

Manipur lies on the eastern frontier of India. It was an ancient kingdom which had enjoyed the fortune and glory and experienced sorrow and vicissitudes of her long history. Manipur is a cradle of human civilization and creativity which has come under the influence of many cultures of many different ethnic groups who came at various times and contributed to the growth of the civilization in this hilly State in India's north eastern frontier. Manipur, a small State surrounded by ranges of hills, is one of the beauty spot on the earth and rightly called "**The Jewel of India**". Its velvety green fields, transparent lakes, zigzag streams and temperate climate induce a visitor to feel as if he is in Kashmir. The merit of Manipur does not lie in size and population. In these respects, it is smaller than an average district of the large States of India. It has made its mark by her valuable contributions in the field of Indian dances. The game of **Polo** is originated in this land. Agriculture and cottage industry are the main occupations of the majority. While the men work in the field, women weave at home. The embroidery works of the Manipuri women are diverse and excellent. The women of Manipur enjoy a fair amount of freedom. They are very hard workers and share the burden of the family with the male members.



Name of Manipur

The present name of the land as "**Manipur**" is of comparatively recent origin dating from the eighteenth century only and it lost its independence to the mighty British in 1891. The history of its people had run a long course of two thousand years is evident from the chronicles and manuscripts. According to manuscripts like "*Sanamahi Laikan*" and "*Miyat*", the name of Manipur was first officially introduced in the early eighteenth century during the reign of king Garibaniwaja (1709 - 48). The indigenous name of Manipur before introducing as "Manipur" in the eighteenth century, according to the above two manuscripts "*Sanamahi Laikan*" and "*Miyat*", was "*Poirei Sana Leipak*". According to the manuscripts like "*Sakok Lamlen*", "*Kangbalon*" etc. the name of Manipur was called in the *Hayi Chak* (the first epoch) as "*Tilli Koktong Ahanba*", in the 2nd epoch, *Khunung Chak* "*Mira Pongthoklam*", in the 3rd epoch "*Langba Chak*" as "*Hanna Semba Konna Loiba*" and in the last and 4th epoch "*Konna Chak*", *Muwa Palli*.

In early day, Manipur was known by the neighbouring States by different names given by them. In Rennell's Memoir and maps of India, it was called "Mecklay". In the Narrative of Symes and in maps of that period, Manipur was called "Cassy". To the Shans, it was known as "Kase" and to the Burmese (at present Myanmar) as "Kathe", the Ahoms called it Makeli and the Cacharies "Magli", while the old Assamese name for it was Moglan (J. Roy).

Name of the Geographical Indication

Description of Goods & Specification : Moirang Pheejin

Moirang Pheejin:

The *Moirang Pheejin* is a special design of the Manipuri textile. This design is used in almost all kinds of "*Innaphee* (chaddar), a wrapper (phanek or sharong) used by the Manipuri women as luxurious item in different occasions relating to marriage, *Lai Haraoba* festival, public gathering functions, etc. and this design is commonly used in the border of the girl's loin cloth. The wrapper with this design of Moirang Pheejin at the lengthwise borders is also known as *Yarongphi*. This popular border design apparently looks like a continuous series of the geometrical figure of a triangle. This design was firstly woven by taking the pattern of the pronged teeth of the "*Pakhangba*", the Pythonic God of the Meitei mythology. So, the name of this design was known as *Yarongphi* means *ya* = tooth and *rong* = long = *longba* = pronged. The teeth with upward pointed tops, when arranged in a regular and uniform series, have appealing touch in the aesthetic perception of the people.

Though it can not be said say exactly how old this design, used in the Manipuri textile, but from the text of old manuscript "*Loiyumba Silyen*", it was sure that this design was existed during the time of Meidingu Loiyumba, the king of Manipur who reigned during 1074-1122 A. D. According to this text, Meidingu Loiyumba distributed the weaving of this kind of cloth '*Yarongphi*' or '*Yairongphi*' to the family of "*Thongkapam*". Later on, the cloth of '*Yairongphi*' which had the design of *Moirang Phijin* was the textile item which the Moirang paid as annual tribute to the Meitei Kings during the monarchical period in Manipur and the name of the design was also known as "*Moirang Pheejin*". Moirang is a place which is situated at a distance of about 44 Kms from Imphal, the capital of Manipur where the first

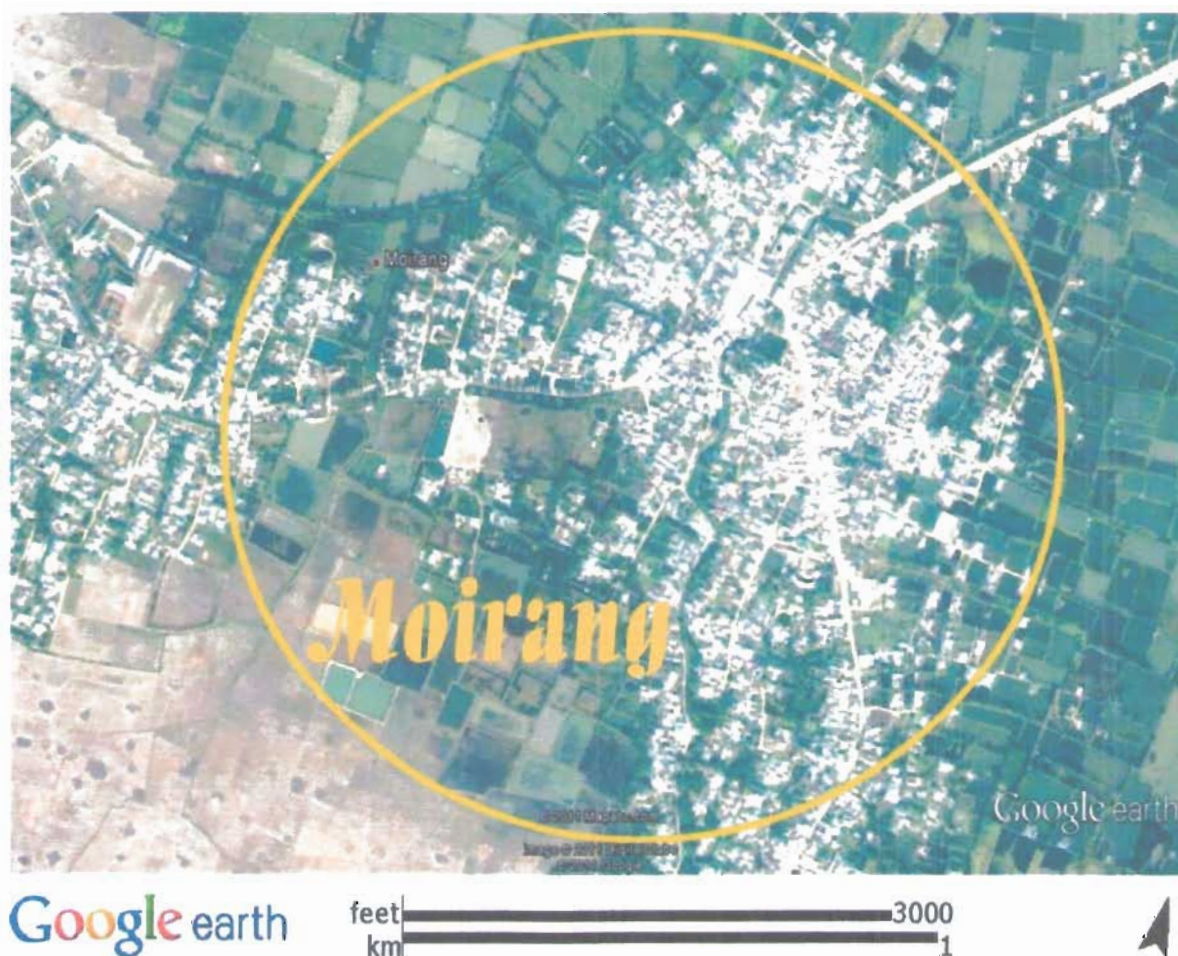


Moirang Pheejin



INA flag was hoisted on Indian soil in 1944, The woman weavers of Manipur use the extra weft woven technique in weaving the Moirangphi design. In this technique, the weavers weave the design in loom, throw shuttle loom and fly shuttle loom.

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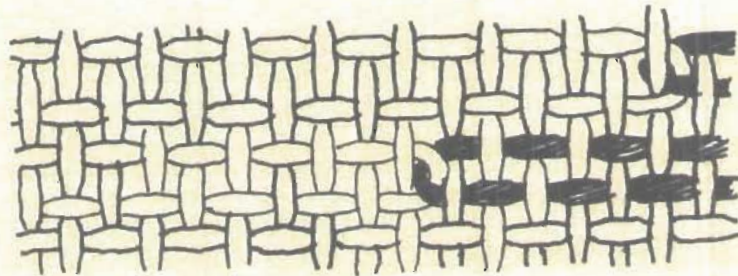
Map of the origin of Moirang Pheejin at Moirang, Bishenpur District, Manipur

MOIRANG PHEEJIN PATTERNS

The Moirang Pheejin or literally means the border design from the area of Moirang which is situated on the banks of the famous fresh water lake, the Loktak Lake. It lies on the National Highway 150 which goes to Aizawl in Mizoram. The area is known historically mainly for the legendary Khamba Thoibi or Moirang Thoibi.

The main technical detail of the design is the border design. On the main body weave, the main emphasis is the design made by the weft design on the border. The design are of different steps, they are made into odd numbers, they are i) 3 (three) steps ii) 5 (five) steps iii) 7 (seven) steps iv) 9 (nine) steps and v) 11 (eleven) steps and higher up etc. respectively.

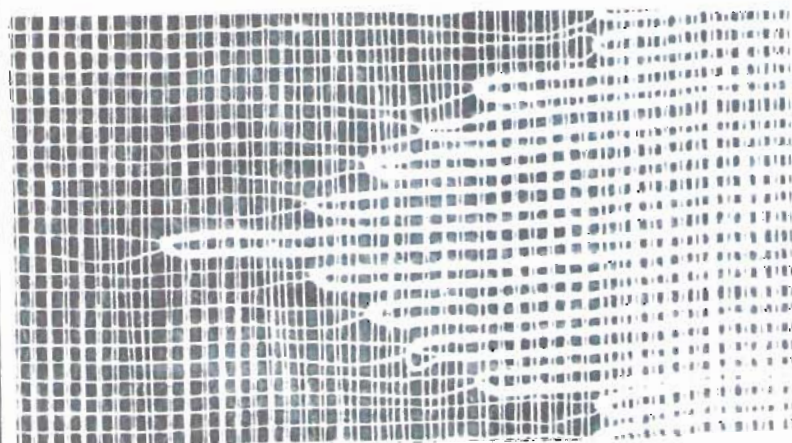
Border Design - Moirang Pheejin Weaving Technique



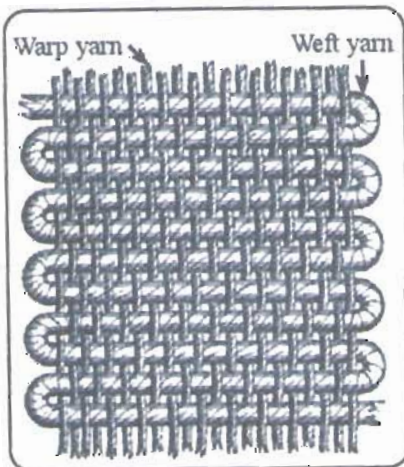
Black colour yarn is weft yarn is the Moirang Pheejin weave

White colour yarn for the main body weave of the fabric

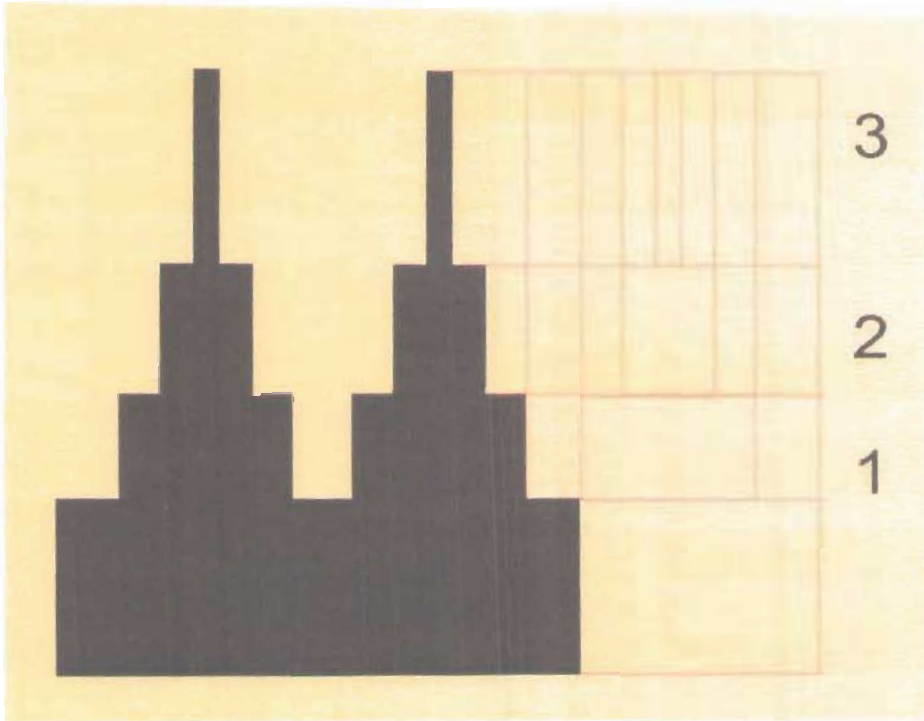
The graphic details of the weave



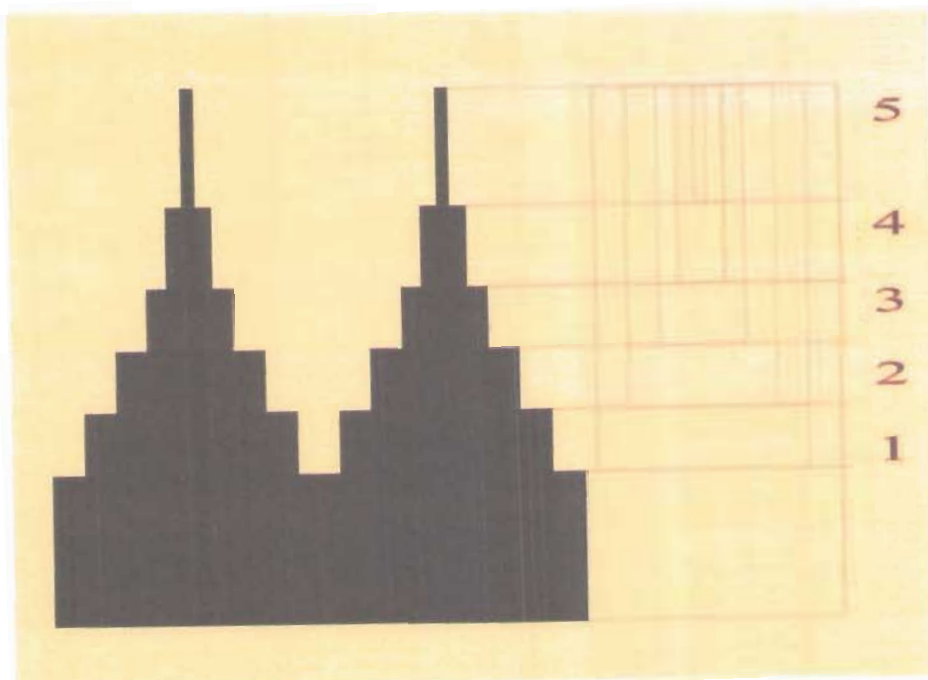
The weft details of the weave



Technical details of weave



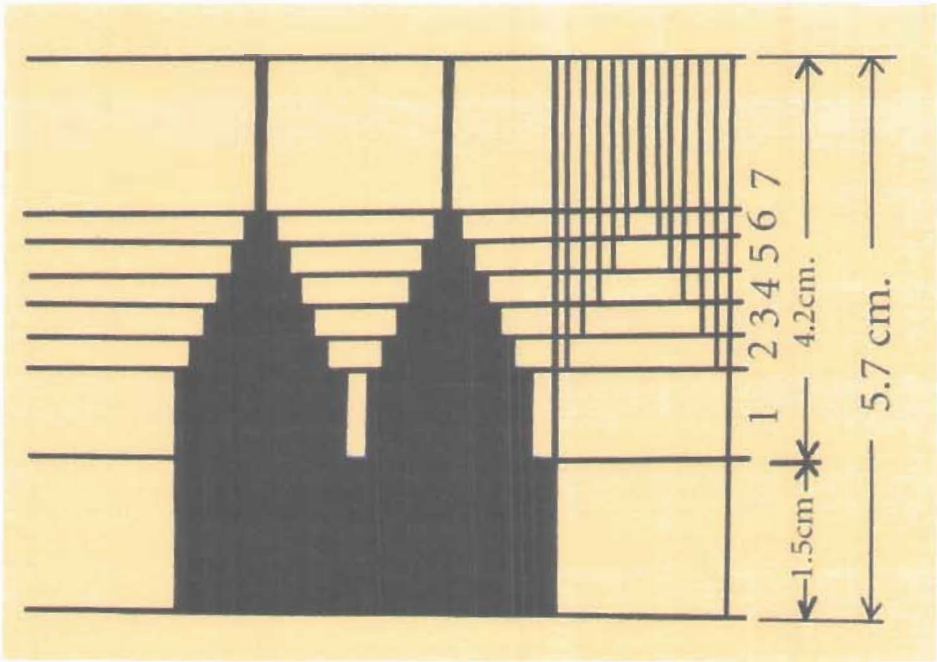
The 3 steps weft design



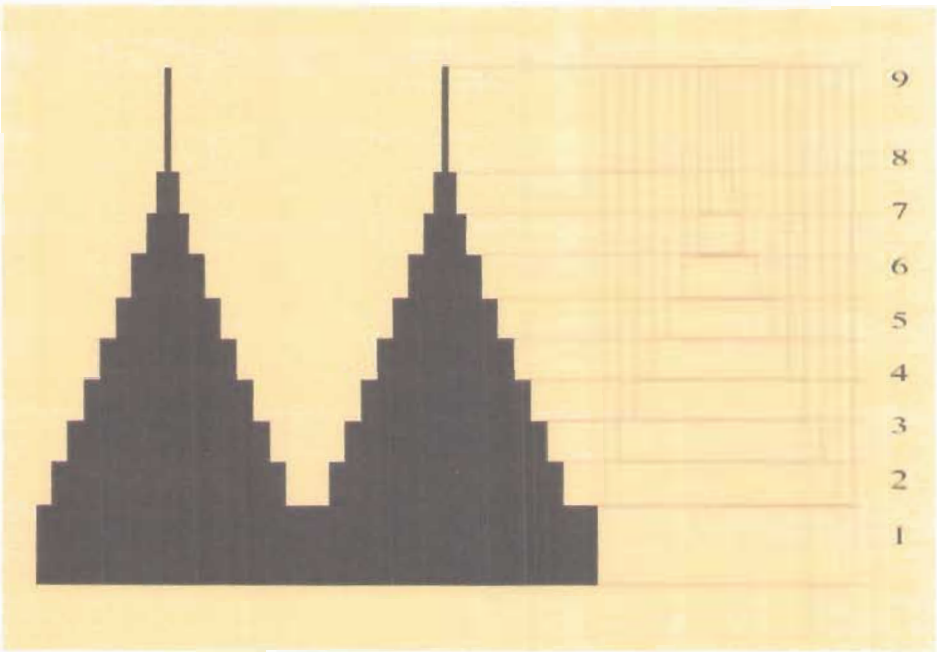
The 5 steps weft design

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The 7 steps weft design



The 9 steps weft design



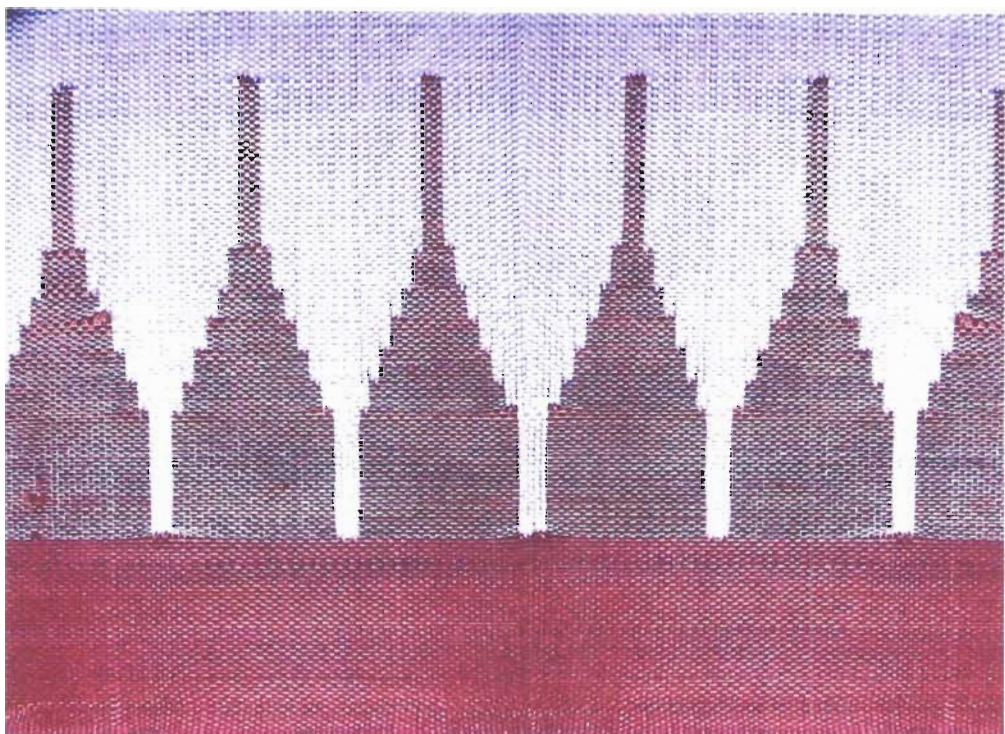
The 5 steps weft weave design



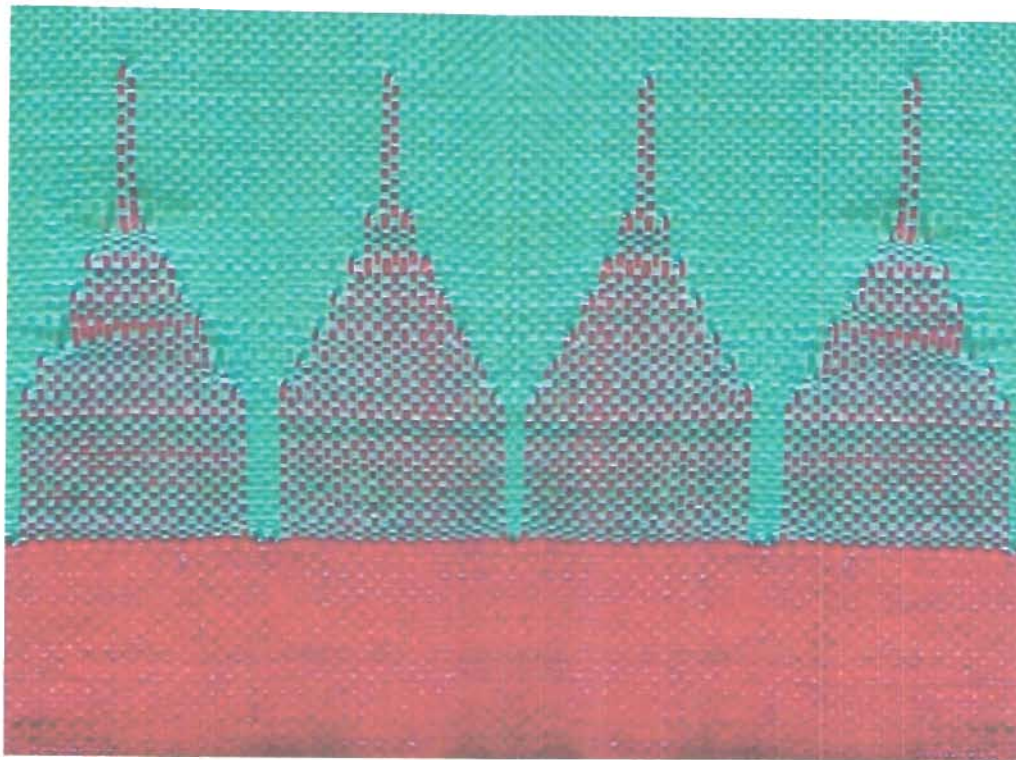
The 7 steps weft weave design



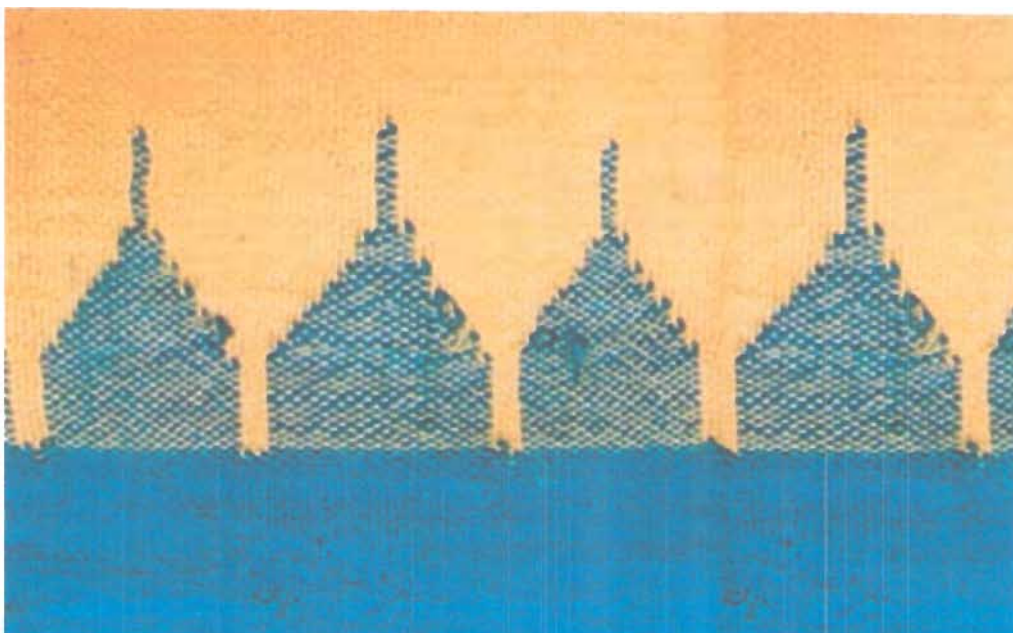
The 7 steps weft weave design



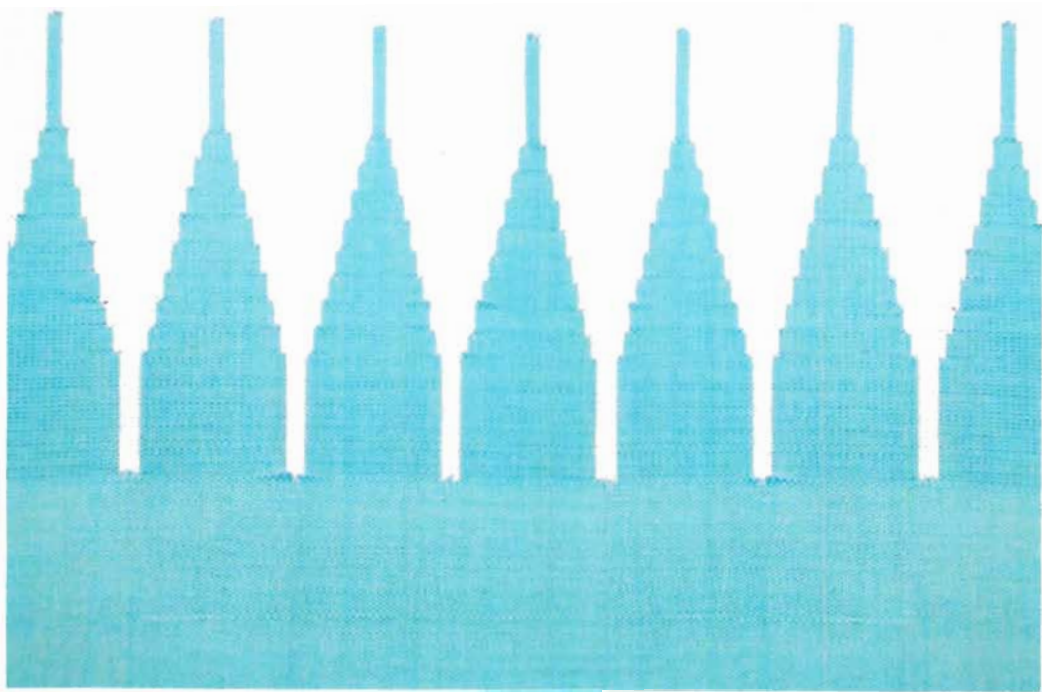
The 7 steps weft weave design



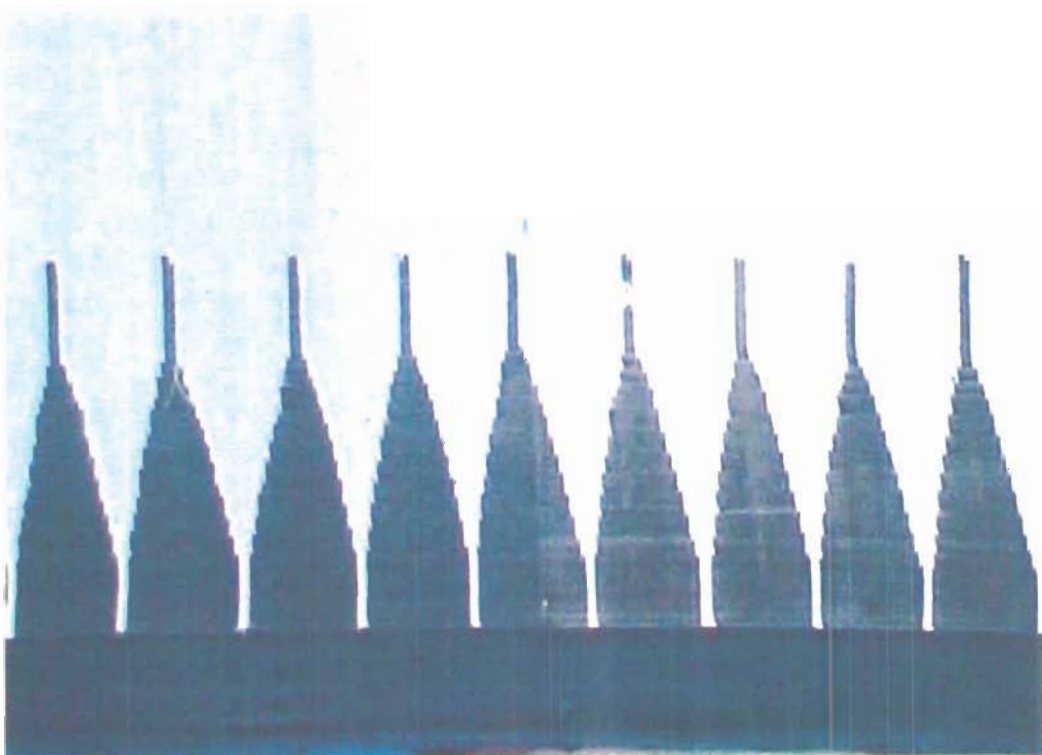
The 7 steps weft weave design



The 7 steps weft weave design



The 11 steps weft weave design



The 13 steps weft weave design

Location and area

Geographically the physical feature of Manipur is that the territory of Manipur lies within the latitude of $23^{\circ}.50'$ N. to $25^{\circ}.41'$ N and the longitude of $93^{\circ}.2'$ E to $94^{\circ}.47'$ E. It is fixed on the eastern frontier of India. The extent of Manipur depended upon the ability of the kings of Manipur. Though the present size of the modern Manipur is small, ancient Manipuri literatures state that Manipur had a larger area. In the east it touched the borders of China and Burma (Myanmar). The Kabow valley of Burma was a part of Manipur upto the period of 1834 from the period of king Kyamba (1467 - 1508). In the south, the boundary of Manipur extended upto the sea. In the north and north-east its boundary extended upto the kingdoms of Hidimbapur and Moran respectively. (J. Roy).

The present boundary of Manipur with an area of 22327 sq. km. more or less remained fixed since the controversial transfer of Kabow valley to Burma in 1834. The valley is in reality a plateau, its height above the sea level varies at different points but may be taken to be about 2,600 ft. Imphal; the capital of Manipur is almost intersected by the 25th parallel north latitude and 94° E longitude (N. Ibohi). Manipur is bounded in the north by Nagaland, in the east and the south by Burma (Myanmar), in the south-west by Mizoram and in the west by Cachar valley of Assam.



Geographical Area of Production:

The craft of *Moirang Pheejin* is practised mainly at the four districts of Manipur mainly in the valley area. They are i) Imphal East ii) Imphal West iii) Thoubal and iv) Bishenpur districts respectively.

