



An Analytical Study of Ikat Cloths of Thai Puan Living in Bann Mee, Lopburi Province

Jariya Rodjun

Abstract

This is an analytical study of Ikat cloths of Thai Puan people living in Lopburi province in terms of production process, design, color, product processing and wisdom transfer. The data from three major groups of producers including “Bann Puan Group” located in Tumbon Hinpak, “Bann Gluay Group” located in Tumbon Bann Gluay, and “Aunt Narong Center” located in Tumbon Bann Sai was compared. Sample groups were Ikat cloths from three producers, one hundred cloths each.

Production process of Thai Puan people living in Bann Mee, Lopburi province included 3 major factors which were 1) thread preparation and weave process, 2) materials, and 3) equipments. Thread preparation and weave process could be divided into two periods, former and present time. There were differences between the two periods in terms of process details, time spent, materials and equipment used. In the past, each craftsman had to complete all processes ranging from thread preparation to weaving to produce the cloth. Presently, the craftsman needs not to complete all steps since there are groups of people who perform specific work to serve weave process. Therefore, time taken in the process is shorter than it was in the past.

The designs of cloths from the three producers could be divided into two groups including basic or ancient design and developed or applied design. Names of basic or ancient design from three groups of producers could be classified as nineteen groups including Kra Chab, Kha Yum Teen Ma, Kha Pia, Khao LhamTud, Ta Khai, Bua Kwam Bua Ngai, Plong Oiy, Mha Tum, Mee Khor, Mee Khun, Mee Kope, Mee Nak, Mee Bua Krue, Mee Piang, Mee Yoi, Mee Lai, and Mee Iang Song Klong. It was found that Mha Tum was the most popular design found in Bann Puan and Bann Gluay Groups. For Aunt Narong Center, Mee Lai was the most popular design.

For developed or applied designs, they could be classified into four groups as designs developed from basic or ancient ones i.e. Khun Chae Lock, Khum Sub Noi, Cherng Thien, Pan Kruea, Pan Lak, Applied Pan Lak, Applied Mha Tum, Applied Mha Mui, Applied Mee, Mee Lock, Comb Tung, Jaekun Kaew, Kra Chome, Kunjae, Kiew Koi Nong Nang, Kor Kamen, Kor Bet, Kor Pra Thep, Khum Sub, Kruang Bin, Khae Ma, Dok Khaosan, Dao Lom Duen, Man Sonthaya, Si Trakraw, Na Tang, Mee Pan Kruea and Liam, design developed from animals i.e. Kham Poo, Khai, Nok Yoong (Peacock), Nok Yoong Rum Pan, Pee Sua, Hong, Hoi Khong, Tao, Pla Muk, Ma Num, Mang Mum and Hang Nok Yoong, designs developed from plants i.e. Dok Tan Tawan, Ton Son, Chor Paka, Dok Phikul and Mafueang, and designs developed from geometric shapes i.e. Kra Dook, Reka Kanit, Scot, Sai Roong, Khanom Piakpoon and Sao. The popularity for producing cloths with developed or applied designs varied between the three producers. This was the result of variation of designs and colors initiated by craftsmen in each groups

and reflected consumer demand.

Colors used in cloths from the three groups could be divided into three types including tone, shading and contrast. The result showed that most of basic or ancient design cloths' colors were not dim but rather warm toned.

Products developed from Ikat cloths could be classified into ten groups including pillow slip, pillow, scarf, dress, suit, local dress, purse, pouch, key ring, and slippers. In addition, styles of the products were similar among groups of producers. This revealed the similarity of communities' lives, ideas and opinion sharing among the neighboring communities.

Wisdom was transferred from the old to the new generation and similarly found in all three producers. The process of wisdom transfer included learning by doing, being familiar with craftsmen's life to obtain knowledge, being of assistance to the craftsmen, and living in real environment in order to be inspired. These learning processes are still generally seen today.

Importance and point of the problem

Ikat clothes are local handmade products reflecting culture and civilization of local people transferred from generation to generation and representing cultural heritage rooted from wisdom and creative idea inherited from the past to present (Art and Cultural Center, Thepsatri Rajabhat Institute, Lopburi.2001: 12). In addition, people also use such cloths for their daily life. Distinctive designs and symbols on the cloth produced by each community reflect people's beliefs, norms, ways of life, dressing cultures and traditions. These mirror cultures, values and identities of each community (Patcharanee Wattanachai. 2003: 1; referred from Wannarat In-Um.1994:6). Weaving products in the past were arts and crafts inherited from generation to generation before developed to modern industry which has introduced new technologies to the production process of cloth. This reflects evolution of idea and creation (Rujira Tansamrit.2006: Interview) and also involves way of life of Asian people for centuries which can be regarded as social heritage mirroring concrete picture of their backgrounds and concepts (Songsak Prangwattanukul et al.,(1994:22). Weaving requires craftsmanship, meticulousness, endurance, effort and endeavor appreciated through beauty of design on each cloth. It represents development of knowledge and wisdom inherited from the

ancestors and is seen as invaluable social heritage with beautiful and complicated design making Thai weaving cloths always valuable and reputable at international level. It deserves cooperation for conservation in order to revitalize traditional knowledge and to promote Thai local handicrafts.

Ikat Cloths is made by making thread tie to specify color for design designated by craftsman before dyeing. In the past, there were only Ikat Cloths made in blue from *Indigofera tinctoria*. To date, chemical dye has made it possible to give various colors to Ikat Cloths. In short, it means weaving process starting from thread made from cotton or silk which will be tied and dyed according to the design and color desired by the craftsman, simply called tie and dye (Nikul Onlamai.2006 Interview) Beauty and character of Ikat Cloths will come from colored area which has not been tied and, when weaving, give design and color of the cloth. Variation of design and color may happen and hence can be reduced by expertise of craftsman in tie and dye, loom setting and precise weaving (Wanida Rukprom;2006. Interview). Sometimes, designers deliberately make such variation of color to increase distinctiveness and beauty (Art and Cultural Center, Thepsatri Rajabhat Institute, Lopburi.2001: 13).

Ikat Cloths made by Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi are well known in local and

provinces. When thinking of Ikat Cloths, most people will be reminded of products from Bann Mee, Lopburi which are still preserved to be handmade product by Thai Puan people in Bann Mee District using traditional weaving process which is quite increasingly rare. People of this modern date are decreasingly interested in becoming a craftsman. The researcher is therefore interested in carrying out analytical study on Ikat cloths made by Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi to establish database for further use.

Objectives

To study Ikat clothes made by Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi concerning production process, design, coloring, product processing and wisdom transfer

Significance

1. Research findings will help to understand the living status of weaving groups and character of Ikat Cloths made by Thai Puan people Bann Mee, Lopburi. This will also provide basic information for improving living status of weaving group and quality of Ikat Cloths.

2. Study results can be used as basic information for relevant agencies for providing support and development of products. It can be used as a reference for Thai arts and crafts study at all levels.

Research Methodology

Target Population and Samples

Population was Ikat Cloths from Thai Puan people living in Bann Mee, Lopburi.

Sample group was Ikat Cloths made by Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi, for the sum of three hundred cloths from three major producers in three sub-districts in Bann Mee District, Lopburi including:

Bann Puan Group located in Tumbon Hinpak, one hundred cloths

Bann Gluay Group” located in Tumbon Bann Gluay, one hundred cloths and

Aunt Narong Center located in Tumbon Bann Sai, one hundred cloths

Data Collection

1. Secondary Data was collected from:

1.1 Information about Lopburi Province

1.2 Information about Thai Puan people Bann Mee, Lopburi and weaving of Ikat Cloths

1.3 Information of weaving group of Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi

1.4 Information about wisdom transfer

1.5 Information about design

1.6 Information about coloring

1.7 Information about product processing

1.8 Related Studies

2. Field record was carried out by:

2.1 Observation: the researcher explored living status of Thai Puan people in Bann Mee, Lopburi, production process of Ikat Cloths, other products apart from cloth.

2.2 Interview: the researcher made informal interviews with relevant persons in the field of study such as the pioneer for weaving, head of group, weaving person, tying person.

2.3 Record: the researcher recorded data in writing or by voice recorder or by taking photography during observation and interview.

Data Analysis: Data was analyzed by the researcher as follows:

3.1 Analyzing secondary data from documents and interview with respect to the objectives of study

3.2 Analyzing data from sample group as follows:

3.2.1 Production process

3.2.2 Design and color

3.2.3 Product processing

3.2.4 Wisdom transfer

3.3 Presenting results of study in analytical description

Conclusion and Discussion

Findings from analysis of Ikat cloths produced by three major groups of Thai Puan producers in Lopburi including “Bann Puan Group” located in Tumbon Hinpak, “Bann Gluay Group” located in Tumbon Bann Gluay, and “Aunt Narong Center” located in Tumbon Bann Sai, indicate that:

1. Ikat Cloths Production Process by Thai Puan People in Bann Mee, Lopburi

Production process consisted of three major factors, namely, thread preparation and weave process, materials and equipments. Thread preparation and weave process could also be divided into two periods, former and present time. There were differences between the two periods in terms of process details, time spent, and materials and equipment used. In the past, each craftsman had to complete all processes ranging from thread preparation to weaving in order to produce the cloth. Presently, the craftsman needs not to complete all steps since there are groups of people who perform specific work to serve the weave process. Therefore, time taken in the process is shorter than that of in the past. Materials, equipment and process used in the three groups were the same as they locate in neighboring communities. Also, materials and equipment came from the same source. Craftsmen were familiar to each other. In the present time, in each group, there is a separation of duties with respect to production process such as those who are good at dyed thread rolling will take responsibility for only this step and likewise for those being good at tying thread to specify color of design, thread rolling or weaving. Work under each step will be delivered at the group’s office. Staffs at the office will facilitate the production

for members of the group. Production process has now been easier than in the past where craftsman had to perform all steps by him/herself and most of equipments were made of wood. The process has been shortened and equipments have been developed and, therefore, made of metal. This makes weaving more convenient and faster. Production process is similar among the three groups. Production process and equipments can be observed at the office of Bann Puan Group while for Bann Gluay Group and Aunt Narong Center, works are done at home. Making by hand, a craftsman will finish the work by him/herself while adapting to industrial process. Craftsmen will lose ability to carry out the whole weaving process to produce the whole product and mass production will reduce creativity. The use of mass-produced thread instead of handmade one may result in very smooth thread; however, it is not as attractive as handmade product.

2. Design and Color

2.1 Findings from studying on design of Ikat Cloths made by Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi in three groups of producer including “Bann Puan Group” located in Tumbon Hinpak, “Bann Gluay Group” located in Tumbon Bann Gluay, and “Aunt Narong Center” located in Tumbon Bann Sai, indicate that their design could be classified into two groups, namely, basic or ancient design and developed or applied design. Developed or applied design of Bann Puan Group and Aunt Narong Center could be further classified into developed or applied design from basic or ancient design, developed or applied design from parts or names of animals, developed or applied design from parts or names of plants. Developed or applied design of Bann Puan Group could be classified into developed or applied design from basic or ancient design, from parts or names of animals and from geometric shapes

Basic or ancient design of Bann Puan Group which was found the most was Mha Tum,

six items or 6.00% of all items and 14.63% of basic or ancient design group. The least found basic or ancient design of Bann Puan Group was Plong Oai and Mee Yoi, one item each or 1.00% of the total or 2.44% of basic or ancient design group.

Developed or applied design of Bann Puan Group which was found the most was developed or applied design from basic or ancient design, namely, Applied Meek, nine items or 9.00% of the total or 15.25% of developed or applied design from basic or ancient design. Developed or applied design of Bann Puan Group which was least found was developed or applied design from basic or ancient design, namely, Khun Chae Lock, Khum Sub, Pan Lak, Mee Lock, one item each or 1.00% of the total or 1.69% of developed or applied design from basic or ancient design. Developed or applied design from parts or names of animals were Kham Poo, Nok Yoong, Pee Sua, Hong and Hoi Khong, one item each or 1.00% of the total and 1.69% of the design group named by referring to parts or names of animals.

From the interview, the most found designs were produced accordingly to customer demand while the least found design depended on many factors such as being sold out due to popularity or less production due to less popularity.

Basic or ancient design of Bann Gluay Group which was found the most was Mha Tum, twenty-six items or 26.00% of all items and 30.95% of basic or ancient design group. Basic or ancient design of Bann Gluay Group which was least found was Kha Yum Teen Mha, one item or 1.00% of the total or 1.19% of basic or ancient design group.

Developed or applied design of Bann Gluay Group which was found the most was developed or applied design from geometric shapes, namely, Scot, 5 items or 5.00% of the

total or 31.25% of developed or applied design. Developed or applied design of Bann Gluay Group which was least found was developed or applied design from basic or ancient design, namely, Chae Kun Kaew and Lai Pun Luk, one item each or 1.00% of the total or 6.25% of developed or applied design.

From the interview, the same reason as that of Ban Puan Group was found, that was, the most found designs were produced accordingly to customer demand while the least found design depended on many factors such as being sold out due to popularity or less production due to less popularity.

Basic or ancient design of Aunt Narong Center which was found the most was Mee Lai, eleven items or 11.00% of all items and 26.19% of basic or ancient design group. Basic or ancient design of Aunt Narong Center which was least found was Mee Khor, Mee Khan, Mee Nak and Mee Ear Song Khlong, one item each or 1.00% of the total or 2.38% of basic or ancient design group.

Developed or applied design of Aunt Narong Center which was most found was developed or applied design from parts or names of animals, namely, Tao, 4 items or 4.00% of the total or 6.89% of developed or applied design.

From the interview, the same reason as that of Ban Puan Group and Bann Gluay Group was found, that was, the most found designs were produced accordingly to customer demand while the least found design depended on many factors such as being sold out due to popularity or less production due to less popularity.

With respect to basic or ancient design, it could be noted that Mha Tum of Bann Puan Group and Bann Gluay Group was the most popular among the customers resulting in high volume of production and product offering for sale in the shops which differed from that of Aunt Narong Center where Mee was the most popular one. Regarding developed or applied

design, trend of production was different among the three groups as the designs of this group would largely depend on craftsmen's creativity to make any design to become popular.

2.2 Study on coloring of Ikat Cloths by Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi in the three groups of producer showed that Bann Puan Group used a variety of colors including violet and bright colors. Bann Gluay Group also used a variety of color including black, brown, bright colors such as pink, yellow and green. Aunt Narong Center used violet, brown, green and also contrast group of colors such as green, red, yellow and violet. In addition, the three groups similarly classified coloring of Ikat Cloths into three groups, namely by tone, compatibility and contrast.

Findings from the three groups showed that most of basic or ancient design cloths' colors were not dim but rather warm toned.

From the above-mentioned, it is recommended to promote and conserve this heritage to the next generation. The key factor is a craftsman who is able to carry out weaving process from the beginning until getting finished product; especially for basic or ancient design which are quite rare to find now. If necessary steps have not been taken to address this endangered traditional knowledge, we will probably not see this product in the future as this field of knowledge is less interested by the youth over time.

3. Product Processing

From the study on processing of Ikat Cloths of Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi, it showed that Ikat Cloths products were made for similar processed products into ten groups including pillow slip, pillow, scarf, dress, suit, local dress, purse, pouch, key ring, and slippers. Products relating to menswear were most found in Bann Puan Group and Aunt Narong Center while accessories such as key ring, purse, pouch etc. were most found at Bann Gluay Group and Aunt Narong Center. Local dress could be found at Bann Puan Group. In addition to the above-mentioned, patterns of products were similar. This reflected similar ideas and subsistence including sharing of ideas between people in the communities.

4. Wisdom Transfer

From the study on wisdom transfer regarding weaving of Ikat cloth of Thai Puan people, Bann Mee, Lopburi, it showed that methods for transfer of such wisdom to their descendants were the same among the three groups which included:

4.1 learning by doing

4.2 being familiar with a craftsman to learn

4.3 being of assistance to a craftsman

4.4 living in the same environment of the elderly to be inspired to do the same and to take it as second career

References

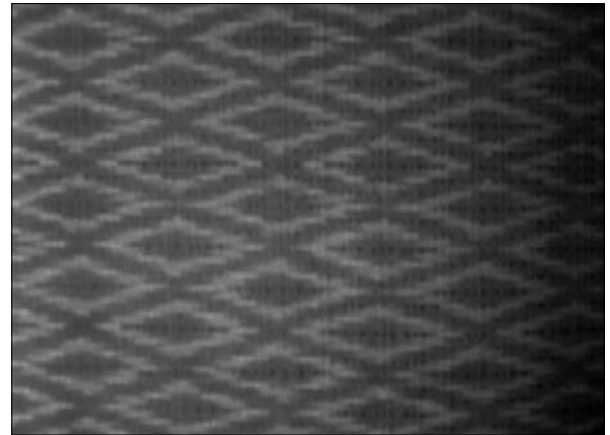
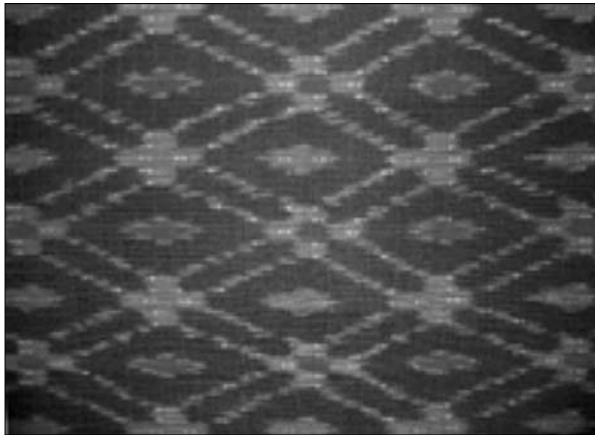
- Art and Cultural Center, Thepsatri Rajabhat Institute, Lopburi (2001) Local Handmade Ikat Cloth in Lopburi and Saraburi. Bangkok: P.A. Living Co.,Ltd.
- Nikul Onlamai, Interviewee, Jariya Rodjun, Interviewer, at House No. 85, Village 10, Hin Pak Sub-District, Bann Mee District, Lopburi on 3 May 2007.
- Patcharanee Wattanachai. (2003). Study and Analysis of Ikat Cloth Design of Lao Krung Thai People in the Central of Thailand. Thesis for fulfilling Bachelor Degree of Education (Arts Education). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Copied document.
- Rujira Tansumrit, Interviewee, Jariya Rodjun, Interviewer, at House No. 81, Village 10, Hin Pak Sub-District, Bann Mee District, Lopburi on 20 August 2007.

Songsak et al.(1987).Asian Cloth: Common Cultural Heritage. n.p. ``

Songsak Prangwattanakul and Patricia Sisman. (1987). Cloth of Lanna, Yuan, Lua and Laos. Bangkok: Art and Cultural Promotion Center, Chiangmai University.

Wanida Rukprom, Interviewee, Jariya Rodjun, Interviewer, at House No. 82, Village 10, Hin Pak Sub-District, Bann Mee District, Lopburi on 3 May 2007

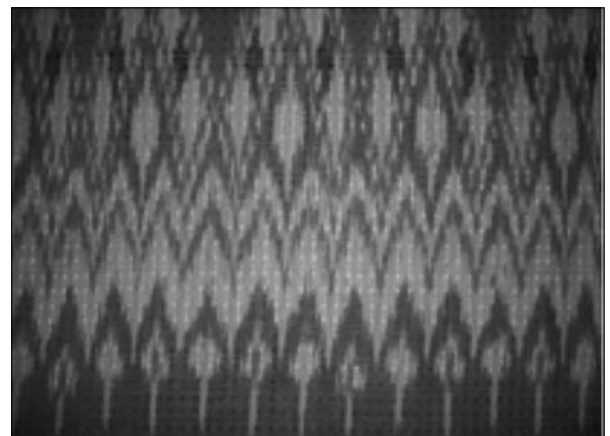
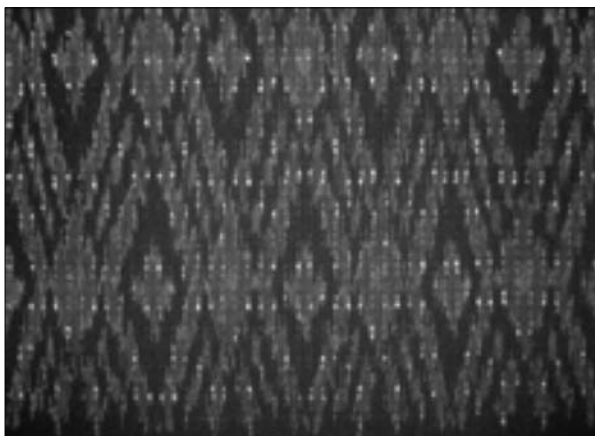
(1)



(2)

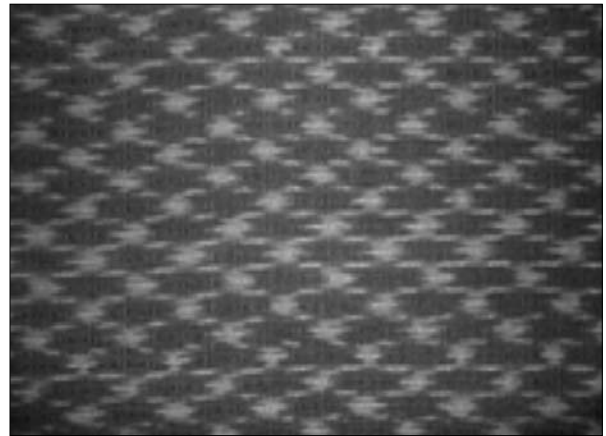
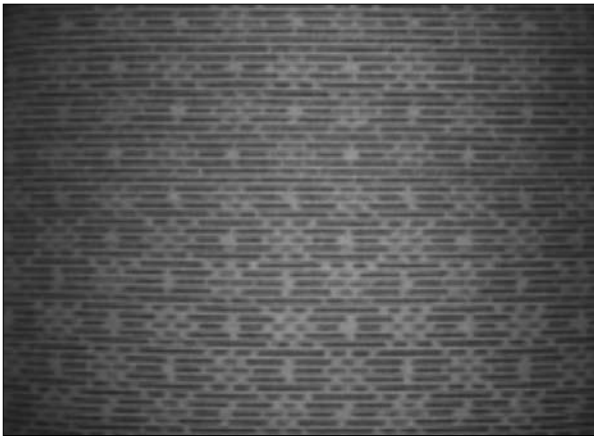


(3)

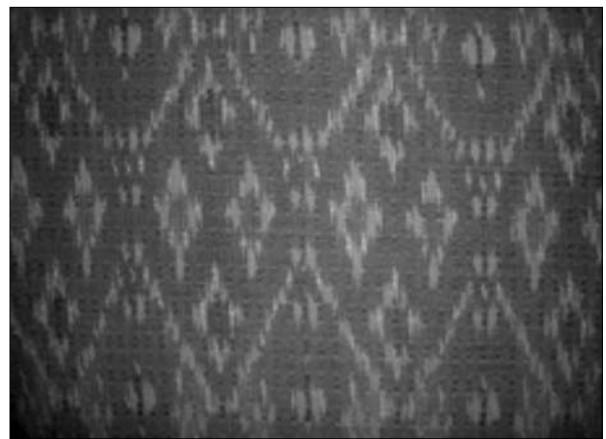


Khao Lham Tud Design (1) Bann Puan Group (2) Bann Gluay Group (3) Aunt Narong Center

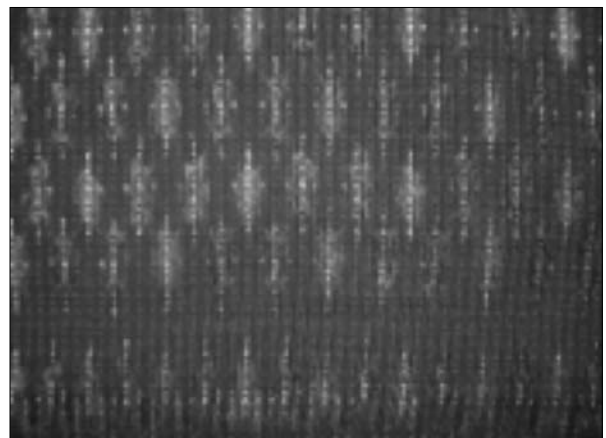
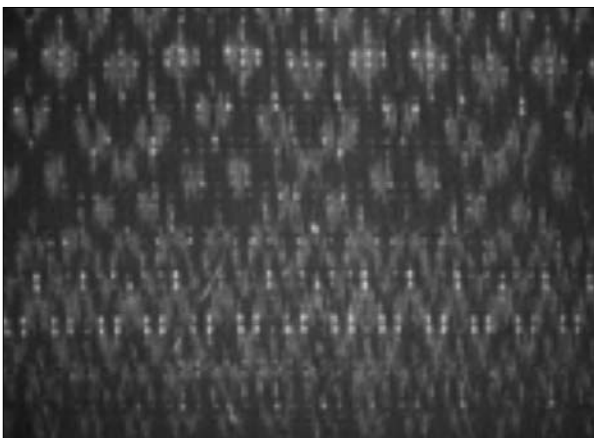
(1)



(2)

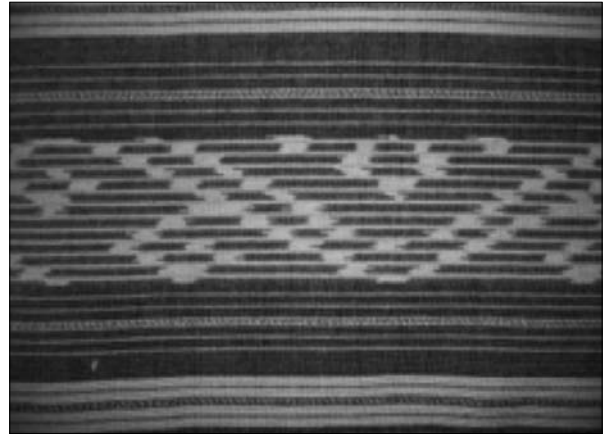
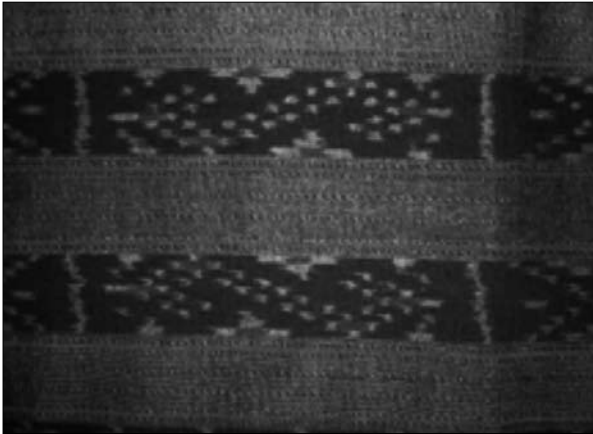


(3)

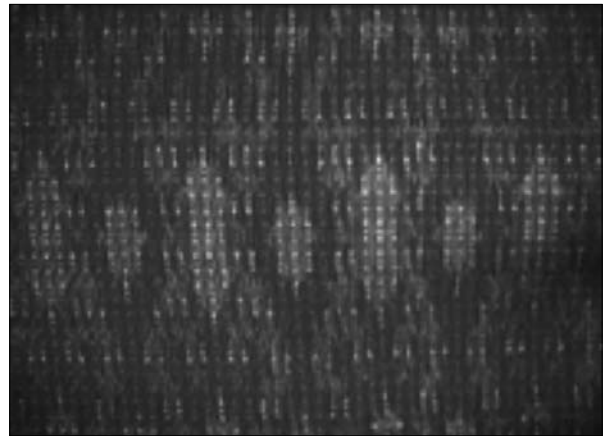


Mha Tum Design (1) Bann Puan Group (2) Bann Gluay Group (3) Aunt Narong Center

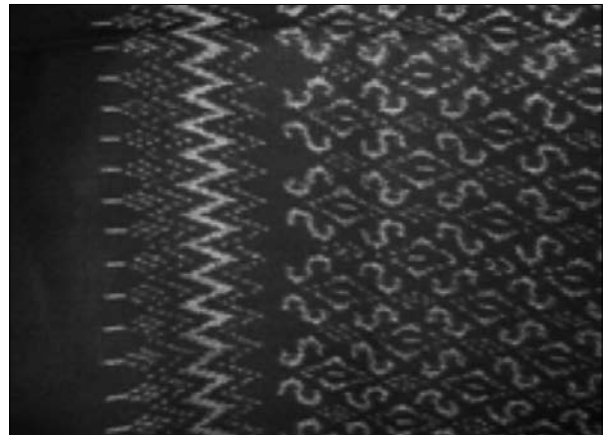
(1)



(2)

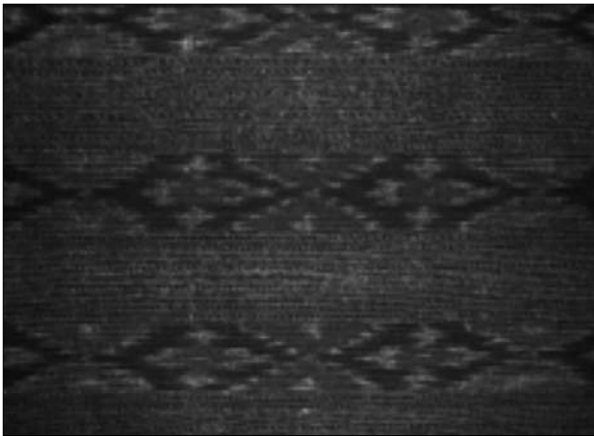


(3)

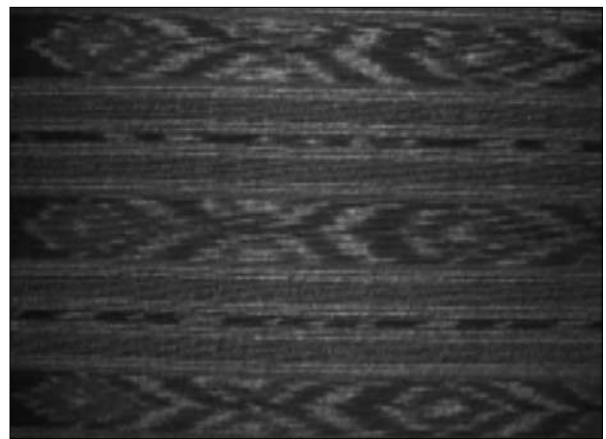


Mee Khor Design (1) Bann Puan Group (2) Bann Gluay Group (3) Aunt Narong Center

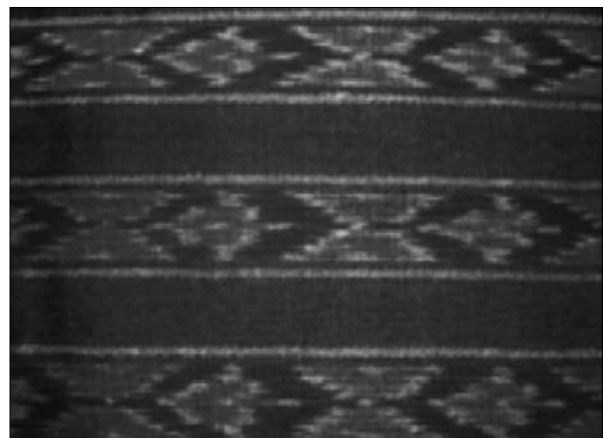
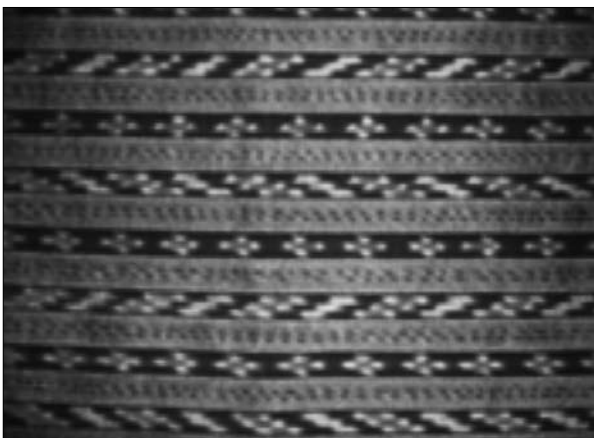
(1)



(2)

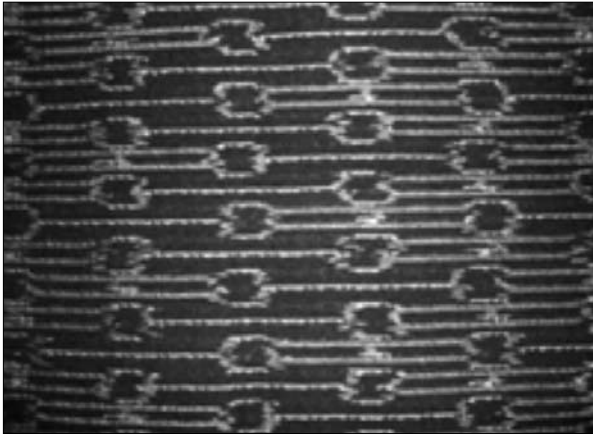


(3)

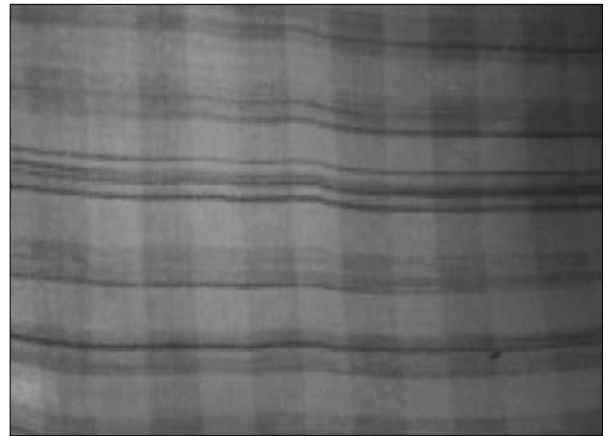
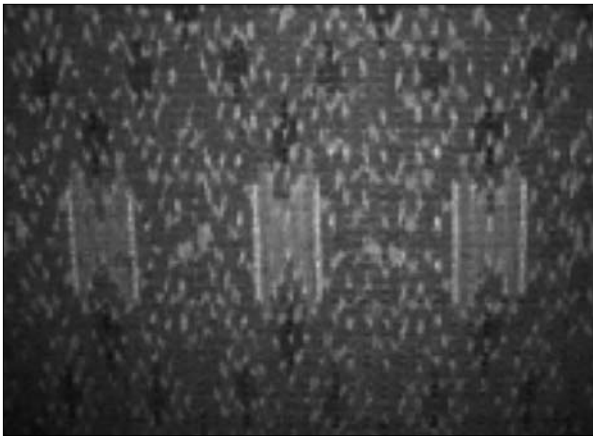


Mee Lai Design (1) Bann Puan Group (2) Bann Gluay Group (3) Aunt Narong Center

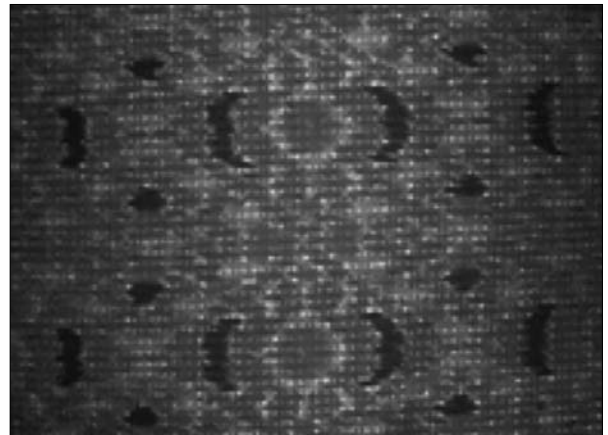
(1)



(2)

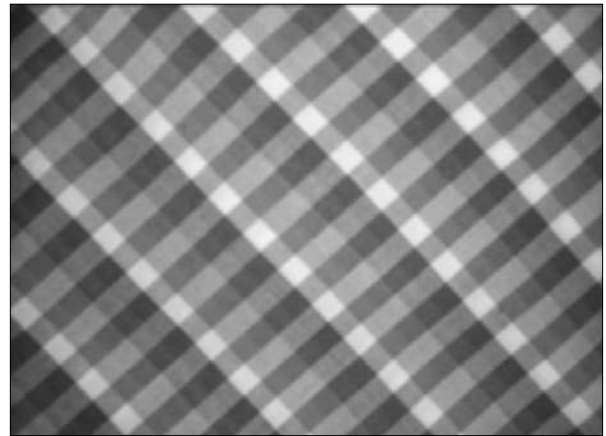
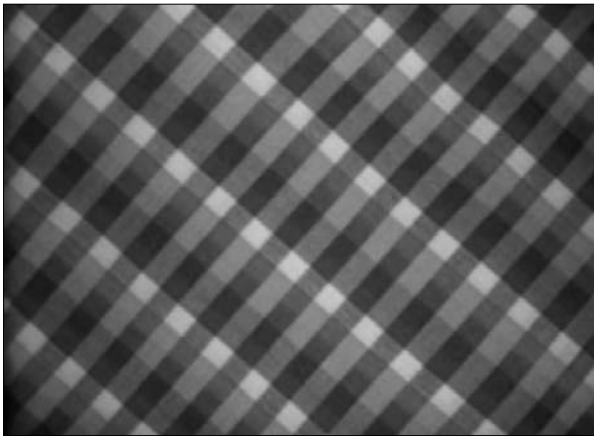


(3)

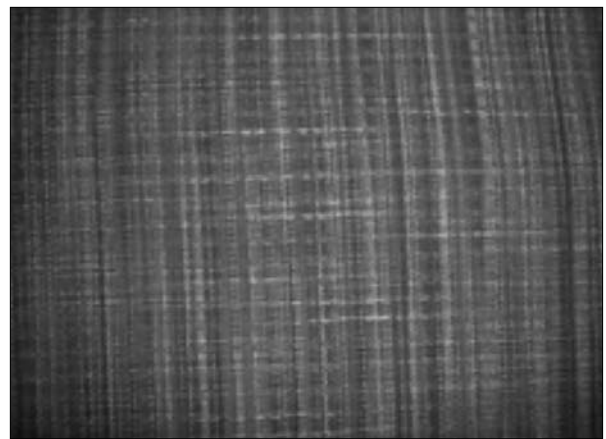
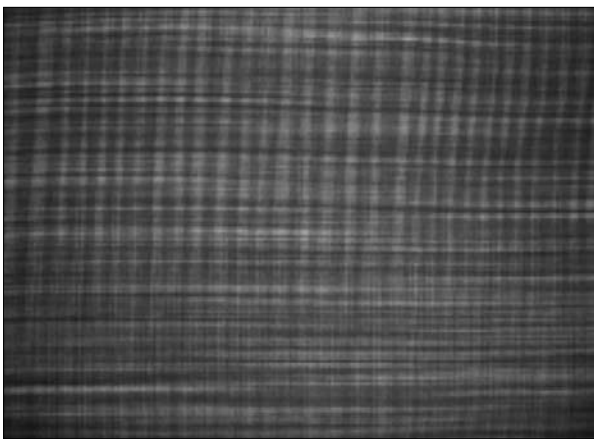


Geometric Shapes Design (1) Bann Puan Group (2) Bann Gluay Group (3) Aunt Narong Center

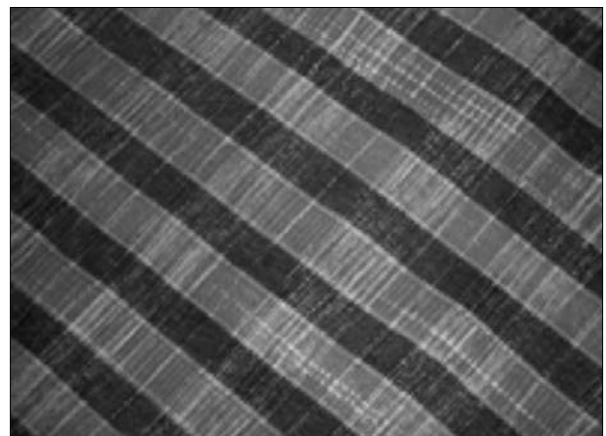
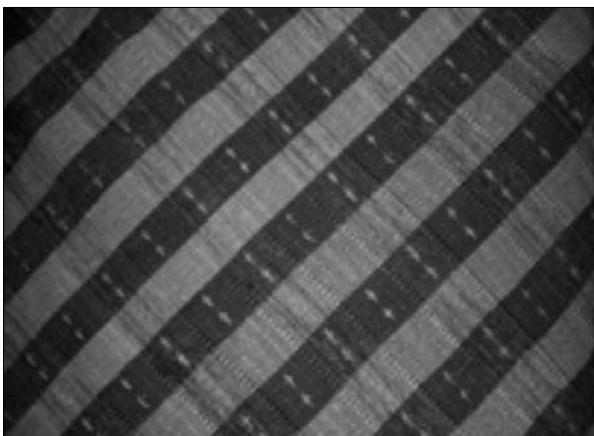
(1)



(2)



(3)



Scot design (1) Bann Puan Group (2) Bann Gluay Group (3) Aunt Narong Center

