color database of Taiwanese floral fabric and exploring its historical meanings and social values. In the meantime, it is expected that the result of this study and the color database can help preserve cultural colors of traditional floral fabric and inspire artists and designers to bring more potentials and add value for cultural industry in Taiwan.

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