

**APPLICATION OF PATTERNS IN
INTERIOR DESIGN:
Case study of Nairobi Serena Hotel**

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REG. NO. B/50/7097/2002

This Thesis is presented as

Part fulfillment for the award of Master of Arts in Design

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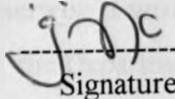
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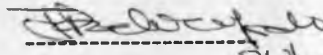
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this paper to all the young aspiring Designers in the quest for Knowledge
and
To My Wife and Children.

ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to unveil that conscious use of patterns in interior environment can make a more effective and successful business success in the hotels and hospitality industry. The researcher uses Nairobi Serena Hotel as a case study to principally test the hypothesis.

To meet this objective, questionnaires were randomly administered because the researcher believed it provided a wide population cover and non-biased response. The target population included the hotel patrons and the hotel staff who provided a measure of the effectiveness of patterns in the Hotel. Practicing Interior designers provided professional view, relevance, value and evaluation of the use of patterns in the Hotel. Formal interview with the Design consultant shaded more light to the reasons for selection, and the meaning embedded in the patterns. A literature review on patterns provided a basic understanding and information on patterns, as described by other scholars.

The analysis of research findings positively show that effective and deliberate use of pattern is instrumental to the success of Nairobi Serena Hotel. The results of the findings also provide the extent of understanding and appreciation of patterns in interior and exterior spaces as observed by all the hotel users.

The research concludes by providing information on the sources of the patterns and why they have been used in Nairobi Serena Hotel with the view explaining how much the use of patterns has influenced the public and user to visit the Serena Hotel.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The Serena Hotel Group was established in the mid-1970s and comprises of Hotels and Lodges, which are owned and managed by Tourism Promotion Services, a division of Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development. The mandate of TPS is to realize tourism's potential in selected areas of the developing world, in an environmentally sensitive manner.



Plate 1:1 Nairobi Serena Hotel Central Park View¹

The objectives are to promote awareness of the environment within developing countries, to improve appreciation of the culture, to help protect the natural environment, and finally to revitalize and sustain cultural traditions.

¹ Nairobi Serena Hotel Brochure, 2004

There are fifteen Serena luxury hotels, resorts and safari lodges, which are found in some of the world's most exquisite and remote settings in East Africa² (Plate 1:2) and Pakistan in the Middle East. A typical example is Nairobi Serena Hotel (Plate 1:1). All Serena hotels' premises are enhanced by unique surroundings. For example, the buildings blend and harmonize with the local landscape by utilizing eco-friendly materials while respecting local ways of life, handicrafts and products and the various sites expand horizons for travellers. Serena Hotels are considered and recognized as eco-tourism pioneers, initiating important environmental programmes to protect the Continent's wildlife and fragile habitats. For example the Serena website has commented: -

“Serena hotels aim to provide a showcase and a stimulus for local architectural traditions and crafts, as well as accommodation in underserved regional centres. The Serena Hotel Group throughout East Africa prides itself on the integration and blending indigenous themes, culture, design and materials in the architecture, interior design and landscape, complemented with the highest of international standards of hospitality, care and service. Visitors to the heart of East Africa who choose to stay with Serena Hotels experience the ‘real’ Africa as it’s meant to be, with its natural and traditional heritage preserved in style”³.



Plate 1:2, A map of Serena Hotels and Lodges in East Africa⁴

² Mombasa Serena Beach, Amboseli, Mara and Samburu Serena Safari Lodges. Tanzania: Ngorongoro, Serengeti and Lake Manyara Serena Lodges and Kirawira Camp. Zanzibar: Zanzibar Serena Inn

³ Internet, 2005, <http://www.serenahotels.com/company.htm>

⁴ Nairobi Serena Hotel Brochure, 2004

Serena group of Hotels and Lodges are considered a success in the East African market; according to the results of a regional survey carried out at the end of the year 2004 by PriceWaterhouseCoopers and the Nation Media Group. The report stated about 250 of the region leading Chief Executive Officers interviewed chose Serena Hotel Group as the best and the company they most respect in the East African hotel and tourism sector⁵.

In addition to being eco-friendly, Serena Hotels have consciously adapted a policy that all the hotels in the group should offer diverse thematic architecture and interiors that are culturally relevant and in tune with both the vernacular and assimilated ideas. For example the Zanzibar Serena Inn, in the heart of Old Stone Town, Zanzibar, has been influenced by the Islamic culture and the rich centuries of heritage and trading culture. The romantic buildings combine traditional Swahili architecture with Arabic, European and Indian motifs⁶



Plate 1:3. A map indicating the location of Nairobi Serena Hotel⁷

Considered by many to be Nairobi's finest hotel, is the Nairobi Serena Hotel. The Hotel is among the few five star hotels in Kenya, and according to the information available in the

⁵ Internet, 2005, <http://www.serinahotels.com/press.asp?id=20042> 15th November 2004

⁶ The Zanzibar Inn is discussed in the literature review in relation to pattern.

⁷ Nairobi Serena Hotel Brochure, 2004

Internet⁸, the Hotel is the flagship of Serena Hotels' fleet of world-class hotels in Kenya, and a member of the Leading Hotels of the world. The Hotel is also a financially stable institution, with the most recent phase of development by TPS being the floating of the hotel shares on the Nairobi Stock Exchange.

Nairobi Serena Hotel enjoys one of the finest locations in the city of Nairobi, the Capital of Kenya. The Hotel is located at the junction of Kenyatta Avenue and the Processional Way and overlooking the Central Park and adjacent to Uhuru Park (Plate 1:3). The Hotel, is set amongst the lush-green abundance of extensive tropical gardens, looking out over the gentle green avenues of Central Park and commands a panoramic view over the glittering modern highrises along the Uhuru Highway of Nairobi central business district which can be seen in Plate 1:4.

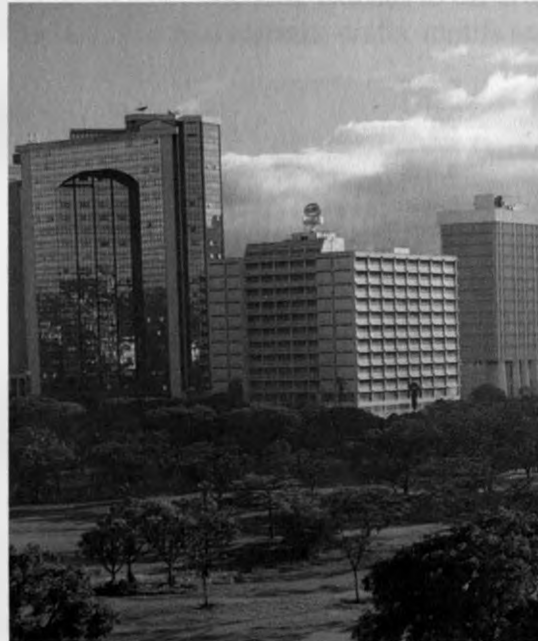


Plate 1:4. Panoramic view of Nairobi City seen from Nairobi Serena hotel.⁹

⁸ Internet August 2005 <http://www.serenahotels.com/company.htm>

The hotel five star status is manifested in the exceptional standards of accommodation, conference facilities, service and hospitality, cuisine and the most modern amenities. The thematic interiors reach their fullest expression in the intricate timberwork that accentuate most of the Hotel interior spaces and especially the hotel rooms,¹⁰ as it can be seen in Plates 1:5 and 1:6. These appear on the door frames, fetish screens; bed-head boards, chair frames and curtain boxes. The five star status also allows the hotel to enjoy a variety of both local and foreign clientele on business or holiday trips in all the seasons. Nairobi Serena Brochure¹¹ highlights some of the key achievements of the Hotel by stating: -

“The hotel is sensitively constructed from ecologically sympathetic materials; the interior decor of the hotel reflects a kaleidoscope of cultural influences blending Moroccan mystique and a breadth of African heritage into one elegant and harmonious whole. The hotel has all the comforts of home... Serenely elegant, essentially African and superbly equipped, the Nairobi Serena has the ultimate in room choices. All are appointed to the highest international standards and have been individually interior designed along pan-African themes. The Interiors inspired by Pan African design themes reach their fullest expression in the intricate timberwork that accentuates the guest rooms. The extraordinary Contrasts, extends to the architecture, decoration and catering of the properties, and the use of local materials, crafts, motifs and design idioms.”



Plate 1:5. Typical hotel room lounge at Nairobi Serena Hotel¹²

⁹ Nairobi Serena Hotel Brochure, 2004

¹⁰ Details of the designs are described in chapter four

¹¹ Nairobi Serena Hotels brochure, 2004: 8

¹² Plates 1:5-6, Source: Nairobi Serena Hotel Brochure, 2004



Plate 1:6, Typical hotel room at Nairobi Serena Hotel

1.1 Background to the problem

Patterns¹³ have and continue to play important roles in shaping our daily lives; this can be traced back to the early cave paintings, the ancient civilizations to the modern world. Patterns are used to enhance the human body through techniques such as tattooing and body painting by utilizing various tools and materials, and also to beautify objects utilized by man in daily activities, such as printed and woven textiles, leather works, pottery, basketry, carvings and wood works among others. These various designs help to establish personal and community identity, because symbols and signs carry symbolic meaning to members of specific communities. Interiors and exteriors of human shelter from huts to high-rise buildings are adorned with pattern.

According to Jewell,¹⁴ adornment of house walls in traditional times served the function of preserving the structure and wall and also enhanced the status of the owners. For example, the sculptured mud around the Hausa doorways strengthens the edges while the Ndembele murals on the houses in Southern Africa add a protective layer of paint to the mud walls.

Interior spaces provided and continue to provide the physical context for daily activities, and give substance and life to the architecture, which houses them. The Interior designer plays a

vital role in transforming empty spaces created by the architectural structures and shells of building into functional and visually pleasing spaces that enhance our status, promote associations and carry image and meaning to the people who use and experience them. Choice of material, type of surface adornment and finishes determine the final atmosphere of interior spaces.

Why do designers employ patterns? Patterns in interior spaces play a role in surface decoration and as a communication tool. Hatton¹⁵ in the preface to his book on design provides reasons why we employ patterns states;

“There is at present, a strong desire among persons of taste for plain object, for objects devoid of complication of form, although beautiful in shape, delicate in proportion, and good in colour. Such a demand as this, excludes decoration, or ornaments, as an unnecessary addition, as much on the score of beauty as for any other reason...’But simultaneously with the rise of a demand for plain objects of good form and colour has risen a deeper regard for pattern. That patterns are a rhythmical form of art, with a justification of their own, is now admitted. Some have not hesitated to ascribe to them a deeper, more mystical and more symbolic significance than pictorial Art can claim...Lifted thus into a rather more exalted region, the works of the decorator become more definitely works of Art.”

There are several kinds of meaning, which can be conveyed by use of pattern in interior spaces. Some operate at a general level understood by the public because they have direct associations with their daily lives, and others are more specific to certain cultures and carry meanings that are not direct or obvious. Rodemann,¹⁶an author of a book on *Patterns and Psychology* while emphasizing on patterns states, that the most important design tool is to understand pattern, use and effects.” She further argues that;

“It is not a secret that patterns and combinations of patterns in an interior design can produce a broad variety of physical, emotional, and psychological responses in those who view them, from cheerfulness and a desire to get things done to agitation or lethargy.”

She however points out that very few interior designers have a strong grasp of how and why these responses are produced and which types of patterns are most likely to evoke a specific

¹³ Pattern - purposive repetition or multiplication of a basic unit, (the motif) to form a large orderly sequence.

¹⁴ Jewell R. 1994, pg 12

¹⁵ Hatton, R. 1903: preface

reaction. Even less is known about pattern preferences among different demographic groups. Most studies available on these subjects are purely academic, largely theoretical, or devoid of any reference to practical application. The information intended to be passed across by the patterns to the users of the spaces is therefore not understood and appreciated. It is in light of these that the research based.

1.2 Problem Statement

Patterns play a vital role of enhancement and adornment of interior spaces. Whereas they are perceived, recognized and appreciated by human senses of touch and sight, their application in most other parts of the world is deliberate, and clearly understood to carry social, cultural and religious meaning to the users and designers of the spaces. However in Kenya, little has been done by professionals and scholars on the application of patterns types, how or where to apply them specifically. Consequently the origin and reasons for patterns remain a matter to be assumed, not clearly understood, defined and explainable for the good of design today and the future. It is the perspective of the researcher that application of patterns in interior design in Kenyan is therefore often unconscious through using pattern without knowledge of thuer meaning and, or their origin. The research attempts to study the existing patterns in the various interior spaces of Nairobi Serena Hotel with a view to source the origins, meanings and essence, and to provide the information to the interior design fraternity, the space users and the general public.

1.3 Hypothesis

- The success of Nairobi Serena Hotel contemporary interior design is partly because of the sensitive conscious use of patterns.

¹⁶ Rode Mann. P. 1999: preface

1.4 Significance of study

Debates within the design community, have argued that patterns form a basis or a building block for wholesome design specifically in interior design. The debates were triggered by the post ornamentalist period of sanitized environments. The study attempts to provide general information on why designers consider use of patterns, and how the objectives are met. Patterns should not only be used for decoration purposes, but should be used to communicate other important information such as culture, religion and time. It is often the case that most artists or designers apply patterns because they are visually attractive without understanding the origins, meaning and essence. Consequently the outcome of the use of patterns may not fulfill all the desired purposes. The research provides guidelines on the evaluation of patterns before final applications. The body of knowledge provided helps to understand and shed light on the rich and diverse application of patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel, and can be used as a source of information for more specific studies by other scholars on the subject.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The Research purposefully focuses on Nairobi Serena hotel, and principally investigates the diverse use of patterns in its various interior spaces, ¹⁷because the researcher believes the success of the hotel is partly due to the rich cultural diversity manifested in the architecture, interior space and landscaping, in terms of material selection and the conscious use of patterns or designs. The researcher Investigates and evaluate the richness and appropriateness of the use of patterns in the Hotel and their contribution to its success and whether the cultural and religious meaning and significance of the patterns can be attributed to the acknowledged success of the hotel.

¹⁷ Hotel main reception and Bambara resident lounge, guest rooms, the Mandhari restaurant, Café Mahgreb, pool bar, conference rooms and Maisha Health club.

1.6 Scope of the study

The research on patterns is defined to cover Nairobi Serena Hotel in Kenya and is principally centered on specific elements of the interior space¹⁸. A comparative case study on Mombasa Serena Hotel and Zanzibar Serena Inn documents consistence in design patterns.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Sources of information on patterns were limited; Books provided shallow reference materials hence Internet sources were relied upon. Other problems encountered were language barriers and time limitations, and unwillingness by the respondents to be interviewed.

¹⁸Floor finishes, Skirting, Dado rails, cornices, ceilings, doors and doorframes, and soft furnishings

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the nature of the research, descriptions of the methods used, and the timeline of the research. Principally, this is descriptive research that seeks to address the problem statement under investigation.

2.1 Data collection instruments

In order to achieve the purpose of the research, the researcher employed secondary and primary methods of data collection. Literature review from various sources such as books, journals, magazines, brochures, newspapers and internet provided secondary data on the basic understanding of patterns from a broader perspective as documented by other scholars on the subject.

Primary data was collected initially through a field survey, taking of photographs and observing of Nairobi Serena hotel to identify the problem area. This was later followed by comprehensive visits to analyse and document the existing hotel environment in relation to the topic of study. Later formal interviews were conducted with hotels top customer care management and the design consultants¹⁹. Informal interviews were conducted with a number of hotel patrons chosen at random. Structured questionnaires were largely employed to gather data from the hotel patrons, the staff of Nairobi Serena Hotel and practising interior designers in Nairobi.

There are several reasons why the researcher opted for the three data collection instruments:

- (a) Four site surveys carried out enabled the researcher to obtain and record the physical state of the hotel facilities that would otherwise have been difficult to obtain via interviews or questionnaires. The researcher took photographs and physically observed the site. The existing patterns applied in the interior elements

of the hotel such as the doorframes, dado rails²⁰, window pelmet boxes²¹, decorative facia, cornices, floor and furniture, for example could only be determined through a site survey. These qualitative attributes were observed and recorded through sketches, drawings and photographs and any such appropriate ways. Quantitative attributes such as space on site were taken using tape measures.

- (b) Three Formal interviews were conducted to gather detailed information from the design consultants and the hotels top customer care management. Structured questions e.g. (what makes you visit Serena hotel?) were directed to the respondents by the researcher and clarifications were sought where the answers were unclear or non-convincing to the researcher to the researcher.
- (c) Informal interviews were initially carried out with 30 hotel patrons in a period of one week, but the method was dropped because of language barriers between the researcher and non-English speaking patrons, and most respondent were unwilling to be interviewed.
- (d) Questionnaires were administered to 42 hotel patrons and staff of the hotel chosen in random, in a period of one month. Questionnaires to 7 practicing interior designers and consultants were administered via the Internet. All were answered and returned. Questionnaires were preferred because: -
 - (i) They were are easy to administer and the target population was covered in the proposed schedule of one month.

¹⁹ Symbion International and Planning interiors.

²⁰ Use of a different material at the lower part of the wall.

²¹ Curtain boxes.

- (ii) Questionnaires were confidential because personal details and information were not included in the questionnaires. Often confidentiality is necessary to ensure participants' responses are honest.
- (iii) They were inexpensive to administer and did not need high funding.

However there existed weaknesses with the use of questionnaires: -

- (i) The population sample of the hotel patrons was composed of people from different nationalities thus creating a language barrier. Questionnaires were therefore administered to English speaking patrons only, and therefore the results could not be fully generalized to cover the entire population of the patrons.
- (ii) The feedback from some questionnaires were short and shallow and did not provide the required detailed or useful information. Some questions were also left unanswered²² e.g. Age and profession.
- (iii) Seven questionnaires were not returned for analysis.

2.2 Population and Sample

As described in previous topic, the study principally centered on use of patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel, but a brief study on Mombasa Serena Hotel and Zanzibar Serena Inn, provided a comparative data source on the use of patterns in the three chains of hotels. Lamu architecture was included to provide insight into Islamic architecture, which the researcher believes is a constituent of Nairobi Serena Hotel.

The researcher 's choice of Nairobi Serena Hotel was attributed to the following: -

- (i) Nairobi Serena Hotel is among the few five star hotels in Kenya, and meets the international classification criteria that:

- A five star hotel property should offer the widest range of public areas and the greatest variety of quality and elegant services. A five-star hotel will customarily have a professional multilingual staff and a high

²² This are represented as missing systems in the data analysis

staff-to-guest ratio, luxurious public rooms and accommodations, refined decor and appointments, at least one restaurant, one lounge, some meeting space, suites or other multi-room accommodations, swimming pool, ultra modern health club, gift shop, meticulously groomed landscapes and round-the-clock room service. The quality must be sustained and improved continuously from year to year²³

(ii) It is located in Nairobi, the metropolitan city of Kenya, and thus enjoys a variety of clientele both local and foreign visiting on either business or holiday trips.

(iii). The Nairobi Serena is the flagship of Serena Hotels in Kenya, and a member of the Leading Hotels of the World and is listed in the Nairobi Stock Exchange, indicating that the hotel is a financially stable institution

Four samples for the research were drawn from the following population: -

2.3 Data Presentation and Analysis

Collected data was compiled and presented in photographs, sketches, charts, and graphs where appropriate. Photographic comparisons and descriptions were utilized to analyze collected data.

²³Internet August 2005 <http://www.starserviceonline.com/main/classification.aspx>

2.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

AKFED	Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development. An international development agency, which promotes entrepreneurship in the private sector in specific regions of the developing world.
Client	The owners of Nairobi Serena Hotel, who are Tourism Promotion Services.
Design	The general use of principles and elements to resolve an identified problem through a process.
Interior design	Interior design is a specialized field in architecture that is concerned with functional improvement, aesthetic enrichment and psychological enhancement physiological needs of interior spaces.
Interior design Consultant	Professional lead interior designer involved in the provision of interior design services.
Hotel management	The workers of Nairobi Serena Hotel either on managerial or administrators.
Motif	Basic or simplest design unit that is complete by itself, but can also be combined to form a pattern. Sometimes referred to as a cell.
Patrons	Serena Hotel visitors either on business or recreational trip.
Pattern	Purposive repetition or multiplication of a basic unit (the motif) to form a large orderly sequence. It is also referred to as a design when in its completeness.
Professional Interior Designer	Practicing interior designer not involved with the design of Nairobi Serena Hotel.
The Hotel	Nairobi Serena Hotel, the case study of the research.
TPS	Tourism Promotion Services. A division of AKFED that promotes tourism in developing countries.
Intensity	Strength
Value	Worth
Door frames	The timberwork that keeps the door secured at its position.
Landscape Design	The art of planning and creating attractive external ‘sceneries’.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.0 Overview

In design, patterns are never quite what you expect - a surprise here, a flourish there, a change of color, the flip or rotation of a motif where you might not predict it. The more you look, the more variations you find. How can we explain this phenomenon of patterns? Is it the result of human choice, or human error? The natural world is full of wondrous patterns and designs. You might discern pattern in the leaves on a branch growing in a repetitive design, flowers petals, a snowflake forms a beautiful pattern. Some inbred instinct drives animals to form symmetrical patterns in herds, flock of birds flying in formation, school of fish, or herds of deer protecting themselves. The wings of a butterfly form a pattern, as one wing is the mirror image of the other. The feathers of a peacock have very intricate and colourful designs. Patterns can also result from the creation of human mind and hand, either abstracted from the natural forms or purely new patterns that have no relation to the natural world.²⁴

It is difficult to trace the origin of patterns and when they were first used, but according to Bayer²⁵: -

“Pattern and ornament are as old as creation and are found in every culture no matter how primitive, and the reproducing of patterns inspired by the beautiful patterns by nature, has been a basic design principle throughout the history of humankind, in the forms of body decoration, utilitarian and decorative objects such as pottery, weaving, and architecture”.

Human beings have been fascinated with body decoration right since the beginning of life on earth. Archeologists dug out facts that proved that early human cave dwellers braided seashells into their hair and wore bone necklaces. The art kept on improving with time and later Stone Age civilizations painted their hair and bodies with plant and mineral dyes. The colouring of bodies suggested group membership or rank, which they belonged. Gradually, symbolic body

²⁴ Internet August 2005 <http://www.aldokkan.com/art/architecture.htm>

painting or colouring became a magical part of hunting rituals, religious festivals, and ceremonies. Information available in the Internet²⁶ suggests that body decoration has been used for over 40,000 years, all over the world, and for many different purposes; traditional cultures use pattern and paint for rituals and celebrations, and to symbolize their physical and spiritual being. For example, the practice of henna body decoration in the modern world dates back to Islam, and is thought to have first come into use in Egypt for coloring fingertips and finger nails, palms of hands, and soles of feet²⁷.

Patterns have also been used for adornment of buildings since the beginning of civilization. For example between 2780–2689 B.C, Egyptian sculptors integrated ornamentation, hieroglyphic and pictorial carvings in brilliant colours. They developed conventionalized motifs such as palm leaves, the papyrus plant, and the buds and flowers of the lotus. Other motifs of Egyptian ornament are symbolic, such as the scarab, or sacred beetle, the solar disk, and the vulture. According to Internet²⁸ “Hieroglyphics were decoration as well as records of historic events. Egyptian sculptors possessed the highest capacity for integrating ornamentation and the essential forms of their buildings. From natural objects, such as palm leaves, the papyrus plant, and the buds and flowers of the lotus, they developed conventionalized motifs.”

What is a pattern? Different authors provide diverse, but related definitions of pattern.

Hornby²⁹ defines pattern as:-

“The regular way in which things happen or are done. A regular arrangement of lines, shapes, and colours as a design on material e.g. carpets.” He also defines patterning as “the forming of fixed ways of behaving by copying or repeating things.”

Beyer³⁰ discusses patterns as related to symmetry as being

²⁵ Beyer J. 1998: 10

²⁶ Internet August 2005 <http://www.info4india.com/Indian-mehndi-design/indian-mehndi-henna-history.shtml>

²⁷ Internet August 2005 <http://www.aldokkan.com/art/architecture.htm>

²⁸ Internet August 2005 <http://www.aldokkan.com/art/architecture.htm>

“The basic organizing principle and a system of repeating parts that form a design.” It is that symmetry that creates pattern, and begins when a non-symmetrical motif (a cell) repeated to form a pattern. How a particular motif is repeated determines how the pattern will look, and one single cell can be repeated in a wide variety of ways to produce many different designs.

The definition directly equates design to mean pattern.

On the other hand, Ching³¹ describes pattern as,

“the decorative design or ornamentation of a surface, which is almost always based on the repetition of a basic unit called a design motif”.

But Dorothy and Donald³² explain: -

“Pattern implies a design composed of one or more devices or motifs multiplied and arranged in orderly sequence”

But categorically clarifies:-

“A single device, however complicated or complete in itself it may be, is not a pattern, but a unit, which the designer, working according to some definite plan of action, may compose a pattern.”

All the above mentioned theories, acknowledge that pattern only arises from repetition of lines, motifs or shapes, forms, colours and texture to create a desired visual or tactile trait. Whether in nature or art, a pattern relies upon three characteristics: a unit, repetition, and a system of organization. Pattern can therefore be summarized as purposive repetition or multiplication of a basic unit (the motif) to form a large orderly sequence. (Plate 3: 2).

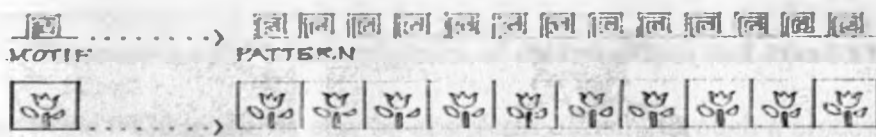


Plate 3: 2 drawing showing a motif and a pattern³³

²⁹ Hornby A.S. 2000:856

³⁰ Beyer J. 1998: 10

³¹ Ching F. D. 1987,

³² Dorothy K. and Donald W.C. 1988:

³³ Plates 3:2-3, Source: Interior Design Illustrated, 1987,

3.1 Elements of patterns.

To clearly understand patterns and patterning, it is vital to describe some components and elements that form patterns and how they are interrelated. Ching¹⁶ provides a clear overview to this effect. He describes the components and elements of pattern as follows:

A point or a dot is the generator of all forms, it marks a location in space and conceptually, it has no length, width, or depth. It is static and directionless. Dots by themselves form patterns through different combinations and computations. As a point moves, it leaves a trace of a line—this is called the first dimension. In basic terms a line is a repetition of points. Line is an essential element that helps us define shape, a characteristic by which we recognize things. Lines are also used to create texture and patterns on the surfaces of forms. Shape is the means by which we distinguish one form from another. It may refer to the contour of a line, the outline of a plane or boundary of three-dimensional mass, FN Ching³⁴ (see plate 3:3).



Plate 3: 3 Drawing showing relationship between point, line and shape

There are several broad categories of natural shapes that represent the images and forms of our world. These shapes may be abstracted, usually through a process of simplification and still remain the essential characteristics of their natural sources. Examples are; leaf and wood grains.

Non-objective shapes make no obvious reference to a specific object or to a particular subject matter. Some non-objective shapes may result from a process such as calligraphy, and carry

³⁴ Ching F.D.1987;pg 43:

meaning as symbols.³⁵ He continues to say, others may be geometric and elicit responses based on their purely visual qualities. Geometric shapes dominate the built environment of both architecture and interior design. There are two separate and distinct types of geometric shapes- rectilinear and curvilinear.

In their most regular form, curvilinear shapes are circular while rectilinear shapes include the series of polygons, which can be inscribed within a circle. Of these, the most significant geometric shapes are the circle, the triangle and the square. Different shapes represent various attributes; for example, a circle represents unity, continuity, and economy. Triangles represent stability, and square represents the pure and rational.

Colour is a visual character, which helps define pattern and affects our perception of forms and dimensions. Colour schemes and the effect of optical mixing through contrasting of hue, values and intensity³⁶ are also the concerns of this paper. For example tonal sequential distribution of colour values to follow the pattern of nature in interior spaces: floor darkest finish, walls; middle to light range and the ceiling lightest range. Texture is that specific quality of a surface, which results from its three-dimensional structure i.e. relative smoothness, or roughness of a surface. It can also be used to describe the characteristic surface of familiar materials such as the roughness of stone, the grain of wood and the weave of a fabric.

According to Ching³⁷, Visual texture is of two basic types: *Tactile textures* are real and can be felt by sense of touch and sight, (Plate 3:4) *Visual textures* can be perceived only by the sense of sight only and may be illusory or real (Plate 3:5).

³⁵ Source: Interior Design Illustrated, 1987;pg48.

³⁶ Hue: The Name of a pure colour for example red, blue yellow, green. Value: Lightness or darkness of a colour - the amount of grey or white. Intensity: the saturation of a colour.

³⁷ Ching F. D. 1987,

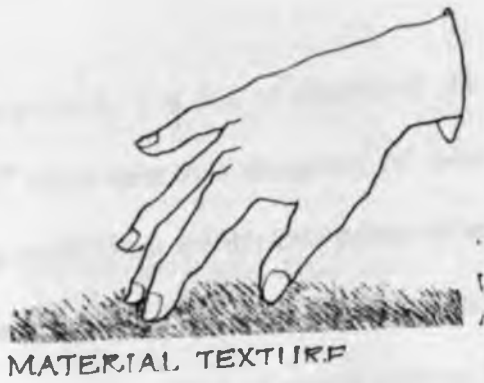


Plate 3: 4 example of tactile texture, carpet³⁸

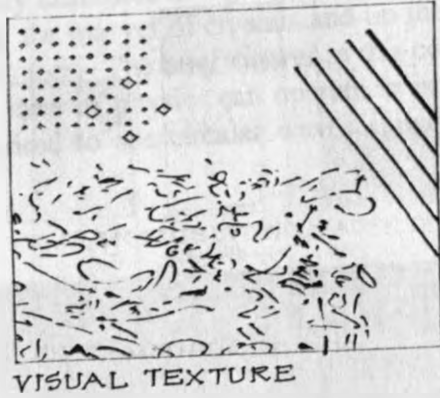


Plate 3: 5 example of visual texture, a drawing³⁹

The repetitive design of a pattern often gives the ornamented surfaces a textural quality as well. When elements that create a pattern become so small that they lose their individual identity and blend into a tone, they become more textural than patterns (Plate 3:6)

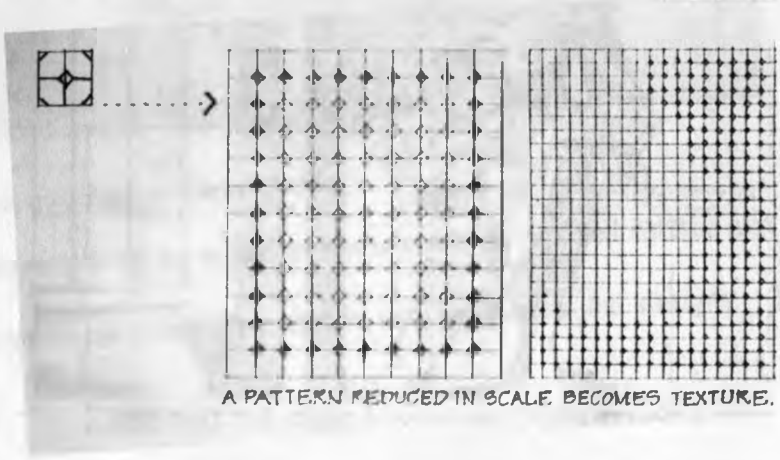


Plate 3: 6 Relationships between pattern and texture

³⁸ Source: Interior Design Illustrated, 1987,

3.2 Types of patterns

To effectively analyze patterns, it is vital to understand the classification and types that exists. According to Ching⁴⁰ there exist two categories of patterns: **structural** and **applied patterns**. Structural patterns result from the intricate nature of material and the way they are processed, fabricated or assembled, they are also referred to as natural patterns (Plate 3:7).

Gombrich⁴¹ provides a comparative description of natural patterns, he states;

“The natural world exhibits many examples of regularity and simplicity - from the stairs in their courses to the waves of the sea, the marvel of crystals and up the ladder of creation to the rich orders of flowers, shells and plumage. The brief answer to this complex problem is that order in nature comes about where the laws of physics can operate in isolated systems without mutual disturbance. We are not surprised to see circular waves spreading on a pond after we have thrown a stone.¹⁵”

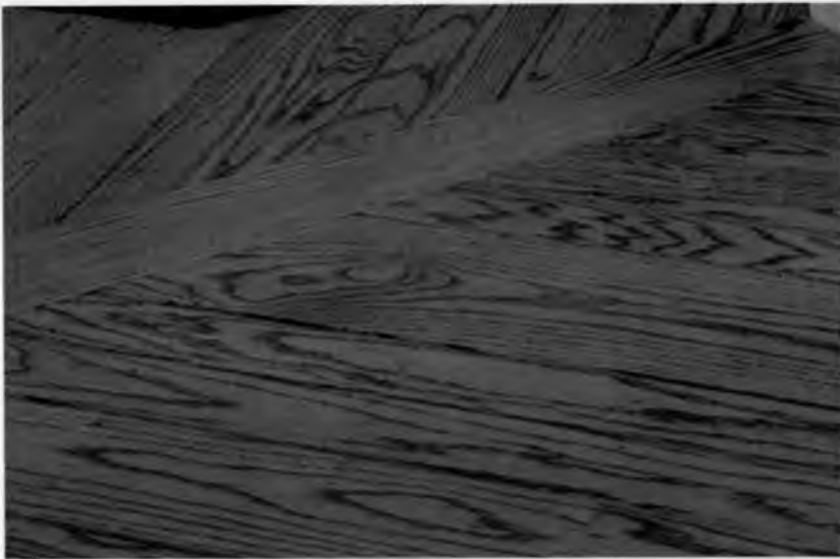


Plate 3: 7 Natural patterns: timber grains in wood flooring⁴²

Applied patterns: They are added to a structurally completed surface and are sometimes referred to as man-made patterns. The motifs vary in shapes and designs. The sources of inspirations include: -

³⁹ Plates 3:5-6, Source: Interior Design Illustrated, 1987,

⁴⁰ Ching F. D. 1987,

⁴¹ Gombrich E.H. 1979,

⁴² Source: Sunset Flooring, 1982, pg 11

Nature-inspired patterns. (Plate 3:8) - According to Gombrich⁴³

“It is never without danger to draw analogies between nature and culture. Clearly culture can derive analogous advantages from the creation of order, which proved them in the process of evolution. They include all animal and plant patterns, which are extracted and applied on other surfaces through painting, carving or embossing”.

Geometric shapes: one distinct character of man-made patterns is the frequent occurrence of geometrical elements, which are very rare occurrence in nature, so rare that they are hard to impress themselves upon the mind. The conclusion to which we are driven, suggests that it is precisely because these forms are rare in nature that the human mind has chosen those manifestations of regularity which are recognizably a product of a controlling mind and thus stand out against the random medley of nature. The basic motifs are geometric shapes, which are repeated to form patterns either single or many different motifs; circles, triangles, squares.⁴⁴

(Plate 3:9)

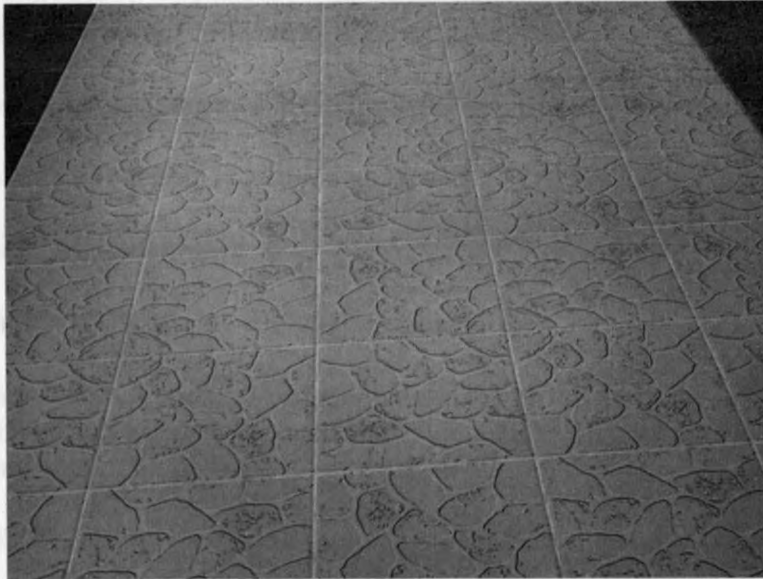


Plate 3: 8 Nature inspired man made patterns; floor tiles imitating natural stone⁴⁵

⁴³ Gombrich E.H.1979,

⁴⁴ Source: Interior Design Illustrated, 1987:65

⁴⁵ Plates 3:8, Source: Sunset Flooring magazine, 1982:24

Abstract patterns: They do not necessary utilize design principles and are neither nature nor geometric but can be inspired by one or both. These are indefinite patterns created through imagination and may also be abstracted from existing patterns.



Plate 3: 9 Man made geometric patterns; ceramic floor tiles³⁷⁴⁶

3.3 General overview on Traditional African patterns.

In traditional African societies, designs on bodies, jewellery, clothes and houses helped to establish personal and communal identity, and signs and symbols had special meaning for members of specific communities.

Jewell⁴⁷ in his book African designs describes: -

“In African art there was a tendency to distort natural forms for the purpose of emphasizing certain characteristics and with the application of symbolic motifs, which led to a predominance of geometric forms”.

Variations of different geometric shapes and patterns recur throughout Africa art, and probably reach their summit in Islamic designs⁴⁸. There were various reasons why an object was patterned. The pattern served a function, for example to preserve the walls of a house, to

⁴⁶ Plate3.9: Sunset Flooring magazine, 1982:000 31

⁴⁷ Jewell R. (1994) pg 43

⁴⁸ Islamic patterns are covered in details in proceeding parts of this chapter

enhance the status of the owner e.g. in the Bosocho culture⁴⁹ or the artist or the patterns may have been purely decorative, enhancing the overall design or framing an image.

The Yoruba carved wooden doors were often made up of a series of scenes each one framed or separated from the next by a linear latticework pattern with the intent to communicate. These borders called *Eleyofo* served to organize the scenes into a narrative order, (see plates 3:10 and 3:11). The door panels were significant as, unlike most African sculpture, they described events, which took place over a period of time e.g. the king and his entourage as shown below and war captives or royal ancestors as represented by the vultures.



Plate 3: 10 Yoruba door panel design 1⁵⁰

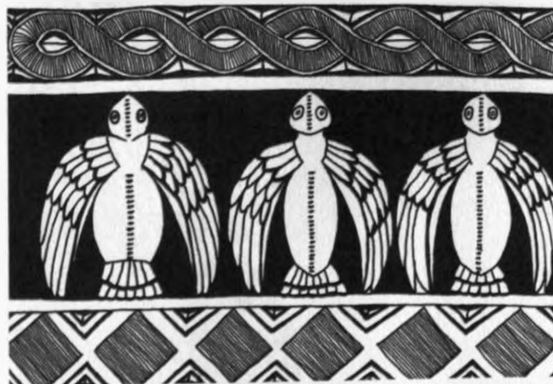


Plate 3: 11 Yoruba door panel design 2⁴⁰

According to Jewell⁵¹, “Designs on houses helped to preserve the structures. The sculptured mud around Hausa doorways strengthens the edges, and Ndebele murals in southern Africa added a protective layer of paint to the mud walls. The designs also have symbolic

⁴⁹ Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

⁵⁰ Plates 3:10, Source: African designs, 1994

⁵¹ Jewell R. (1994)

meaning. Some of the Ndebele designs are architectural enhancing the structure of the dwelling and depicting steps, verandas and doors. Plates 3:20

Specific motifs had names for identification. For example according to Jewell⁵²:-

“The Kuba people have over two hundred named patterns. Sometimes the name given reflects the shape of the pattern, which may have a similarity to something in real life, like the track of an iguana. In other cases it might be named after the person who designed it, but more often than not the name will have no meaning that can be discovered”.

The Kuba are extraordinary in their desire to decorate absolutely everything – cooking utensils, furniture, houses, their own bodies, textiles and clothes. Jewell maintains that, “sometimes patterns or motifs are symbolic; Fante flags have proverbial meanings and can represent historic events. The flags had the purpose during warfare to communicate provocative messages or to celebrate victory. (Plate 3:12). A flag bearing the image of a vulture meant we came to fight but not you mere vultures.” (Plate 3:13).



Plate 3: 12 Fante flag design⁵³



Plate 3: 13 Fante flag, the vulture⁵⁴

⁵² Jewell R. (1994)

⁵³ Plates 3:12, Source: African designs, 1994

⁵⁴ Plates 3:13, Source: African designs, 1994

Symbolism in Benin art has been studied in detail, in particular in a book edited by Paula Ben-Amos and Arnold Rubin⁵⁵ The crocodile (Plate 3:14), the fish eagle (Plate 3:15), the python (Plate 3:16), and the elephant (Plate 3:17), are all emblems of legitimate authority.⁵⁶

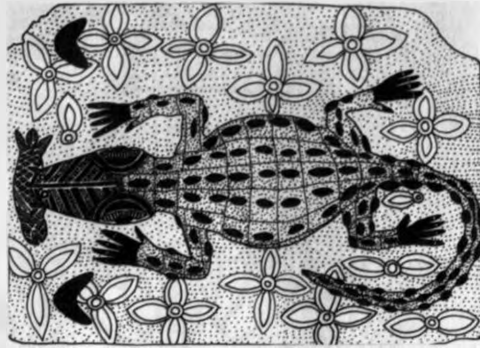


Plate 3: 14 Benin crocodile pattern⁵⁷



Plate 3: 15 Benin fish-eagle pattern⁵⁸



⁵⁵ Ben-Amos P. and Rubin A. 1983

⁵⁶ The crocodile eating a fish symbolized the ruler exerting authority over the ruled.

⁵⁷ Plates 3:17, Source: The Arts of Power, The Power of Arts, 1983

⁵⁸ Plates 3:14, Source: The Arts of Power, The Power of Arts, 1983



Plate 3: 17 Benin elephant pattern⁵⁹

Colour plays an important part in the symbolism of African art.

“In Benin, the red coral beads and the red cloth worn by the king issued a threat to his enemies. White is associated with the tranquil nature of the gods, in particular the god of the sea. In Ghanaian art, red is worn to show sorrow or dissatisfaction; indigo blue is for womanhood and tenderness; gold is for the wealth of the land and green is for productiveness. Similarly, materials are significant in Benin art, for example, ivory was worn only by the king and brass by the king and chiefs.”⁶⁰

Perhaps the most striking feature of African art is how often animals are portrayed, both figuratively and stylistically. Often the most geometric of designs is interpreted as being of animal origin. Creation myths throughout Africa explain the origin of life through the action of animals. Ben-Amos, Rubin⁶¹ provides the following descriptions, for the Yoruba (in Nigeria).

“It is said that, the earth took shape when a hen scratched it up from the primordial water and a chameleon came to inspect it. The Bambara (in Mali), knowledge of agriculture was imparted by the antelope and for the Dogon (in Mali), birds, hyenas and monkeys evict spirits of the dead from the village”.

⁵⁹ Plates 3:17, Source: The Arts of Power, The Power of Arts, 1983

⁶⁰ Ben-Amos P. and Rubin A. 1983

⁶¹ Ben-Amos P. and Rubin A. 1983

Hierarchies within societies echo hierarchies within the animal Kingdom. Lions, leopards and elephants are associated with kings and chiefs.

“In Benin, the king (Oba) and the leopard had a metaphorical relationship; the leopard was king of the wild (nature) and the Oba king of the home (culture). The leopard motif is an emblem of authority and symbolizes the Oba’s right to take the life of another human being.”

3.4 Patterns in Traditional African houses

The art of decorating houses is known throughout Africa. Lower Nubia, in the Nile valley, is an ancient culture, although house decorations are relatively recent, probably not going back much beyond the late 19th century. Terence⁶² suggested: -

“In very early periods, house decorations did exist; for a period of time, this practice was not tenable and the art of decoration may have been preserved but practised in some other form not on houses but perhaps on pottery, until conditions again favoured the decoration of houses. This idea of the transference of a style or form of decoration from one medium to another, an act that preserves the art even though it appears in a different context, may be more widespread than this.”

For example, among the Ndebele, the same type of brightly coloured and patterned ornamentation is found in clothing and house painting, but not generally on both during the same period. As clothing styles began to conform more to western fashions, the use of colour and pattern, which had originally been seen in clothing, appeared to relocate itself in painted houses.

3.4.1 Patterns in Basotho painted houses

Murals on the houses built by Basotho honour ancestors and serve as visual prayers;

“The mud walls signify the fields and the designs signify patterns of cultivation and some of the things which are growing; the houses themselves signify the womb and the creation: the emergence of humans from the earth.”⁶³

The designs were etched using blunt tools into the plaster walls before paint was applied.

(Plate 3:18)

⁶² Terence W. (1995)

⁶³ Internet August 2005 <http://www.uxl.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>



Plate 3:18 Basotho painted house. Design represents field glowing patterns and Flowers, and together these symbolize fertility and creation.⁶⁴

In many parts of Africa, both the men and the women carried out the work of building houses. Men's role was to build the framework or the shell and women role was to plaster the walls with mud, thatch and apply surface decoration. Gary N., Van Wyk A.⁶⁵ provides the following example,

“Among the Basotho tribe, women paint the houses and as seems to be the case in certain other examples of African architecture where women play a dominant role as builder or designer, in particular, examples from nomadic cultures, the symbolic meanings are associated with female rituals” (Plate3: 19).

They continue to explain: -

“The painted houses functioned as flags that proudly asserted the Basotho identity of the women who painted them by signaling their creators' participation in a rich culture and an ancient art-making tradition. The murals flew in the face of the oppressive apartheid regime that used every conceivable strategy to demean black existence-past and present”

⁶⁴ Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

⁶⁵ Gary N. Van Wyk A. (1998)



Plate 3:19 Basotho women after an initiation ceremony⁶⁶

‘Litema’ is a word, which refers to the mural art of Basotho women. It includes engravings, painting, relief, and mosaic. Engravings have the closest visual relationship to field patterns; the process involves smearing a clayish mixture onto the wall and then engraving a motif into it, working quickly; the overall design consists of squares with the same image repeated but in reverse or mirror images; a finer pattern may then be engraved in the larger design, using a comb or fork. The engravings follow landscape/field patterns they represent. Another tie between subject and representation is that women traditionally did agricultural work so the engraving is a replication of that labour. Gary N., Van Wyk A.⁶⁷ explains,

“Many of the designs relate to plants or other natural motifs; some are derived from games, hairstyles, and scarification, reflecting, the cultivation of humans rather than of fields, but the women who make them do not speak of them as a visual expression of cultivation; they use the word for flowers to describe them, and seem to mean the flower as a symbol of beauty and fertility, of both the fields and of women” (Plate 3:20).

⁶⁶Internet September 2005 Source: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

⁶⁷ Gary N. Van Wyk A. (1998)

According to the same author, the house below has a flower painted above the doorway with a hole cut into it to let the blue sky through; it is a direct call for rain. It is also possible to see the use of a relief trim on this house.

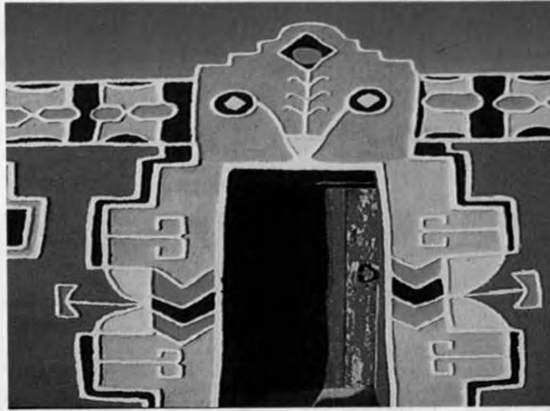


Plate 3:20 Basotho house⁶⁸

The Litema murals are a traditional sign of the Basotho home, and also show respect for the ancestors who will then be kindly disposed towards the household and honor the community with peace, rain, and plenty, all of which are expressed in the litema patterns through the colors, materials, and the designs. The materials and colours used in the murals have symbolic meaning,

“Clay, like mud, is a product of the earth, it represents the womb of creation and the resting place for ancestors. The colors red, black and white being the most important; Red, the color of blood, signifies the earth's blood, or water. As a symbol of water, it is a call for rain; as a symbol of blood it is related to menstruation, or fertility, and sacrifice. White signifies peace and happiness and purity, transition and illumination. Black signifies the home of the spirits of the dead, and also dark rain clouds.”

These three colours are the key in mural art and also in initiation rites which suggests a relationship between the murals and rituals, does exist and leads to the suggestion that to the extent which rituals are associated with the possession of spirits, the murals are as well.

⁶⁸ Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

Geometric patterns are also present in Basotho painted houses. Gary N., Van Wyk A⁶⁹ describes, “The root for the word triangle includes gods, and things that do not have substance, such as fire, lightning and smoke.” The triangle has multiple meanings:

“It evokes Modimo, the god who is called the Source; it evokes lightning, which is associated with Modimo and Modimo's bird, the Lightning Bird. The zigzag patterns in the murals would therefore seem to be part of an appeal for rain, a call to the Creator god, and a reference to the winding of the seasons or the cosmic path of constant change and transition from one state to another.” (Plate 3:21)



Plate 3:21. The ornamentation of this house uses a pattern, which creates the effect of columns supporting the roof. Note the triangle pattern across the "headband" of the house.⁷⁰

The Basotho houses themselves are metaphorical and this increases the significance of the patterns on the walls; Gary N., Van Wyk A explains,

“The houses are metaphor for a womb and creation.”

The earliest houses suggest associations with nomadic architecture and with cave dwellings, being generally circular mud houses with conical thatched roofs, a cone placed on top of a cylinder, or igloo-shaped dwellings without windows and with entrances so low they had to be crawled through (Plate 3:22).

⁶⁹ Gary N. Van Wyk A. (1998)

⁷⁰ Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

“The house type seems to be a recreation of the creation myth, which describes human beings crawling up a long passage to reach the surface of the earth and daylight.”

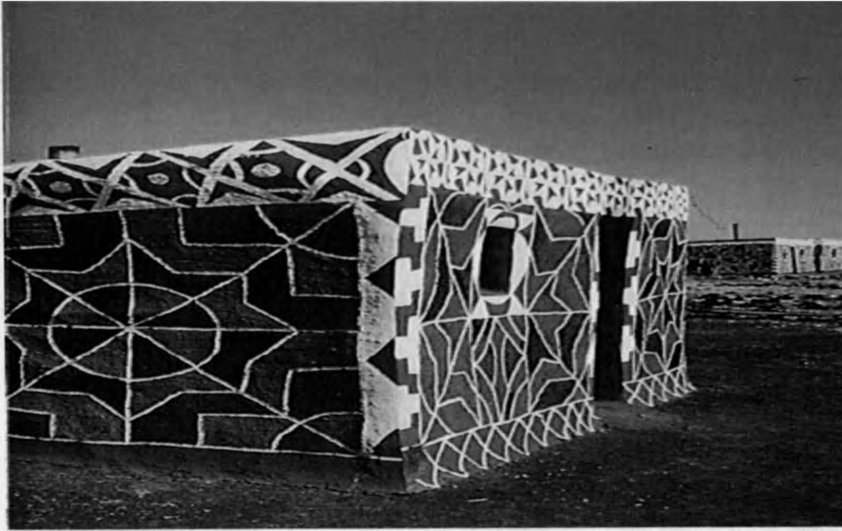


Plate 3:22 the house uses a pattern of overlapping squares, diamonds and circles, and is a variation of a pattern which is called a spider web.⁷¹

Contemporary architecture relates to the myth in its orientation to the east and generally dark interiors and carry hidden symbolic meanings associated with the women who paint the houses⁷²:

The painted fields of patterns on the exterior of the house then literally become the earth, which the person sees upon emerging. The Basotho house becomes the womb; the Basotho woman becomes the house. For the initiation ceremony of women, they dress with a reed mask, called *lesira*, a word, which means, "Wind break." This suggests a parallel between the masks and a screen against the wind, or the wall of a house. They wear grass belts, which are made of rings of grass strung together. The belts suggest infinity, mastery of nature, and cosmic order.

On their legs, the women paint *litema* patterns-the woman as the symbol of the house, and the house as the symbol of a womb. (Plate 3:19) This equivalence of woman and house seems to strengthen the meaning of the house and the painted walls as a metaphor of birth, and the

⁷¹Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.uxl.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

⁷²Gary N. Van Wyk A. (1998)

metaphor of birth, in turn, becomes the key to seeing the Basotho painted houses as an embodied aesthetic of place, re-possession and regeneration.

Other patterns evident in the Basotho houses have political connotations tied up with their cultural beliefs and practices. The house below (plate 3:23), uses the colors of the African National Congress, the red symbolizes blood and black the ancestors and rain clouds, which they will bring.



Plate 3:23 Basotho painted house⁷³

3.4.2 Patterns in Ndebele painted house

Ndebele painted houses are a "tradition" that is barely more than 50 years old, although there appears to be an earlier practice of painting house walls with earth-toned colors and an even earlier practice than that of decorating walls by scratching patterns into the wet plaster with one's fingers (Plate 3:24) Powell⁷⁴ while writing about Ndebele painted houses stated.

"The earlier patterns are believed, unlike the more recent painted patterns, to have sacred powers and to have been made in response to demands by the ancestors."

⁷³ Internet August 2005 Plates 3:23-24, Source: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

⁷⁴ Powell I, (1995)

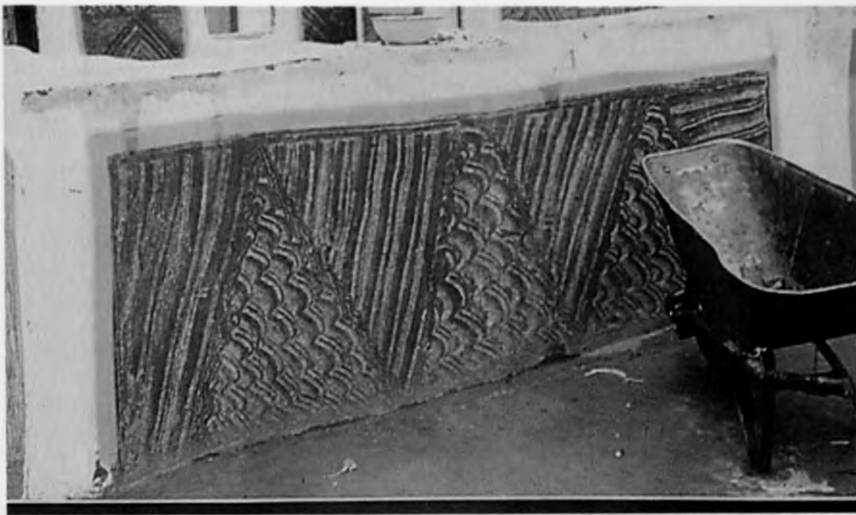


Plate 3: 24. Ndembele earlier styles of decorating walls by scratching with fingers

According to the same writer Powell⁷⁵, the recent brightly colored (Plate 3: 25),

“Geometric wall paintings are thought to be profane and decorative, and to have emerged at a time when the Ndebele were living in exile from their symbols of identity, the painting served as a means of identifying themselves and setting themselves apart from the other groups they were living among. This theory of cultural self-expression needs to be balanced against the enormous public interest shown in these houses, because the rapid evolution and changes, in terms of colors used, motifs, and overall artistic vocabulary, may have been in response to this interest. But these houses are painted by women, the women who live in them. If the houses represent their dreams, perhaps it is the dreams that have changed and the visual means of expressing them have followed the dreams”

⁷⁵ Powell, I. 1995

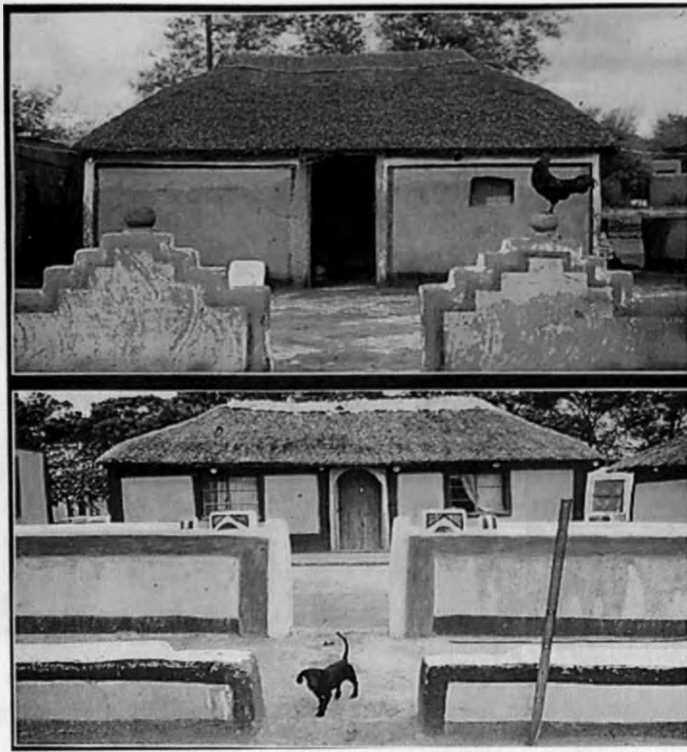


Plate 3:25. The earlier styles of painting with bright earth pigments⁷⁶

The author has also been noted that in many cases, the imagery was actually depictions of things seen in the houses, which employed these Ndebele women, and not in their own houses—a type of visual appropriation of things they want but do not have. He gives an example of one woman who said of her painted house (Plate 3: 26):

"I want it to be beautiful.... Like a real house with all of these things. It's like having a house with these things."

This sense of not being finished because the house depicts the desires of the woman who lives there, a sense of always existing in a state of becoming, may be a metaphor for the Ndebele culture and its relationship to a fixed origin in Ndebele/African spirituality. The Ndebele history is a history of being exiled and marginalized, and a history of ongoing contact with western culture, either as the culture of its oppressors or the culture of consumers.

⁷⁶ Source: Ndembele: A People and their Art. 1995



Plate 3: 26 Designs in the house reflect things the people don't have but want to have⁷⁷

Powell⁷⁸ concluding on the Ndebele painted houses, suggest however that,

“Despite the commercial impetus for the style's evolution, it was assimilated into the culture and became a cultural practice, which does constitute part of the identity of the Ndebele, and it serves this role in the close relationship, which exists with beadwork and patterns and the inscription of domestic imagery in the walls.”

3.5 Sufism and Islamic Patterns

Sufism is generally understood by scholars to be the inner mystical, or psycho spiritual dimension of Islam.

“Sufis believe that it is possible to become close to God and to experience this closeness when one is alive; it consists of abandoning oneself to God in accordance with what God wills. It is expected that one should not possess anything nor anything should possess oneself. The aim of Sufism is to gain a closer connection to God and higher knowledge.”⁷⁹

The core of Sufism is to live an ordinary life, in order to close down the distance with God. And by reducing the distance between God, man also gets closer to truth and knowledge.

The soul is seen upon as an element that can stretch out from the carnal body, and pass through the divine spheres.

⁷⁷Internet August 2005 Source: Ndembele: A People and their Art. 1995

⁷⁸ Powell, I. 1995

Even if few Sufis will claim that they can reach all the way to God, knowledge and insight increases the closer, one manages to get. Techniques vary, but they have three things in common: rhythm, repetition and endurance. The actual technique can be utterance of words or phrases, singing and dancing. It can in some cases involve physical pain, or acting out on illegal act. Sufism is the foundation of Islamic mysticism. Sufism is concerned with the nature of reality, the individual's struggle to attain a clear vision of reality, and the transformation of consciousness that accompanies such vision.

Decoration is a major unifying factor in Islamic architecture and design. Islamic patterns provide a good example of the way in which patterns are created in an attempt to interpret and express the world around us. An article on the Internet⁸⁰ states, "Underlying all Islamic designs is the need to express the unity of Allah. That unity holds together the diversity and multiplicity of the world; this relationship is expressed no better than in the complex interlocking patterns. Decoration has linked buildings and objects from all over the Islamic world, from Spain to China to Indonesia, because it has features that are commonly repeated." Each building and each object embodies to some extent identical principles, which are clearly identifiable. Decoration contributes to the creation of a sense of continuous space that is a hallmark of Islamic architecture. Islamic patterns exemplify the Islamic interest in repetition, symmetry and continuous generation of pattern. The layers of surface decoration are increased and the complexity of visual effects enriched by the use of carpets and cushions, which often reflect the same decoration schemes as those found on walls and ceiling.

⁷⁹ Internet September 2005 <http://www.arches.uga.edu/~godlas/Sufism.html>

⁸⁰ Internet August 2005 [www.aaaah.org/wiki/en/is/Islamic architecture.htm](http://www.aaaah.org/wiki/en/is/Islamic%20architecture.htm)

Islamic pattern, unique as an art form, is also unitary in its aim and function. Symbols can exhaust verbal explanation but verbal explanation can in no way exhaust symbols and the symbols inherent in Islamic pattern and geometry are directed towards that undifferentiated unity. The circle and its centre are the point at which all Islamic patterns begin (Plate 3:27).

According to the Internet⁸¹

“The circle is an apt symbol of a religion that emphasizes one God, symbolizing also, the role of Mecca, the center of Islam, toward which all Moslems face in prayer. The circle has always been regarded as a symbol of eternity, without being and without end, and is not only the perfect expression of justice-equality in all directions in a finite domain but also the most beautiful parent of all polygons, both containing and underlying them”.

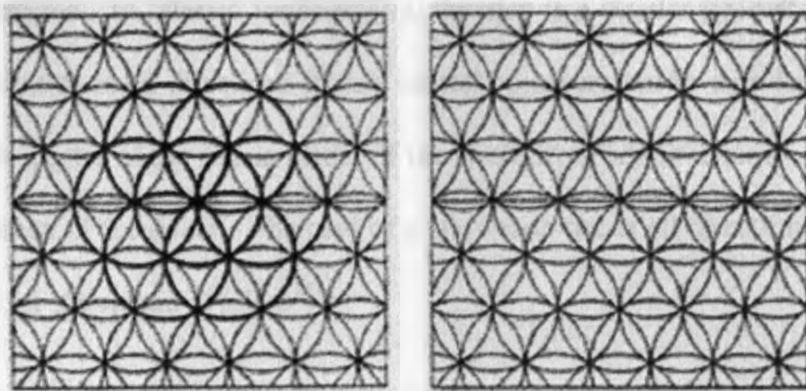


Plate 3: 27. Islamic patterns derived from circles⁸²

From the circle, three fundamental figures in Islamic art are derived, the triangle, square and hexagon (Plate 3:28). The author of the Internet⁸³ article explains the symbolic meanings of the shapes;

“The triangle symbolizes human consciousness and the three basic biological functions: ingestion, digestion, and excretion. The square is the symbol of physical experience and the physical world-or materiality-and the hexagon, of Heaven⁸⁴”.

⁸¹Internet August 2005 <http://www.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

⁸²Internet August 2005 Plates 3:27-28, Source: <http://www.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

⁸³Internet August 2005 <http://www.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

⁸⁴Internet August 2005 Plates 3:27-28, Source: <http://www.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

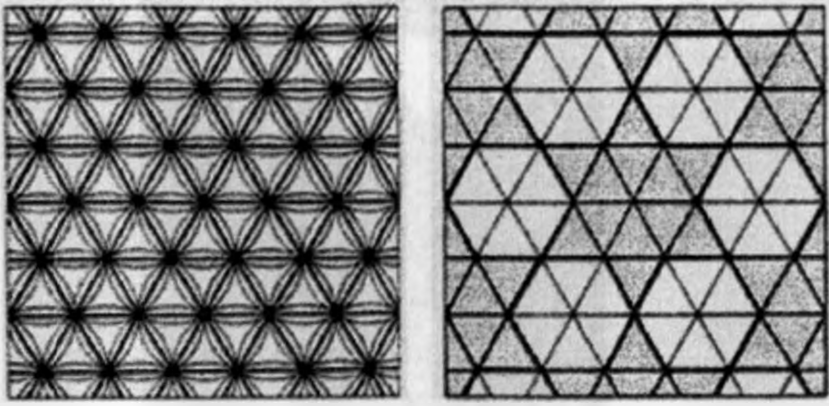


Plate 3:28. Islamic patterns: hexagons derived from triangles

Another symbol prevalent in Islamic art is the star and has been the chosen motif for many Islamic decorations. In Islamic iconography, the star is a regular geometric shape that symbolizes equal radiation in all directions from a central point, created by a division of a circle into equal parts. The center of the star is center of the circle from which it came, and its points touch the circumference of the circle. The rays of a star reach out in all directions, making the star a fitting symbol for the spread of Islam⁸⁵.

Islamic design may seem restricted to two dimensions but the very character of Islamic design implies three-dimensional possibilities. Through the use of reflecting and shining materials and glazes, the repetition of designs, the contrasting of textures and the manipulation of planes, Islamic decoration becomes complex, sumptuous and intricate.

“It is an art of repose where tension is resolved. Regardless of form, material or scale, this concept of art rests on a basic foundation of calligraphy, geometry and, in architecture, the repetition and multiplication of elements based on the arch”⁸⁶. (See plate 3:29)

⁸⁵ Internet August 2005 www.islamicart.com

⁸⁶ Internet August 2005 www.islamicart.com



Plate 3:29. Picture of an Islamic arch⁸⁷

Water and light: They are of paramount importance to Islamic architectural decoration as they generate additional layers of patterns and just as happens with surface decoration they transform space. Space is defined by surface and since surface is articulated by decoration, there is an intimate connection in Islamic architecture between space and decoration. It is the variety and richness of the decoration, with its endless permutations, that characterizes the buildings rather than their structural elements, which are often disguised.

Calligraphy: Because of its role in recording the word of God, calligraphy is considered one of the most important of the Islamic arts. Nearly all-Islamic buildings have some type of surface inscription in the stone, stucco, marble, mosaic and /or painting.

“The inscription might be a verse from the Qur'an, lines of poetry, or names and dates. Like other Islamic decoration, calligraphy is closely linked to geometry. The proportions of the letters are all governed by mathematics.”⁸⁸

Inscriptions are most often used as a frame along and around main elements of a building like portals and cornices. An inscription also might be contained in a single panel. Sometimes single

⁸⁷ Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

⁸⁸ Internet August 2005 www.islamicart.com

words such as Allah or Mohammed are repeated and arranged into patterns over the entire surface of the walls. Calligraphic texts might appear in pierced cartouches, providing a pattern for light filtering through windows.

Geometry: Islamic artists developed geometric patterns to a degree of complexity and sophistication previously unknown. These geometric patterns (Plate3: 30) exemplify the Islamic interest in repetition, symmetry and continuous generation of pattern.

"The superb assurance of the Islamic designers is demonstrated by their masterful integration of geometry with such optical effects as the balancing of positive and negative areas, interlacing with fluid overlapping and under passing strap work, and a skillful use of color and tone values⁸⁹.



Plate 3:30. Picture of an Islamic arch decorated with geometric patterns⁹⁰

Floral patterns: Islamic artists reproduced nature with a great deal of accuracy. Flowers and trees might be used as the motifs for the decoration of textiles, objects and buildings. The arabesque (geometric zed vegetal ornament) is: -

"Characterized by a continuous stem which splits regularly, producing a series of counterpoised, leafy, secondary stems which can in turn split again or return to be reintegrated into the main stem (Plate 3:31). This limitless, rhythmical alternation of movement, conveyed by the reciprocal repetition of curved lines, produces a design that is balanced and free from tension. In the arabesque, perhaps more than in any other design associated with Islam, it is clear how the line defines space, and how sophisticated three-dimensional effects are achieved by differences in width, color and texture⁹¹

⁸⁹ Internet August 2005 <http://www.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

⁹⁰ Internet August 2005 Plates 3:30. Source: www.islamicart.com

⁹¹ Internet August 2005 <http://www.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

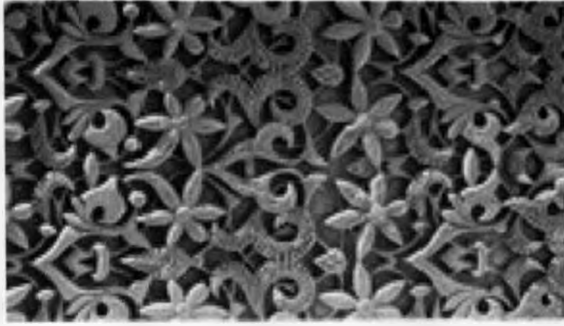


Plate 3:31. Picture of an Islamic floral pattern⁹²

Figures and animals: because the creation of living things that move; humans and animals are considered to be in the realm of God, Islam discourages artists from producing such figures through art. Nevertheless, a certain amount of figural art can be found in the Islamic world, although it is mainly confined to the decoration of objects and secular buildings and to miniature paintings. Figural sculpture is quite rare in Islam.

3.6.0 Case studies

This in use in these two hotels in order to identify similar or related patterns with those of Nairobi sub title explores the designs of Zanzibar Serena Inn and Mombasa Serena Beach Hotel. The researcher analyses the patterns Serena Hotel.

3.6.1 Serena Inn in Zanzibar

Zanzibar was once the heart of the spice route between the Arab world and India. It developed into a prosperous port attracting an exotic mix of inhabitants comprising of native Islanders and mainland Africans, Indian merchants and artisans, British and Portuguese traders, and the rulers the Oman Arab Sultans of Zanzibar. It is in this rich historical Island that Serena Inn was established to revive its great cultural legacy that evokes Africa's exotic past.

The hotel is located in two restored seafront buildings, one of the 18th century, the other a colonial building of the 19th century (Plate 3:32), that along with many of the other buildings in Stone Town, were falling into disrepair. The Beddow and Burns⁹³ of the book *Safari Styles* explain: -

“The hotel was restored in the traditional Zanzibari way, blending African with Arabic designs and finishes, using local labour and expertise. The interiors consist of a collection of antique clocks, crystal chandeliers, and fretwork screens, carved staircases, Persian rugs, and brass-studded doors. The interior design concept is a fusion of authenticity and opulence that reflects the very essence of Zanzibar.”

The authors describe the effect of restoration of Zanzibar Serena Inn as;

“Magical: combining Arab exoticism and colonial grandeur with the natural beauty of fragrant frangipani trees. Rooms are decorated in typical Zanzibar style drawing on influences from India, Persia and Victoria England. Particular attention has been paid to internal finishes, drawing on the traditional skills of local artisans.”

There are various patterns that have been used in the interiors and the exteriors of the entire hotel; the balcony has an intricately carved fascia board with curved motif resembling an arch, a dominant feature of the Arab Architecture.

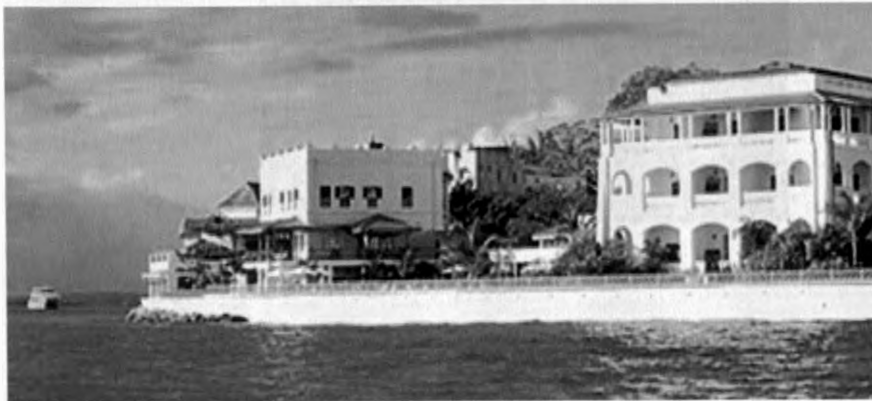


Plate 3:32 2 buildings housing Zanzibar Serena Inn⁹⁴

The double door on first floor (left of the Plate 3:33) also has a curve above. One door has a lower rectangular timber panel with bevel edges and upper small rectangular glass panels arranged in two linear columns, each with a set of four pieces.

⁹²Internet August 2005 Plates 3:31. Source: www.islamicart.com

⁹³ Beddow T. and Burns N., (1998).

The two doors are identical. The terrace main banisters have an etched design of a rectangle with a curve at the top. Vertical members and the handrail have an etched fluted pattern. The wooden main door is made from coastal hardwood (Plate 3:34). The etched central wavy design on the outer doorframe has upper and lower receding carved motifs, which are opposing one another. The timber board above door has circular motifs in relief, divided into four right-angled sectors and supported by a triangular feature with wavy lines below. The main doorframe has circular floral features with a central core and petals. A combination of the above two motifs, a butterfly wing motif and square motif at the base forms the pattern of the central dividing member. A decorative floral motif in brass arranged in a linear pattern is evidence of the Indian traders and artisans' influence.



Plate 3:33, Serena Zanzibar Inn, fascia design⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.serenahotels.com/zanzibar/inn/home.htm>

⁹⁵ Source: Safari Style pg179



Plate 3:34. Serena Zanzibar Inn, door detail⁹⁶

Arched windows (Plate3: 35), in the dining have a wooden infill with a diagonal linear oval pattern divided into three portions by framework. The central portion is bordered by a mirrored pattern. The chairs have two curved motifs radiating from the corners of the backrest.



Plate 3:35. Serena Zanzibar Inn, door detail⁹⁷

Some of the hotel's features and furnishings are original, tracked down from the far East. Brass work and furniture brought from Pakistan and Afghanistan recreate the look of a wealthy Arab merchant's home. This wall-mounted lamp has floral design in relief and triangular cut infill pattern⁹⁸ (Plate 3: 36).



Plate 3:36, Serena Zanzibar Inn, wall mounted lamp detail⁹⁹

Many of the interior details in the main reception area (Plate 3:37) are reproductions based on illustrations or antiques. The ceramic floor tiles are typical of the nineteenth century and were made especially in England and Kenya to decorate key areas.



Plate 3:37, Serena Zanzibar Inn, main reception¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Plates 3:34, Source: Safari Style pg172

⁹⁷ Plates 3:35, Source: Safari Style pg176

⁹⁸ Beddow T. and Burns N., (1998).

Rooms are decorated in typical Zanzibari style, drawing on influences from India, Persia and Victorian England. Particular attention has been paid to internal finishes, drawing on the traditional skills of local artisans. All the bedrooms at Serena face the Indian Ocean, most with their own private balconies overlooking the beach. Handcrafted slatted wooden shutters are adjustable and can be slanted to follow the sun's path during the day. Beddow and Burns¹⁰¹ emphasizing on the use of local artisans states,

“Intricately carved antique furnishings also attest to the skills of Zanzibari carvers.”

The room furniture (Plate 3:38) is made from square paneled hardwood timber and rectangular mirrors. Round brass Door Knobs are conspicuous. Washroom tiling is composed of square white ceramic tiles.

The bed pole has rounded bed poles and vertical fluted design. The round pole resembles a dome a feature related to Islamic designs and architecture. Footboard has central curved oval designs and two rectangles. Bed cover is a woven double stripe design consisting of various motifs. Basic motifs include rhombus and triangles for one stripe and double peaked waves with side arched window design and dots.



Plate 3:38, Serena Zanzibar Inn, typical bedroom¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Source: Safari Style 176

¹⁰⁰ Internet August 2005 Source: <http://www.serenahotels.com/zanzibar/inn/home.htm>

¹⁰¹ Beddow T. and Burns N., (1998),

¹⁰² Source: Safari Style 178

3.6.2 Mombasa Serena Beach Hotel

Mombasa Serena Beach Hotel is located along Shanzu Beach, off the Indian Ocean, north of Mombasa. The resort blends indigenous architecture and materials (Plate 3:39) with the highest standards of modern hospitality.



Plates 3:39, Mombasa Serena Beach hotel¹⁰³

The hotel is styled to resemble a 13th century Swahili town complete with winding lanes, carved balconies, pointed door arches, triple curved door arches (Plate3:40) courtyards (Plate3:41) and bustling market squares.



Plate 3:40, Mombasa Serena Beach hotel, pointed door arch¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Plates 3:39-40 Researchers photographs



Plate 3:41. Mombasa Serena Beach hotel, and courtyard¹⁰⁵

Information available in the Internet¹⁰⁶ state:

“The hotel is set out as a village, and its luxurious bedrooms evoke the spirit and style of the ancient town of Lamu, with its stunning Swahili-style houses complete with handcrafted doors, native art, furnishings, and all Swahili elegance. The hotel décor blends the time-honoured intricacy of Swahili carving with the jewelled glow of Arabian lanterns, the white-gleaming splendour of a Sultan’s palace and the lotus-cool of a Persian water garden.”

Twin circular columns with a reducing diameter, neck ring in relief and rectangular support the hotel balcony. The banister rail has a square border with two diagonal members that create four Equilateral triangles. (Plate 3:42).



Plate 3:42. Mombasa Serena Beach hotel, balcony banister rails

¹⁰⁴ Plates 3:41 Researchers photographs

¹⁰⁵ Plates 3: 42 Researchers photographs

¹⁰⁶ Internet August 2005 <http://www.serenahotels.com/kenya/mombasa/home.htm>

Some walls have rectangular framed ventilation vents and a concentric arch in relief and cut out infills of abstracted floral motifs, a star formed from condensed square and circles.

(See plate 3:43)



Plate 3:43, Mombasa Serena Beach hotel, balcony banister rails¹⁰⁷

The decorative fascia on the balcony has a wave design with notches, cut double pointed arrows, and curved circular motif with three equidistant diameters (See plate 3:44)



Plate 3:44, Mombasa Serena Beach hotel, and decorative fascia at the balcony¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Plates 3: 44 Researchers photographs

The decorative timber fence (Plate 3:45) is composed of arched rectangles infilled with diamond patterns formed by crossing timber battens and parallel horizontal rectangles in alternating sequence. The base is square with a floral design of abstracted rhombus, cut out at the center.

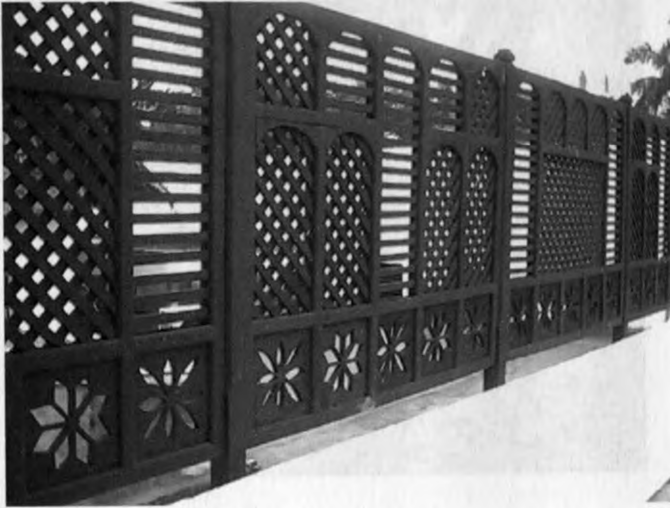


Plate 3:45, Mombassa Serena Beach hotel, and decorative wall¹⁰⁹

The focal point of a typical room is a mirror framed by a triple curved arch, and various patterns cast on the walls. The basic unit is the square with radiating lines from the center, concentricly inclined squares framed by a main square or a combination of four small square with diagonals to form a main square. (Plate 3:46)

Plate 3:46, Mombassa Serena Beach hotel, and typical hotel room.



¹⁰⁹ Plates 3:46 Researchers photographs

Hotel screens have non-geometric motifs but incidentally they have a symmetrical balance, achieved through mirror action. (Plate 3:47)



Plate 3: 47, Mombassa Serena Beach hotel.fetish screen¹¹⁰

3.6.3 Comparison on patterns

There exist similarities between patterns on African artifacts (body and face painting and painted houses), and patterns found in Lamu Old Town, Mombasa Serena Beach Hotel, Zanzibar Serena Inn and Nairobi Serna Hotel¹¹¹. The patterns have been identified to be similar, identical, or abstracted. Plates (3:48-3:54) show the comparisons of some of the features.

¹⁰⁹ Plates 3:46 Researchers photographs

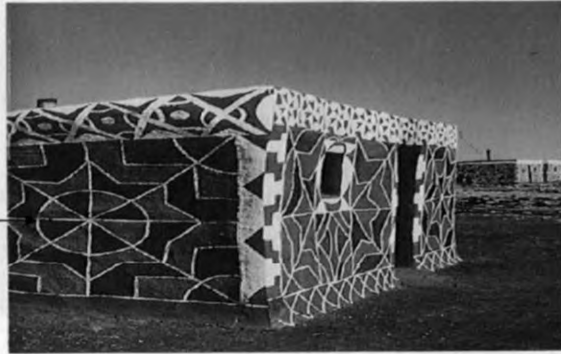
¹¹⁰ Researchers photograph

¹¹¹ Comparisons on patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotels are presented in chapter four.

AFRICAN BASKETRY/AFRICAN PAINTED HOUSES STAR WEB DESIGN



African coiled basket



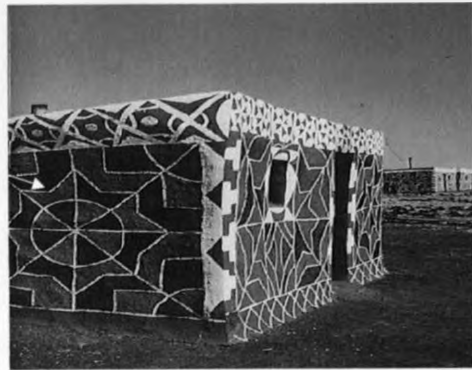
Basotho painted house

Plate 3: 48¹¹²

AFRICAN PAINTED FACES/ AFRICAN PAINTED HOUSES



People of Kau



Basotho Painted House

Plate 3: 49¹¹³

LAMU ARCHITECTURE/ MOMBASA SERENA HOTEL TRIPLE CURVED DOOR ARCHES



Old Lamu



Mombasa Serena

Plate 3: 50¹¹⁴

¹¹² Source: Plate3: 48 Internet August 2005 African Handicrafts & <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

¹¹³ Source: Plate3: 49 Internet August 2005 People of Kau & <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

¹¹⁴ Source: Researchers photographs



Old Lamu town



Mombasa Serena

Plate 3: 51¹¹⁵

Old Lamu Door

Serena Zanzibar Swahili door

Plate 3: 52¹¹⁶



Modern Swahili house in Lamu



Mombasa Serena Hotel

Plate 3: 53¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Source: Plate 3:51 Researchers photographs

¹¹⁶ Source: Plate 3:52 Researchers photograph and Safari Style

¹¹⁷ Source: Plate 3:53 Safari Style & Researchers photograph



Zanzibar Serena Twin column support system



Mombasa Serena Twin column support system

Plate 3: 54¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Source: Plate 3:54 Researchers photograph and Safari Style

CHAPTER 4

NAIROBI SERENA HOTEL

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents photographic documentation and description of the various patterns that existed in Nairobi Serena Hotel at the time the research was carried out. A photographic comparative study of the various related, similar or same patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel and those of African artifacts (African painted faces, African painted houses, African printed Fabrics), traditional Lamu architecture, Mombasa Serena Hotel and Zanzibar Serena Inn are also presented.

4.2 Nairobi Serena Hotel patterns

The patterns that have been applied in the hotel vary from space to space. For example the patterns identified in hotel rooms are sometimes absent in the other spaces like the reception, lounge, the restaurants and bars, therefore the designs are specific and not carried through the entire hotel. To achieve the purpose of this research, some areas of the hotel space were ignored in order to provide detail analysis of some specific areas namely; the hotel rooms, the lounge, and the reception

A typical hotel room has several patterns of a basic motif; a cut out abstracted lizard (Plate 4:1). The motif is inspired by a lizard and is applied on the bed headboard and support frame (Plates 4:2 and plate 4:3). The bedcover pattern is non-geometric shape printed in parallel lines using different colours



Plate 4:1, Nairobi Serena hotel, typical room motif¹¹⁹



Plate 4:2, Nairobi Serena hotel, motif applied on the headboard¹²⁰

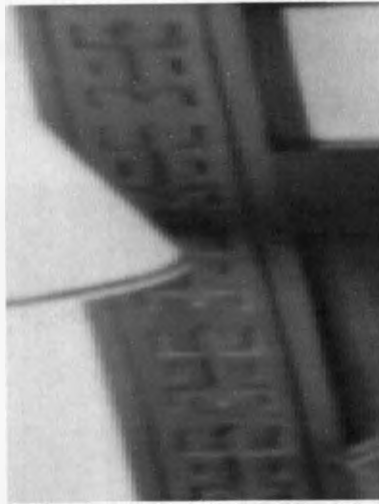


Plate 4:3, Nairobi Serena hotel, motif curved on the headboard framework¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Source: Researchers photographs

¹²⁰ Plates 4:2, Source: Researchers photographs

¹²¹ Plates 4:3, Source: Researchers photographs

The motif is also carved in the bedside chest timber framework (Plate 4:4 and 4:5). Brass pyramid are utilized as drawer handles.



Plate 4:4, Nairobi Serena hotel, motif carved on the bedside chest¹²²



Plate 4:5, Nairobi Serena hotel, motif carved on the bedside chest¹²³

The doorframes of the typical rooms also are engraved with the same motif and are bordered by chain cut design on both sides. (Plate 4:6). The brass square accent at the top of the doorframe imitates a pyramid.



Plate 4:6, Nairobi Serena hotel, motif carved hotel room door¹²⁴

¹²² Plates 4:4. Source: Researchers photographs

A main double door leading to a hotel room is also embedded with the same lizard motif both on the doorframe and on the fixed side panel with glass. A diamond pattern grille is attached to the fixed glass. (Plate 4:7)The lizard originally from the Senofu people of Cote D'Ivoire appeared curved on doors is said to be a sign of wealth and social status. In earlier times the doors were taken as booty in wars between villages. The designs most often refer to divination, bush spirits and sources of power.



Plate 4:7. Nairobi Serena hotel, motif curved double door¹²⁵

Stepped arches are a conspicuous pattern above main door entrances and facia of the restaurant. The pattern is cut into the masonry walls to form shape similar to the stepped pyramids of Ancient Egypt. (Plate 4:8 and 4:9)



Plate 4:8, Nairobi Serena hotel, stepped door arch on main doors

¹²³ Plates 4:5 Source: Researchers photographs

¹²⁴ Plates 4:6, Source: Researchers photographs

¹²⁵ Plates 4:7, Source: Researchers photographs

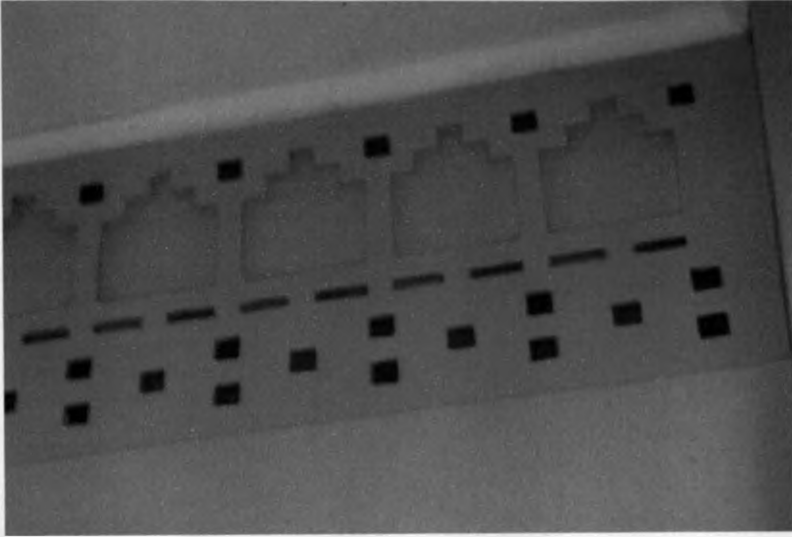
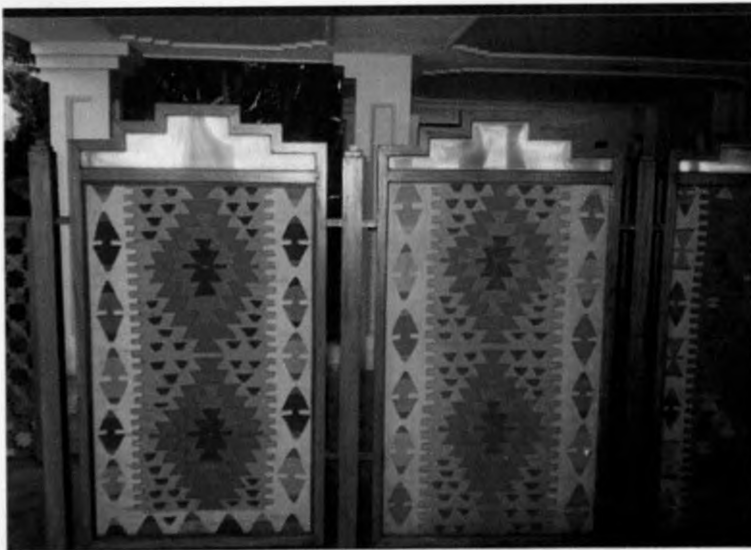


Plate 4:9, Nairobi Serena hotel, stepped arch on fascia¹²⁶

A stepped arch motif is also evident in other lounge furniture such as the screens (Plate 4:10), the infill consists of a shiny brass plate.



127

Plate 4:10, Nairobi Serena hotel, stepped arch on fetish screens

The surface mounted niche (Plate 4:11) utilized as display unit for brass sculpture, has a stepped arch and the infill is West African printed fabric.

¹²⁶ Plates 4:9-10- Source: Researchers photographs

¹²⁷ Plates 4:11, Source: Researchers photographs

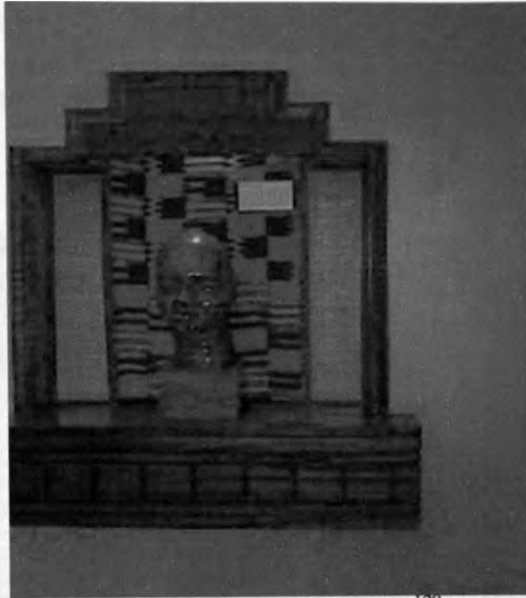


Plate 4:11, Nairobi Serena hotel, stepped arch on surface mounted niche¹²⁸

Curved and pointed Islamic arches are a dormant feature in the hotel. In the main hotel lounge and staircase landing, niches are cut into the wall and are also utilized for lighting by installing a wall bracket. The mosaic pattern inside the niche (Plate 4:12) has a floral pattern that radiates from a center. The general design of the niche resembles those of Lamu's old town.¹²⁹



Plate 4:12. Nairobi Serena hotel. curved pointed arch on a wall niche

¹²⁸ Plates 4:12, Source: Researchers photographs

¹²⁹ The comparisons are provided in the next part of this chapter.

A curved and pointed arch design is etched on the front facing of the masonry wall anchoring the bar timber top (Plate 4:13) and also cut out at the main lounge parapet wall (Plate 14)

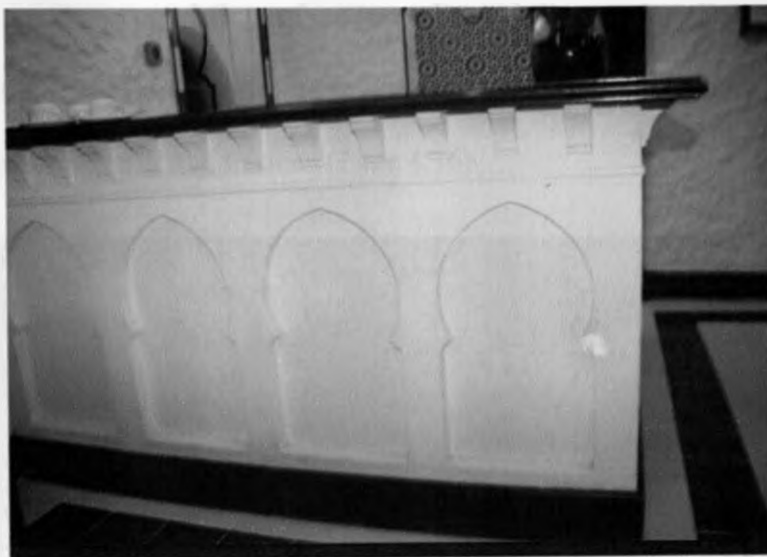


Plate 4:13, Nairobi Serena hotel, curved pointed arch on bar counter¹³⁰



Plate 4:14, Nairobi Serena hotel, curved pointed arch at the lounge

¹³⁰ Plates 4:13-14, Source: Researchers photographs

A diamond pattern (or inclined squares) generated from cross-hatching of parallel members or lines at equal distance is another prominent design in the hotel. The ceiling on part of the hotel has a square grid that forms diamond patterns. The decorative timber fascia has etched geometric patterns consisting of squares formed by parallel lines, zigzag cut lines, inclined squares, and triangles, all repeated in the same sequence. (Plate 4:15). The same pattern is also used to frame wall mounted mirrors (Plate 4:16).

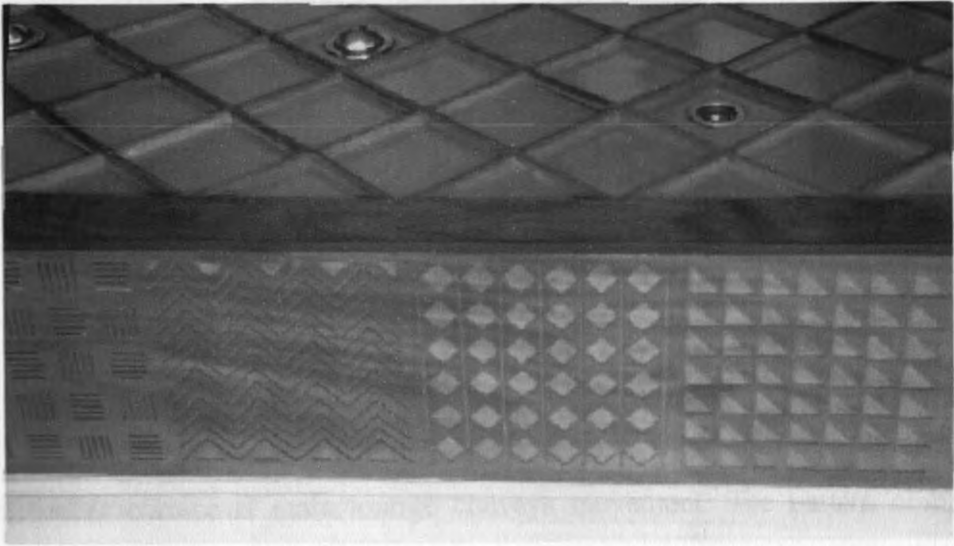


Plate 4:15, Nairobi Serena hotel, ceiling and fascia design¹³¹



Plate 4:16 Nairobi Serena hotel, mirror frame design

¹³¹ Plates 4:15-16, Source: Researchers photographs

There exists another form of etched, inclined square pattern on the fixed door panels of some doors. This particular design is formed by a single column of inclined squares framed by two parallel-etched lines on the edge to create a series of triangles on both sides (Plate 4:17)



Plate 4:17, Nairobi Serena hotel, inclined squares design on doorframe¹³²

The timber cornice at main lounge conveys movement. The pattern components are isolated and linked squares, triangles and fluted framing (Plate 4:18). A similar pattern was discovered on a West African woven mat¹³³

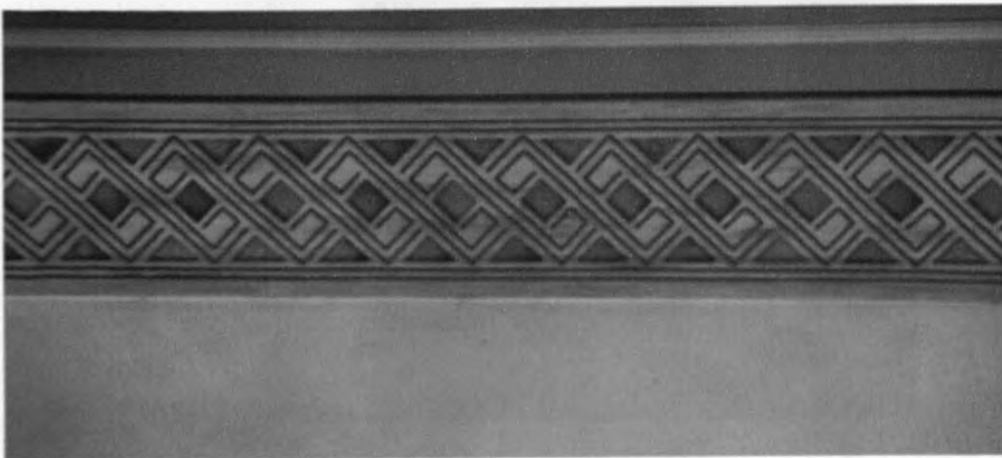


Plate 4:18 Nairobi Serena hotel, inclined squares, and triangle design, lounge cornice

¹³² Plates 4:16-17, Source: Researchers photographs

¹³³ The carpet pattern is provided in the next part of this chapter.

The screens (Plate 4:19) and the interior partition at the hotel reception (Plate 4:20) also have inclined square patterns.



Plate 4:19. Nairobi Serena hotel, inclined squares, on fetish screens¹³⁴



Plate 4:20. Nairobi Serena hotel, inclined squares, on interior partition

¹³⁴ Plates 4:19-20, Source: Researchers photographs

The Hotel's main reception desk made from mahogany timber consists of a series of panels with carved geometric motifs. The background of the design is an inclined square and the front are two inclined rectangles rounded on the edges and placed so as to form a cross. (Plate 4:21). Top the part of the reception desk is a series of squares bordered by straight lines.



Plate 4:21. Nairobi Serena hotel, main reception¹³⁵

The soft furnishing such as the carpets and decorative tapestries have complex patterns generated from a combination of various geometric shapes. The tapestry (Plate 4:22) for example has a cross as the main shape and the infill is a square and a concentric inverted square, triangles join the main squares at the sides.



Plate 4:22. Nairobi Serena hotel, tapestry pattern

¹³⁵ Plates 4:21-22, Source: Researchers photographs

The carpet at the corridor has a conspicuous beige border pattern and diamond pattern infill. (Plate 4:23)

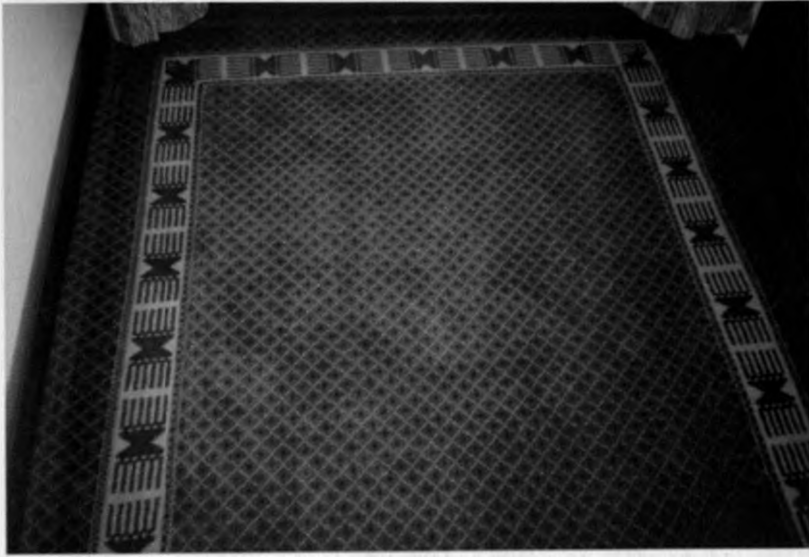


Plate 4:23. Nairobi Serena hotel. carpet pattern¹³⁶

4.3 Comparison of Nairobi Serena Hotel patterns and others

In the course of the research, it was found that some patterns used in Nairobi Serena Hotel are related to some used in Mombasa Serena Hotel, Zanzibar Serena Inn, Lamu Old town Architecture and African art and Craft. The following plates (4:24 4:29) show the comparisons.

AFRICAN POTS/ NAIROBI SERENA HOTEL DIAMOND PATTERN

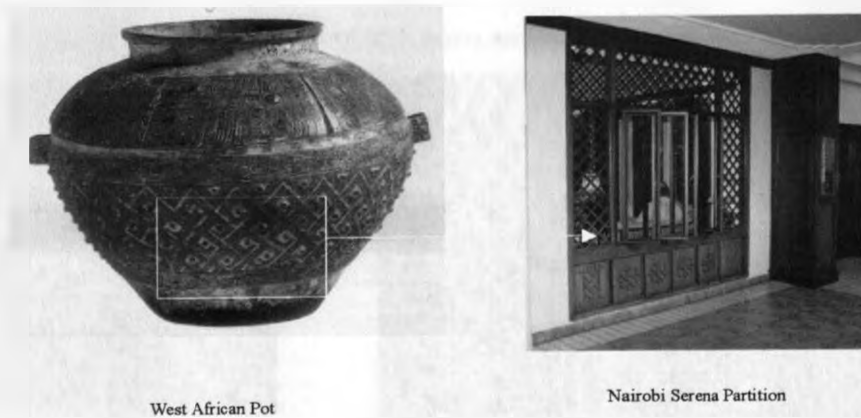
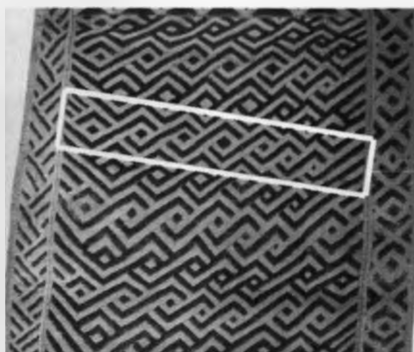


Plate 4:24¹³⁷

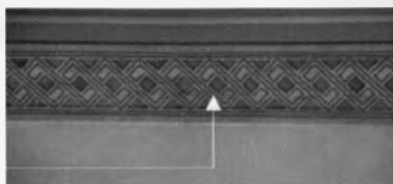
¹³⁶ Source: Researchers photographs

¹³⁷ Plate 4.24 source Internet August 2005: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb?> painted houses.htm

AFRICAN WOVEN TEXTILE/ NAIROBI SERENA DIAMOND
PATTERN



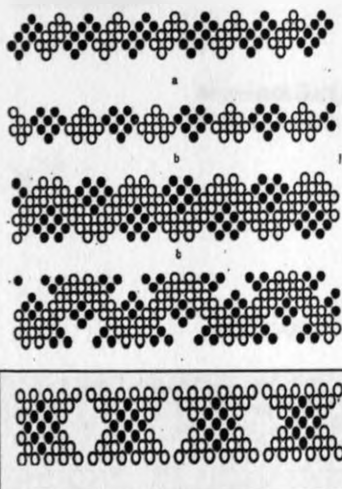
African woven
mat



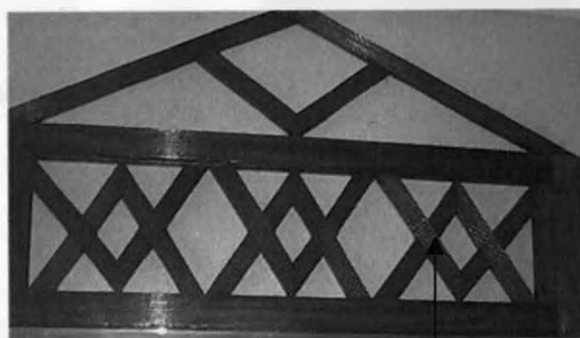
Nairobi Serena
cortice

Plate 4:25¹³⁸

AFRICAN BEAD WORK/ NAIROBI SERENA HOTEL DIAMOND PATTERN



African beadwork patterns



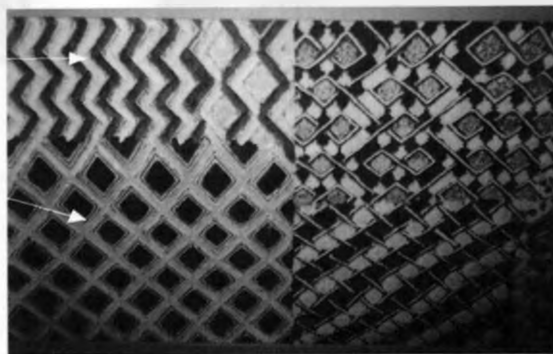
Nairobi Serena door crown pattern

Plate 4:26¹³⁹

AFRICAN FACE PAINTING/ NAIROBI SERENA HOTEL ZIG ZAG & DIAMOND PATTERN



People of Kau



Carpet Nairobi Serena

Plate 4:27¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Plate 4.25 source Internet August 2005: [http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb? painted houses.htm](http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb?%20painted%20houses.htm)

¹³⁹ Plate 4.26 source Internet August 2005: [http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb? painted houses.htm](http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb?%20painted%20houses.htm)

MOMBASA SERENA/ NAIROBI SERENA. DIAMOND PATTERN.



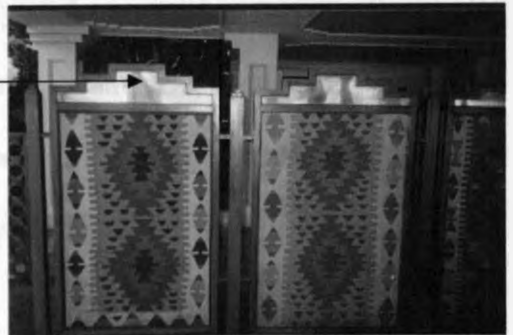
Mombasa Serena Lattice design
Nairobi Serena

Plate 4:28¹⁴¹

AFRICAN PAINTED HOUSE/ NAIROBI SERENA HOTEL CROWN MOULD



Basotho painted house



Nairobi Serena lounge Screens

Plate 4:29¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Plate 4.24 source Internet August 2005: [http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb? painted houses.htm](http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb?%20painted%20houses.htm)

¹⁴¹ Plate 4:28 Source Researchers photograph

¹⁴² Plate 4.24 source Internet August 2005: [http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb? painted houses.htm](http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb?%20painted%20houses.htm)

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION & DATA ANALYSIS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter contains presentation and analysis of research findings collected from the target population based on the questionnaires presented and the interviews conducted by the researcher. The target population composed of: the patrons of Nairobi Serena hotels, the management and workers of Nairobi Serena Hotels, Interior design consultants, and Practising Interior designers.

5.1 Presentation of questionnaires and Interviews

The data collected from, the hotel patrons, management of the hotel, professional designers and the project consultant is presented in form of frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts and descriptive text.

5.2 Analysis of Findings

The majority of the hotel patrons interviewed were females, and the age bracket was identified to be between 28 and 52 years of age. Nearly all the respondent were professionals, working in diverse field of economy; managers, accountants, lawyers, lecturers, doctors and business people. About 97% of the patrons have visited Nairobi Serena hotel more than once before the research was carried out, and therefore they have had time to admire and appreciate the patterns.

The research conducted indicate the interior design of the hotel is third reason why patrons frequently visit Nairobi Serena beside quality of service provided and the location but about 90 % of the patron mentioned the word beauty in their responses. It is evident that pattern have contributed so much in enhancing the hotels beauty. . About 90% of the respondents have a general understanding on the definition of pattern, they used basic acceptable words such as “design layout”, “consistent design”, “design sequence” and “repeated design”. Patrons

described the patterns in Nairobi Serena hotel as “standard”, “African design” and “beautiful and well designed” in that order.

Results indicate that 98% of the patrons have visited other prestigious hotels in Kenya, they include Nyali beach, White Sands, Intercontinental, Mombasa Beach, Safari Park, among others. This shows that the patrons have information on the nature of other facilities in the hotel and tourism industry. The patrons were able to draw analogies and contrast before responding. All patrons stated they would highly recommend and encourage other people to visit the hotel. Compared to the other hotels, the general design of the hotel was ranked superior by the majority, and similar by the minority.

Based on the above, it is true to conclude that the respondents understood the questions posed to them and the results achieved could be generalized to represent a bigger population than that which was interviewed.

Two thirds of the management and support staff of Nairobi interviewed were male. The age bracket was between the age of 30 and 54 years, and 78% of them have worked at the hotel for a period of between 2 and 11 years. The staff has the experience, understanding and the appreciation of the state of facilities in the hotel. The research identified that most of the hotel staff associate the patterns of the hotel with African and Islamic influences and that most of the patterns are more symbolic than historic. It was also noted that some symbolic meaning could not however be directly understood, and require prior information and interest in art. The staff stated that the majority of the hotel patrons were found to be interested in the patterns and frequently inquire on who designs, who installs, how they are installed and some times the meanings.

The management of the hotel indicated that the patterns are damaged on many occasions though the rate of damage varies from one type of pattern to the other. For example while relocating bulky hotel furniture, abrasion on the walls and panels cause the carved and precasted

patterns to break or chip off. Local trained experts are mainly used in the restoration of general patterns, however when intricate patterns are damaged which happens rarely, specialized people are called from abroad to restore them.

“The Interview with the Interior Design Consultant revealed that the design brief closely integrated indigenous design and materials with the most modern amenities, complementing them by exceptional service.”¹⁴³

The design brief that emanated from the client for Nairobi Serena Hotel required creation of interior and exterior spaces that were to reflect a pan-African theme drawing on the cultural design and historical design/ethnic design of the African continent. The design was also expected to promote tourism and awareness of the environment of developing countries, improve appreciation of their cultural traditions, help protect that environment and revitalize and sustain those traditions.

It was also established that the design consultant was given the freedom to choice of the overall design provided it yielded to the design brief. Therefore the layouts, the motif to apply, the material for the finishes, the colours to use was all at the will of the design consultant. The design consultant explained Pan African theme is very wide to be captured in one hotel setting, due to the diverse cultures that exists in the African continent. After in house consultations and deliberation specific regions of the continent were purposively chosen due to their rich cultural heritage to represent the rest. Various hotel spaces were to be designed with differing themes but with certain elements providing continuity through the space in colour and form. For example, the Bambara lounge is generated from the Bambara area in Western Africa, the Axum (Aksum) bar is from Ethiopian origins and the Maisha Health Club is form North African origins. Nature of the patterns are all either abstracted or literally taken or generated from cultural patterns used in various parts of the continent. It can therefore be said the choice of the patterns to apply was purposive and conscious.

The design consultant believes the areas of the interior design within which they worked, achieved their objectives and so they are meant to understand the client was is also content. Within the parameters of the brief, budget, and client aspiration the design consultant is satisfied with the products but points out that, like any other designer at the end of a product, there are always other ways of potentially doing things purely due to the passage of time from the initial conceptual ideas through to the end of a project, which can take months if not years.

The approach to a project included in-depth and careful research and use of a variety of designers within the firm from different cultural and national backgrounds within the African continent to provide diverse ideas and inspirations to meet the requirements of the brief. The challenges encountered during the project, was the fact that the main aspect of changing interiors or developing interiors within an existing hotel lie in the fact that one has to work around the hotel operating throughout, because it very rare for a hotel to close down completely to undertake a renovation. Mixing the pure business aspect of hard architecture and commercial contractors with artistic individuals, whether be it sculptors, painters, jewelers and others proved to be a challenge but throughout the project, and the consultant had to learn to create balance, marriage and unity in all the people and factors involved. The design consultant representative¹⁴⁴ in describing the overall design of Nairobi Serena Hotel said

“The hotel is sensitively constructed from ecologically sympathetic materials; the interior décor of the hotel reflects a kaleidoscope of cultural influences blending Moroccan mystique and a breadth of African heritage into one elegant and harmonious whole.”

¹⁴³ Internet August 2005 :<http://www.serenahotels.com/kenya>

5.3. Secondary findings

Serena Hotel group in Kenya has used patterns whose origins can be described as diverse. In the case of Nairobi Serena Hotel, this researcher was able to identify the origin and meanings of some notable patterns applied, however the origin and meaning of others patterns could not be established. Some patterns were discovered to be directly associated and similar to those of a particular religion; while others were influenced by people of a specific geographical setting. Nature inspired and abstract patterns are also evident.

Islamic patterns are the most notable in Nairobi Serena Hotel. Intricately carved doorframe design has roots in Old Lamu Town and the Zanzibar Island, which are Islamic towns. The niches on the walls, counters, and short walls have pointed arches, a dominating feature of Islamic architecture. The lattice (diamond pattern), the triangles and squares on some partitions, fetish screens and decorative fascias have association with the geometrized patterns of the Islamic religion. Based on the Internet¹⁴⁵ and other sources of information such as the historical museum in Lamu, various shapes have different symbolic meanings; the triangle is said to symbolize human consciousness and the three basic biological functions: ingestion, digestion, and excretion. The square is the symbol of physical experience and the physical world-or materiality-and the hexagon, of Heaven.

The emphasis on Islamic patterns can also be attributed to the propagation of faith by the proprietor of the hotel, His highness the Aga Khan. According to Internet¹⁴⁶ His Highness the Aga Khan became Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims in 1957, succeeding his grandfather, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan. He is the 49th hereditary Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims and a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, through his cousin and son-in-law, Ali, the first Imam, and his wife Fatima, the Prophet's daughter.

¹⁴⁴ Symbion International

¹⁴⁵ Internet August 2005 :<http://www4.hmc.edu:8001/humanities/mus127s/islam.htm>

¹⁴⁶ <http://www.akdn.org/hh/highness.html>

The Aga Khan has emphasized the view of Islam as a thinking, spiritual faith, one that teaches compassion and tolerance and that upholds the dignity of man, Allah's noblest creation. In the Shia tradition of Islam, it is the mandate of the Imam of the time to safeguard the individual's right to personal intellectual search and to give practical expression to the ethical vision of society that the Islamic message inspires. Addressing the International Conference in Karachi in 1976, the Aga Khan said, it is that the wisdom of Allah's final Prophet in seeking new solutions for problems which could not be solved by traditional methods, provides the inspiration for Muslims to conceive a truly modern and dynamic society, without affecting the fundamental concepts of Islam⁴⁰.

In consonance with this vision of Islam and their tradition of service to humanity, wherever Ismailis live, they have elaborated a well-defined institutional framework to carry out social, economic and cultural activities. Under the Aga Khan's leadership, this framework has expanded and evolved into the Aga Khan Development Network, a group of institutions working to improve living conditions and opportunities in specific regions of the developing world. In every country, these institutions work for the common good of all citizens regardless of their origin or religion. Their individual mandates range from architecture, education and health to the promotion of private sector enterprise, the enhancement of non-government organizations and rural development. A typical Islamic inspired space is the State Suite (or Lamu Suite).

Several features in the Nairobi Serena Hotel have a stepped arch. They include, door arches, display niches and fetish niches. According to the design consultant, the inspiration was derived from the great stepped pyramid of Egypt, which resembles or projects a triangle. Ching¹⁴⁷ provides the meaning derived from a triangle as that which represents stability. But

¹⁴⁷ Ching F. D. 1987,

according to the Internet¹⁴⁸, among the Basotho people, the triangle was used to evoke the god, the lighting bird, and hence it has spiritual attachment.

It was also established that the various themes vary from one space to another but the patterns of a particular space are related for continuity and harmony. The patterns can therefore be described as a fusion of West African, Moroccan, North African and Islamic religion. The following examples provide an insight in the diverse themes in various spaces: The author of an article on the Internet¹⁴⁹ writes,

“The Bambara Residents Lounge is an oasis of peace amid the bustle and features some outstanding examples of ethnic design. Named after the Bambara community of Mali and designed around a West African theme with its hand-carved camphor wood panels, each depicting an African legend or superstition, the Bambara Lounge is reserved for hotel residents.”

The Mandhari Restaurant offers sophisticated international cuisine amid elegant surroundings. Mandhari, which is Swahili name for landscape, an impressive 60-foot Kisii soapstone mural of the Ngong Hills by local artist Joanie Waite provides the restaurant’s backdrop.

The all-day Cafe Maghreb is a popular meeting place with an extensive menu and al fresco dining area beside the pool. The spokesman of the Design consultant¹⁵⁰ provided the background of the café.

“Cafe Maghreb was named after the Swahili/Arabic word meaning ‘west-of the setting of the sun’. Its decor has echoes of Moroccan mud-style architecture and is reminiscent of the street side stalls of Marrakech and Tangiers, where the bitter sweet brew of spiced aromatic “Kahawa” or coffee is poured from copper urns beside the crowded emporiums and bazaars.”

The Aksum Bar (formerly the Kisima Bar) is spacious and boasts an Ethiopian theme. According to Internet¹⁵¹

“The name ‘Aksum’ is derived from the ancient, almost mythical town Aksum situated on the Tegrev Plateau of Northern Ethiopia. The Kingdom of Aksum reigned as a political force at the heart of ancient Ethiopia up until the 13th century. The Nairobi Serena Hotel has tried to rekindle the ancient Aksumite atmosphere, decor and spirit in its own Aksum.’

¹⁴⁸ Internet August 2005; <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfrb/paintedhouses.htm>

¹⁴⁹ Internet August 2005 :<http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/whatson/decian/serena.htm>

¹⁵⁰ Symbion International

¹⁵¹ Internet August 2005 :<http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/whatson/decian/serena.htm>

For interior design, the Serena Group philosophy of blending the highest international standards with traditional African design and materials is nowhere better illustrated than in the pan-African themes incorporated in the Nairobi Serena Hotel bedrooms. According to the Design Consultant

“The inspiration for the recurring motifs used in the intricate timberwork drawn from the designs of the Dogon people of Mali, particularly their fertility symbols. The themes are interpreted in the carvings of local mahogany and mvuli wood as well as brass fitting.”

The abstraction of one of the Dogon motifs has been used as a theme for the carpentry in the bedroom and this peaceful and yet exciting graphic has been developed indirectly and directly throughout the bedroom. The main motif on typical rooms is a geometrized shape of a lizard. The motif runs on the bed support, bedside chest and the doorframe. However, it was not be fully established why the lizard was chosen.

Denyer¹⁵², in her book, *African Architecture*, notes "the layout of Dogon villages and houses is Further information from the spokesman of the design consultant, indicated he regard the artistry and architecture of the Dogon identified the designs as among

"The most astounding in Africa and their appreciation of form, massing and sculpture has an elegance beyond comprehension"

A spokesman adds:

"While their architecture and decoration is both functional and religious, it represents an area of creativity and elegance which we believe is synonymous with the elegance and originality that the Serena Group endeavors to achieve and portray through architecture and presentation of all aspects of their operations."

The materials that have been used in the Hotel are diverse. For example, the parking area has been finished in machine cut stone a material that is available in the Kangundo area of Machakos District. Rugged marble stones have been used to clad some partitions of the exterior wall to contrast with the brilliant white paint on plastered areas. The stones were sourced locally in Mbooni hills of Machakos area. The design consultant explained the white colour was applied

¹⁵² Denyer Susan, (1978),

to make the building conspicuous from a distance, while the pebbles were meant to harmonize the building with the hard pavement and parking in terms of texture and ochre colours.

The guest rooms furniture (Plates 1:5, and 1:6 page 5); bed, bedside cabinet, lounge seat, skirting, pelmet boxes, and door architraves are constructed from Mahogany imported from Congo and finished in clear matt varnish to preserve and also enhance the aesthetic grain properties of timber. The floor finish is beige carpet with diamond pattern. The carpet was imported from South Africa, and was selected from the various catalogues of the manufacturer to fit the theme of the rooms. The window curtain material is brocade with gold and green checked pattern. The material was sourced and imported by the design consultant from Nigeria, although local soft furnishing designers were employed to carry out the tailoring work. The duvet have a matching colour and design but in printed cotton. Gold-framed painting of various themes have been used as room accent and were painted by local artists and sourced from local galleries. The walls are finished in soft white silk paint finish to complement the beige scheme, while brilliant soft white is applied on the ceiling to increase the relative height of the room. The Imported rectangular marble slabs have been used to clad all the washrooms and cloakrooms. The colors vary from white to beige and the tiles have been laid straight to form a grid pattern. Marble was selected over tiles because of the superior finish and durability.

In the Bambara resident lounge (Plate 4; 14 pages 56) the walls are finished in textured paint finish imported from South Africa and applied by a local company specializing in paint application. The lounge chairs are made from mahogany framework and woven reeds infill. The artifacts were mainly sourced from the West African countries especially Mali and Morocco, and included Masks, sculptures, Printed and woven textiles. The intricate carved patterns on the timber works at the reception counters and borders at the restaurant, door architraves were first designed by the Design Consultant, locally trained wood carvers especially those from

Ukambani area were commissioned to provide prototypes. The approved samples were then supplied to mechanized wood workshop for mass production and uniformity.

The researcher interviewed a local artisan who was involved in production of sample boards of etched patterns. He explained that he acquired his skills through apprenticeship and informal classes from other wood carvers. The initial stage was sourcing of ideas and inspirations and converting them into sketches and refined drawings; this stage was carried out by the design consultant. The artisan process starts by preparing a timber surface through processes such as sizing and planning. The refined drawing of the pattern is then traced to the timber surface followed by the process of etching using both hand tools such as chisels and machines such as hand drills. The finished sample is sanded and clear varnished. The sample is then presented to the design consultant for comments and approval. Similar process was followed in the production of printed patterns on the walls. The design consultant provides the finished drawing of the intended pattern to the artisan who prepares a silkscreen stencil. A sample is then done on a sample wall for approval.

It is worth noting that, Serena group of hotels prides itself on the blending of local materials and workmanship with the natural environment. However, patterns that can be claimed to be representing diverse Kenyan, themes are absent in Nairobi Serena Hotel except the few coastal inspirations. However, although many Kenya concepts are missing, the patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel have been greatly welcomed and appreciated, this shows that patterns are a universal and appreciated and acknowledged world wide, due to the desirability and appeal to all the people of different continents, races or creed.

To concretize this research, it was noted that during the course of gathering data, Nairobi Serena Hotel was in the process of renovating the premises. The work included renovation of hotel rooms and construction works. It was also established that the renovation is a continuous process that is carried out to modernize and uplift the image of the hotel.

5.4 Hotel patrons

The following tables contain the feedback received from the various patrons of the hotel and is categorized into background information and responses to the questionnaires.

Table 5.1 and 5.2 indicates the percentage of the patrons' gender of whom participated in the research. 75% of the respondents were women. This was mainly so because the research sample ratio was chosen in direct proportion to that of the patrons who visited the hotel.

Gender of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	11	36.7	36.7	36.7
	Female	19	63.3	63.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 5.1, (Frequency Table on gender of the patrons)

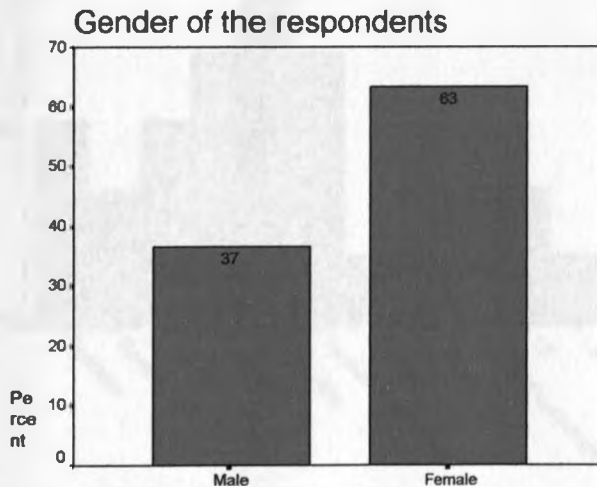


Table 5.2 (bar chart on gender of the patrons)

Table 5.3 and 5.4 shows the occupation of the respondents. Most of the respondents have professional experience except the housewife/student category. The house wives/ students were represented to avoid getting biased information. Again this percentage is determined by the financial status. Most of the patrons were well up financially.

Occupation of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business	3	10.0	10.3	10.3
	Researcher	2	6.7	6.9	17.2
	Manager	3	10.0	10.3	27.6
	Marketing	4	13.3	13.8	41.4
	Accountant	5	16.7	17.2	58.6
	Housewife/not employed/studen	4	13.3	13.8	72.4
	Lawyer	1	3.3	3.4	75.9
	Lecturer	2	6.7	6.9	82.8
	Doctors/Psychologis	2	6.7	6.9	89.7
		2	6.7	6.9	96.6
	Logistics	1	3.3	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Table 5.3, (Frequency Table on occupation of patrons)

Occupation of the respondents

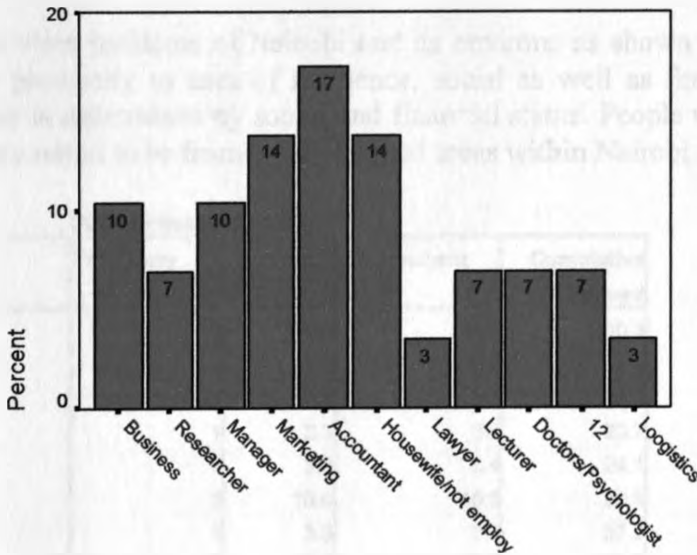


Table 5.4, (Bar graph on occupation of patrons)

Table 5.5 shows the ages of the respondents. The majority of the respondents, about 50% were between 23-33 years of age. This age bracket frequented the hotel most and there was no bias in choosing the respondent in regards to the age. It was noted that this age bracket visited the hotels and mostly during the weekends. Most of the older patrons were also seen to be accompanied by the younger generation. The valid percentage takes care of the missing system making the target population 100%.

Age of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	23	4	13.3	13.8	13.8
	24	4	13.3	13.8	27.6
	25	2	6.7	6.9	34.5
	26	1	3.3	3.4	37.9
	27	1	3.3	3.4	41.4
	28	1	3.3	3.4	44.8
	29	1	3.3	3.4	48.3
	30	2	6.7	6.9	55.2
	31	2	6.7	6.9	62.1
	33	2	6.7	6.9	69.0
	34	1	3.3	3.4	72.4
	35	1	3.3	3.4	75.9
	38	1	3.3	3.4	79.3
	40	1	3.3	3.4	82.8
	42	1	3.3	3.4	86.2
	45	1	3.3	3.4	89.7
	48	2	6.7	6.9	96.6
	52	1	3.3	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Table 5.5, (Frequency Table for ages of the patrons)

All the respondents were residents of Nairobi and its environs as shown on table 5.6. This was mostly affected by proximity to area of residence, social as well as financial status. Area of residence in this case is determined by social and financial status. People who can afford to visit the Serena hotel were noted to be from the developed areas within Nairobi.

Place of Resident

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Upperhill	3	10.0	10.3	10.3	
	Buruburu	1	3.3	3.4	13.8	
	Loresho	1	3.3	3.4	17.2	
	Kitimani	1	3.3	3.4	20.7	
	Ridgeways	1	3.3	3.4	24.1	
	Westlands	3	10.0	10.3	34.5	
	Lavington	1	3.3	3.4	37.9	
	Southlands	1	3.3	3.4	41.4	
	Kiambu	1	3.3	3.4	44.8	
	Riara Road	1	3.3	3.4	48.3	
	Nairobi	8	26.7	27.6	75.9	
	Limuru	3	10.0	10.3	86.2	
	Ngong	1	3.3	3.4	89.7	
	Old Racecourse	1	3.3	3.4	93.1	
	Kikuyu	1	3.3	3.4	96.6	
	Kyuna	1	3.3	3.4	100.0	
		Total	29	96.7	100.0	
	Missing	System	1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0			

Table 5.6, (Frequency Table for area of resident of patrons)

The following tables are presentations of the answers provided by the hotel patrons based on the questionnaire; with support reason being, the quality of service, the superiority and beauty of the interior spaces and general design among other reasons. Part of the reason for visiting the Serena Hotel is the interior design. The beauty of the spaces has been emphasized by the use of patterns.

Have you ever visited Nairobi Serena before?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	96.7	96.7	96.7
	No	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 5.7

Have you ever visited Nairobi Serena before?

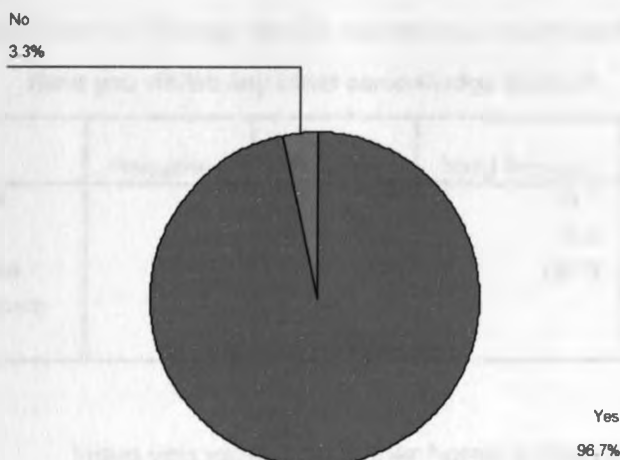


Table 5.8

If Yes, how often?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Often	8	28.7	27.6	27.6
	Rarely	21	70.0	72.4	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Table 5.9

Have you visited any other serena/lodge before?

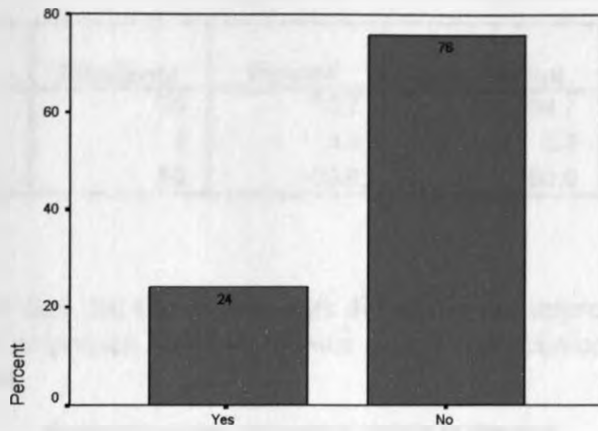


Table 5.10

This question was asked a view of finding out the respondents experience in the other hotels.

Have you visited any other serena/lodge before?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	23.3	24.1	24.1
	No	22	73.3	75.9	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Table 5.11.

Have you visited any other hotels in Kenya?

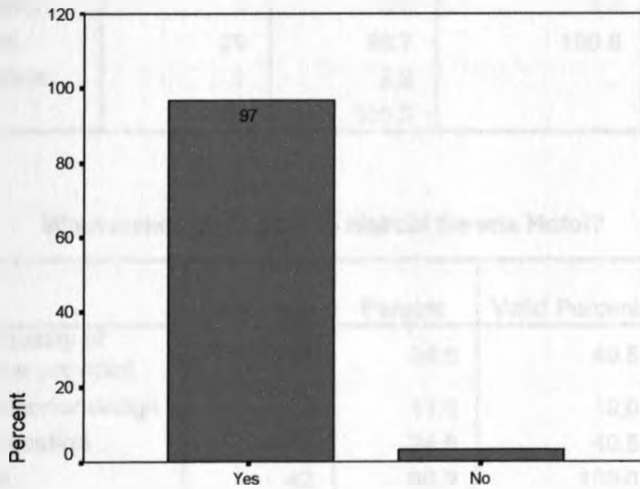


Table 5.12

Would you recommend anybody to visit Nairobi Serena Hotel?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	96.7	96.7	96.7
	4	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 5.13

This question affirms the fact that the respondents did or did not appreciate their visit to Serena hotel depending on their responses. Positive answer means appreciation sighting the factors that make them visit this hotel.

Have you visited any other hotels in Kenya?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	96.7	96.7	96.7
	No	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 5.14

How would you compare the general design of Nairobi Serena Hotel and those of other hotels you have visited?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Superior	18	60.0	62.1	62.1
	Similar	10	33.3	34.5	96.6
	Inferior	1	3.3	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Table 5.15

What makes you come to Nairobi Serena Hotel?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	The quality of service provided	17	24.6	40.5	40.5
	The interior design	8	11.6	19.0	59.5
	The location	17	24.6	40.5	100.0
	Total	42	60.9	100.0	
Missing	System	27	39.1		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.16

The quality of services is very much appreciated by the respondents. This goes hand in hand with the interior space beauty. The quality of service was not only mentioned in reference to the efficiency at services but also referred to other issues as cleanliness and beauty. The use of patterns has so much to do with beauty in the hotels spaces.

Would you recommend anybody to visit Nairobi Serena Hotel?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	42.0	96.7	96.7
	missing	1	1.4	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	43.5	100.0	
Missing	System	39	56.5		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.17

Give reasons

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Beautiful/Class	4	5.8	12.1	12.1
	Quality of service	25	36.2	75.8	87.9
	The interior design is fantastic	2	2.9	6.1	93.9
	Good location	1	1.4	3.0	97.0
	Pattern has African touch	1	1.4	3.0	100.0
	Total	33	47.8	100.0	
Missing	System	36	52.2		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.18

Have you visited any other hotels in Kenya?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	42.0	96.7	96.7
	No	1	1.4	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	43.5	100.0	
Missing	System	39	56.5		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.19

Most of the respondents claim to have visited the nyali, whitesands and intercontinental hotels due to their locations.

If yes, please state which ones

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nyali Beach	5	7.2	8.5	8.5
	White sands	5	7.2	8.5	16.9
	Intercontinental	5	7.2	8.5	25.4
	Heritage group	1	1.4	1.7	27.1
	Alliance group	2	2.9	3.4	30.5
	Sarova Group	1	1.4	1.7	32.2
	The Stanly	7	10.1	11.9	44.1
	Nairobi Safari club	2	2.9	3.4	47.5
	Hilton Nairobi	8	11.6	13.6	61.0
	Norfolk	4	5.8	6.8	67.8
	Lomrho	1	1.4	1.7	69.5
	Pan Afric	2	2.9	3.4	72.9
	Maasai serena	1	1.4	1.7	74.6
	Grand regency	5	7.2	8.5	83.1
	Ngulia Lodge	1	1.4	1.7	84.7
	Green hills	1	1.4	1.7	86.4
	Shade hotel	1	1.4	1.7	88.1
	Land mark	1	1.4	1.7	89.8
	Safari park Hotel	1	1.4	1.7	91.5
	Naivasha Simba lodge	1	1.4	1.7	93.2
	Mt Kenya safari club	1	1.4	1.7	94.9
	Voyager hotel	1	1.4	1.7	96.6
	Mombasa beach	1	1.4	1.7	98.3
	Indiana beach	1	1.4	1.7	100.0
	Total	59	85.5	100.0	
Missing	System	10	14.5		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.20

How would you compare the general design of Nairobi Serena Hotel and those of other hotels you have visited?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Superior	18	26.1	62.1	62.1
	Similar	10	14.5	34.5	96.6
	Inferior	1	1.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	42.0	100.0	
Missing	System	40	58.0		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.21

What do you understand from the word pattern?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Design/layout/uniqueness	12	17.4	40.0	40.0
	Consistency/repeated design/sequence	15	21.7	50.0	90.0
	combination of designs/colours	2	2.9	6.7	96.7
	Interior decorations	1	1.4	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	43.5	100.0	
Missing	System	39	56.5		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.22

How would you describe patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Beautiful/well designed	6	8.7	20.7	20.7
	Standard	9	13.0	31.0	51.7
	Linear	3	4.3	10.3	62.1
	Pattern has african design	8	11.6	27.6	89.7
	Arabic looking	1	1.4	3.4	93.1
	It lacks warmth	1	1.4	3.4	96.6
	Require updation	1	1.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	42.0	100.0	
Missing	System	40	58.0		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.23

In your opinion What does the overall design in Nairobi Serena Hotel represent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African idea	15	21.7	46.9	46.9
	Asiatic	8	11.6	25.0	71.9
	Others	9	13.0	28.1	100.0
	Total	32	46.4	100.0	
Missing	System	37	53.6		
Total		69	100.0		

Table 5.24

5.5 Management of Nairobi Serena Hotel

The following is the background information of the management of Nairobi Serena hotel and the responses to the questionnaires.

Gender of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	4	44.4	66.7	66.7
	Female	2	22.2	33.3	100.0
	Total	6	66.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	33.3		
Total		9	100.0		

Table 5.25

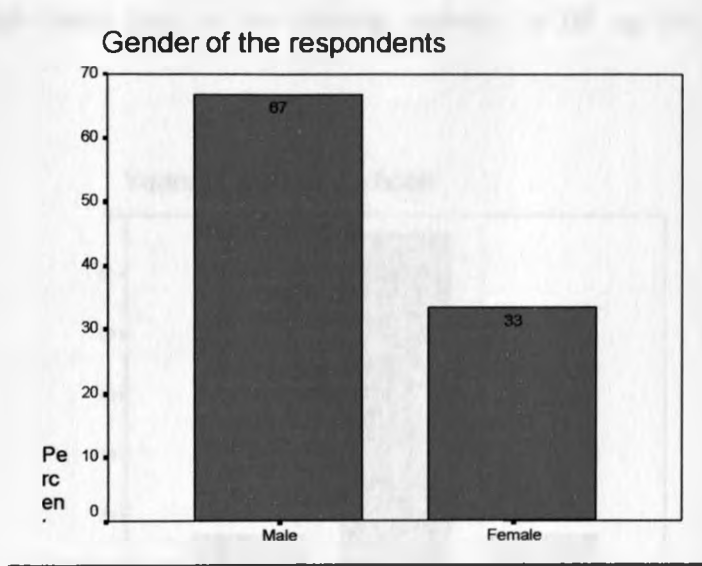


Table 5.26

Age of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30.00	1	11.1	25.0	25.0
	34.00	1	11.1	25.0	50.0
	49.00	1	11.1	25.0	75.0
	54.00	1	11.1	25.0	100.0
	Total	4	44.4	100.0	
Missing	System	5	55.6		
Total		9	100.0		

Table 5.27

Years at work in the hotel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	11.1	16.7	16.7
	2.00	4	44.4	66.7	83.3
	11.00	1	11.1	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	66.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	33.3		
Total		9	100.0		

The valid percentage takes care of the missing system, to fill up the 100% of the target population.

Table 5.28

Years at work in the hotel

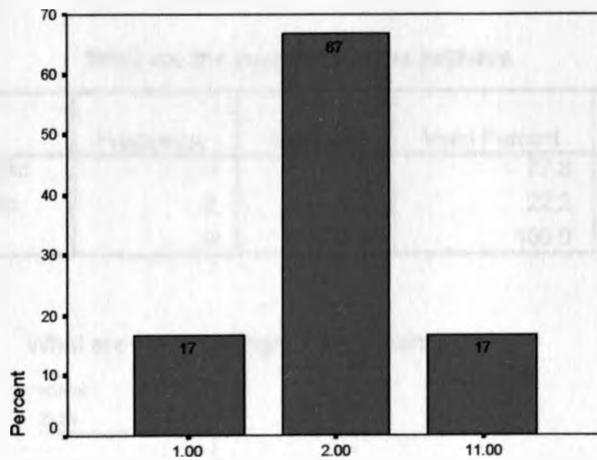


Table 5.29

Where do you think is the origin of the patterns

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Africa	6	66.7	85.7	85.7
	Asia	1	11.1	14.3	100.0
	Total	7	77.8	100.0	
Missing	System	2	22.2		
Total		9	100.0		

Table 5.30

Most of the respondents claim the patterns to be African even without prior knowledge of patterns.

Where do you think is the origin of the patterns

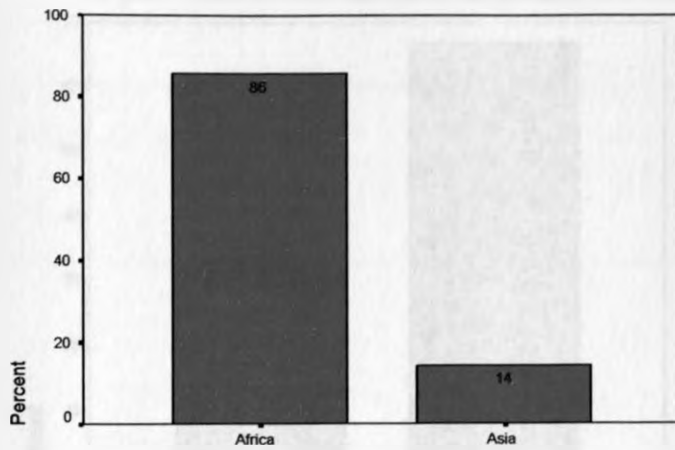


Table 5.26

What are the meanings of the patterns

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	symbolic	7	77.8	77.8	77.8
	Historic	2	22.2	22.2	100.0
Total		9	100.0	100.0	

Table 5.27

What are the meanings of the patterns

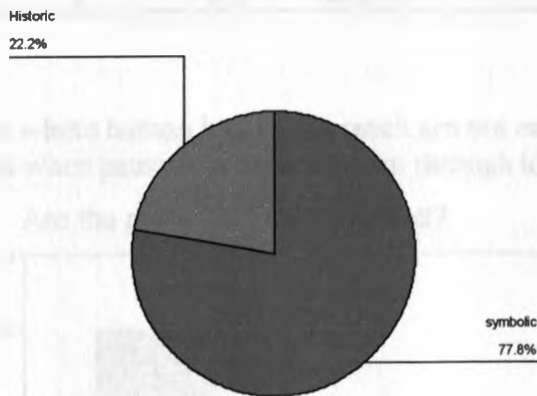


Table 5.28

Do visitors enquire about the patterns?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	2	22.2	33.3	33.3
	Some of them	4	44.4	66.7	100.0
	Total	6	66.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	33.3		
Total		9	100.0		

Table 5.29

In your opinion do visitors enquire about the pe

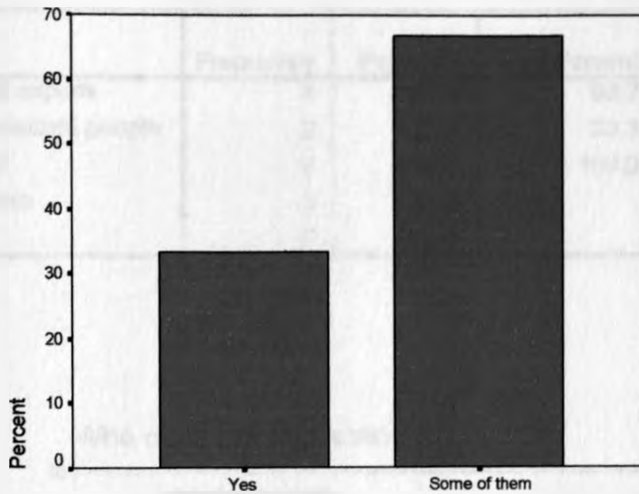


Table 5.30

Are the patterns ever damaged?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	33.3	50.0	50.0
	No	2	22.2	33.3	83.3
	sometimes	1	11.1	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	66.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	33.3		
Total		9	100.0		

Table 5.31

Patterns that are high above where human beings can reach are not easily destroyed. It was noted that patterns were destroyed when patrons to admired them through touching.

Are the patterns ever damaged?

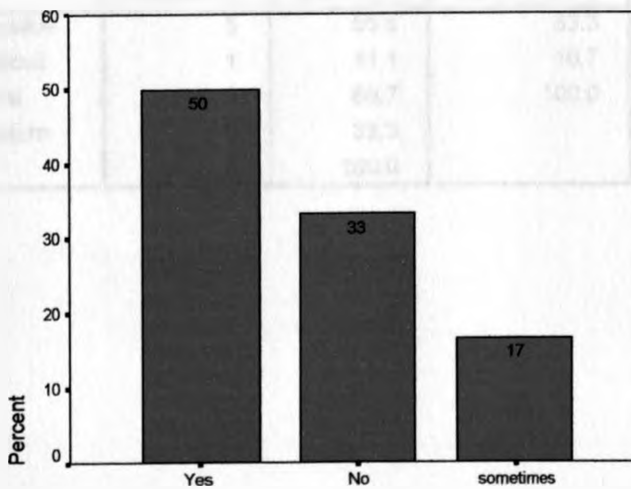


Table 5.32

Who does the restoration

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Local experts	4	44.4	66.7	66.7
	Specialized people	2	22.2	33.3	100.0
	Total	6	66.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	33.3		
Total		9	100.0		

Table 5.33

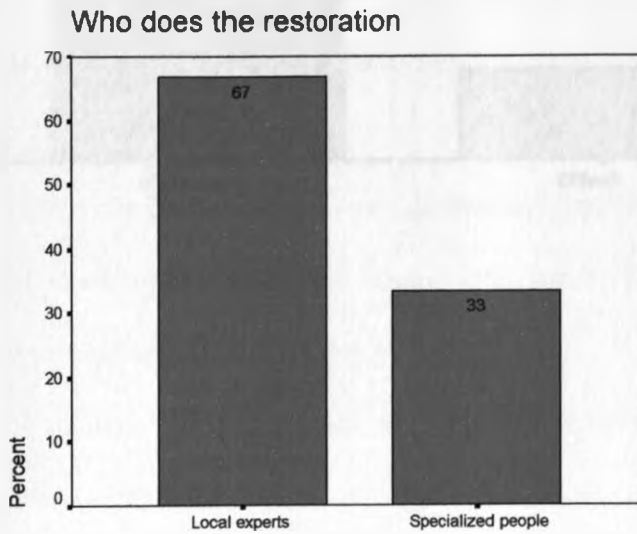


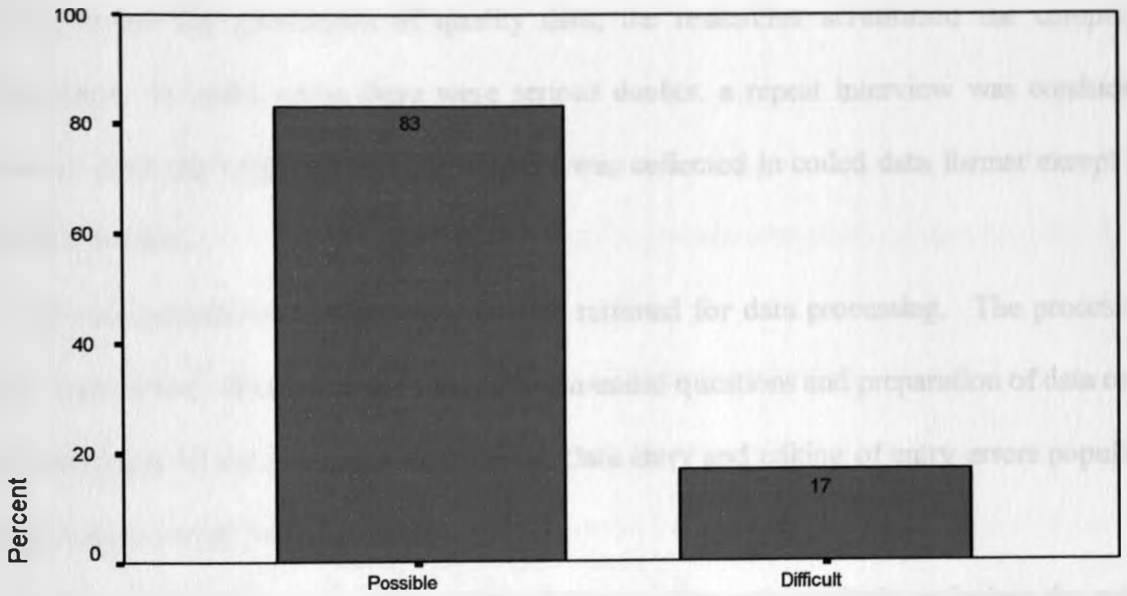
Table 5.34

How would you rate the maintenance and restoration of patterns

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Possible	5	55.6	83.3	83.3
	Difficult	1	11.1	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	66.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	33.3		
Total		9	100.0		

Table 5.35

How would you rate the maintenance and restoration of patterns



5.6 Conclusion

To ensure the production of quality data, the researcher scrutinized the completed questionnaires. In cases where there were serious doubts, a repeat interview was conducted. Information from the main survey questionnaire was collected in coded data format except for structured questions.

All the questionnaires (section a-d) were returned for data processing. The processing exercise consisted of office editing, coding of open-ended questions and preparation of data entry screen, (designing of the data entry structures). Data entry and editing of entry errors popularly known as data cleaning was undertaken.

The qualitative data was then analyzed through thematic analysis to isolate the major themes, explanation and findings; on the other hand, quantitative data was analyzed using tabular, percentile and graphic distribution and descriptions.

Quantitative data was then analyzed; frequency tables were used for explaining patterns and trends of design patterns of Nairobi Serena hotel among other key questions.

An SPSS (statistical package for social sciences) computer packages was used. This was for the purposes of drawing relevant descriptive statistics and testing for some relationships among variables with regard i.e. gender, age, and work position, among others.

In summary, the following steps were undertaken in the above process of data analysis,

1. Cross checking the collected data.
2. Data coding.
3. Designing of the data entry structures.
4. Data entry.
5. Data analysis and graphic production.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the previous chapters, the summary of findings, general summary, the researcher's point of view and the recommendations. It also provides areas of further studies by other scholars on the subject.

The research commences with a brief background of Nairobi Serena hotel, the ownership, location and a general view of the physical facilities. Use of patterns in the hotel is identified as the focus of investigation. An outline on the procedures and instrumentation of acquiring the necessary information is outlined. The target population was also identified and this included the Hotel patrons, the management and staff at the hotel, practicing interior designers and design consultants.

The Literature Review provides a brief history on patterns, definition and elements of patterns. Patterns on traditional African houses, Islamic, and Indian patterns are described. Comparative case studies of Mombasa Beach Hotel and Zanzibar Serena Inn is presented to provide more information on the use of patterns in the Serena group of hotels. This was done in order to understand the different meanings of pattern and their use by different communities so as to determine whether they have been correctly used at the Serena Hotel.

A documentation and discussion of patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel, provides information on the diverse and intricate use of patterns. A comparison of the same with African patterns and Islamic patterns (Mombasa beach hotel, Zanzibar Serena inn and Lamu Old town.)

The results of the research; questionnaires and interviews are presented and analyzed in the form of tables, bar graphs and pie charts. Other information is presented as descriptions and discussions.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The research has found that effective use of patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel, has largely contributed to the attainment of the five star status it currently enjoys. Consequently the status quo has raised and maintained the business success, thus making the hotel among the few pace setters in the region. The research established that all the respondents interviewed appreciate and acknowledge the diverse and unique use of patterns in the hotel and they placed the hotel on a higher level than most of other hotels visited. The patterns used in the hotel were described to be original, interesting, relaxing, beautiful, and attractive, inviting and that they provide the users of the space with something to think about and focus on. The patterns were also identified as creating an ultra modern ambience at the same time, portraying African themes.

6.3 Recommendations

In order to achieve the desired out come while using patterns, one needs to understand the basic issues about the patterns. Patterns had meanings and thus the meanings embedded in any pattern needs to be decoded before using the pattern. Some communities are against the use of certain art object in their space of dwelling e.g. the Muslim community prohibits the use of human figure, and thus using the wrong figure in a hotel may course negative impact on the business. The right use of patterns should be observed by researching before using a pattern. The origin of the pattern should be established and the use by its original community also established .The moral implication of the pattern then and now should be looked into before putting any pattern into use. Also the pattern should be accommodative to all communities if one is to get the desired outcome. In the current age one needs to choose the patterns to use putting in consideration the theme of the business. The location of the business the environment and the setting are also a factor to consider. The target clientele also helps determine the kind of art work to be used around the business premises. The community around the premises of business should also be consider and there reaction to any kind of pattern thought about irrespective of the

target clientele. This two should be balanced to avoid any conflicts from arising. There drawbacks in the use of patterns as information about them is not readily available. This brings the issue of having different decoding by different people from different communities and especially in place like Kenya where we have diverse communities. Another aspect that determines the success of the business is the right use of the pattern in relation to design .pattern should be used in such a way that they do not create monotony or become disturbing to the eye. Variation in the direction of the pattern or the combination of the patterns will help vary the designs .Congesting to many designs in one are while another are is without the pattern makes the entire design imbalanced.

Other group of hotels and lodges should consider the improvement and introduction of effective interior design in order to improve their status and create the feeling people yearn for while they are away to do business or party . By raising the status of their facilities, the other hotels will set a platform of competition where innovation and new products will result for the good of the Kenya economy and the satisfaction of the patrons. The value of money spent will equate the services provided. More detailed research needs to be carried out on patterns used in other hotels. This will provide a middle ground for analyzing the success of hotels in Kenya based on their interior design and use of patterns.



Plate 6:1 Old Lamu niches¹⁵³



Plate 6:2 Old Lamu niches¹⁵⁴



Plate 6:3 Old Lamu pointed arch¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Plate 6: 1 Source Researchers photographs

¹⁵⁴ Plate 6: 2 Source Researchers photographs

¹⁵⁵ Plate 6: 3Source Researchers photographs



Plate 6:4 Old Lamu niches arch¹⁵⁶



¹⁵⁶ Plate 6: 4 Source Researchers photographs

Plate 6:5 Restored stepped Lamu arch¹⁵⁷



Plate 6:6 Restored Lamu pointed arch¹⁵⁸



Plate 6:7 Restored Lamu pointed arch¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Plate 6: 5 Source Researchers photographs

¹⁵⁸ Plate 6: 6 Source Researchers photographs

¹⁵⁹ Plate 6: 7 Source Researchers photographs

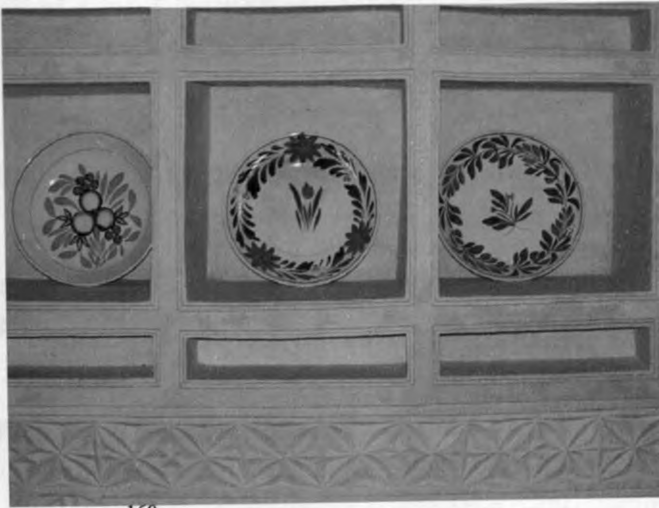


Plate 6:8 Restored Lamu niches¹⁶⁰



Plate 6:9, Restored Lamu niches¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Plate 6: 8 Source Researchers photographs
¹⁶¹ Plate 6: 9 Source Researchers photographs

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Appendix A i

Questionnaire for hotel patrons - 30 Respondents

Respondent background

- (i) Sex : Male Female
- (ii) Age : years
- (iii) Occupation / profession
- (iv) Place of residence

Question 1. Have you ever visited Nairobi Serena Hotel before?

- 1. Yes 2. No

If yes how often?

- 1. Often 2. Rarely

Question 2. Have you visited any other Serena Hotel/ lodge?

- 1. Yes 2. No

If yes, please state which one(s).....

Question 3. What makes you come to Nairobi Serena Hotel?

- 1. The quality of services provided 2. The interior design
- 3. The location

Question 4. Would you recommend anybody to visit Nairobi Serena Hotel?

- 1. Yes 2. No

Why.....
.....

Question 5. Have you visited any other hotels in Kenya?

- 1. Yes 2. No

If yes, please state which ones.....

Question 6. How would you compare the general design of Nairobi Serena Hotel and those of other hotels you have visited?

- 1. Superior 2. Similar 3. Inferior

Question 7. What do you understand from the word “Pattern”?

.....
.....

Question 8. How would you describe patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel?

.....
.....

Question 9. In Your opinion does the overall design in Nairobi Serena Hotel represent: -

1. African idea 2. Asiatic (Islamic idea)
3. Others

Support your choice

.....
.....

Appendix A ii

Interview questions for the Interior Designer Consultants 2 Respondents

Respondent background

(i) Sex : Male Female

(ii) Age :

(iii) Position in firm.....

(iii) Years of practice.....

1. What was the brief from the client?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. Were there any themes of the project?

1. Yes 2. No

If yes, describe?

.....
.....
.....

3. Does the theme differ from space to space?

1. Yes 2. No

If yes, describe?

.....
.....
.....

4. What was the source of inspiration for the various patterns used in hotel? For example, African, Asiatic, Islamic etc

.....
.....
.....

5. Do the patterns have any cultural or religious meanings?

1. Yes 2. No

If yes, what are the meanings?

.....
.....
.....

6. In your own opinion did you achieve the objectives of the project?

1. Yes 2. No

7. Are you satisfied with the product?

1. Yes 2. No

8. Do you think the client was satisfied?

1. Yes 2. No

9. Given another opportunity now, would you do the project differently?

1. Yes 2. No

If yes, give reasons

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

10. What were some of the challenges encountered in the course of the project?

(iv)

(v)

(vi)

Appendix A iii

Interview questions for other professional Interior Designers- 5 Respondents

Respondent background

(i) Sex : Male Female

(ii) Age :

(iii) Position in firm.....

(iii) Years of practice.....

1. Have you visited Nairobi Serena hotel?

1. Yes 2. No

2. What is your reaction about the interior design of Nairobi Serena Hotel?

.....
.....
.....

3. Describe the nature of patterns in Nairobi Serena Hotel

.....
.....

4. As a professional in the field, what are your comments about the use of patterns in the hotel?

.....
.....
.....

5. In your opinion, why did the designer use the patterns?

1. Aesthetic value 2. Communication tool

6. Do you think the patterns have any cultural or religious significance?

1. Yes 2. No

If yes, what are the meanings?

.....
.....
.....

7. Are there any noticeable influences in the ideas applied in this hotel? Say Kenyan, African, Islamic, Asiatic?

.....
.....
.....

8. In your opinion, is the use of patterns successful?

.....
.....
.....
.....

9. How would you compare the use of patterns and general interior design of Nairobi Serena hotel with other hotels you have visited in Kenya?

1. Very good 2. Good 3. Fair
4. None of the above

If yes, why?

.....
.....
.....

Appendix A iv

Interview questions for the management of Nairobi Serena Hotel - 10 Respondents

Respondent background

- (i) Sex : Male Female
- (ii) Age :
- (iii) Position
- (iv) Years at work in the hotel.....

1. Please list the areas in your hotel that you have noticed the use of patterns?

.....
.....

2. Where do you think is the origin of the patterns?

1. Africa 2. Asia
3. Europe 4. Other

3. What are the meaning(s) of the patterns?

1. Symbolic 2. Historic
3. Aesthetic 4. Other

4. In your opinion do visitors of Serena hotel understand the meaning of patterns used?

1. Yes 2. No

5. Do your visitors enquire about the patterns?

1. Often 2. Rarely

6. Are the patterns ever damaged?

1. Yes 2. No

If yes, what is the procedure of restoration?

.....
.....

Who does the restoration?

1. Local expertise 2. Specialized people

7. How would you rate the maintenance and restoration of the patterns?

1. Possible 2. Difficult

Appendix A v

Some responses received from the seven practicing or professional interior designers were as follows: -

What is your reaction about the Interior Design of Nairobi Serena Hotel?

- The interior environment (design) is unique.
- Ultra modern but traditional African atmosphere and surrounding.
- It is most attractive, relaxing and inviting.

Respondents' description of the Nature of pattern in Nairobi Serena

- Main patterns are geometric shapes.
- Majority of the Interior space in Arabic influence because of Swahili timber carvings.
- Derived from Asian and African Patterns.

Professional comments about the use of patterns in the hotel.

- Related patterns have been applied.
- They have too much of Swahili patterns and forget the other tribes have rich pattern e.g. The Maasai.
- Very effectively and evenly distributed.

Do the patterns have any Cultural or Religious significant? What are the meanings?

- The meaning cannot be directly identified/described.
- Related to Islam Religion features found the mosques and Islamic centres.
- Pattern and colour are greatly influenced by African Culture.

Are there any noticeable influences in the ideas applied in this hotel? Say Kenyan, African, Islamic, Asiatic?

1. Most African and Islam e.g. Niches/Arches and/African sculptures.
2. All three African, Asian, Islamic.

Is the use of patterns in Serena Hotel Successful?

At least all the seven of the respondents were of the opinion that the use of pattern at the Nairobi Serena hotel is very successful.

Why is the use of pattern successful?

- The patterns used Nairobi Serena are very unique. All respondents claim not to have seen similar use of pattern before.
- It gives a customer something to think and admire about the Hotel. The repetitive use of motif keeps one wondering until they pick up that single motif and then wonder back in to deeper thinking of what else would be formed from it.
- They are original and attractive and haven't been used in similar manner in any other space the respondents have visited before.