Taqueté: Past and Present

by Nancy Arthur Hoskins

Taqueté, a weft-faced compound tabby, is an elaboration of plain weave with many names in the textile literature: weft-faced Summer and Winter weave, weft-faced polychrome Summer and Winter weave (without tabby), weft-faced two-tie unit weave, two-faced weave with pattern in reverse, double-faced weave, and Coptic weave.

There are many variations in this basic threading, such as Peter Collingwood’s favored threadings for rug and shaft-switching. In this structure, colors exchange on the obverse and reverse in a bi-color taqueté. Colors blend on the reverse in a tri-color taqueté.

The weft-faced compound tabby structure is woven with a unit threading system, a repetitious treadling order, and a double pass of four weft picks to create two or multi-block, bi-color patterns. Taqueté is a compound structure which means that there is more than a single function for the warp and weft:

- Warp: the unit threading system has binding ends on two shafts that alternate with pattern ends on all other available shafts.
• Weft: in a bi-color taqueté four weft picks work together in pairs as 'complements' to one another in a bi-color taqueté to form each pass (one solid of weft covering warp ends). A color sequence is repeated to form the pattern blocks.

When Rome ruled the western world, Near Eastern and Egyptian weavers wove two and three-color weft-faced patterned taqueté textiles of linen and wool for pillows, coverlets, and clothing – perhaps as early as the second century AD. Taqueté is an interesting and very versatile structure.

![Detail from a recreation of a bi-color Coptic taqueté at the Royal Ontario Museum. Publication: Hoskins, 1992/2011.](image1)

![Detail from a recreation of a tri-color Coptic taqueté at the Musée du Louvre. Publication: Hoskins, 1992/2011.](image2)

**References:**
