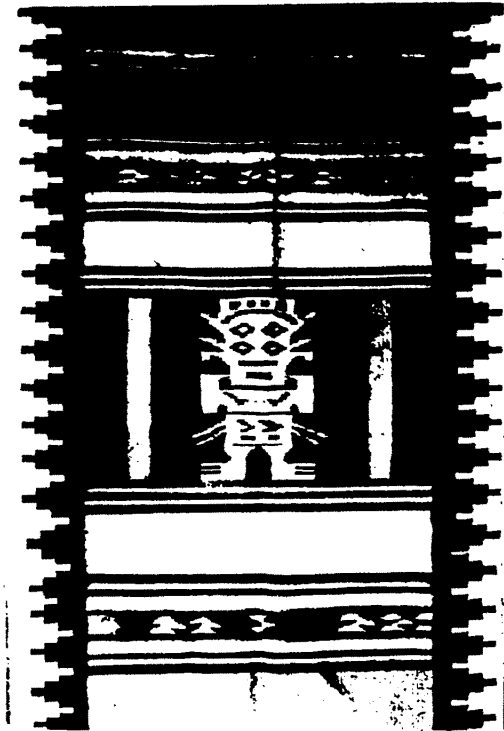
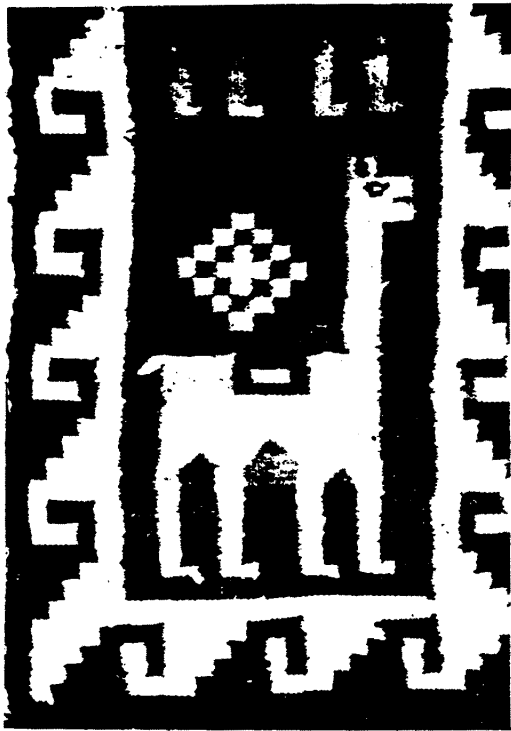


Handweaving News



Peruvian Tapestry Weaving Similar to
Norwegian "Aklæ".

The two illustrations above are both modern Peruvian weavings. The one on the left is a rug, and is photographed on the smooth side. The other side is rough as it was teased up in long soft fibres. It was woven of natural color llama wool in the "Aklæ" technique, two llamas in the center, and the border all around the outside edge. The piece on the right, also a modern weaving, though a copy of the sun god appears in the center, is in the same technique. It is woven on a fine handspun sheep's wool warp and very fine firm sheep's wool weft. The background is white, with many colors in the pattern. The black border goes all around it. I only found three of these in the native market at Huancayo, and probably these are the work of only one weaver.

Method of Weaving the "Aklæ" technique.

1. The Design. For this technique is based on the square as a unit. One square of cross section paper can represent 2, 4, or 8 warp threads. Generally 4 warp threads are used for each square, unless a picture design is used, then 2 threads is more satisfactory. The design on Page 3, Figure No. 9 is quite suitable for a first attempt. It consists of 25 units of 4 threads each, which would call for a warp of 100 threads.

2. Materials. Carpet warp set at 8 threads to the inch may be used for the first piece if desired. But for a rug, use much heavier warp, or carpet warp could be used threaded 2 or even 4 threads in a heddle, and sleyed the same. Two harness looms can be used, or on a four harness loom, thread to twill 1, 2, 3, and 4. Weft should be of fine yarn, the best is Bernat's Crewel wool. Fine handspun yarn with the color mixed on the cards is also excellent. Germantown, shetland, or knitting worsted could be used.

3. How to Wind a Yarn Bobbin. No color is carried across the full width of the loom on a shuttle. So it is necessary to wind yarn bobbins for each separate color unit of the design. Hold down the end of a skein of yarn with the third and fourth fingers of the left hand. Wind in the shape of a figure 8 around the thumb and first finger of the left hand, using only three or four yards of yarn. When within about a half yard from the end, slip the figure 8 loops off the left hand, holding firmly between the thumb and first finger, and with the right hand, wind the 18" length closely around the loops to hold them together. Slip the end of the yarn under the last wind around the loops and pull it up so it will not slip out. Wind several bobbins of each color in this way, as at Figure No.1. The end which pulls out from the center is the one used to weave with. Do not make bobbins too large, as they are harder to handle, three or four yards is enough.



Figure No.1.

4. Two sheds- 1) Pattern shed, 2) Interlocking shed.

1) Pattern Shed. The shed on the loom that is raised so that the first warp thread on the right is down is the pattern shed, start with this shed and always add new bobbins in this shed. Always have all of the bobbin wefts go from the right hand side of the loom to the left in this shed. Figure No.2 shows solid black line for warp thread that



Figure No.2.

is down, double line for thread that is up, and two units of a light color, and two units of a dark color started. Note how each color is locked at the start. Do not carry weft of one color all way across the loom. Divide up the width and start new bobbins every two to 3 inches apart. Put weft in to form a good arc, as shown. Make this arc very

large for a long design unit, then beat it down into place, giving a slight pull on each weft bobbin to keep a straight vertical edge between each pattern unit. Never lock wefts on this pattern shed. A coarse comb or a fork can be used to beat the weft into place, if desired. It is best to change the shed, which will now be the interlocking shed and give two hard beats. This helps to beat the weft closely together.

2) Interlocking Shed. In this shed the first thread on the right is always raised when the shed is open, the weft always goes from left toward the right.

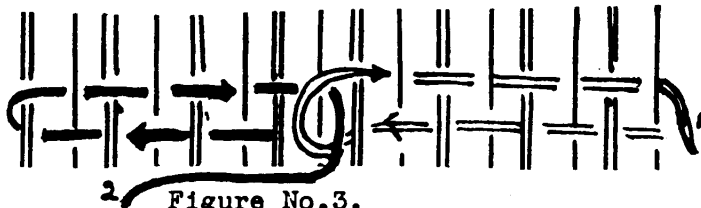


Figure No.3.

Starting at the left in this shed, take bobbin No.2 back toward the right up to the point on the previous row where bobbin No.1 ended. Cross the left No.2 over the right No.1, let No.2 hang, pick up No.1 bobbin, and bring it further to the right through the necessary num-

ber of pattern design units. Continue across the full width of the loom in exactly this same way. Always make arcs with the weft bobbins, and pull just enough so there will be no excess loop at the point where the interlocking takes place. This completes a row which covers the warp threads, so one shot of weft in the Pattern shed and one shot of weft in the Interlocking shed is needed. Weave enough rows to square the unit pattern block of the design. Clip off the ends where the adding of or finishing off, of a bobbin takes place. There should be but little difference between the back and front of the fabric. It is best to always finish off all of the color units in one row before leaving the loom, then no mistakes are made.

5. Finishing off a weft color and adding a new weft color. Should always be done on the pattern shed. When a weft bobbin color ends, let it lie in the last interlocking shed with an end at least 2 or 3 inches long. Let it interlock with the bobbin to the right as usual. Then change to the pattern shed, bring it back over two warp threads and tie a slip knot as shown on Figure No.4, pull this up tight. This method of tying off a thread is best as it leaves no slit in the weaving, and has been interlocked so that the warp is also completely covered. After several rows of weaving have been completed, these ends can be cut close.



Figure No.4.

Figure No.5 Showing how two weft colors come together on pattern shed.

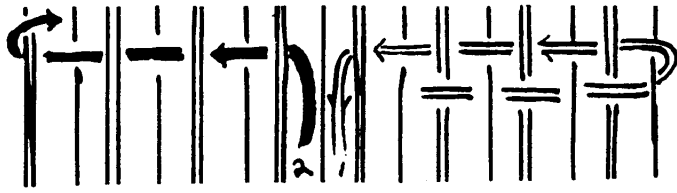


Figure No.6 Change of Design - Method of Advancing both weft colors to the Right.

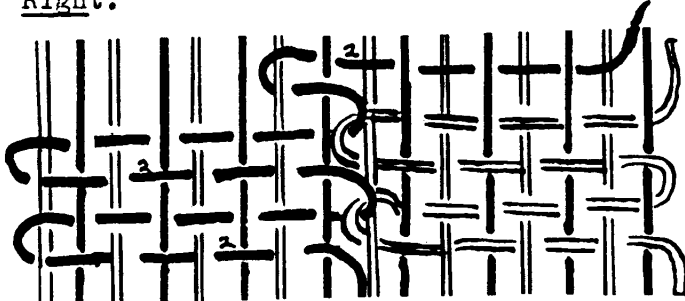


Figure No.7 Change of Design- One color Advancing to right and then left.

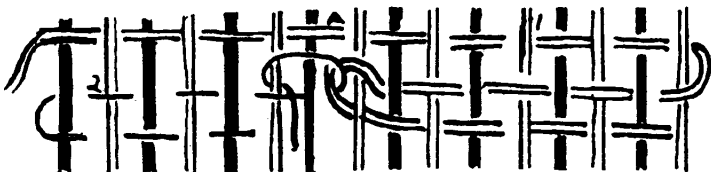


Figure No.8 Change of Design- Advancing to Left with both weft colors.

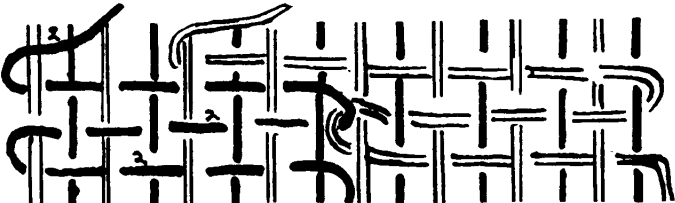
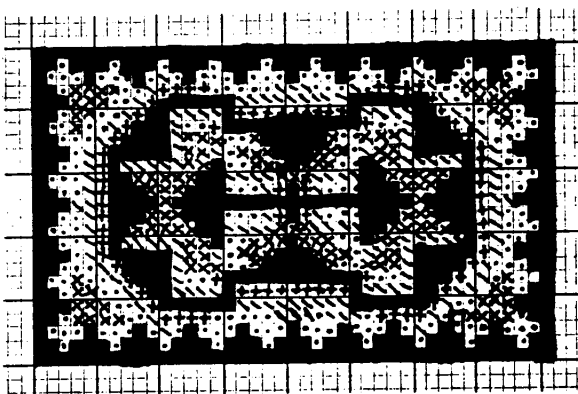


Figure No.9 A simple design using 5 colors, - blue, rose, tan, green, yellow.



of years ago. An excellent description, with further details of this technique, is also given in an article in the "Weaver", Vol II, No.2 for April 1937, by Elmer W. Hickman, "Scandinavian Art Weaving."

Refer again to Figure No.2 which shows the first row in the pattern shed, with the method of fastening the beginning of the pattern weft color. No.3 shows the first row of interlocking weft. Figure No.5 shows how the pattern weft colors should look when they meet on the second row, and succeeding rows, of the pattern shed. Note there is always one warp thread down between the two raised warp threads, when two weft colors meet on the pattern shed.

6. Change of Design. Two colors advance to the right. Finish interlocking shed, bring color No.1 as far to the right on the interlocking shed as it goes. Then take end of weft color No.2, leaving the interlocking shed still open, and go over one warp thread to the left of the interlocking of color No.1 and No.2, then go under the 2nd warp thread to the left which is down. Now carry color No.2 to the right in the same shed as color No.1, but only up to the point where the new unit of color No.2 begins. Always advance to the right with color No.1 first after interlocking, then with color No.2.

7. One color advancing to right and then left. If color No.2 ends at A on the interlocking shed, let the end hang after interlocking with color No.1. Finish putting in Color No.1 to the right. Change to pattern shed, tie off color No. 2 at A with a slip knot as at Figure No.7, and continue to advance color No.1 as far to the left as desired.

8. Advancing to the Left with both colors If color No.2 also advances to the left, instead of ending at A, and color No.1 also advances to the left, finish interlocking row all way across as usual. Then change to pattern shed. Bring color No.2 to the left as far as its color unit goes, then bring color No.1 to the left in the same shed, right over color No.2, as far as its color unit goes. If these methods are carefully followed, change of design will not be difficult.

9. A simple design is shown at Figure No.9 To follow this, transfer this to large cross section paper, and put in the colors with paints or crayons, or better still make your own designs. Note also the modern Peruvian designs on Page 1.

These directions were written up at the special request of several Handweaving News subscribers. I have attempted to give them in as clear concise way as possible, as I learned the technique a number