

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS
OF MAJOR COMMERCIAL ARTS AND CRAFTS
IN KENYA

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
INST. OF AFRICAN STUDIES
LIBRARY.

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF A.D.D
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
IN FULFILMENT FOR AWARD OF DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

BY
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MAY 1982

(ii)

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

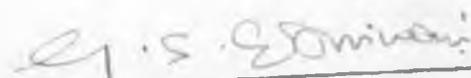
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements here go far beyond decorative ritual. Without the cooperation and assistance of several institutions and numerous people, most of whom I cannot possibly mention by name, this study would not have been possible. In this regard, am most grateful to:-

The Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi for awarding me the scholarship; All those artists and craftsmen, interviewed in the field, for their eagerness to freely share with me their time and thoughts; The various workshops for readily accepting my request to conduct the interviews; Those artists and designers who gladly agreed to provide second opinions to my own observations; photographer, Philip Sika and typist, Mary Khaemba; The Nairobi Museum and The Kenya National Archives, for allowing me to study and photograph their collections of traditional Kenyan artefacts; My University Supervisors, Dr. A. Darwish, Mr. J. Kariru and Prof. G.S. Eshiwani for their guidance during the career of my study.

ABSTRACT

THE STUDY.

This study deals with that category of contemporary Kenyan art commonly referred to as "tourist art". Essentially, the study attempts to measure effects of commercialization and tourist patronage on production of this modern Kenyan art. As a basis for measurement, sampled modern productions in the FIVE areas of; Handprinted fabrics, Stone and Wood Carvings, Pottery, Weaving and Jewellery - were compared with sampled traditional Kenyan forms.

OBJECTIVES.

Specific objectives of this study were: to establish evident particularities of modern and traditional artforms and; to compare evident qualitative characteristics of the two groups of forms, thereby establishing traditional qualities in modern artforms.

PROCEDURE

This study employed two tools, namely; the interview and observations. For the interview; a total of 75 artists and craftsmen, comprising equitable numbers of individuals from all the FIVE areas of productions.

were interviewed at work in their various sampled workshops throughout the country. Interviewees were asked questions that sought insight into the setting in which the arts operate. As regards observations; a session was conducted by the researcher, with a view to ascertaining specific qualities of sampled modern and traditional forms and connections between these two groups of forms. The same examined works were presented to eighteen other competent artists and designers for yet another round of observations. This latter session of observations was primarily for verification purposes.

Information secured through the two mentioned tools consisted of short, often descriptive statements. Summary information from the two groups was presented in an inductive manner, with specifics first and a higher level of generalization following. Corroboration was achieved by assessing the quantity and quality of connections for each of the two groups of evidence, and then for the two groups together. Data and conclusions have, therefore respectively consisted of specific information and general information induced from specifics.

FINDINGS.

The present system in which commercial arts and crafts

industry operates appears to encourage an almost equitable balance between traditional and non-traditional elements. This is interpreted as owing to the tourist need for arts that they understand and at the same time, those sufficiently in line with traditions of their creators.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

The present state of commercial arts and crafts¹ in Kenya calls for urgent review. Many traditional Kenyan artforms are now being made for sale to tourists. Under this circumstance, a special relationship between local artists and their patrons tends to arise. Artists are conditioned, and strive to produce only those works that appeal to tourists as opposed to those agreeable to both themselves and their community. Tourists, for their part, without fully understanding the art, discriminately consume works that measure closely to their own artistic ideals or alternatively those considered exotic. The consequence of this relationship on the development of art is quite obvious. Art develops towards certain inhibitive directions. Directions which alienate art from its basic human background.

¹The term commercial arts and crafts, is here treated as synonymous to tourists art. Although the latter is perhaps a more appropriate term, it is recognized that it has acquired a negative connotation. Therefore for the purposes of this study the term commercial arts and crafts is preferred.

Even though the consequences of the current artistic development is acknowledged; no attempt has as yet been made to assess the degree to which commercialization and tourist patronage have influenced Kenyan art-traditions. This study attempts to look into this discrepancy, by identifying remnant traditional qualities in commercial arts and crafts in Kenya.

To explore the traditional basis of commercial arts and crafts in Kenya; the historical development of Kenyan art is viewed as consisting of two distinct phases - a traditional and a modern phase. But in making this distinction: two dangers arise. Firstly, we are still too close to these artistic developments to discern them clearly. Secondly, in defining this order we may oversimplify it thereby seriously falsifying the truth. For these phases should be thought of as being elastic, because much art lies in between the zones and could infact be considered under one more heading - a transistional phase. On the whole, it is only fair to add that the two phases do exist and have objective reality. For if the backgrounds in which the arts have operated differ markedly, why then shouldn't it be reflected in the Kenyan artistic development? Moreover, the vast majority of the arts fall clearly enough within one another and may justly be considered in relation to the larger trend to which it belongs. Such a classification of

a traditional and a modern phase is, therefore, necessary if we are to reasonably comprehend the great diversity of Kenyan art.

Central to this study, is the connection between the arts of the two phases. It is presumed here that, those traditional arts or qualities now operating within the modern phase have changed substantially.

This presumption is supported by observations of various writers. One such writer, whose study explicitly confirms the presumption is Mount. In his study of contemporary African art, he compares a mask made for sale to tourists with other similar but authentic traditional masks. He observes that although the surface qualities of the masks were for the most part similar a more intense examination of the modern mask particularly the inside structure revealed its crudeness. Thus, whereas one eye-slit matched the eye of the mask, the other eye-slit correspondingly punctured the forehead.² Clearly then, had this mask been made to function within a traditional set up, it would have been carved more appropriately so that it suits its supposed traditional function.

²M.W. Mount, African Art: the Years Since 1920 Bloomington: Indiana University Press (1973) p. 7.

Mount, invariably observes change and deterioration in quality and style in those contemporary - traditional forms sampled at various art - producing centres.³ A number of factors explain the prevailing situation. Firstly, the majority of present-day artists have not undergone training in the traditional sense. Clearly, without appropriate training, artists are bound to produce sub-standard work. Secondly, now that artists are increasingly adopting art-makings alien to their ethnic traditions, they tend to add into their work their own ethnic accents. Thirdly, the effects of the prevailing availability of new materials, techniques and tools cannot be overemphasized. Lastly, the tourist market itself perhaps ranks as the main source of artistic change. For artists have a tendency to adhere to tourist tastes which often conflict radically with traditions.

To identify traditional elements in commercial arts and crafts in Kenya; investigation into these contemporary arts have focused on FIVE types of productions, namely; Handprinted Fabrics, Carving, Pottery, Weaving and Jewellery.

Qualities observed in the modern and traditional artforms have consisted of the following Elements

³Ibid. p. 7-20.

of Design:-

1. Form.
2. Space.
3. Line.
4. Texture and
5. Colour.

In addition to these qualities other aspects of art subjected to observation have included:-

1. Functions of the Products.
2. Subject Matter.
3. Size of the Products.
4. Materials used and
5. Techniques used.

In the field, an interview schedule was administered to some craftsmen and artists whose products were earmarked for examination. Administration of this tool was also coupled with collection of samples of the craftsmen's works and on-the-spot observations. To analyze information derived from this tool, they were edited, coded, counted and reported as percentages of consensus. The main purpose of this tool was to aid in the provision of information on the background in which commercial arts and crafts in Kenya exists.

Essentially, however, this study is a comparative analysis of traditional and modern artforms. Information pertaining to evident traditional elements in the modern forms have been collected through

observation, from an artists view point. Data has consisted of short descriptive statements, verified against observations of other competent observers. To interpret this data, the views of other observers have been computed into percentages of agreements and subsequently interpolated with those of the researcher. Finally, the two bodies of data derived from the interview and observations have been cross examined for more information and for verification purposes.

Taken as a whole then, this study has attempted to assess the degree to which commercialization and tourist patronage has influenced Kenyan art. More specifically, it has sought to identify traditional elements in commercial arts and crafts in Kenya. This undertaking is in fulfilment of a need to acknowledge the degree to which the two mentioned factors have influenced traditional Kenyan art.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to investigate the existence of traditional elements in FIVE selected types of productions within the category of contemporary Kenyan art - commercial arts and crafts.

This study has attempted to answer the following questions.

1. What are the unique characteristics of traditional Kenyan art?

2. What are the unique characteristics of modern commercial arts and crafts in Kenya?
3. What evident traditional qualities exist in each of the FIVE types of selected productions?
4. Are there any similarities in the FIVE types of productions, in terms of:-
 - (a) Their development.
 - (b) Their connections with traditions.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.

Those involved in developing art in Kenya will probably find this study significant because it deals with an important yet often overlooked category of present-day Kenyan art.

Commercial arts and crafts have often been despised. Many writers have assumed an attitude of disdain towards these arts, arguing that they are poor in quality and un-African in background, thereby implying that they merit no serious consideration.

A recent set of writers have supported the need to understand commercial arts and crafts. Amongst these writers are Burt, Njau and Wahlman. According

being produced in Kenya. They are certainly the best exposed of all present-day categories of Kenyan art, making them an eloquent representative of a Kenyan image both within and outside Kenya. They also make-up much of Kenya's existing art-traditions. Still, they contribute substantially to the much needed balance of payments and relieve the Kenyan Government of its nagging unemployment problem. Clearly, then, the importance of commercial arts and crafts is undisputable.

LIMITATIONS.

This study is limited by two factors.

i. It has been recognized that an exhaustive study of all commercial arts and crafts in Kenya, is infact a task near impossible. Consequently, this study has been limited to those artforms considered by the researcher as major. Major artforms, because these are the ones that have substantially influenced our concept of commercial arts and crafts. These artforms fall within the following FIVE types of productions:-

- (a) Handprinted Fabrics.
- (b) Carvings (Akamba and Kisii).
- (c) Pottery
- (d) Weaving (textiles and basket-work - "kiondo's")
- (e) and Jewellery.

2. Even though there are certain traditional qualities that are not directly observable; this study has recognized only those that lend themselves to human perception.

BASIC ASSUMPTION.

This study is dependent upon the following basic assumption:-

All eminent deviations from traditions observed in the modern forms are solely the consequences of commercialization and tourist patronage.

DEFINITION OF TERMS.

In the context of this study, working definitions have been given to the following terms:-

1. Commercial Arts and Crafts - A contemporary category of art, involving production of artforms primarily for monetary gain.
2. Traditional Art - Pre-colonial art. Also later art which strictly adheres to inherited patterns of ideas, methods and techniques.
3. Contemporary or Modern Art - Presently produced artforms.

4. Contemporary - Traditional Arts - Persistent traditional artforms.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION.

An examination of various bibliographical sources⁸ reveals that no study seeking specifically to establish the traditional basis of contemporary Kenyan art has as yet been carried out. Likewise, similar studies in other regions of Africa are virtually non-existent. Studies of African art have consisted almost exclusively of traditional and modern forms, while interconnections between these two levels have largely been overlooked.

This situation, whereby little or no information on the traditional basis of contemporary African art exists, necessitates that relevant information is derived indirectly. To provide a background for this study, therefore, it has been necessary to

⁸Eugene Burt, Annotated Bibliography of Visual Arts in East Africa (Bloomington: Indiana Uni. Press 1980) ; D. Western, A Bibliography of Plastic Arts of Africa (Waltham: African Studies Ass. 1974) ; L.J.B. Gaskin, A Bibliography of African Art (Lond: I.A.I. 1965); M. Simi and Alfred Kegan, American and Canadian Doctorial Dessertations and Masters Theses on Africa, 1886-1973 (Waltham: African Studies Ass. 1976) and; J.B. Eichner, African Dress: Select and Annotated Bibliograph of Sub-Saharan Countries - (Michigan State Uni. - African Studies Centre, Dept. of Textiles, Clothing and Related Arts (Dec., 1969).

examine as separate entities the bodies of information on traditional and modern arts. It is hoped that such an undertaking provides useful insight into the issue under review.

But before examining information pertaining to modern and traditional arts, it is imperative that survival of traditions in the modern arts is confirmed. This has been necessitated by the fact that, too often writers have created an impression to the effect that traditional and modern African art have little in common.

SURVIVAL OF TRADITIONS.

The tendency amongst writers has been to assume that production of traditional African art ceased about the beginning of this century. Early writers like Sadler⁹ seemed to create an impression that, the advent of European powers saw a near-complete destruction of African traditional art. On the other hand, recent writers have appeared to accentuate this notion; rarely is mention made to carry-overs of traditions in present-day art. True, there are many instances where traditional art declined or were phased out as a direct result of colonialization and its

⁹ Michael Sadler (ed.), Arts of West Africa excluding Music London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (1953) p. 7-8.

consequences. Nonetheless, it would be clearly erroneous to assume that this influence led to a complete destruction of traditional African art.

Often in passing, a few writers have either observed or taken as a point in argument to confirm carry-overs of art-traditions. One such writer is Burt. Amongst the "rural" Abaluhiya of Kenya, he observes that their art-traditions were interrupted only slightly; otherwise, many present-day productions still reflect those of precolonial days. Burt admits that changes have taken place, even so these have been constructive rather than destructive. His main argument is that, "If seventy years of domination, intimidation and christianization were unable to eradicate much of Africa's social and cultural framework, why would it be assumed that art would be so easily abandoned by the African?"¹⁰ Here, Burt is concerned with a category of contemporary African art, consisting of persistent traditional forms. These forms are peculiar in that they are made for, appreciated and used by local people - just as they were used in the olden days.

Another category of contemporary African art, comprising of some persistent traditional forms, is the one commonly referred to as "tourist art". This artform is primarily addressed to tourists. Crowley who has made

¹⁰ Burt, Op. cit. p. 7.

significant studies on this art notes that, many of the artforms are, wholly traditional in terms of materials, methods and style.¹¹

He asserts that what has really changed is their function; change from their original religio-social or secular usages to new functions as products to be sold as souvenirs to tourists.¹² Similar observations have been made by several other writers.

A third category of contemporary art consisting of traditional forms is identified by Mount and Beier. Each of these scholars have discussed a peculiar set of few contemporary artists, who continue to produce traditional forms. These artists are peculiar in that their works are neither consumed by local people nor by tourists. In Beiers own words, "...They are traditional artists who through unusual strength of personality and fortunate circumstances have been able to reach out beyond the world in which they grew up, have succeeded in working for a wider largely European audience without becoming cheap, and in their work have

¹¹Daniel J. Crowley "The contemporary - Traditional Art Market in Africa". African Arts (4:1) 1970 p. 43.

¹²Ibid. p. 43.

given expression to the world of transition in which they live".¹³ Both Beier and Mount have gone further, naming these individuals and discussing the background and conditions that gave rise to their particularity in the African art-scene.

These above three cases of contemporary-traditional art, namely; those traditional arts that still function within a largely traditional socio-cultural set-up; the tourist art and; the formal or school traditional art - all confirm survival of African art-traditions.

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN ART

"ART" BY METAMORPHOSIS

The study of traditional African forms is a relatively recent area of academic enquiry. Thus, like most other fields of knowledge, the pioneer stage is often beset with problems related to articulating a viable point of departure. It is, therefore, little wonder that the question as to how best to approach the study of these forms has not been fully realized. As a framework of reference, most recent scholars opt for cultural relativism.¹⁴ Yet, it has been relatively

¹³Ulli Beier, Contemporary African Art. London: Pall Mall Press (1958) p. 15.

¹⁴The cultural relativist, tries to see the culture of a people as they themselves would view it. To authenticate his presentation he may "take" their role and exercise some empathy.

clear that these scholars have not adhered rigidly to this perspective.. They find it necessary to designate Western labels to traditional African forms. These labels are often misleading, for they do not present African forms in their true context.

Preceding the existing approach, were two other popular approaches that have for the most part been rejected. Sweeney has clearly illustrated these approaches.¹⁵ He notes that for the last fifty years, two ways of looking at Negro Sculpture has impeded a realistic understanding of this art. The first, is that a piece of art, "is pure art and that its quality can be assessed by European aesthetic standards, without reference to the culture in and for which it is made." The second, is that African art, "is not a work of art but merely a primitive utilitarian object made by a traditional-fettered artisian for a barbarous community devoid of aesthetic feeling of any kind." Sweeney rejects these approaches on the basis of the fact that, these oversimplified approaches long popular among amateurs of African art, have impoverished rather than enhanced our understanding.¹⁶ Sweeney, proceeds with justifications, to endorse the recent approach. He asserts that,

¹⁵J.J. Sweeney, African Sculpture. 2nd Ed. (N.Y.: Princeton University Press (1964)) p. 3.

¹⁶Ibid. p. 4.

"If we are serious in our efforts to enjoy African art with any degree of discernment, our view of it must combine ethnographic and aesthetic considerations, not rely on one or the other in isolation."¹⁷

To fully appreciate the source of reason as to why scholars appear to contradict themselves and why they have often taken for-granted that their intentions of doing so is well understood, we must comprehend the historical background of Europeans reactions to African traditional forms. These reactions are well documented by Sweeney, Laude and Manquet.

Manquet,¹⁸ after examining the background of European reactions to traditional African forms over the years, concludes that the idea of appointing Western labels into African traditional forms is out of a necessity; because it makes it possible to intergrate African aesthetic objects into European art by metamorphosis. He reiterates that, what really matters is to concentrate our efforts on the relationship between the aesthetic object and the beholder.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 5.

¹⁸ Jacques Manguet, "Art by metamorphosis" African Arts (12:4) 1979 p. 33-35.

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL ART IN GENERAL

It is widely accepted that African traditional art is fundamentally functional. It meets certain utility purposes while its aesthetic considerations is of only secondary significance. Scholars have often grouped African traditional forms into the following three broad levels, based on their functions:- 1. Religious Objects, 2. Court Objects and 3. Secular items.

Sculpture is the best known aspect of traditional African art. This wide exposure is attributed to the fact that, the majority of studies in African art have predominantly concerned themselves with sculptures at the expense of other domains of African art. Bascom, Trowell and Leuzinger amongst others, have pointed out that most sculptures appear to be linked with religion. They have shown further that these objects have not been viewed by their creators as art objects nor, have they been held as idols or gods (a common misconception in Europe before the 20th Century); rather they have been considered as dwelling places for the spirits. Their main function has, thus, been to harness spiritual powers for beneficial ends such as ensuring that evil or catastrophe did not befall the community.

Apart from sculptures, the other broad domain is the decorative arts. This involved ornamentation

of numerous items such as containers, utensils, garments, tools, weapons and even the human body. Fraser and Cole, Trowell, Leuzinger, Jefferson and Sieber; all agree that many of these items were decorated in ways that reflected a meaningful relation with their owners. Leuzinger adds that these items could express the following:- a rulers dignity; a priests rank; the status of a married woman; denote the charm of a young girl; the standing of a wealthy man or; the success of a hunter or warrior.¹⁹ In addition to these expressive items Bascom has pointed out that other few items were decorated to be enjoyed purely for their own sake, such items often brought prestige to their owners.²⁰

The general consensus amongst scholars is that art in traditional African societies was the way of living. Both the community and the individual's lives were intricately bound in art. Consequently artists must have been prominent members of their respective communities. Leuzinger elaborates by saying that, "the artist met a social need for enhanced vitality

¹⁹Elsy Leuzinger, Africa: The Art of the Negro peoples 2nd Ed. (N.Y.: Crown Publishers, Inc.(1967)p. 62.

²⁰William Bascom, African Art in a cultural perspective (N.Y.: W.W. Norton (1973) p. 11.

and transmitted prestige, beauty and joy".²¹ She notes, however, that the status of artists was not always equal in all African communities. Amongst the Agricultural peoples, for instance, of whom farming occupied most of their time, Leuzinger maintains that artists appeared to be held in a lesser esteem. She also shows that even within a given community the esteem of individual artists differed.²² Obviously those who were more talented must have been held in higher regard than their less gifted counterparts.

The role and life of the traditional African artist has been explored by amongst others; d'Azevedo, Bascom, Leuzinger, Trowell and Jefferson. The following are the general consensus deduced. Artists generally produced art as a part-time pre-occupation; otherwise, they were usually also farmers, hunters, etc. Artists were generally trained within an apprenticeship system. Accordingly, any young person who showed talent or interest was often sent to work under the supervision of recognized expert. In addition to this, some particular art-makings were confined to special families. Hence an individual by virtue of being a member of such a family automatically assumed the role of an artist. Artists belonging to the two sexes performed specific

²¹Leuzinger, op.cit. p. 32.

²²Ibid. p. 32-33.

art-makings. For instance, men were predominantly sculptors; whereas pottery was more often than not a woman's job. Artists almost always produced art on commission by patrons. Thus, save for a few utilitarian items, art was hadly ever produced in advance. Lastly, artists created within certain recognizeable aesthetic and artistic limitations; because societal forces often dictated the nature of works acceptable to a given community.

Bascom has identified and explained two contradictory characteristics of traditional African art.²³ They show simultaneously elements of consistency and diversity. Now that societal forces tended to limit artists to certain prototype modes of artistic and aesthetic creations acceptable to the various communities; the individual artist's freedom was often curtailed - giving rise to an element of consistency. Conversely, an element of diversity was accentuated by the fact that each community tended to differ in its tastes.

A significant particularity of traditional African art, be it pictorial or sculptural form, is its pronounced stylization of representation. According to Bascom, the traditional artist did not aspire to represent reality as evident in nature: rather, he transformed

²³ Bascom, *op.cit.* p. 6-7.

nature for the purposes of heightening a visual message.

Traditional African art has consequently come to be considered as being essentially conceptual. Trowell and others maintain that much of the traditional African's thought was influenced by legends, myths and proverbs of the past. These ideas often found expression in art.²⁴ The major motive behind production of art in traditional African communities can, thus, be summed up as a need to record an idea in the form a visual statement.

However, some African presentations do not appear to depict any symbolic or allegorical meaning.

Admittedly, much of the symbolism in African art has not been explored. Moreover, we cannot overlook the fact that meanings may have only been revealed to a chosen few and; as a result, have died with the death of these individuals. Again, meanings may have simply been forgotten over the many years of reproduction and as such, designs have remained to be enjoyed for their own sake.

Trowell has found it appropriate to classify African traditional designs into three broad levels; namely

²⁴Margaret Trowell, African Design (Lond: Faber and Faber (1960) p. 66.

1. Representational patterns 2. Geometric patterns and 3. Textual patterns. Although she considers that most visual communication is achieved through the first two levels, it is her contention that the latter is most striking. Textual patterns she says, are utilized ingeniously. They are evident in most hard materials like; ivory, stone, metal, wood and is utilized to the uttermost in the weaving of textiles, mats and baskets. Trowell, freely admits that in practice, all these three patterns almost invariably co-exist in a single design. Her intentions in classifying African designs as such is, therefore, purely for the provision of a logical scheme in studying them.

On subject matter in representational patterns in African designs, Trowell points out that this consists largely of human and animal motifs. Many of these motifs depict personified animals representing, for instance, as in the applique hangings of Dahomey - ancestors and living rulers. In her survey of representational patterns in Africa, Trowell finds it necessary to sample the West Coast of Africa. Because in her opinion, representational patterns are highly developed in that region.

Apart from subject matter, another important aspect of traditional African art, of relevance to

the present study are the materials, techniques and tools used. These three factors astronomically dictate the outcome of a given production. For example, the effects of using an adze on wood provides different results from using a chisel. Furthermore, these three factors are very much inter-related. Certain materials call for the use of certain tools and techniques; while particular techniques can only be achieved through the use of particular tools on particular materials. As regards materials, techniques and tools used in the production of traditional African art, reference has been made to the works of Trowell, Leuzinger, Jefferson and Newman.

Doubtless, the vast majority of materials used in the making of art in traditional Africa were derived locally. These materials are exemplified by various plant fibres, leather, clay, feathers, woods, stones, seeds and seedpods, etc. Besides local materials, other materials and even techniques were obtained through trade with foreigners. Here, such items as brightly coloured beads, various metals and cowrie shells effortlessly come to mind.

A striking characteristic of traditional African art is that, despite the symbolism presented in the content of various works, the materials used therein often depict certain meanings. To mention a few.

Cowrie shells ordinarily symbolized wealth and fertility. The teeth, claws or horns of a strong and powerful animal often symbolized power. Likewise, power could also be conveyed through the use of wood from a tree known to harbour powerful spirits.

Wood is certainly one of the most widely used materials in the production of traditional African art. It is a basic material in the making of sculptures, be they ancestral figures, masks, fetish, ritual implements, secular figures, animal carvings or, utensils. Leuzinger attributes the popularity of wood to the belief by traditional Africans that, wood even when dry was living matter with a soul. Consequently, wood became a fitting material for receiving "life force". This belief, is confirmed by elaborate rituals that often accompanied the felling of a tree.

Both hard and soft woods were used in the making of sculptures. Leuzinger has classified African sculptures into two categories - The round and the pole sculptures. The latter was generally made of hard woods; while, the former was usually made of soft woods. The characteristics of these two categories of sculptures are closely related to the kind of wood used. The more abstract and angular form of pole sculpture is achieved through

the use of hard woods. On the other hand, the more naturalistic, gentle and organic round sculpture is achieved through the use of soft wood. Again, soft wood was commonly used in the making of masks where weight was certainly a critical factor. All in all, the general consensus amongst scholars regarding the kinds of wood used in the making of sculptures is that, the majority of sculptures were made of soft woods.

Apart from wood, other popular materials included:- calabash; clay; various fibres in the making of baskets and textiles; leather; ivory and bone and; a variety of metals. Given below is a brief examination of each of these materials.

Calabashes or gourds lend themselves favourably to carving, scorching, engraving, scraping and, ornamentation with extraneous materials. It grows widely and easily over much of Africa, and is fittingly put to use as containers. Clay, is another widespread material. It was predominantly used in the making of vessels as opposed to modeling of sculptures. The earthenwares produced were made by hand, thus a potters wheel was almost non-existent. Potters used broken-off necks or bases of broken vessels to fashion their pots. Through a systematic building up of coils of clay and frequent smoothing of the surface, potters often produced astonishingly regular forms. Yet another abundant material are the wide

range of fibres that were used in basketwork and textile weaving. These included:- fibres from certain leaves, stalks of banana plant, date and raffia palms, papyrus and, other grasses. In basketwork, the twill technique was the mainstay of West Africa while, the coil technique is considered to be of Hamatic origin. In-as-much as basketwork utilized coarse fibres, textile weaving made use of the more subtle fibres such as cotton and wool. These fibres were woven on simple handlooms, and products used largely as garments. Also frequently used as garments, was leather. This material is acknowledged as the mainstay of pastrolists and hunters. Its ornamentation, involved; painting, incising, punching, pressing, plaiting, etching and, beading. Ivory and bone was also a common material amongst pastrolists and hunters. These materials were laboriously carved using every simple tools. But, unlike ivory and bone, the fashioning of art-objects from metals often involved complex techniques. A case in point is the technique of lost-wax or 'cire perdue". The metals used included - Bronze and other alloys like brass; silver (common amongst those peoples in close proximity to the Arab World); Iron and Gold.

Still on materials. Colouring agents applied on the various productions of African art, so as to enhance their acclaimed beauty, cannot be overlooked. Like

most of the other basic materials, colouring agents were obtained locally from plant and mineral sources. Colouring agents were applied mainly on - various fibres used in the making of baskets and textiles; a few wood objects and leather; walls of built environment and; some calabashes. Traditional African artists, however, were satisfied with and fully capitalized on the natural colour of the various materials themselves. Wood sculptures, for instance, were rarely painted. Of course, wood was often treated with items such as: mixtures of soot and grease, camwood powder, sap from particular leaves and roots or even, libation of beer and sacrificial blood; these items brought about a charming bronze colouration in the wood, yet the basic nature of this material largely remained unchanged.

The basic colour spectrum of Africa is unanimously believed to be - red, black and white. These colours were rarely free from some meaning. Besides these basic colours, other slightly different colours like brown, orange and yellow were used particularly in the dyeing of cloth and fibres of baskets. Other colours completing the spectrum resulted largely from the use of beads and other extraneous materials.

As final words regarding African traditional art,

reference has been made to the works of Leuzinger and amongst others Segy and Willet to inquire into the character of African sculpture. Sculpture has been an item of uttermost significance in regulating the life of many traditional African communities. Indeed, without sculpture, people within these communities would have been at a loss with the world around them.

Anyone confronted with a piece of African sculpture for the very first time is bound to be intrigued by its disproportionate presentation of the human body. To be sure, this is a deliberate undertaking for the sole purpose of artistically rendering abstract ideas like divine power and majesty, sublimity, repose or death; and should not be interpreted simplistically as a lack of skill or an unsuccessful attempt at naturalism.

In African sculpture, the importance of particular parts of the human body were duly emphasized whether they agreed with anatomical reality or not. Those significant parts of the body often emphasized included the head, navel, genitals and eyes; and were often associated with certain super-natural forces.

To achieve order and symmetry in his work, the African artist ordinarily preferred to compose his work in a median-vertical axis with three main horizontal

points intersecting this axis to mark the head, the torso and the legs. To accomplish his design the artist usually carved from a single block of wood, often following closely its cylindrical structure.

African sculptures were rarely more than three feet tall, yet they almost always exerted emotional and physical monumentality. Such impressions arose from simplification and economy of detail - leading to greater concentration of form. This disparity in detail in African sculpture, registers visually as an interplay of round and angular shapes.

TRADITIONAL KENYAN ARTS.

Although the information presented above must be thought of as representing sub-Saharan art in general, it should be kept in mind that the notion 'African art' is generally biased towards art-traditions of West and Central Africa. Brown has traced this discrepancy to the fact that wood sculpture has come to be considered as the classical art of Africa.²⁵ Now, the West and Central Africa has had a much stronger and highly developed sculptural tradition as compared to the East and South of Africa. Now that sculpture was only

²⁵ Jean Brown, "Traditional Sculpture in Kenya" African Arts (6:1) 1972, p. 6.

found in its spectacular form in West and Central Africa, studies in African art have clustered around these regions to the neglect of those regions devoid of a significant sculptural-tradition. This discrepancy has perpetuated an impression that West and Central African art is synonymous to African art in general.

The uneven distribution of sculpture in Africa is recognized as one of the most perplexing riddles that has yet to be solved. Theories furthered have ranged far and wide. One explanation stems from the nature of life amongst pastoralists, who form the majority of peoples inhabiting the region East and South of Africa. It is argued that the nomadic life of these peoples discouraged production of bulky objects like wood sculptures. The presence of a grassland in the East and South of Africa is yet another explanation. It is recognized that ample wood for sculpting was in short supply. Another explanation is based on the relatively strong influence of Islam in the East and Southern Africa. Here, Islam's hostility towards representational art is recalled. And lastly, some have considered the apparent paucity of societies with centralized political authority. They assert that, in Africa centralized leadership tended to precipitate artistic production. All in all, these four theories

are likely answers; yet further intense scrutiny always seems to find them incomplete.

Leuzinger, Brown, Bascom, and Hartwig have all confirmed that the East and Southern parts of Africa are not as hopeless of a sculptural-tradition as has often been implied. Nonetheless, they all agree that the primary mode of expression in this region is the decorative arts.

Brown's two articles, besides being far from exhaustive in terms of factual information, are probably the best attempts at understanding traditional Kenyan art. They offer a cross-sectional survey of art amongst the various nationalities of Kenya. Brown observes that the decorative arts in Kenya were almost always geometric; arguing that they must have originally been realistic representations of natural or man-made objects, but as a result of increasing stylization over the years have now remained as geometric patterns. She cites Akamba and Tavetta initiation sticks as classical examples depicting this development.²⁶

Whereas Brown's works are overview studies of Kenyan art; Lindblom's work is more specific and illuminating.

²⁶ Jean Brown, "East Africa's Cultural Heritage of Arts and Crafts". East Africa's Cultural Heritage; contemporary monograph series No. 4 Nbi: E.A.P.H. (1966) p. 49.

Lindblom in his two works focuses largely on the Akamba art-traditions. His reflections on East African art in general is that, apart from the East African Coast which was strongly influenced by foreign cultures, the decorative arts of this region are poor and underdeveloped. He proceeds to give a short account on Akamba art, where he singles the calabash as the most appropriate material for attempts at decoration. He observes that, because of its smooth and even surface, one tends to find the greatest variety of motifs on it. Similar motifs as those found on the calabashes are also said to be found on other objects such as drums and beehives. On the character of representations, Lindblom notes that, this consists mainly of nature almost always depicted in free-form.

Other works of significance pertaining to art-traditions of particular ethnic groups in Kenya include those by:- Fox, Huntingford, Tate, Ndeti, Allen, Ogot, Hopley and, Donley.

Adamson's work is also acknowledged here to be of some significance. It provides an added visual information on traditional Kenyan jewellery and garments. Again, since it is a cross-sectional presentation of the various ethnic groups, it facilitates some comparison.

MODERN COMMERCIAL ARTS AND CRAFTS.

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

For this study, in the attempt to establish the character of commercial arts and crafts in Kenya, it has been recognized that invaluable insight could be derived through the understanding of these arts beyond their immediate Kenyan and African backgrounds. Through a world-wide view of commercial arts and crafts, universalities become more distinct; and as a result, regional particularities are easily discerned. Efforts have, therefore, been made here to review some literature concerning commercial arts and crafts as they exist throughout the world.

Graburns has found these arts to be peculiar to certain peoples in particular regions of the world. Essentially, this peculiarity arises from a common historical experience of certain peoples in various parts of the world. These peoples have experienced the impact of colonialization over the last couple of centuries.

The world of these formerly colonized peoples, who have now regained their political independence, has conveniently been termed by Graburns as - The Fourth World. In Graburns own words they, "comprise those native peoples whose lands and cultures have been

engulfed by Nations of the First, Second and Third Worlds"²⁷. The regions in point are:- North America, Mexico and Central America, Asia, Oceania, and Africa.

The work of Graburns and his associates, is perhaps one of the most exhaustive study on commercial arts and crafts as they exist throughout the world. Graburns finds it necessary to categorize the arts of the peoples of the above mentioned regions of the world into two broad levels.²⁸

1. The inwardly-directed arts; these involve those arts made for, appreciated and used by local peoples and;

2. The outwardly-directed arts; these involve those arts made for the external powerful world. In both cases, however, it is evident that traditional qualities are manifested in all those artforms within the two categories.

As regards the continued production of traditional artforms, Graburns notes six vital conditions:-

1. The continued demand for items; 2. Availability

²⁷N.H.H. Graburns (ed.), Ethnic and Tourist Art: Cultural Expressions From the Fourth World (Berkeley: University of California Press (1976) p. 1.

²⁸Ibid, p. 4-5.

of traditional raw materials; 3. Time to work and lack of competing attractions; 4. Knowledge of skills and aesthetics of the arts; 5. Reward and prestige from peer group members and; 6. The role of items in supporting belief systems.²⁹

On changes that have taken place in the traditional arts, Graburns identifies three instrumental factors. 1. New materials and techniques; 2. Cultural changes and; 3. The art-market. Of all these factors, Graburns singles out the latter as the most powerful source of both formal and aesthetic innovations. The art-market, he says, often leads to the following changes in the arts:- their size, simplification, standardization, naturalism, grotesquery, novelty and archism. Graburns proceeds to illustrate each of these kinds of changes with specific examples in the field.

Attempts to see the necessity of commercial arts and crafts from the stand-points of both the powerful patronizing-world and that of the producer world, has been furthered by Graburns.³⁰ To patrons, these arts are more of status objects than memorabilia. One assumes prestige by association with these objects. Indeed, they are cachets connected with international

²⁹ Ibid, p. 13.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 5.

travel, exploration and multiculturalism, etc. Still, they also symbolize the nostalgic input of the "hand-made" in a highly automated world. To the producer-world, they present to the outside world an ethnic image that should be maintained and projected as part of the all-important boundary defining system. In addition, they bring in money and provide useful employment. All in all, as the need for these arts have continued; changes have slowly and surely infiltrated the arts of producer-Nations.

AFRICA.

The consequences of traditional African art in the changing social and cultural framework is, as Burt has rightly pointed out, an area that has largely been overlooked.³¹ Only a small number of scholars has cared to throw some light into traditional African art as it exists to-day. And as if to say this is enough, the majority of these scholars have only dealt with the issue in passing. Under such conditions, then, our understanding of contemporary-traditional art of Africa is bound to be limited.

On commercial arts and crafts in Africa, Bascom and Crowley's works stand out as significant. Both scholars have made fruitful attempts at throwing light into the

development of these arts. Nevertheless, the issue of connections between the modern and the traditional has largely been played down. The essential difference between the works of these two scholars that; whereas Crowley is concerned with developments that have taken place within the last decade, Bascom has considered developments throughout this century.

Bascom, in N.N.H. Graburns (ed.) "Tourist and Ethnic Arts", makes productive attempts at reconstructing the historical development of commercial arts and crafts in Africa - an exercise he acknowledges as difficult. Difficulties arise from such factors as; differing critical dates from one part of the continent to another and, partial documentation of relevant facts. However, Bascom makes the best of the situation.

Bascom recognizes the following issues as land-marks in the development of commercial arts and crafts in Africa. Firstly, contrary to the common belief, production of these arts are not a recent development, they actually pre-date the colonial period. Early artforms are exemplified by Portuguese ivory salt-cellars. Secondly, the critical point in establishment of commercial arts and crafts as they are known today is estimated to be the period just before World War II. From this point onwards, these arts developed rapidly establishing

themselves as an entity. Thirdly, documented evidence shows that there was some European involvement in initiation of some artforms. European involvement ranged from the revival of already extinct traditional forms to initiation of totally new modes of artistic productions. Fourthly, in the early stages of inception, these arts throughout Africa were ordinarily hawked from door to door, with resident Europeans constituting the bulk of consumers. But, in the recent times, with the influx of tourists, the trade has become more sophisticated. Many artforms are now being sold in galleries, museums and curio-shops. Again, at present these arts are readily available in stores of any city in Europe and America. And fifthly, throughout the evolution of these arts emphasis has been placed on practical items. Practical from the European point of view. Thus, items such as ash-trays, salad bowls, flower vases, chess boards, etc. have become common-scenes.

According to Bascom, the effects of tourist patronage and commercialization on African art is undisputed. Poor craftsmanship is indeed attributed to these two factors. The ultimate aim of craftsmen has become production of quantity as opposed to quality. This has resulted in mass production, as exemplified

by the factory-line production of Akamba wood carvings. Moreover, now that most art is sold through middle-men and, with craftsmen rarely coming into contact with consumers; craftsmen are no longer bothered about the quality of their work so long as it keeps selling. Craftsmen are removed, so much so that they do not really need to strive to safe-guard their reputation. Clearly then, the existing system only encourages mediocre work.

Another influence which Bascom attributes to tourist patronage is, infiltration of tourist tastes into local arts. It is quite obvious that tourist patronage is essential for the continued production of these arts. For, without tourist patronage craftsmen would surely lay down their tools. Craftsmen are, therefore, at the mercy of tourists and must conform to tourist tastes for their very survival. To illustrate this point, a revealing statement made by one Akamba wood carver quickly comes to mind - "We find out what they (Westerners) like. We make what they like when we are hungry".³³

While artists are striving to fulfill the requirements of tourists as Graburns has observed, tourists for their part do not labour to understand the symbolism or the iconography of the objects. Their wish is to

³³ Mount, op.cit. p. 39.

obtain items that measure close to the producer's culture. To select objects, they rely on their own judgements and perhaps some information casually gathered from various sources. Thus, they only need to find an object aesthetically acceptable and visually authentic. Of course, the tourist also takes into account other factors such as; cost, portability, the nature of subject matter, colour, durability, and an object's suitability to a certain interior environment in mind.

One notable preconception, observed by Graburns, is that tourists almost always believe that the objects of a particular peoples should match the skin colour of those peoples - little wonder, then, that commercial arts and crafts in Africa, particularly the carvings, are often black in colour.

For proof of infiltration of tourist tastes into local art, Bascom provides ample evidence. For one, tourists have a liking for valuable woods such as Mahogany and Ebony. Thus, even though these hard woods were rarely used in the making of traditional arts, their use in present-day art is widespread. Again, as mentioned earlier, items that can be put into practical use are in demand. It is also common for Europeans, who form the majority of consumers, to judge art by its "life-likeness". Accordingly, local

artists have now shifted radically from stylization as in traditions to naturalism. In contrast to this factor, tourists at times demand grotesqueness in art. This perhaps reflects European pre-conception of primitiveness and value in African art. Hence, this element is now common place in such arts as the Makonde.

Unlike Bascom, Crowley does not occupy himself wholly with the arts; rather he is primarily concerned with the set-up in which these arts operate.

Crowley explores the following issues:- The framework of the trade, here he identifies and examines the various structures of the trade throughout major art-producing centres in Africa; The various aging and marketing methods is also dealt with; some insight into innovations in style, materials and methods is provided; and a brief discussion on implications of the trade for the purposes of economic, political and racial nationalism is presented. The principal aim of this work, therefore, is to introduce and inform prospective collectors on what exists and where to find it.

Clearly, then, this work is not of particular relevance in furthering our understanding of the relationship between the modern and traditional African artforms. Nonetheless, it is important in

that it throws light into the setting in which the modern arts operate, an aspect that should be appreciated.

KENYA.

As concerns commercial arts and crafts in Kenya, hardly any scholarly work exists. Taken as a whole the Akamba wood carvings appear to be the best documented aspect. On these artforms, the works of the following authors are acknowledged as being of some significance: Tracey, Elkan, Mount, Ndeti and, Miller. The content of each of these authors works are almost the same.

They outline:-

The quality and nature of presentations; the subject matter of the carvings; the methods of productions; the origins and subsequent development of the carvings and; the structure of the art-market and its development over the years.

On other aspects of commercial arts and crafts in Kenya are works of:- Burt, Njau, Mount and Miller.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

This section on the research procedure, is divided into two parts. The first, discusses the tools that were used in investigating the traditional basis of commercial arts and crafts in Kenya. These tools are discussed under the following headings:-

1. The interview and
2. Observations.

As aids in conducting the observations, an observational record sheet and an opinionnaire were used.

The second part of this section deals with the procedures that were adopted in selection of the following five crucial factors.

1. Types of productions,
2. Workshops
3. Craftsmen
4. Modern artforms and
5. Traditional forms.

1. Information regarding the background in which major commercial arts and crafts in Kenya exist.
2. Information on the origins and subsequent development of artforms in the FIVE selected areas of production.
3. Information as concerns the materials used, methods of production and, functions of each modern artform sampled.
4. Information as to what craftsmen consider to be traditional in their respective products.
5. An aid to selection of those modern artforms availed for study.
6. Leads as to which traditional forms related to selected modern artforms.

As regards collection of the above stipulated information, an interview was found to be the most appropriate tool; because, unlike the questionnaire which is respondent-administered, it recognized and solved the following problems.

1. That some craftsmen could neither read nor write.
2. That English, Kiswahili, and in some cases the craftsman's own ethnic language had to be catered for.

Through the use of an interview the researcher quickly established and adapted the most suitable language; whether it was Kiswahili, English or, in some very few cases the craftsman's own ethnic language. In the latter case, the researcher often sought and found assistance of a willing interpreter.

Apart from solving the communication problem, an interview allowed for a hundred percent response-rate and qualification of difficult questions through probing and on-the-spot observations. Besides this, rapport established between the researcher and the interviewees facilitated a realistic investigation of the peculiarities of each craftsman, workshop and artform.

For the purposes of fully assessing the peculiarities of the various craftsmen, workshops and artforms; despite its obvious difficulty in analyzing information gathered, an unstructured interview was found to be indispensable.

Soon after administering the interview to craftsmen at a give workshop, the researcher proceeded to collect therein selected works by photograph. These photographs were later to be presented in form of slides. Even though this procedure was adhered to, it was found necessary (later after fieldwork) to

collect again those earlier sampled works. This was unfortunately necessitated by a lack of proficiency in photographs of initially collected works. To retrace these works to their producer-workshops throughout the country was, however, impossible owing to limitations in time and financial resources. Thus, apart from those works in workshops in and around Nairobi (which make up about 60% of the total number of works sampled), the remainder had to be retrieved from patron curio-shops in Nairobi. All in all, mention is made here of the fact that special care was taken in collecting only those works previously sampled in the field.

OBSERVATIONS.

After completion of fieldwork, an observational study of modern and traditional forms was conducted in fulfilment of Research questions one, two and three. In particular, this exercise sought to measure:-

1. The qualities of both modern and traditional forms.
2. Connections between the traditional and the modern forms.

Preceding the observational study was the need to identify, select and collect relevant traditional

forms. These traditional forms were collected by photograph and thereafter presented in form of slides. Sources for traditional forms were: The Murumbi Collection and The Nairobi Museum Collection (inclusive of the collection at the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi). These two sources were considered adequate for the purposes of this study, because they constitute the largest individual collections of traditional Kenyan artifacts in Kenya.

It is necessary to point out here that, at this stage in research, identification of relevant traditional forms was relatively easy. Besides the interview having provided gainful insight,³⁴ the researcher was also well versed with the modern artforms to enable him to logically deduce related traditional forms.

Having identified, selected and made available in form of slides, samples of relevant traditional forms; the researcher proceeded to carry out his own observational study involving identification of traditional qualities in the selected modern artforms. To adequately register his observations, the researcher used a prepared observational record sheet or check list.³⁵ The contents of this aid comprised

³⁴ See interview schedule, item 18, Appendix I

³⁵ See Appendix II

of the following:-

1. The Elements of Design; namely, Form or Shape Space, Line, Colour and, Texture.
2. Other aspects of art; such as, The Size and function of a product, subject matter and, materials and techniques used.

To satisfactorily carry out his observations the researcher adapted the following procedure: Using two slide projectors simultaneously, he projected onto one screen a modern artform and on yet another screen a series of all those traditional forms that were availed for study. Following this examination, another modern form was introduced and again examined against all the traditional forms. This scheme was continued until each modern artform had been examined against all the traditional forms. This scheme of examining all the traditional forms against each modern form was, nevertheless, a slight deviation from the intially proposed plan where only a specific related traditional form was to be matched against its modern counterpart. The change in plan was necessitated by a realization that a cross-sectional examination facilitated a more thorough investigation.

After examining each modern artform against each traditional form, inferences in form

of short descriptive statements were entered into a copy of the observational record sheet. Inferences involved examined qualities of the modern and the traditional form and; examined evident relationships between the two pieces. Following examinations, observational sheets and slides of forms were stored away for use at a later date.

In this session of the researcher's own observations, 5 traditional and 10 modern forms were examined. Accordingly, since each modern artform was measured against all 5 traditional forms, a total of 50 single examinations were made.

For purposes of verifying the researcher's own observations, opinions of other competent observers were sought. Initially, it was proposed that University of Nairobi students of Fine Art and Design would be engaged in this task; but circumstances beyond control disallowed this arrangement. It became necessary to seek an alternative source of observers. To this end, a total of 18 professional artists and designers were engaged. This alternative plan displayed certain advantages and disadvantages over the original plan. On one hand, it was laborious in its execution in terms of; identifying qualified individuals, realizing a reasonable number of these

individuals and, arranging for suitable dates and places of meetings. On the other hand, the change in plan was a blessing in disguise. Not only were individuals consulted, from diverse and varied areas of art and design; but also, they displayed their added advantage of sharing their accumulated wealth of knowledge acquired from their often long experiences in the field.

Five separate sessions of observations were realized. For each, materials used and the procedure undertaken was basically the same as was for all others.

Materials included: two slide projectors, two screens, pre-examined slides of traditional and modern forms and, a sufficient number of opinionnaires. And to enable observers to favourably make and record their inferences, the following procedure was adopted.

They were first briefed on the observational procedure and those events marked for examination - defined.

Thereafter, a modern artform and its related traditional form were projected concurrently on separate screens for all to view. Observers were then given ample time to react and record their observations on the opinionnaires provided. This process of observing and writing down inferences was carried out until all modern and their related traditional forms had been examined. Subsequently,

opinionnaires were collected for analysis.

It is evidently clear that the procedure illustrated above was basically the same as that of the researcher's own observational session. Yet there was a significant difference. This was in respect to numbers of single examinations undertaken. Thus, whereas the researcher carried out fifty single examinations, observers undertook only ten.

Though the benefits of presenting observers with an equal number of single examinations as that of the researcher was acknowledged, its impracticability was also recognized. Time could not allow for observers to be presented with large numbers of single examinations. Consequently, observers were exposed to only those ten pairs of modern and traditional forms considered critical in the study. In other words, they examined each modern artform againsts assigned traditional counterpart; as opposed to, each modern artform against all traditional forms.

To collect viewpoints of observers; the most appropriate tool was found to be an opinionnaire and in particular, an open-ended opinionnaire. For one, this tool could be administered to a number of people in one sitting. Again, since the intention

of the second observational study was not only to verify the researcher's own observations, but also to provide further information that may have been overlooked by the researcher; this tool was certainly favourable as it allowed for freedom in expression.

SLELECTION

To facilitate collection of valid and illuminating information, it was imperative that selection be accorded to the following:- 1. Types of productions, 2. Workshops, 3. Craftsmen, 4. Modern artforms and, 5. Traditional forms.

Types of Productions.

The selection of various types of productions within the category of contemporary Kenyan art - commercial arts and crafts, was found to be overly problematic.

There are well over a hundred different kinds of artforms, leave alone variations, constituting the group of arts referred to here as commercial arts and crafts. Hence, the complete study of all these artforms was for all practical purposes a feat near impossible. Besides, even if a comprehensive study were possible, results would have clearly been

an oversimplification of the issue under review. It was necessary, then, that a sample of these arts be availed for study.

Unfortunately for this study, a systematic selection could not be accorded to commercial arts and crafts. Clearly, the need to comprehend these arts was a pre-requisite to deriving a representative sample. It was vital that commercial arts and crafts were understood at least in general terms. But this was not possible. Presently, no information exists on all the various artforms that make up this category of contemporary Kenyan art. Perhaps as an alternative, the researcher could have conducted his own pre-study to identify all these artforms. But such an exercise could have been too involving. So how could one go about selecting these numerous artforms of which so little is known?

Under the present circumstances, then, there was no alternative save to resort to a selection by individual justification, based on the researcher's casual observation of these productions within the existing socio-economic set-up. Consequently,

the productions selected were those considered by the researcher as major in terms of their popularity in various curio-shops; these were,

Handprinted fabrics, Kisii and Akamba carvings, Luo and Luhya Pottery, Weaving of textiles and basketwork (Kiondo's) and Jewellery. Prior to this selection, However, some discussions were arranged and carried out with notable curio-shop owners, authorities at the Kenya External Trade Authority and the Ministry of Culture and Social Services.

. Workshops.

For the purposes of investigating the above selected productions, established workshops were considered. Established workshops, because they offered a more realistic picture of commercial arts and crafts in Kenya. In identifying a given workshop as "established" these guidelines were considered.

1. Its participation in exhibitions held under the auspices of institutions such as The American Cultural Centre and Goeth Institute.
2. Its coverage in local newspapers over the years.

In as much as efforts were made to sample workshops randomly, it was recognized that rigid adherence to this scheme was bound to be counter-productive. Deviation from this plan may have

meant falsification of the existing situation. For instance, in the case of textile weaving it would have certainly been illogical to exclude a workshop from the wool producing regions of Kenya. Still, it would have also been illogical to disregard the cross-sectional selection of workshops throughout the country that produce a certain type of production. Selection of workshops has, therefore, combined both random sampling and individual justification.

No specific number of workshops to be sampled, for the various types of productions, was pre-determined. This was due to the obvious reason of existing inequality in numbers of workshops producing particular types of productions. However, efforts were made to sample at least 50% of those established workshops producing the various types of productions under review. Given below are the names and locations of those workshops selected within the various types of productions.

1. Handprinted Fabrics - Maridadi Fabrics³⁶
(Shauri Moyo - Nairobi).

³⁶ Designers contributing to "Maridadi Fabrics" are roughly representative of Kenyan designers involved in production of designs for handprinted fabrics.

2. Carvings

(a) Kisii Soapstone Carvings - The various individual craftsmen working at Tabaka (Tabaka - North Mugirango, Kisii District).

(b) Akamba Wood Carvings - Craftsmen working within the three major workshops, namely:-

(i) Nairobi Handicrafts co-op. society.

(ii) Wamunyu Handicraft co-op. society.

(Wamunyu - Kagundo District)

(iii) Akamba Handicrafts co-op. society.

(Changanwe - Mombasa)

3. Pottery

(a) Luo Pottery - The various individual Potters working at Agoro (N'giya, East Alego - Siaya District).

(b) Luhiya Pottery

(i) Kakamega Pottery (Kakamega Town - the Industrial Estate).

(ii) Kaimosi Handicrafts (Kaimosi).

(iii) Ilesi Pottery (Ilesi - Kakamega).

4. Weaving

(a) Textiles

- (i) Ufamaji wa Bahati (Mathare & Bahati Nairobi).
- (ii) Eastleigh Community Centre (Eastleigh - Nairobi).
- (iii) Leo Craft (Njoro).
- (iv) The Lavington Church Project (Lavington-Nairobi).

(b) Basketwork "Kiondo's"

- (i) Kitwii Womens Group - (Kitui-Kangundo)
- (ii) Ngidori Womens Group - (Komothai Location - Githunguri).

5. Jewellery

- (i) Malaika Crafts (Mathare - Nairobi)
- (ii) The African Heritage (Industrial area - Nairobi).
- (iii) Bombolulu (Mombasa - Town)
- (iv) Industrial Rehabilitation Centre (Kenyatta National Hospital - Nairobi)

Craftsmen.

Fifteen craftsmen were interviewed for each of the FIVE types of productions. This number of craftsmen, for each production, was distributed almost evenly to cover all the selected workshops. Given below is a breakdown of the number of craftsmen interviewed at the various workshops.

1. Maridadi Fabrics - 15.
2. (a) Individual Carvers at Tabaka - 7.
 - (b) (i) Nairobi Handicrafts Co-op. society - 3.
 - (ii) Wamunyu Handicrafts Co-op. Society - 3.
 - (iii) Akamba Handicrafts Co-op. Society - 2.
3. (a) Individual Potters at Agoro - Ng'ya - 7.
 - (b) (i) Kakamega Pottery - 3.
 - (ii) Ilesi Pottery - 3.
 - (iii) Kaimosi Handicrafts - 2.
4. (a) (i) Ufamaji wa Bahati - 2.
 - (ii) Eastleigh Community Centre - 2.
 - (iii) Leo Craft - 2.
 - (iv) The Lavington Church Project - 2.

- (b) (i) Kitwii Womens Group - 4
- (ii) Ngidori Womens Group - 3

- 5. (i) Malaika Crafts - 4
- (ii) The African Heritage - 4
- (iii) Bombolulu - 4
- (iv) Industrial Rehabilitation Centre - 3

Within each workshop, selection of interviewees was largely at random. Attempts were made to include the supervisor of each of these workshops for the purposes of providing reliable opinion on the background of the various workshops.

Modern Artforms.

A total of 10 modern artforms representing evenly all the FIVE types of productions were collected. Accordingly, for each production there were two artforms. Although the opinions of of the various craftsmen was sought selection of these artforms were for the most part random.

Traditional Artforms.

From a number of traditional forms found to be related to the various selected modern form, one form to represent each of the FIVE types of productions was selected - largely at random.

From the set of artforms selected to represent the FIVE productions; Relatedness in selection of traditional forms was viewed from the following perspectives:-

1. Hand printed fabrics - One design said to have been adopted.
2. Carvings - Any traditional form depicting figurative representation.
3. Pottery - A traditional pot.
4. Weaving - A traditional woven form.
5. Jewellery - A traditional piece of jewellery.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into three parts of namely:-

- A. The Interview.
- B. Observations.
- C. Discussion and Interpretation.

Following below are outlines on each.

A. THE INTERVIEW

Information received on the interview, relating largely to the setting in which commercial arts and crafts exist in Kenya, is presented under two levels. First, information concerning each of the FIVE productions of namely; Handprinted fabrics, Carvings, Pottery, Weaving and Jewellery. And second, a collective examination of information obtained from the preceding examination of all FIVE Productions.

Within each of the two mentioned levels, information is presented under the headings of the following three topical guidelines.

1. Artists and Craftsmen
 - (a) Their backgrounds,
 - (b) Attitudes and
 - (c) Viewpoints.

2. Workshops

- (a) Dates of initiation and,
- (b) Circumstances leading to initiation.

3. Artforms

- (a) Their characteristics and,
- (b) Development.

Procedure of Analysis of Interview-Responses.

To analyse responses of artists and craftsmen interviewed in the field, responses were subjected to the following treatment. At first, response-sheets of each individual was grouped according to his respective area of production. Next, each individual's responses to the various items on the interview schedule were edited and translated into the scheme provided on Appendix IV. The result of this exercise appear on Tables; 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 - where responses of each interviewee, within the various areas of production, now translated into items in Appendix IV, are coded as; a, b, c, ... as his case may be. Hence, from these tables and with the scheme in aid of analysis³⁷, one can easily establish general responses of each of the 75 interviewees who were interviewed in the fields.

Further analysis involved the coded responses. The object of this second analysis was to tally and compile

³⁷ See Appendix IV.

similar responses amongst interviewees. Thus, within a given area of production, the total number of interviewees answering same (following translation) to the various items contained in the scheme in aid of analysis have been compiled in Tables; 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. This procedure of tallying similar responses was once again extended to cover all areas of productions put together, and is herein tabulated in Table 11, appearing as percentages of agreements amongst artists and craftsmen producing major commercial arts and crafts in Kenya.

Unluckily for this study, the "unstructured" interview schedule that was administered to artists and craftsmen has advantages and disadvantages that are difficult to reconcile. It allowed for a comprehensive survey of the problem-situation, yet the sheer bulk of information gathered restricted presentation of details - hence the need to summarize into general statements; responses received to the interview. These general statements are those contained in the scheme in aid of analysis. But this scheme, too, has limitations. Its rigorous application could mean that, only an "estimate" response of individual interviewees are presented. So, to retain some critical information that may have otherwise been overlooked owing to strict adherence to the scheme; in this report, summarized information has been qualified wherever necessary.

B. OBSERVATIONS.

Information obtained from observation sessions, relating to the nature of modern and traditional forms and their interconnections, are presented within the following three areas:-

1. The Researcher's Individual Observations,
2. Observations of other Observers and
3. Comparison of Observations of the Researcher and those of other Observers.

Within the first two mentioned areas, information is presented under headings of each of the FIVE productions of; Handprinted fabrics, Carvings, Pottery, Weaving and Jewellery. Of those discussed under each production are qualities of: form or shape, space, line, colour, texture, size and function of product, subject matter and, materials and techniques used. The Researcher's observations, recapitulating qualities of various sampled works, now consisting of short descriptive statements are presented accordingly. In case of other observer's observations, however, their general opinions have largely been presented in form of percentages of agreements.

The intention of including other observers in this study has primarily been for purposes of verifying the researcher's own observations. To fulfill this

intention, the researcher's observations and those of other observers are compared and areas of agreements and disagreements acknowledged in the last section of this part.

C. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION.

The final part of this chapter attempts to cross-examine evidences raised from analysis of both the interview and observations. In so doing, the object has been to further verify information and to facilitate provision of more information.

PART ONEINDIVIDUAL EXAMINATION OF INTERVIEW-RESPONSES RECEIVED
TO SPECIFIC AREAS OF PRODUCTION

What follows in this first part of Chapter Four is an examination of responses received to the interview schedule that was administered to artists and craftsmen involved in the production of; Handprinted fabrics, Carvings, Pottery, Weaving and Jewellery.

Responses discussed, here, have been reconstructed according to the scheme in aid of analysis. They bear to the various variables that were investigated in the field in respect to: Creators of artforms in the various areas of productions; centres where productions were fashioned and; artforms within the various areas of productions.

HAND PRINTED FABRICS

To explore hand printed fabrics in Kenya, - "Maridadi Fabrics" was investigated. This production is peculiar amongst all other productions herein examined in that, throughout its execution, the designing stage is the most crucial and of significance to this study. For this reason, then, only designers were considered amongst all those involved in the production process.

Virtually all designers contributing to "Maridadi Fabrics Fabrics", work part-time. In other words, they could be - art-teachers; students of art and design; professional and amateur artists and designers working elsewhere or; even persons working in fields totally unrelated to art - all of whom contribute to the workshop largely as a side-line activity.

Because designers were working from without the workshop, it was necessary to deviate from the norm in the manner of administering the interview. Thus, unlike all other productions, for hand printed fabrics it was imperative that designers be traced and interviewed outside the workshop.

(a) Designers

Given below are responses of individual designers in respect to their backgrounds, attitudes and view points on their involvement in producing designs for "Maridadi Fabrics".

Sex and Age. Of those designers interviewed 11 were males and 4 females. The ages of these individuals fell within the following age-brackets:

3 designers were under 20 years of age

4 designers were aged between 21-25 years.

7 designers were aged between 26-30 years.

and 1 designer was in the 31-35 age bracket.

The average age of all these designers was found to be 25 years.

Level of Education and Experience (Years) in the

Production. Among the 15 designers; 10 had attained secondary school education, and the rest had attained or were attending post-secondary school education.

The number of years of experience as designers (inclusive of training) for these individuals were as follows:-

7 had been designers for less than 5 years.

6 had been designers for 6-10 years.

And 2 had worked as designers for 11-15 years.

The average number of years of experience for these designers was found to be 8 years.

Method of Training and Reasons for becoming Artists.

From the total of 15 designers; 12 had undergone formal training in art, 2 were self-taught artists and one had trained on-the-job. Five of these 15 designers were of the opinion that they chose to become artists owing to a profound interest in art. For four others, it was because they were talented.

Another three reported having become artists largely

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7 designers were aged between 26-30 years.

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The average age of all these designers was found to be 25 years.

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out of chance. And in the case of the last two, expected rewards and other reasons were given respectively.

Manner of Involvement in Occupation and Attitudes

towards Occupation. Out of the 15 designers; 8 were ordinarily full-time designers, while the rest were part-time designers. (The terms full-time and part-time apply here to persons working either wholly as designers or those designers who also perform other occupations totally unrelated to art). Of those 15 designers: 2 considered their occupation of art to be strictly a job; 7 viewed the undertaking to be something from which they derived satisfaction and; the remaining 6 people felt that their involvement in art was both a job and something they enjoyed.

Attitudes towards need for innovation. And factors dictating conformity. All designers were unanimous in agreement that, inventiveness was the key to any work of significance and of uttermost importance to any serious artist. As to factors dictating conformity to certain established patterns of design-work: two of the 15 designers mentioned consumers demands and tastes; while, for all others, the workshop itself expected and sought works that were evidently African.

Prior Involvement in the Making of Traditional Kenyan Art, And whether or not such an undertaking has left a mark on an individuals work. Seven designers reported having tried their hands in the making of various traditional items; and the other eight reported no such experience. Of the said seven designers, only four affirmed tradition influences in their work.

(b) The Workshop.

Date and Circumstances leading to its initiation.

Since information received from authorities within the workshop, was considered most accurate; information acquired from interviewees have been overlooked in favour of those of the workshop.

According to the authoritative source, the project was first conceived in 1966 and realized in 1967. The intention in establishing the project was to provide useful employment to the needy of Pumwani district of Nairobi. To accomplish this, the technology of handprinting was considered most opportune; because of its simplicity, inexpensiveness and no-need-for-training of would be participants.

(c) Artforms.

Approximation as to when artforms were first made for sale to foreigners. Again, like information

received on the workshop, reliable information as to when screen printed fabrics were first made commercially for outside consumption is reported from sources within the workshop as opposed to these of interviewees.

It was said that, printing on fabrics by hand on a large scale for commercial purposes in Kenya was introduced by "Maridadi fabrics." Accordingly, it appears safe to assume that the first forms of handprinted fabrics were those made by "Maridadi fabrics". Hence, 1967 should be about the point at which the artforms were first availed to foreigners.

Consumption of Artforms by local People. Rating as to how much they consume. And the difference, if any, in those designs favoured by local people and those by foreigners. 14 designers responded in the affirmative to whether or not local people consumed their work, and one expressed doubts. When asked to give an idea as to how much of total production was consumed by local people, all 14 designers reported this to be very small. And in response to whether or not there were any notable differences in those designs popularly consumed by local people and those by foreigners; three of the 14 designers said No and the rest said Yes. Most

of this latter group qualified their statements by saying that, although the difference was slight there were certain evident differences. Their reflections are discussed below.

Expounding on the issue, the said respondents unanimously agreed that foreigners consumed nearly all kinds of designs that "Maridadi fabrics" had to offer. And that the main difference in preferences of the two groups of consumers was that; whereas, foreigners often sought "Africaness" in designs, local people consumed designs simply because they happened to be pleasing to the eye. One other area of difference was seen in variation in cost of textiles. It was argued that, because decorations in themselves were of lesser significance to local people, they were bound to go for less expensive textiles. Yet another area of differences in likings was seen in suitability of certain motifs in design to certain usages. It was recognized that local people almost always bought the textiles for use as garments, while foreigners tended to put textiles to all sorts of uses ranging from napkins and teddy bears to cushion covers. This factor of usage of textiles implied that local people ordinarily consumed textiles with small motifs in design. In perceptible terms, therefore, most interviewees concluded that inexpensive textiles with small motifs in design were preferred by local people.

Similarities between the Works and Other Traditional Kenyan Arts, and whether or not there are any Specific Traditional Forms relating to the Modern Designs.

All designers reported connections with traditions in the workshop's production. Of these 15 designers; 2 reported no specific traditional forms as bearing to the workshop's production, and the rest mentioned that some few modern designs had been almost faithfully reproduced from certain traditional Kenyan forms. Particular traditional items mentioned included combs, stools, shields and jewellery amongst others.

Changes in development of Modern forms. In considering changes in designs over the years; a majority 13 of the 15 designers maintained that changes must have taken place however rudimentary. Of responses of these 13 designers, a clear pattern of opinions appeared to emerge. It was first clarified that because of closeness to development, it was rather difficult to ascertain the kinds and nature of change. Next, it was declared that change was indeed an inevitable consequence as the workshop continually readjusted itself in meeting its diverse and evergrowing market. Increasing engagement of designers, often from different backgrounds was seen to be another crucial and determining factor, resulting in diversity of ideas. In perceptible terms, changes were noted in the nature and sizes of motifs. In the latter case

there was a more or less definite decrease in sizes of recent motifs.

Sources of Materials. Out of the 15 designers; 10 reported all materials used in the production process to be derived locally while the remaining 5 were a little cautious. They pointed out that much of those chemical dyes used in printing were imported.

Usages of finished works. Whether they have any traditional uses; And if not, could they function within a traditional set-up? It was almost unanimously maintained that the workshops production were decidedly put to some practical uses; such as garments, cushion covers, curtain, etc. And on whether or not present works had any traditional uses, 13 designers said no and the other two designers expressed reservations. The third question regarding the variable of usages of works, was rephrased so as to make it more relevant to the situation. Interviewees were asked to consider a hypothetical situation whereby a modern motif was reproduced on say a traditional stool, and then asked to consider whether or not such a stool would have been acceptable to people of olden-days. Nine designers said Yes and the other six said No; with reasons to the effect that traditional designs were not merely arbitrary creations, rather they conveyed certain intrinsic meanings necessary in authenticating them within a given community.

TABLE 1

Responses of Each of the 15 interviewees for
Handprinted fabrics, Translated into
The scheme in aid of Analysis.

Question Items as in The Scheme in Aid of Analysis	Interviewees														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	a	b	a	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	a	a
2	c	c	b	c	b	b	a	c	b	a	c	a	d	c	c
3	c	d	c	c	d	d	c	c	c	c	c	d	d	c	c
4	b	a	a	b	a	a	a	d	a	b	b	a	c	b	b
5	c	c	a	c	c	c	c	c	c	b	c	c	c	c	b
6	a	b	b	d	b	d	a	b	a	d	a	e	b	e	c
7	a	a	a	a	b	b	b	a	b	a	a	b		b	a
8	b	c	a	a	b	c	c	c	b	b	c	b	b	b	c
9	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
10	a	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	a
11	a	b	b	b	b	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	b	a	b
12	a	b	b	b	b	b	a	b	a	a	b	b	b	b	b
13	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
14	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
15	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
16	a	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
17	c		c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
18	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	b	b	a	a
19	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
20	a	b	a	a	a	a	b	a	a		a		a	a	a
21	a	b	a	a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
22	a	b	b	a	b	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	a
23	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
24	b	b		b	b	b	b	b	b		b	b	b	b	b
25	a	b	a	a	b	b	a	a	b	b	a	a	a	a	b
26															

KEY



denotes no-response

CARVINGS: AKAMBA AND KISII.

To explore production of carvings in Kenya, those of Akamba and Kisii were investigated. In the case of Akamba wood carvings the three major workshops of namely: Nairobi Handicrafts Co-operative Society in Gikomba, Nairobi; Wamunyu Handicrafts Co-operative Society in Wamunyu, Kangundo District and; Akamba Handicrafts Co-operative Society in Changamwe, Mombasa - were all looked into. And for Kisii stone carvings, on the other hand, Tabaka Centre, South Bogirango of Kisii District was investigated. Here, anything in the the name of a workshop was found to be ordinarily a fragile and tentative establishment. Indeed, workshops of the magnitude of those of Akamba are non-existent. Carvers preferred to work either in small temporary groups or more often, individually in their respective homesteads.

Following are responses of eight Akamba and seven Kisii carvers who were interviewed in the mentioned centres. Responses presented here bear to the carvers themselves, their respective centres of production and artforms within their production.

(a) Carvers.

Sex and Age. The occupation of carving of both

Akamba and Kisii carvings is exclusively a male dominated profession., But a single exception to this rule was chanced in Wamunyu where, among the numerous male carvers, one was a female. She was among those interviewed in this study. The ages of the 15 carvers was found to range from 21 to over 51 years. Below is a breakdown of the total number of individuals within the various age categories.

4 were aged between 21-25 years.

6 were aged between 26-30 years.

3 were aged respectively between the age groups of 31-35, 36-40, 41-45 years.

And 2 were over 51 years of age.

The average age of these carvers was found to be 33 years.

Level of Education and Experience (Years) in the

Production. From those 15 carvers interviewed; 4 had had no school education, 9 had attained primary school education and, 2 had attended secondary school. And of these 15 carvers; 2 had worked as carvers for less than 5 years, 4 had been carvers for 11-15 years, 7 had been working as carvers for 16-20 years and, 2 had had the experience of over 21 years.

The average number of years of experience in carving amongst these interviewees was found to be 16 years.

Method of Training and Reasons for Choosing to be carvers.

Seven of the 15 carvers reported having trained largely on-the-job and, eight reported being self-taught carvers.

Giving reasons as to why they chose to become carvers:

One carver reported being talented; two said it was merely due to interest developed in the field; eight conceded that carving offered lucrative rewards; three reported having become carvers largely as a result of chance and; one gave some other reason.

Manner of Involvement in Occupation and, Attitudes

towards Occupation. Amongst the 15 carvers, ten worked full-time and the rest worked part-time. It is worth pointing out here that, all those working part-time were found to be Kisii carvers.

Of the 15 respondents: nine considered their occupation to be strictly a job; three felt that this undertaking was something from which they derived satisfaction and; the remaining three considered their occupation to be both a job and something they enjoyed.

Attitudes towards Need for Innovations. And factors

dictating conformity. Fourteen carvers responded positively to the question as to whether it was considered necessary to introduce new creations into

already existing assemblage. And one carver was sceptical of such moves arguing that introduction of new work would be wasteful, for many would probably not sell.

On factors that usually lead to conformity to certain established modes of creations: 13 of the 15 carvers reported consumers tastes and demands, as reflected by the market, to be the single-most limiting factor; while the other carvers were unsure.

Prior Involvement in the Making of Traditional Kenyan Arts. And whether or not this undertaking has left a mark on an individual's work. Seven respondents affirmed having made some traditional objects and eight reported having had no such previous experience. Of those seven carvers who had been involved in making traditional objects, five felt that this undertaking had somewhat registered an influence on them. Traditional influences according to these carvers, arose from the fact that their initial training in carving involved making of traditional items.

(b) Centres of Production.

As has already been stated, those workshops in Nairobi, Wamunyu and Mombasa were investigated in connection with production of Akamba wood carvings; and in the case of Kisii stone carvings, individual carvers in Tabaka were consulted.

Dates of Initiation of Centres of Production and Circumstances leading to their initiation. Discussions with the various Kisii carvers revealed that, production of stone objects by Gusii people in Tabaka area was probably as old as production of stone-items prior to arrival of the white man. It was often mentioned that stone objects were made in olden-days for some practical usages such as; utencils, smoking pipes and containers. In addition to this, the stones were often ground to powder for among other uses - body painting. From this information, it was clear that contrary to common belief, the stones were an art-material of significance among the Gusii prior to the advent of Europeans. It was also clear that Tabaka area was probably a very important place in manufacture of stone produce.

On who initiated production of modern items, and why they were initiated; interviewees were unanimous in agreement that an elder of Bomware clan of Tabaka, Moseti Orina, was the initiator of the trade. His reasons for starting and continuing this trade was said to be purely because he had uncovered a viable economic activity. As regards the exact date of initiation of the trade in Tabaka area, however, responses were found to be more inconsistent. For some respondents this date was as early as over 50 years ago and for others it was as recent as 30 years

ago. In view of this inconsistency and because the complete establishment of this date was not crucial to this study; it was seen as worthwhile to cease any further pursue to it.

Unlike responses received from Kisii carvers in respect to dates, those of Akamba carvers were found to be more consistent. It has been instinctive to attempt to understand this variance: Variation in ages of carvers now participating within the two groups appears to be one explanation. It has been observed that in contrast to Kisii, Akamba carvers comprise of many elderly persons. This implies closeness to and actual participation in past development, hence the ability for recollection. Another probable explanation arises from the manner in which the two groups of carvers often partake their occupation. Many Kisii carvers appear to carve on a part-time basis; whereas, Akamba carvers are ordinarily full-time carvers. Accordingly, complete devotion of time to carving among the Akamba is seen to be a factor enhancing familiarity with developments in their field.

Discussions with Akamba carvers showed that there were relative differences in the development of the three major workshops. As a result, it has been necessary to consider each workshop separately.

First, the workshop in Wamunyu. All individuals interviewed, both here and elsewhere, confirmed that Wamunyu was the cradle of Akamba wood carvings; and that a man from this area, by the name of Mutisiya Munge, was the sole initiator of the trade which he soon passed on to members of his family and clansmen alike. Interviewees were also unanimous in agreement that, the period of initiation of the trade was just after the first world war.

On circumstances that gave rise and substance to the trade in Wamunyu, the general consensus of Wamunyu carvers was that: Soon after its initiation fortunate circumstances prevailed - a favourable market for carvings was recognized - and it became clear that the occupation was a potential income generating activity necessary in this area which suffers often from periodic spells of drought.

Second, the workshop in Nairobi. According to those interviewed here, initiation of this workshop in the late 1940's was a direct consequence of the then increasing need to be close to both the source of materials and consumers. Local woods for sculpting in Wamunyu area had virtually been exhausted, occasioning wood to be received from without and finished products to be transported to the out side markets of major East African towns. Such a transaction

was seen to be laborious if not cumbersome. Thus, solution of this problem became the founding of a workshop in Nairobi.

Third, the workshop in Mombasa. Like its Nairobi counterpart, this workshop is also reported to have been established as a result of both the needs to be close to materials and consumers. And the date of its establishment is said to be 1956.

(c) Artforms.

Approximation as to when Artforms were first made for sale to foreigners. Of those interviewed, none could point out exactly when both Akamba and Kisii carvings were first introduced to foreigners. Never the less, it was often mentioned that the dates were sure to correspond to dates of initiation of initial workshops, because at that time much of the works had little use to respective communities.

Consumption of Artforms by local people. Rating as to how much they consume. And the difference, if any, in those items consumed by local people and those by foreigners. Although all 15 carvers agreed that local people consumed their products, it was quickly mentioned that the amount was still very small. And on whether or not there was a difference in those items

often consumed by local people and those by foreigners; nine said yes, 4 said no and one restrained himself from making any judgement. The difference according to most of the nine carvers, centred around the twin factors of function and cost. Because of cost, most local people went for less expensive carvings of which many were small pieces. And because of function, most local people consumed items that in their view-point had practical use. Such items included combs, utensils and walking sticks as in the case of politicians. Thus, those purely decorative items of animals and people that make-up the bulk of production were said to be consumed predominantly by foreigners.

Similarities between Artforms and Other Traditional Kenyan Arts, and whether or not there are any specific traditional forms relating to the Modern items.

All respondents reported at least some small connection between their items and traditions. Among these respondents, 13 were able to identify specific traditional forms that they felt had some bearing to their works. Examples of specific traditional forms mentioned as regards Kisii carvings were - pots and smoking pipes; and in the case of Akamba carvings, combs, utensils and stools were said to be wholly traditional.

Changes in development of Modern forms. Of those 15 carvers interviewed, all recalled that changes must have or had in fact taken place in development of their works from earlier to present state. Changes were generally attributed to the three factors of 1. Carvers themselves 2. Tools and 3. The market and consumers.

From these agents of change, changes were often reported to have taken the following directions.

1. "Carvers". Because of increasing number of carvers and because of increased expertise and confidence over the years, there had been a tendency for the characters of works to change.

2. "Tools". In the past, tools had been few and were used extensively throughout the production process. In the case of Akamba carvings, for instance, these consisted of almost exclusively the adze and the knife. But in recent years, there has been an increase in the range of tools used; saws, files, chisels and sand paper are now common-place. This wide-spread use of new tools, suitable for specific functions is increasingly being adapted in an effort to minimize on energy, time and materials, and consequently realize a bigger profit margin. Also, the intensive use of various tools has resulted in changes in works produced.

3. "The Market and consumers." Tastes of consumers as exhibited by the market, was affirmed as the single-most influencing factor so far as setting of trends is concerned.

Sources of Materials. All respondents acknowledged all materials to be received locally. These materials were said to consist of locally mined stones, dyes and polish as in the case of Kisii carvings and; in the case of Akamba carvings, local woods of mainly "Muvuvu" Ebony and polish.

Usages of finished works. Whether items have any traditional uses; And if not, could they function within a Traditional set-up? According to 13 of the 15 carvers, consumers put their works to both practical and decorative uses; and for the other 2 carvers, items were used solely as decorations for interiors. On whether or not their works had any traditional functions, 2 carvers said no and 13 said yes. This majority added that such present-day items as combs, utensils and stools had traditional uses. However, it was also mentioned that out of all their produce, items of traditional usages were very few and that the bulk of their produce had little relevance to a

TABLE 3

Responses of Each of the 15 interviewees
for carvings, translated into
The scheme in aid of Analysis.

Question Items as in The Scheme in Aid of Analysis	Interviewees														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
2	e	c	f	h	h	c	c	d	c	b	b	c	c	b	b
3	b	c	a	a	a	b	b	a	b	b	b	b	b	c	b
4	d	d	e	d	e	d	c	a	c	d	c	a	d	d	c
5	a	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
6	c	c	c	c	c	d	d	e	a	c	c	c	h	b	d
7	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	b	b	b	a	a	b
8	c	c	a	a	b	a	c	a	a	a	a	a	b	b	a
9	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
10	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	NO-RESPONSE	a	NO-RESPONSE	a	a	a	a	a
11	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	a	b	b	b	a	b	b	b
12	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
13	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	c	NO-RESPONSE	NO-RESPONSE	NO-RESPONSE	e	e	e
14	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
15	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e
16	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
17	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
18	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	b	a	b	NO-RESPONSE	a	a	b	b
19	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
20	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	a	a	NO-RESPONSE	a	a
21	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
22	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
23	c	c	c	c	b	c	c	b	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
24	a	a	a	b	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
25	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
26															

KEY
 Denotes NO-RESPONSE

traditional community.

POTTERY: LUO AND LUHYA.

To explore the production of pottery, contemporary Luo and Luhya pottery were looked into. The centres of production visited were:-

1. Agoro-Ng'iya in Siaya District,
2. Kakamega Potteries in Kakamega Town,
3. Kaimosi Handicrafts in Kaimosi,
- and 4. Ilesi Pottery in Ilesi - Kakamega.

Of these centres, all except Agoro-Ng'iya were workshops in the sense of the word. In Agoro-Ng'iya potters worked individually in their homes as opposed to working together in a permanent site as is the case in all other centres.

Below are responses received from a total 15 potters, of whom seven were Luo and eight Luhya potters. Their responses concern themselves, their centres and their works.

(a) Potters.

Sex and Age. Among the 15 potters interviewed, ten were females and five were males. The ages of these potters were as follows:- within each of the three age-groups of under 20, 41-45 and 46-50 years there was

one potter; within each of another three age-groups of 21-25, 26-30 and 31-35 years there were 2 potters and; within the age-bracket of over 51 years there were six potters.

The average age of these potters was found to be 37 years.

Level of Education and Experience (Years) in Production.

Out of the 15 potters, ten had received no school education and three and two other potters had respectively received primary and secondary school education. Of the 15 potters, the number of years of experience in the making of modern works were given as follows: 6 potters had made the works for less than 5 years; another 6 potters had worked for 6-10 years and; 3 had worked for 11-15 years. The average number of years of experience in production was found to be eight years.

Method of Training and Reasons for choosing to become potters. Asked to specify how they had trained; 5 potters reported having trained on-the-job and the remaining 10 potters reported being largely self-taught. On their reasons for choosing to become potters: 5 reported a need to earn an income; 4 reported chance; another 4 reported interest in the art-making and; 2 reported talent and other reasons respectively.

Manner of involvement in Occupation and, Attitudes towards occupation. Eight of the 15 respondents reported being part-time potters while the others worked full-time. Speaking of their occupation; six potters considered it to be nothing more than just a job, three potters reported enjoying their undertaking and, the remaining 6 viewed their undertaking to be both a job and something they enjoyed.

Attitudes towards need for Innovation. And factors dictating conformity:- All potters supported the need to be inventive. And on factors that lead to conformity to certain lines of creation; 7 considered consumers tastes and demands to be the unquestioned determinant, 5 saw the workshops expectation as crucial, 2 reported other factors to be over-riding and, one saw the sky as the limit.

Prior Involvement in the Making of Traditional Kenyan Arts and whether or not this undertaking has left a mark on an individuals work. From those 15 potters interviewed, 14 had had previous experience in the making of traditional objects, particularly pottery. Amongst these potters, 13 expressed strong opinions to the effect that previous involvement in traditional works had registered a lasting mark on their current works. According to this majority, influences were prevalent because the making of traditional pots

constituted their early training in pottery.

(b) Centres of Production.

Dates of initiation, and circumstances leading to their initiation. Considered here are those 4 centres of productions examined in respect to contemporary Luo and Luhya pottery. These were:-

1. Agoro-Ng'iya
2. Kakamega Potteries
3. Kaimosi Handicrafts and
4. Ilesi Potteries.

1. Agoro-Ng'iya.

From the outset, it was ratified that production of pottery in this centre was not a recent development and that traditional pottery had been made here from time immemorial. Be that as it may, it was then necessary to establish exactly when modern pottery were first made. This proved to be quite controversial. For some potters, the date was as early as 1960 and for others it was as late as 1970. Thus, because of these conflicting accounts, it was difficult to establish with a reasonable degree of certainty the date of initiation of modern pottery in Ng'iya.

This unusual situation whereby opinions of potters vary in respect to the date of initiation of a

development of which most were witnesses - call for some speculation. This situation appears understandable for two reasons. For one, it was almost conclusively observed that potting in this area was a low status occupation. It is argued that this weak system of reward and prestige may have lessened recollection of details. For another, it was observed that wholly traditional pots for the local market were being made along-side modern pots often by the same potter. Accordingly, it is seen as likely that continuity of traditions and concurrence of traditional and modern pottery may have rendered it difficult to clearly pinpoint developments.

More definite than responses to the date of initiation, were responses to circumstances that lead to the up-growth of modern pottery in Ng'iya. The general consensus was decidedly a realization of an economic opportunity.

2. Kakamega Potteries.

This workshop is situated within the Industrial Estate of Kakamega Town. It was established in 1975, with a brief help of a Danish expert, and is presently fully Kenyan owned and managed. The reasons for its establishment must be seen in light of the Kenyan Governments aims in opening up Industrial Estates throughout major towns in the country. The opening of

a ceramics industry in Kakamega was seen to be a viable economic activity.

3. Kaimosi Handicrafts.

This workshop was initiated in 1972 with the help of some European volunteers. Currently its being managed by those local women working therein. The reasons for its initiation was given as, to enable local women of Kaimosi area to make a living off pottery and other crafts such as tie and dye.

4. Ilesi Potteries.

This workshop was initiated in 1972 by one Luhya potter, who until then was making traditional pots largely for local consumption. According to this potter, he started this workshop when he realized that making pieces of pottery for outside market was financially more rewarding.

(c) The Artforms.

Approximation as to when Artforms were first made for sale to foreigners. Because this aspect has not been of central importance to this study, no special pains were taken to ascertain the exact year when items were first made for sale to foreigners. Nevertheless, responses of potters tended to point to the late 1960's and early 1970's.

Consumption of Artforms by local people. Rating as to how much they consume. And the difference, if any, in those items consumed by local people and those by foreigners. All potters agreed that their works were consumed by local people. And according to a majority of these respondents, consumption of items by local people was relatively small. On the difference in those items consumed by local people and those by foreigners, 5 respondents reported no difference and 10 reported a difference. The essential differences were said to be in the sizes and function of items. Local people consumed small items that were usually functional in their viewpoint.

Similarities between the works and other Traditional Kenyan Arts, and whether or not there are any specific traditional forms relating to the Modern Productions. All respondents agreed that the single traditional items that bore strongest resemblance to their works were the pots. Similarities were identified in the method of production and in the structural and decorative form.

Changes in development of Modern forms. All respondents reported changes having taken place in their works over the years. The general opinion was that these changes were those of increased number and variety of forms, and miniturization. Also it was often mentioned that

TABLE 5

Responses of Each of the 15 interviewees
for Pottery, Translated into
The Scheme in aid of Analysis.

Question Items as in The Scheme in Aid of Analysis	Interviewees														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	a	a	b	a	a	a
2	g	h	h	h	d	d	h	f	h	c	b	h	c	b	a
3	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	c	a	b	b	b
4	a	a	b	c	a	a	c	b	b	a	a	b	c	c	b
5	b	b	b	b	b	a	b	b	a	a	a	a	b	b	b
6	d	a	b	d	b	c	d	d	c	e	b	c	b	c	c
7	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
8	b	c	a	c	a	a	c	a	a	b	b	a	c	c	c
9	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
10	d	a	d	d	d	d	c	NO-RESPONSE	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
11	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	a	a	a
12	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	a	a	a
13	c	c	NO-RESPONSE	d	c	c	d	b	b	a	a	b	b	b	b
14	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	a	a	b	b	a	b	b	b
15	NO-RESPONSE	c	NO-RESPONSE	d	c	c	d	b	b	a	a	h	b	b	b
16	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
17	c	c	NO-RESPONSE	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
18	b	a	b	b	b	a	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
19	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
20	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
21	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
22	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	a	a	a	b	b	a	a	a
23	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
24	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
25	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
26															

KEY



Denotes NO-RESPONSE

increased expertise and confidence over the years had registered a profound effect on the quality of work being produced.

Sources of Materials. Apart from two out of the 15 respondents, the rest unanimously agreed that all materials used in production were derived locally. It is worth pointing out that the two unconsenting respondents actually worked in a workshop which produced some glazed pottery. It was for this reason that these respondents reported most and not all their materials to be locally available.

Usages of finished products. Whether Productions have any traditional uses; And if not, could they function within a Traditional set-up? Each of the 15 potters believed that their works were being put to both practical and decorative uses. Again, it was almost unanimously agreed that some of their works had traditional uses and could in fact function in a traditional sector.

WEAVING: TEXTILES AND BASKETWORK (KIONDOS).

To investigate production of weaving, textile weaving and basket-work were looked into. In the latter case, "Kiondos" were considered. Interviews were conducted in the following centres of production.

1. Weaving of Textiles. Ufamaji Wa Bahati (the two workshops in Mathare Valley and Bahati); Eastleigh Community Centre, The Lavington Church Social Project and Leocraft. In these centres a total of eight weavers were interviewed.

2. Weaving of Kiondos. Kitwii Womens Group and Ngidori Womens Group. In these two centres a total of seven weavers were interviewed.

Below are responses received from weavers, interviewed in the above mentioned centres, pertaining to themselves, their workshops and their artforms.

(a) Weavers.

Sex and Age. Among the 15 weavers interviewed, 14 were females and only one was a male. The ages of these individuals fell within the following age-groups.

One was aged between 21-25 years.

Six were aged between 26-30 years.

One was aged between 31-35 years.

One was aged between 36-40 years.

Three were aged between 41-45 years and another

three were aged over 51 years.

The average age of these interviewees was found to be 37 years.

Level of Education and Experience (Years) in the Production.

Amongst the 15 respondents: 5 had received no formal education; 6 had attended primary school and 4 had had secondary school education. When asked to specify how long they had been involved in the making of the modern products:- 7 reported having worked for less than 5 years; 2 reported 6-10 years and; 6 reported 11-15 years. The average number of years of experience in the making of the modern products was found to be about 13 years.

Method of Training and Reasons for choosing to become Weavers.

Eight of the 15 weavers reported having trained on-the-job; while, the other seven were largely self-taught. In considering their reasons for choosing to be weavers: 3 reported an interest in the art-making; 4 reported expected rewards; 7 reported chance and; one gave other reasons.

Manner of Involvement in Occupation and Attitudes

towards Occupation. Out of the 15 weavers interviewed, 7 worked full-time and 8 worked part-time. On their views towards their occupation: 2 felt that it was just a job; one said it was an undertaking she enjoyed and; all the other 12 were of the opinion that it was both a job and an undertaking they enjoyed.

Attitudes towards need for Innovations. And factors dictating conformity. Of the 15 weavers, a majority 14 favoured inventiveness. Responding to the question of factors necessitating conformity to certain established prototype models: five weavers saw consumers tastes and demands as over-riding; seven believed their workshop to have the final say and one gave other reasons.

Prior Involvement in the Making of Traditional Kenyan Arts, and whether or not this undertaking has left a mark on an Individuals work. Ten of the 15 weavers reported having made traditional works. On the influence of this experience to their present work; eight of the ten respondents reported some influence, almost always mentioning that this constituted their basic training in particularly basketwork.

(b) Workshops.

Dates of Initiation and circumstances leading to their Initiation. Following below are information gathered mainly from the workshops themselves regarding their dates and reasons for initiating them.

1. Ufamaji Wa Bahati.

Consists of two separate workshops, one located in Mathare Valley and the other in Bahati. Both are managed by (N.C.C.K.). And the first workshop to be

established, in 1974, was the one in Mathare Valley. The objective of N.C.C.K. in establishing there was, to bring together needy people and provide them with jobs so as to make them self-supporting.

2. The Lavington Church Social Project.

Following the Lavington Church's concern for those in squatter areas (of Kongo, Gatina and Kawangware) situated about half a mile off the Churches premises; in 1971, the project was initiated in an attempt to provide gainful employment.

3. Eastleigh Community Centre.

This workshop is run under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (P.C.E.A.) and is situated near Mathare Valley Squatter Settlement. It was established in 1972 with a view to rehabilitating the needy in this area so as to make them self-reliant.

4. Leo Craft.

This centre was established in 1980 and is situated in Njoro, a notable sheep rearing region of Kenya. Here, much of the processing of wool and production of items are done by individuals in their homes. Thus, the centre is largely a consultation point. The chief reason for its establishment was largely

dictated by abundance of the raw material-wool.

5. Ngindori Womens Group.

This group became operational in 1980; with the intention of bringing together the rural women of Komothai location of Githunguri, so as to enable each to get to know one another and to use the association as a venue for discussing issues of direct concern to the community as a whole. It was later found that an income generating activity like making of kiondos was not only financially beneficial to group members; but could also be a means of bringing individuals even closer.

6. Kitwii Womens Group.

This group was started in 1978. It involves a total of about 92 women, making sisal products of which "Kiondos" are the most important items. The main reason behind initiation of this group was to get rural women in this region of Kangundo involved in an extra-income generating activity.

(c) Artforms.

Approximation as to when Artforms were first made for sale to foreigners. From the interviews, it was difficult to ascertain exactly when production of hand woven textiles and kiondos were first made for

foreign consumption. Even so, it was possible to arrive at some estimate dates. As concerns textiles, this was seen to be about the early parts of 1970's because this date corresponded with the dates of initiation of pioneer workshops. And in the case of "kiondos," many weavers speculated the date to be about mid to late 1960's.

Consumption of Artforms by local people. Rating as to how much they consume. And the difference, if any, in those items consumed by local people and those by foreigners. Answering to whether or not local people consumed their works, all 15 weavers said yes. However, it was also mentioned that the quantity consumed was small.

On whether there was a difference in the nature of products commonly consumed by local people and those by foreigners, ten of the 15 respondents reported a difference. In the case of textiles, respondents stated that local people tended to consume textiles that were put to use as garments. And in the case of basket work, respondents seemed to suggest differences in tastes in not two but three distinct groups of consumers. The groups identified were:

1. Local-rural consumers.
2. Local-urban consumers
- and 3. Foreign consumers.

According to the basket-makers, these three groups of consumers to some extent

displayed differing tastes in regard to: 1. The shapes of baskets 2. Sizes of baskets 3. Materials used and 4. The quality of weave in baskets.

1. "Shapes of baskets." Two types of baskets were identified. One is more traditional and has a U-like shape i.e., the rim and base of basket are almost equal in circumference. The other is more modern and displays a V-like shape i.e., the rim is greater in circumference than the base. The latter types of baskets constitute almost all present-day works, and were said to be extremely popular with foreign and local-urban consumers. Whereas, the former were said to be predominantly consumed by local-rural consumers.

2. "Size of baskets." Three approximate sizes of baskets were identified: large, medium and small. Almost entire produce of the centres of production comprised of medium-sized baskets, and though consumed by all groups of consumers, they were reported to be the mainstay of local-urban and foreign consumers. The large and small-sized baskets, on the other hand, were favoured by mostly by local-rural consumers.

3. "Materials". Two kinds of materials were reported to be available in contemporary production - these

are sisal and synthetic fibres. In the two centres of production, however, only sisal baskets were noticed, and it was reported here that production consisted exclusively of these types. Sisal baskets were said to be keenly sought by both foreign and local-urban consumers; while synthetic baskets (though not produced in the two centres) were mentioned to be popular with local-rural consumers.

4. "Quality of weave in baskets." The quality of traditional baskets were reported to have been astonishingly fine. Indeed, some were so fine, that they were almost water-tight. But in recent years, more so with increasing commercialization, weave in baskets has increasingly become course. In connection with this, it was pointed out that; whereas, local people usually considered the quality of weave, foreign consumers bought whatever was available.

Similarities between the works and other Traditional Kenyan Arts, and whether or not there are any specific traditional forms relating to the Modern Productions. Nine out of the 15 respondents maintained that there were similarities between their works and other traditional art-makings. And on whether or not there were particular traditional items relating to their works; seven of the 15 respondents consented,

pointing out that their baskets originated from traditions.

Changes in development of Modern forms. From the 15 respondents, a majority 14 acknowledged change in development of their work. In the area of textiles change was underscored as: continued incorporation of new and varied designs into initial items. And in the area of basket work, changes were reported in:-

1. Increasing production of wide rimmed basket as opposed to the more traditional narrow rimmed baskets,
2. Increasing standardization in size of baskets, with medium-sized baskets becoming more regular,
3. Increasing use of a wide array of colours (now available in chemical dyes) as opposed to only the more traditional browns and orange,
4. Increasing coarseness in character of weave as basket-makers strive to minimize on time and maximize on out put,
5. Increasing concentration on the aesthetic as opposed to the functional aspect of baskets.

Sources of Materials. Eleven of the 15 weavers maintained that all materials used in the weaving

process were obtained locally, whereas, the other four weavers reported that most and not all materials were locally available. These four respondents clarified that some of the dyes being used were imported.

USAGES of Finished work. Whether works have any traditional uses; And if not, could they function within a Traditional set-up? All 15 respondents reported that their works were only put singly to practical use. From these 15, seven respondents confirmed that their works had traditional uses. Responding to whether they thought their works would function within a traditional sector all the other eight said no.

JEWELLERY.

To explore production of modern commercial Jewellery in Kenya, these four workshops were examined.

1. Malaika Crafts.
2. Industrial Rehabilitation Centre.
3. Bombolulu and
4. The African Heritage.

What follows are responses of a total of 15 Jewell-makers interviewed in the above mentioned workshops. Their responses relate to themselves, their workshops and their works.

(a) Jewell-Makers.

Sex and Age. Of the 15 interviewees, twelve were males and three were females. Their respective ages were as follows:-

3 were aged between 21-25 years.

9 were aged between 26-30 years.

1 was aged between 31-35 years.

and 2 were aged between 36-40 years.

The average age of these individuals was found to be 29 years.

Level of Education and Experience (Years) in the Production. Among the 15 respondents, six had received no school education, eight had attended primary school and one had received secondary school education. Of these respondents, eight reported having been in the production for less than 5 years and the other seven for between 6 to 10 years. The average number of years of experience was found to be about 6 years.

Method of training and reasons for choosing to become Artists. Fourteen of the 15 Jewell-makers had trained on-the-job and one had received formal training in art. Giving their reasons for having chosen to be artists: five respondents reported this to be largely due to chance; three mentioned expected rewards; four said they were talented; two reported being interested in

the field and; one gave other reasons.

Manner of Involvement in Occupation and Attitudes

towards Occupation. All 15 respondents reported being full-time Jewell-makers. Four considered their work to be strictly a job, while the other eleven persons felt that it was not only a job but also an engagement from which they derived satisfaction.

Attitudes towards need for Innovations. And factors

dictating conformity. A majority 13 of the 15 Jewell-makers endorsed the need to be inventive. As to factors necessitating adherence to certain lines of work: five respondents considered consumers tastes and demands as crucial; Another five reported the workshops expectations; two others underlined technological factors and; one gave some other reason.

Prior Involvement in the Making of Traditional

Kenyan Arts; And whether or not such an undertaking

has left a Mark on an individuals work. From the 15 Jewell-makers, seven acknowledged having made some traditional forms. But only three of these persons conceded that this undertaking had registered some influence on their current work. The nature of this influence was generally postulated as being; a

keener conceptualization of what is entailed in a work bearing to traditions, moreso now that work being made were expected to depict some sort of a traditional basis.

(b) Workshops.

Dates of initiation and circumstances leading to their initiation. Given below are information pertaining to the backgrounds of each of the four workshops examined for productions of Jewellery.

1. Malaika Crafts.

Was established in 1971 and is run under the supervision of The National Christian Council of Kenya. Reasons for its establishment was to help in providing the needy of Mathare Squatter settlement with a means of making a living.

2. The Industrial Rehabilitation Centre.

This centre is located within the premises of Kenyatta National Hospital and was initiated in 1970, with a view to providing both physiotherapy and vocational training to physically disabled persons. One area of vocational training provided here involves production of Jewellery.

3. Bombolulu.

The need for this workshop was first conceived in 1968

when a British volunteer and physiotherapist, was shocked to see one of her capable patients begging in the streets of Mombasa. Through her persistent efforts and those of other individuals, Bombolulu began production in 1971. The initial aim of this centre, therefore, was to enable needy physically disabled persons to become self-reliant through mainly production of Jewellery.

4. The African Heritage.

This workshop was established in 1973, and reasons for its establishment were given as: A realization of a need to produce African inspired designs of Jewellery.

(c) Artforms.

Approximation as to when Artforms were first made for sale to foreigners. Most knowledgeable interviewees affirmed that the date of presentation of the forms to foreigners should be around early 1970's.

Consumption of Artforms by local people. Rating as to how much they consume. And the difference, if any, in those items consumed by local people and those by foreigners. Of the 15 interviewees, thirteen were of the contention that their products were being consumed

by local people even though the quantity was relatively small. On the differences in what was usually consumed by local people and those by foreigners; only one of the thirteen interviewees reported a difference. According to this lone interviewee, local people consumed their less-expensive items.

Similarities between the works and Traditional Kenyan art-makings, and whether or not there are any specific traditional forms relating to the modern works. All 15 respondents reported some evident link between their works and the Kenyan art-tradition of body ornaments. This connection was seen to be in the areas of design, method of production and materials. Of the 15 respondents, eight were able to identify certain specific traditional ornaments that bore strong resemblance to some of their works.

Changes in development of modern forms. Twelve out of the 15 respondents confirmed change in the development of their works while the others were not sure. Change was generally reported to be increased number and variety of items.

Sources of materials. Thirteen of the 15 interviewees reported that most of their materials were derived

TABLE 9 -

Responses of Each of the 15 interviewees.
for Jewellery, Translated into
The Scheme in aid of Analysis

Question Items as in The Scheme in Aid of Analysis	Interviewees														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	a	a	a	b	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	b	a	a	a
2	c	c	c	e	e	b	c	b	c	d	c	c	c	b	c
3	c	a	b	a	a	b	b	b	b	a	a	a	b	b	b
4	b	a	a	a	b	a	a	a	b	b	b	b	b	a	a
5	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	c	a	a	a	a	a	a
6	d	d	c	d	d	a	a	a	b	c	a	b	e	c	d
7	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
8	c	a	c	a	a	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	a	c
9	a	a	a	b	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
10	a	■	■	b	b	a	a	a	b	a	d	c	c	b	b
11	b	b	b	a	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	a	b	b	b
12	b	b	b	b	b	a	b	b	b	b	a	a	b	b	b
13	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	c	c	c	b	b	b
14	a	a	a	a	a	b	b	b	b	a	a	a	d	d	d
15	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	c	c	c	b	b	b
16	a	a	a	b	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
17	c	c	c	d	d	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
18	b	b	b	■	■	b	a	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
19	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
20	a	b	b	b	a	a	a	a	a	b	b	a	a	a	b
21	a	■	■	■	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
22	b	b	b	b	b	b	a	b	b	a	b	b	b	b	b
23	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	a	c	c	c	c
24	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	■	a	a	a	a	a	a
25	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	■	a	a	a	a	a	a
26															

KEY



Denotes NO-RESPONSE.

locally. Thus, apart from materials such as; copper, silver and brass the rest were said to be available locally.

Usages of finished products. Whether productions have any traditional uses; And if not, could they function within a traditional set-up? Fourteen of the 15 interviewees, enlightened the researcher that their works were being put to both practical and decorative uses and the other one interviewee reported use to be solely practical. Responding to whether or not their products had any traditional functions, 14 interviewees said yes and one said no. When pressed further to consider the possibility of their works functioning within a traditional sector, the lone interviewee only expressed reservations.

COLLECTIVE EXAMINATION OF INTERVIEW RESPONSES FROM ALL AREAS OF PRODUCTIONS.

What follows is a collective examination of information secured from all those pre-examined FIVE areas of production. This is an attempt to reach a higher level of generalization in those earlier presented details. It is hoped that this undertaking will provide a general picture of the setting in which major commercial arts and crafts exist in Kenya.

The format of presentation here, follows in line with that of the preceding examination of individual areas of production. It is based on three topical guidelines of: the Artists and craftsmen, their centres of production and their productions.

(a) Artists and Craftsmen.

Given below is a report on the backgrounds, attitudes and viewpoints of some 75 artists and craftsmen currently involved in production of major commercial arts and crafts in Kenya.

Sex and Age. Amongst these 75 artists and craftsmen there was an almost equitable number of males and females with 57 percent being men and 43 percent consisting of women.

A majority 40 percent of these artists and craftsmen were aged within the age bracket of 26-30 years. The average age was found to be about 32 years.

Computation and ranking of individual groups of producers, from the youngest to the oldest collective

ages of group members, was as follows:- Designers, Jewell-makers, Carvers, Weavers and Potters. Hence, from this undertaking its clear that those involved in production of handprinted fabrics constituted the youngest population and those involved in Pottery constituted the oldest population.

Level of Education and Experience (Years) in Production.

Of the artists and craftsmen, a majority of 68 percent comprised of persons who had received no more than primary school education.

The computation and ranking of individual groups of producers, from the lowest to the highest collective level of attainment in education of group members, revealed as follows:- Potters, Jewell-makers, carvers, Weavers and Designers. Thus, from this exercise its clear that potters comprised the group with the lowest attainment level of education, while designers constituted the group with the highest level of attainment in education.

Regarding the number of years of experience in the various productions; no interviewee reported more than 15 years. And a majority 39 percent of interviewees had only worked for no more than 5 years.

Computation and ranking of individual groups of producers, from the least to the most collective number of years of experience in production of group members, revealed the following:- jewell-makers, designers, potters, weavers and carvers. Thus, from this exercise it is clear that jewell-makers had the least experience in their production, while carvers were the most experienced.

Method of Training and Reasons for Choosing to become Artists. Out of the 75 artists and craftsmen, a minority 17 percent had undergone formal training in art and design, while the remaining 83 percent had either trained on-the-job or were self-taught. Most interviewees had trained on-the-job.

On their reasons for choosing to become artists and craftsmen; a total of 34 percent gave either talent or interest as their motivating factors and for the other 66 percent it was expected rewards, chance and other reasons.

Manner of Involvement in Occupation and Attitudes towards Occupation. A majority 63 percent of the artists and craftsmen worked full-time and the other 37 percent work part-time. Of these 75 respondents: 31 percent considered their occupation to be just a

job and nothing more; 19 percent felt that it was something they enjoyed and; 51 percent considered it to be a job from which they derived satisfaction.

Attitudes towards Need for Innovations. And Factors dictating conformity. An overwhelming 95 percent of the 75 interviewees considered inventiveness to be a virtue. And on factors dictating conformity, again a majority 79 percent reported either consumers tastes and demands or their various workshops to be limiting factors.

Prior engagement in the Making of Traditional Kenyan Arts and, whether or not such an undertaking had left Marks on the works of Artists and Craftsmen.

60 percent of the 75 respondents reported having had previous experience in making of traditional works. And of the 75 respondents 44 percent felt that their engagement in traditions had registered an influence on them.

(b) Centres of Production.

Dates of Initiation and Circumstances Leading to their initiation. Apart from those centres producing carvings almost all others were found to have been in existence for no more than 15 years.

From response received, it was clear that two main reasons had often prevailed in decisions to initiate the various centres of production. These motivating factors were of the nature of either; a realization of an economic opportunity or, a need to provide employment to unemployed members of the society.

(c) Productions.

Approximation as to when artforms were first made for sale to foreigners. Except for the production of carvings, responses revealed that all other productions were first presented for foreign consumption no more than 15 years ago.

Consumption of Productions by local people. Rating as to how much they consume. And the difference, if any, in those items consumed by local people and those by foreigners. According to 73 percent of respondents, local people were infact consuming their products even though consumption was still relatively small. On reports on whether or not there were any notable differences between what was commonly consumed by local people and those by foreigners: 56 percent of respondents said yes; 40 percent said no and the remaining 4 percent were non-committal. The main differences were reported to be in the areas of cost and function. Local people tended to consume small

and less-expensive pieces, most of which were often functional in their view points.

Similarities between Products and Traditional Kenyan Arts, and whether or not there are any Specific traditional forms relating to the Modern Productions.

A considerable majority of 92 percent of interviewees saw similarities between some of their products and traditions. Of the interviewees, 72 percent were able to identify particular traditional forms that they believed to be related to their productions. Linkages with traditions were seen as:-

1. Continued production of wholly traditional forms as in the case of Basketwork and few carvings.

2. Assimilation of traditional elements of materials, designs and techniques in production of modern items as in the case of Jewellery and Pottery.

3. Reproduction of traditional designs and production of designs with traditional flavours as in the case of Handprinted fabrics.

All in all, then, save for the area of textile weaving where little or no relationships with traditions were reported; all other productions reflected some traditional basis.

Changes in development of modern forms. Virtually all interviewees who had been involved in the various productions over a reasonable span of time and those who were knowledgeable on the backgrounds of their respective productions acknowledged change to have infact taken place in the development of their works over the past years.

Changes were generally reported as:-

1. Increase in number and variety of items.
2. A decisive tendency for reduction in size of items.
3. A tendency for more emphasis to be placed on the aesthetic as opposed to the practical, and
4. Increased simplicity and uniformity in individual kinds of items, attributed by most respondents to be a consequence of increased expertize and confidence over the years.

Sources of materials. Almost all interviewees reported that, for the most part, all materials used in the productions were obtained locally.

Usages of finished products. Whether productions have any traditional uses; And if not, could they function within a traditional set-up? Almost all interviewees mentioned that their products were being put to some

PART TWO

OBSERVATIONS

In this second part of chapter four, information obtained from the comparative analysis of sampled modern and traditional works is presented. Presented first is the researcher's own observations, followed by those of other observers, and finally these two groups of observations are compared for purposes of verifying information.

Within the first two mentioned sections, information is given under headings of the FIVE productions. For each production, pre-examined qualities of: form, space, line, colour, texture, size and function of products, subject matter and materials and techniques used - are those reported for various series of observations.

THE RESEARCHER'S OBSERVATIONS.

The method of conducting observations, adopted by the researcher, was that of simply describing and then comparing perceptible features of various works. For examination, a collection of ten modern and five traditional pieces were availed. From this collection, particular pieces comprising of two modern and one traditional works were marked and examined for each

production. Also examined for each production were its two modern pieces against all other traditional pieces. These examinations are systematically presented herein, for each production, as outlined below.

1. Established characteristics of each of the three works (of two modern and one traditional pieces) belonging to particular areas of productions.
2. Resolved relationships between the two modern works and their traditional counterpart.
3. Determined relationships between the two modern works and other traditional works.

HANDPRINTED FABRICS.

The first modern piece (Photo.1), is considered amongst works produced by "Maridadi fabrics" to be in the category of geometric designs. Its observable characteristics were found to be as follows.

- (a) Shapes of motifs are basically rectangular. Within these motifs are other geometric shapes of either smaller rectangles, triangles or some few semicircles. Much of these shapes are linear in presentation.

- (b) Space within and in between motifs comprise of bold lines reflecting contours of positive geometric shapes.
- (c) Line in both negative and positive shapes is bold straight, angular or at times curved.
- (d) Colour consists of black shapes on a white background.
- (e) Texture as displayed visually, by bold geometric lines, is hard but not rough.
- (f) Size of each motif is about 11 by 5 cm.
- (g) Function of textile involves making of garments table clothes, cushion covers, etc.
- (h) Materials used consists of cotton cloth and chemical dye.
- (i) Technique used is that of silk screen printing.

The Second Modern Piece (Photo. 2) is considered amongst works produced by "Maridadi fabrics" to be in the category of representational or figurative design. Its characteristics were observed as follows:

- (a) Shapes in the motif are biomorphic. They involve stylized representations of a human being, gourds, and flowery plants.
- (b) Space appears as organic shapes.
- (c) Line is for the most part bold and relatively free flowing.
- (d) Colour consists of black shapes on a white background.
- (e) Texture as displayed by flat organic areas of shape and space appears as intercurrence of smooth and rough textures.
- (f) Size of motif is approximately 12 by 12 cm.
- (g) Function of textile is that of making of garments, covers, etc.
- (h) Subject matter involves a woman in a traditional outfit, drawing water from a pool surrounded by lush and flowery vegetation.
- (i) Materials used consist of cotton cloth and chemical dye.
- (j) Technique used is that of silk screen printing.

The Traditional items (Photo. 11) presented for comparison with the two modern designs were Boni combs. They were collected in 1969 in Pate-Lamu Islands for the Nairobi Museum. Below are observed characteristics of these combs.

(a) Form of structures are almost geometric. Also geometric, are decorations on the structures. Decorations are of mainly rectangular motifs within which there are other smaller rectangles progressively presented in a gradiating order. These are, of course, linear in presentation.

(b) Space within each motif is made up of relatively thin lines. An optical illusion of depth is created by presentation of a gradation of increasingly smaller rectangles.

(c) Line as in both negative and positive areas of each motif are respectively thin and bold relatively free-flowing straight lines.

(d) Texture displayed owing to presentation of relatively regular geometric patterns, is visually hard. And owing to material used and its subsequent treatment, physically, a rough texture is presented.

(e) Size of each pattern is averaged to be about 7 by 5 cm.

(f) Function of items: combs.

(g) Technique used is something between engraving and curving on a flat wood surface.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two modern designs and the combs. Greatest similarity with the traditional was seen in the first rather than the second modern design. In the first piece strong connections were conclusively observed in qualities of decorative form, use of space within motifs and visual texture imparted. Also, some connections were seen in the quality of line and technique used. In the second modern piece, vitually no significant relationship was recorded between it and the combs.

Relationship deduced from comparison of the two modern designs and other traditional items.

This final examination, yet again revealed the first modern design as bearing strongest resemblance to other four traditional items. Resemblances were noted in ornamentation on traditional items of namely; the gourd, the mat and, the pot. Thus, save for the necklet, all other traditional items were found relate significantly to the first design.

The second modern design displayed very little if any connections with other traditional items. And of traditional items, the gourd offered greatest

relationship. For one thing, gourds were depicted in this modern design. For another, both works displayed stylized representations; even though those in the modern tended more towards naturalism while those in the traditional were more towards abstraction.

CARVINGS

The first modern piece (Photo. 3) was sampled from Kisii carvings. Its characteristics were given as follows:

(a) Structural form is symmetrical with a generally rounded configuration. Decorative form, on the other hand, comprises of geometric shapes and stylized representations of fish and floral patterns.

(b) Space around the structure is ordered and smoothly curved. And in decoration, space reflects geometric and biomorphic shapes.

(c) Line around the structure is smoothly curved; While line in decoration are thin relatively free-flowing straight, angular and curved lines.

(d) Colour is that of a black form with scratched out white areas of decoration.

(e) Texture of the structure is smooth and highly polished with rough scratched out areas of decoration.

- (f) Size of structure is approximately 13 by 13 by 16 cm.
- (g) Function of item is that of a container or simply that of decoration of interiors.
- (h) Subject matter depicted on the structure consist of fish and floral patterns.
- (i) Materials used are soapstone and black wax polish.
- (j) Technique used involves substructive carving off a block of stone and smoothening and polishing of the surface of resultant product. On this surface, preconcieved decorations are scratched out.

The second modern piece (Photo. 4) was sampled from Akamba wood carvings. Its characteristics were given as follows below.

- (a) Form of structure is biomorphic; a naturalistic representation of a rhinoceros.
- (b) Space around the structure is irregular.
- (c) Line in contour of the strucutre consists of a miscellany of straight, curved and angular lines.
- (d) Colour is that of a dark shade of brown.

(e) Texture is smooth and highly polished.

(f) Size of form is approximately 17 by 20 cm.

(g) Function of item is singly that of adorning interiors.

(h) Subject matter depicted - a rhinoceros.

(i) Materials used are those of a hard wood of ebony variety and wax polish.

(j) Technique used is that of carving from a block of wood, the final product is smoothed and polished.

The traditional item (Photo 12) availed for comparison with the two pieces of carvings is an Akamba gourd. It was collected in 1972 at Ngomeni, North Kitui, for the Nairobi Museum. The top half of this gourd is adorned with a beaded cover, while the bottom half has been engraved with geometric designs on one side and figurative designs on the other. Of the two kinds of ornamentations, those of engravings were considered in this study. And of the two engraved sides of the gourd, the geometric patterned side was presented for examination of the Kisii carving and the other figurative patterned side was presented for examination of the Akamba carving. Below are observed characteristics of this traditional item.

- (a) Shape of patterns: on one side are geometric patterns involving triangular shapes presented within broad parallel bands. And on the other, are highly stylized figurative patterns of natural objects.
- (b) Space around decorations is more regular for geometric presentations and most irregular for figurative presentations.
- (c) Line in decorations are thin relatively free-flowing straight and angular lines.
- (d) Colour is that of black patterns on the brown natural colour of dried gourd.
- (e) Textures presented are of two kinds - smooth and rough. The surface of the item is smooth and decorations are rough.
- (f) Size of item is approximately 13 by 13 by 20 cm.
- (g) Function of item is that of a container and perhaps also a media for carrying certain information
- (h) Subject matter depicted include representations of a human being, animals and mountains.

(i) Materials used consist of a prepared gourd and a mixture of soot and fat for use in highlighting ornamentations.

(j) Techniques used in regard to decorations are of two kinds 1. Drapping with a beaded cover and 2. Engraving on the surface. The latter was considered. It involves scratching the surface of a dried gourd with a sharp implement, to induce preconceived patterns. Thereafter, a mixture of soot and fat is smeared liberally on the scratched surface. Subsequent wiping off of smear, removes excess smear and at the same time enables some to penetrate into scratched areas - revealing decorations as black areas.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two modern carvings with the traditional gourd. Of the two carvings, the Kisii carving was seen as relating most to the traditional item. Similarities were evident in virtually all qualities examined. While in the case of the Akamba carving, some similarities were noted only in qualities of form and subject matter.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two carvings and other traditional items, again showed the Kisii carving to relate most to traditions. And of traditional items, the one relating most to this modern carving was the pot. Here similarities were evident

in qualities of form, space, line, texture, colour, function and technique in ornamentation. Next strongest relationships were seen in the combs, with similarities evident in qualities of decorative form, space and colour. While for the other two remaining traditional items of namely the necklet and the mat, the only notable similarity was in presentation of geometric shapes.

As regards the Akamba carving, little if any connections were observed. And the traditional item found to relate close to this piece was undoubtedly the combs, where some similarities were seen in qualities of materials and techniques used.

POTTERY.

The first modern piece (Photo. 5) was sampled from contemporary Luo pots. Below are its observed characteristics.

(a) Structural form is that of a sphere resting on an added flat base and topped with a large mouth. On its shoulders are four other small projecting mouths. Decoration is singly that of rouletting.

(b) Space irregular, with parts of the form projecting into space.

- (c) Line in contour of vessel consists, generally of curved and straight lines.
- (d) Colour is that of a dark brown shade, darkened with sporadic black colouration.
- (e) Textures presented are of two kinds - Rough and smooth. Much of the surface is covered by rough texture, induced by roulette decoration.
- (f) Size of vessel is approximately 20 by 15 by 12 cm.
- (g) Function of the pot is that of a flower vase and decoration of interiors.
- (i) Technique used involves building by the coiling method and decorating by rouletting.

The second modern piece (Photo. 6) was sampled from contemporary Luhya pottery. Its characteristics were given as follows:

- (a) Structural form is essentially elipsoidal with a thick scalloped band fused around its shoulders. Decorative form involves stamped geometric shapes, scratched wavy lines and rouletted areas.
- (b) Space around the form is for the most part smoothly curved, broken only by the band running

around its shoulders. Also regular, is space in-between and within decorations on the surface of the vessel.

(c) Line in contour of the vessel is smoothly curved and interrupted only by that band running around its shoulders. And on decorations, except for the scratched thin lines those of other decorations are comparatively bold and angular.

(d) Colour of the vessel is black.

(e) Textures on the surface of the vessel are of two kinds - smooth and rough. Smooth textures appear on the neck, mouth and inside of the pot, while the remaining parts are covered by rough textures. Rough texture is made up of those induced by scratching, rouletting and imprinting.

(f) Function of the vessel is that of a container and decoration of interiors.

(g) Materials used consist of locally found clay; and for colouration, a particular bark infusion.

(h) Technique used involves building using the coiling method. And in decoration techniques involve scratching, imprinting and rouletting.

The traditional item (Photo. 13) presented for comparison with the two modern pots was a Lunyore water pot. It was collected for the Nairobi Museum in 1971 at Musoli. Its characteristics were observed by the Researcher to be as follows:

- (a) Form of the vessel is spherical, and decorative form is largely geometric.
- (b) Space around the structure is regular; whereas, space in decorations is largely irregular.
- (c) Line in contour of the vessel is smoothly curved, while line in decorations are irregular angular lines running around the vessel.
- (d) Colour of vessel is that of a dark shade of brown with sparse areas of black.
- (e) Textures are of two kinds - Rough and smooth. Areas of rough texture are those covered by rouletted patterns.
- (f) Size of vessel is approximately is by 15 by 15 cm.
- (g) Function of vessel is that of a water pot.
- (h) Materials used are locally found clay and bark infusion.

(i) Techniques used:- In building the vessel is that of the coiling method; And in decorating the vessel - those of rouletting, scratching and smoothening of parts.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two modern pieces of pottery and the traditional pot, revealed very strong connections between these two groups of forms. Connections were prevalent in all examined qualities. For this reason, then, it has been appropriate to highlight on deviations rather than connections.

Apart from differences in sizes and functions; in both modern pieces, a notable difference with the traditional was observed in their structures. The first displayed four other necks besides the main one and possessed a flat raised base. And the second, not only differed in its general shape with the traditional; but also displayed and added band around its shoulders. These variations in structure of the two modern pieces and the traditional, further contributed to some variations in qualities of mainly space and line.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the pieces of pottery and other traditional items. Some relationships were observed with all four traditional items. Of similar qualities, most outstanding were those of

shapes in decorations and colour. Black colouration or that of a dark shade of brown, characterizing modern pots, was evident in all traditional items except for the necklet. And geometric shapes of mainly triangles were common to both modern pieces of pottery and all traditional items.

WEAVING.

The first modern piece (Photo. 7) is a basket (kiondo). And its evident characteristics were given as follows:

- (a) Structural form is essentially conical. While decorative form is linear, consisting of three broad and dark bands each of which are bisected by a thin strip of background colour.
- (b) Space around the structural and decorative form is regular.
- (c) Line in contour of the structural and decorative forms are essentially straight.
- (d) Colour consist of a dark shade of brown and the white natural colour of sisal fibres.
- (e) Texture as presented physically is rough, owing to use of thick sisal strings in weave. While texture

as presented, visually is hard, owing to display of high, ordered linear patterns.

- (f) Size of basket is approximately 38 by 60 by 30 cm.
- (g) Function of the basket is that of a container.
- (h) Materials used consist of thickly span sisal strings and chemical dyestuff.
- (i) Technique used involves simple weaving via alternating manipulation of weft and warp strings. To shape out required structure, warp strings (appearing as coiled strings in finished baskets) are manipulated by varying the size of a coil relative to one preceding it. These warp strings are also manipulated when introducing decorations, by attaching coloured strings.

The second modern piece (Photo.8) is a woven piece of textile. Its apparent characteristics were recorded as given below.

- (a) Areas of shape are made up of broad and thin parallel bands.
- (b) Areas of space are thin parallel bands.
- (c) Line consists of thin and broad parallel bands.

(d) Colour is that of a light and dark shade of white and brown.

(e) Texture as presented physically is soft. While visual texture appears hard owing to presentation of straight, ordered and parallel lines.

(f) No measurements for size of the textile is given, because size of cloth will vary depending on a customers requirements.

(g) Material used involves differentl, coloured cotton threads.

(h) Technique used is that of weaving using a hand-loom.

The traditional item (Photo. 14): Aailed for comparison with the two woven products, is a sleeping mat belong to the Malakote (Upper Pokomo). It was collected in 1969 for the Nairobi Museum. Its characteristics were observed as given below.

(a) Patterns consist of broad parallel bands, each of the same size and equidistant to the other. Each band contains two concurrent rows of small dark and light shaded triangles all of which are enclosed within two thin parallel lines.

(b) Space in decorations is organized in a regular manner, with those in between bands of decorated areas being broad equal sized bands.

(c) Line in decorations are those of straight and other zigzag lines.

(d) Colours are those of a dark brown shade and the natural colour of dried palm fronds.

(e) Texture displayed is hard both physically and visually.

(f) Size of mat is approximately 2½ by 1½ metres.

(g) Function item: sleeping mat.

(h) Material used consists of palm fronds of two kinds. One kind is dried and the other is dried and dyed using some natural dyestuffs.

(i) Technique used involves plaiting of prepared strips of palm fronds.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two woven pieces and the traditional item. Similarities with the traditional item were recorded in each of the two modern pieces. These were evident in qualities of decorative form, space, line, colour, texture, materials and

techniques. Attention was, however, drawn to the probability of some of these similarities arising largely from universalities in the technique of weaving.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two modern forms and other traditional items. Little if any connections were recorded in the two groups of works. And of qualities, only that of colour was noteworthy.

JEWELLERY.

The first modern piece (Photo. 9). Its visible characteristics were given as follows:

- (a) The structure consists mainly of circular shapes, and is symmetrical in composition.
- (b) Space is utilized in a highly ordered manner.
- (c) Line is essentially circular and sharply defined.
- (d) Colour is that of polished brass.
- (e) Texture is smooth and highly polished.
- (f) Size of item is approximately 30 by 15 cm.

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- (e) Texture is smooth and highly polished.
- (f) Size of item is approximately 30 by 15 cm.

(g) Function; The item is used as a body ornament and perhaps also as a decoration for interiors (i.e. wall-hanging).

(h) Material used is Brass wire.

(i) Technique used involves; coiling, beating and assembling of prepared pieces of wire.

The second modern piece (Photo.10). Its characteristics were observed as follows:-

(a) The structure is largely linear in presentation and is symmetrical in composition.

(b) Space is utilized in a highly ordered manner.

(c) Line is essentially straight and parallel.

(d) Colours are those of different shades of brown, characterizing different materials used.

(e) Texture is generally smooth. Never the less, this smooth texture varies slightly depending upon particular materials used.

(f) Size of item is approximately 32 by 10 cm.

(g) Function; The item is used as a body ornament and perhaps also used in decoration of interiors (i.e., wall hanging).

(h) Materials used comprise of: banana fibre string; copper coins, beads and wire; and small cylindrical and spherical wood beads.

(i) Technique used involves assembly of various prepared materials.

The traditional item (Photo. 15):Used in comparing the two modern pieces of jewellery, is an Akamba necklet. It was collected in 1888 and is currently in the Nairobi Museum collection. Its observable characteristics were recorded as follows:

(a) Shape of structure is conical, with some irregularly shaped disc's attached onto a part of its outer border. As regards the nature of composition, this is considered - with reservations - to be assymmetrical. It is likely that this item may have initially been symmetrical in composition and that some of the discs accounting for this balance may have been detached from the main form; hence its present assymmetrical composition.

- (b) Space around the form (as in its present state) is utilized in an irregular manner.
- (c) Line is irregularly curved.
- (d) Colour is that of brass.
- (e) Texture displayed is for the most part smooth.
- (f) Size of item is approximately 17 by 15 cm. .
- (g) Function of item is that of a body ornament.
- (h) Materials used comprise of brass foil and beads and, leather strings.
- (i) Technique used involves assembling of prepared materials.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two modern pieces of Jewellery and the traditional item.

Out of qualities reviewed; notable similarities were recorded in structural form, materials and techniques used.

Relationships deduced from comparison of the two modern pieces with other traditional items. Here, the only similarity of significance was noted in the area of form, where presentation of geometric shapes were almost universal for both groups of works

OBSERVATIONS OF OTHER OBSERVERS.

In this section, are reports of eighteen artists and designers who were called upon to verify observations of the Researcher. Although these observers were provided with exactly the same items as earlier examined by the Researcher; their examinations were less detailed, focusing on only what was considered critical. They only examined each of the FIVE pairs of modern works against assigned traditional counterparts, and did not proceed to examining each modern work against all other traditional items. Also eliminated from their observations was the task of examining qualities of function and size of products and, materials and techniques used.

To analyse observations of these verifiers; Totals of numbers of observers answering same to the following two central issues were worked out.

1. Whether or not there were similarities in qualities of each modern work and its traditional counterpart and
2. Ratings as to how much relationships were evident

Resultant figures, representing opinions of observers have been computed into percentages and presented on Tables 12 and 13. Table 12, shows percentages of responses to whether or not there were similarities in qualities of each modern work and its traditional counterpart. And Table 13, shows percentages of

responses (of those who saw a relationship) rating how much relationships were evident in qualities in each examination.

Information contained in these two tables are discussed below under each of the FIVE areas of production.

HAND PRINTED FABRICS.

Of the two modern designs, the first was given as relating most to the traditional item. This is illustrated by percentages of responses affirming relationships for each of the two designs. For the first, a considerable 77 percent responses acknowledged relationships as compared to 30 percent for the second.

Still proving the first design as relating most to the traditional item were - ratings of relationships. For the first, a majority 75 percent responses rated relationships to be either very much or much. And for the second, 10 percent of responses were for much relationships while the remaining 90 percent were either little or very little. These ratings accentuate the fact that, even in cases where a relationship was evident in the second design, it was usually just slight; unlike, in the first design where it was strong.

CARVINGS.

Responses showed the Kisii carving as relating most

to the assigned traditional item. In this piece, 85 percent of responses affirmed relationships as compared with 48 percent for the Akamba carving. And in rating of relationships, 52 percent of responses rated similarities as either very much or much for the Kisii carving and 13 percent for the Akamba carving. On the balance, then, the Kisii carving was seen to be relating more to the traditional item than the Akamba carving in terms of quantity and quality.

POTTERY.

Despite responses showing both modern pieces of pottery as relating almost equally to the assigned traditional item, the second piece was given as relating slightly more than the first. In the second piece, 76 percent of responses confirmed relationships while in the first it was 65 percent. Responses rating relationships as either very much or much, was slightly more for the first piece than the second. It was 59 percent for the first piece and 50 percent for the second.

WEAVING.

Responses showed both weaving to relate almost equally to the traditional item, with the textile relating slightly more than the basket. 77 percent of responses affirmed relationships for the textile and 67 percent for the basket. As for responses rating relationships as either very much or much,

for the textile it was 53 percent and 60 percent for the basket.

JEWELLERY.

Like in productions of pottery and weaving; in jewellery, responses showed both modern pieces as relating almost equally to the assigned traditional item. Responses to the first piece indicated a 73 percent relationship, and to the second piece a 69 percent relationship. Responses rating relationships as either very much or much were: 58 percent for the first and 57 percent for the second. It is clear therefore that the first piece related slightly more to the traditional item than the second.

TABLE 12

NUMBERS OF RESPONSES TO WHETHER OR NOT, RELATIONSHIPS WERE EVIDENT IN QUALITIES OF EACH MODERN WORK AND ITS TRADITIONAL COUNTERPART

(COMPUTED INTO PERCENTAGES)

Production	Relationships		No Responses
	YES	NO	
Hand printed fabrics			
1st Design	77	18	5
2nd Design	30	69	1
Carvings			
Kisii	85	12	3
Akamba	48	42	10
Pottery			
1st Piece	65	26	9
2nd Piece	76	17	7
Weaving			
Basket	67	23	10
Textile	77	11	12
Jewellery			
1st Piece	73	15	12
2nd Piece	69	21	10

TABLE 13

NUMBERS OF RESPONSES: RATINGS, AS TO HOW MUCH RELATIONSHIPS WERE EVIDENT IN QUALITIES OF EACH MODERN WORK AND ITS TRADITIONAL COUNTERPART.

(COMPUTED INTO PERCENTAGES)

Production	Ratings of Relationships			
	VERY MUCH	MUCH	LITTLE	VERY LITTLE
Hand printed fabrics				
1st Design	40	35	18	7
2nd Design	-	9	44	47
Carvings				
Kisii	17	35	40	7
Akamba	2	11	60	27
Pottery				
1st piece	16	34	34	16
2nd Piece	16	43	33	8
Weaving				
Basket	24	36	22	18
Textile	33	20	36	11
Jewellery				
1st Piece	24	34	29	14
2nd Piece	20	37	37	5

CORRELATION OF OBSERVATIONS OF THE RESEARCHER AND
THOSE OF OTHER OBSERVERS.

Although both groups of observations displayed strikingly similar relationships for the various series of examinations, those of other observers displayed slightly more relationships than the researcher's. This variation in views is appreciated. For one thing, observers were accorded with a task of identifying and reporting relationships irrespective of any intervening factor; whereas, the researcher had to pay special attention to relationships in respect to the aim of the study. The researcher was therefore a little more cautious in accepting certain evident relationships. He deliberately overlooked those arising from conditions that were clearly consequences of uses of similar materials and/or techniques. For instance, it would have been erroneous for the researcher to consider those linear and parallel patterns in production of weaving as carry-overs of traditions, because such are purely universalities for this type of production. For another thing, now that observers were introduced to only those examinations considered critical, their findings were bound to reflect greater relationship over that of the researcher.

Fortunately, however, such differences in observations of the researcher and those of other observers were few and did not effect results significantly. Thus,

for all practical purposes, no significant differences were evident in the two groups of observations.

PART THREE

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

In conclusion to this chapter, analyzed information of the interview and observations are compared with a view to verifying and establishing further information. To relate closer to the main objective of this study, attention is drawn specially to information pertaining to the traditional basis of examined productions of commercial arts and crafts.

Both groups of analyzed information explicitly confirmed presence of traditions, though in varying degrees, in the FIVE productions. Information from the interview appeared to depict greater connection than that of observations. This difference is perhaps owed greatly to the fact that view points in the interview were "estimations" of the situation; whereas, those in observations were more concise and objective. We are, certainly, also aware of the factor of over-statement in the case of judgemental and evaluative statements of artists and craftsmen in their bid to emphasize their view points.

Below are points drawn from the interview and observations, reflecting upon presence of traditions in modern works.

The Interview.

1. 44 percent of the interviewees reported their previous engagement in making of traditional items as having influenced their present productions. This not only confirms traditional linkage, but also that artists and craftsmen are an important factor in continuing production of the traditions.

2. About 83 percent of the interviewees confirmed probability of some of their works functioning within a traditional sector. This shows a close relation between the two groups of items and above all, that much of the modern items are rooted in traditions.

3. 92 percent of the interviewees affirmed relationships between their various products and those of the traditions. 72 percent of the interviewees were able to identify specific traditional forms that they believed to relate to their products. Connects were reported to be:-
 - (a) Continued production of traditional artforms and
 - (b) Assimilation of traditional qualities into alien forms of productions. The above evidence, from the interview, shows an almost unanimous agreement amongst Artists and Craftsmen that there is indeed a strong

relationship between the two groups of work. However, this evidence does not furnish us with the degree of relationship. And to establish how much relationship exists in the two groups of works, we rely solely on observational evidence.

Observations.

The Researcher's observations revealed an approximate 50 percent relationship between traditional and modern works. As for observations of other observers, on the other hand, an average 66.6 percent relationship was established from their examinations.

Of these two groups of observations, the 16.6 percent difference was ignored on grounds that it could be meaningfully accounted for. Thus, the degree of relationships between the two groups of works has been taken to be about 50 percent, showing an almost equitable existence of modern and traditional qualities in the modern works.

The two bodies of analysed information of namely the interview and observations, have served in establishing the central aim of this study. This aim has been to establish whether there is a relationship between the two groups of works and most importantly, to provide a measure for this relationship. The first intention

was established by both bodies of evidence, each showing clearly that there is infact. a significant relationship. And the second intention was established through observations, where a 50 percent relationship was found. In keeping with the need to fulfill the central intentions of the study we state that, there was a significant 50 percent relationship in the FIVE areas of productions of commercial arts and crafts in Kenya.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As the final chapter of this study, Chapter Five aims at summarizing the whole study and in conclusion answer research questions and highlight some implications and recommendations as viewed by the researcher.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the presence of traditional elements in the category of contemporary Kenyan art referred to in this study as commercial arts and crafts. To accomplish this, FIVE major productions within the mentioned category of art were marked for examination. These were:- Hand printed fabrics, carvings, pottery, weaving and jewellery.

The first task of the study was to administer an interview to a total of 75 artists and craftsmen, who were involved in the making of artforms in the FIVE selected areas of production. For each production, 15 artists or craftsmen were randomly selected and interviewed individually as they went about their work in various identified workshops. Interviewees were asked questions pertaining to their backgrounds, workshops and productions. And in general, questions

contained in the interview schedule sought to provide insight into the setting in which commercial arts and crafts exist in Kenya. Besides conducting interviews in various workshops, samples of work produced therein were collected for later observation. The observations which comprised the second task of the study were crucial in achieving solutions and part solutions to the study's aims of 1. determining characteristics of (a) Modern and (b) Traditional works and 2. determining interconnections of the two groups of works. This task was conducted on two levels, namely, the researcher's own observations and those of other competent observers.

The Researcher's observations involved comparing of characteristics of each of ten modern works with each of five traditional works (all works were derived by means of stratified random sampling for each of the FIVE areas of productions). This observational session sought to specifically, establish characters of some outlined qualities of modern and traditional works and to establish quality and quantity of connections between the two groups. Observations of other observers, on the other hand, sought to identify and rate relationships in outlined qualities of the two groups of works. Exactly the same works as earlier examined by the researcher were availed for this second observational session. And the only difference was that fewer series

of examinations were carried out here. Examinations involved comparing each of five pairs of modern works with specific items of the five traditional works. Groups of works marked for examination, here, were those considered crucial to each of the FIVE productions. It was necessary to provide these few and focal examinations to observers because their primary role in observations was to provide a check and balance to the researcher's observations.

To arrive at results of the interview and observations, each group of information was analysed separately. In case of the interview: responses of each interviewee was grouped according to his area of production; thereafter, each individual responses were translated into "the scheme in aid of analysis", resulting in a mass of coded responses for each interviewee within the various areas of productions. These coded responses appear in Tables 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9. Of these coded responses, similar responses of the interviewees to various question items were tallied; at first for each production and then for all productions put together. This arithmetical information is presented in Tables 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 11, and is referred to in all discussions pertaining to the interview.

In the case of observations, those of the researcher were reported accordingly from his observational

record sheets. And from opinionnaires, similar observations of other observers on outlined qualities of modern and traditional works were counted and presented in Tables 12 and 13. Reports on the opinions of other observers and a comparison of these opinions with that of the researcher, have made use of the counted numbers.

CONCLUSIONS.

At the inception of this study, the following four questions were suggested as the focal points of the study;

1. What are the unique characteristics of traditional Kenyan art?
2. What are the unique characteristics of modern commercial arts and crafts in Kenya?
3. What evident traditional qualities exist in each of the FIVE types of productions?
4. Are there any similarities in the FIVE productions, in terms of:- (a) Their development and (b) Their connections with the traditions.

In respect to the first question, answers were obtained from observations on the five traditional items presented for examination. But these answers were by no means totally conclusive in the provision of characteristics of traditional Kenyan art. That certainly important aspect of the background in which these arts operate, was beyond capability of this

exercise and as such, could not be provided for. And at any rate, the number of items examined were too few to provide complete and conclusive evidence. However, it should be pointed out here that much of the required information had already been established in the chapter concerning related literature. To correct this imbalance, then, information in related literature pertaining to traditional African art should be consulted.

Adding to information contained in related literature, information acquired from observations on the five traditional items bearing to previously outlined qualities of traditional Kenyan art is given below. Because greatest peculiarity of traditions was evident in decorative rather than structural form, much of characteristics of qualities presented below relate to the former.

1. It was clear from observations that decorations in traditional items comprised of geometric designs that tended towards free form. Much of these geometric designs were triangular in shape and linear in presentation. But not all decorations in this traditional art were found to be geometric. Representational designs, though very few, were also evident. These comprised of stylized representations of mainly natural objects such as animals and mountains etc.

Utilizing evidence secured from analysis of the interview, an attempt is made below to construct unique characteristics of commercial arts and crafts. Evidence has been considered in relation to unique characteristics of traditional African art, as established in Related Literature, by highlighting on the degree of: A. Remnant traditional characteristics and B. Characteristics that appear to reflect "radical" breaks with traditions. It is hoped that this treatment brings about a keener conceptualization of peculiarities of commercial arts and crafts, in terms of; background of artists and craftsmen, their centres of production and their productions.

1. Artists and Craftsmen.

(a) An almost equitable number of males and females were involved in production of the modern arts. We assume this to reflect some similarity with traditions; because in traditions, each of the two sexes were often assigned specific art-makings.

(b) Traditional tendencies to confine specific art-makings to one of the two sexes and, to confine certain art-makings to special social groups such as members of a family or clan; were evident in most traditionally-based productions. Cases of confinements of productions to families and clans are illustrated in productions and of pottery and carving. And of confinement to particular sexes: pottery, carving and basketwork. Although

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evident in traditionally-based productions, demarcation of productions according to sex or inherited social group memberships were absent in almost all newly introduced productions.

(c) Like their traditional counterparts, a majority 47 percent of artists and craftsmen had trained by apprentice method. All others were either self-taught or had undergone formal training in art.

(d) Although 33 percent of contemporary artists and craftsmen had received no school education, individuals appeared to be aware of other styles of presentations apart from their own.

(e) Unlike their traditional counterparts who almost always worked part-time, a majority 63 percent of artists and craftsmen worked full-time. Also art was being produced in advance and rarely on commission.

(f) Despite an overwhelming 95 percent of artists craftsmen being in favour of a need to be inventive, these same individuals were producing work along general lines. They were infact the first to admit the contridiction. Like in the case of their traditional counterparts, certain factors dictated conformity to specific lines of creations. In this case conformity was largely due to consumers requirements and in traditions it was mainly societal forces

(g) 60 percent of artists and craftsmen had had prior experience in making of traditional works for the traditional sector.

2. Centres of Production.

(a) Unlike traditions whereby artists usually worked individually, most contemporary artists and craftsmen work together in groups within a given workshop. This is confirmed by the fact that out of 18 centres of production visited, 16 were workshops within which individuals were working under one roof.

(b) Apart from those centres producing carvings, all others were found to have been in existence for no more than 35 years.

(c) Two main reasons prevailed in decisions to initiate the various centres of production. They were either; the realization of an economic opportunity or, the need to provide employment to unemployed.

3. Productions.

(a) Except for the production of carvings, all others were first presented for foreign consumption no more than 15 years ago.

(b) Similarities were reported between modern productions and traditions. These were said to be:-

(i) continued production of wholly traditional items

as in cases of basketwork and few carvings.

(ii) Assimilation of traditional elements of materials and techniques into production of modern items as in the case of jewellery and pottery.

(iii) Reproduction of traditional designs and production of designs with traditional flavours as in the case of hand printed fabrics.

(c) The general consensus was that local people were infact consuming the products, even though local consumption was still very small. On the difference between products ordinarily consumed by local people and those by foreigners, responses were much more divided. About half of respondants said no and the other half said yes. Differences were seen mainly in areas of cost and function of products.

(d) Changes in development of products over the years were generally reported to be:-

(i) Increased number and variety of items.

(ii) A tendency towards reduction of size of items.

(iii) Increased naturalism in representations as opposed to stylization.

(iv) A tendency to emphasize on the aesthetic rather than the functional aspect of items.

(v) Increased simplicity and uniformity of specific items.

(e) As in traditions, most materials used in various productions were received locally.

(f) Products were being put to practical uses, or involved a combination of practical and decorative uses. The element of practicality is here equated with traditions. Infact a majority of respondents maintained that, some of their products had traditional uses and could even function within a traditional set-up.

In the attempt to give a picture of characteristics of modern commercial arts and crafts in Kenya; the foregoing points were raised from analysed interview-responses, while the following points were received from observations on outlined qualities of ten sampled modern items.

1. Structures and decorations of examined modern items each comprised of either geometric or figurative presentations. Nevertheless, the dominant mode of presentation was clearly geometric. Geometric presentations in decorations of mainly triangular, rectangular and few circular shapes. And geometric presentations in structures were basically spherical or conical forms. Figurative presentations in decorations, on the other hand, comprised of mainly stylized representations of objects of nature such as fish and flowers amongst others. And the only

representational structure was that of a realistically presented rhinoceros. As regards composition of both structural and decorative forms of examined items, all displayed strikingly symmetrical arrangements.

2. Owing to the nature of composition of structures and decorations, areas of space tended to reflect a certain amount of regularity. Regularity of these negative shapes were particularly apparent in geometric decorations; where negative and positive shapes were so alike, to an extent that it was often difficult to tell which was which.

3. Lines in decorative forms were bold and relatively regular. Also regular were lines in structural forms.

4. Colour of items comprised of essentially various shades of brown, white and black.

5. Tactile texture of most items were smooth, and exceptions to this included few rough and soft textures. Visual texture, on the other hand, often appeared as slightly hard; owing to presentations of relatively regular geometric patterns.

6. Sizes of various modern items seemed to suggest that portability of items had been taken into account.

7. Most items appeared to display both practical and decorative uses, with each tending towards one of the two extremes.

8. Subject matter in representations comprised of objects of nature of particularly flora and fauna.

9. Virtually all materials used in production of items appeared to have been derived locally. These included; wood, clay, stone, cotton cloth and sisal and banana strings. And materials used in colouration of items were bark infusions and wax polish. Other materials that were probably received from without included copper, brass and chemical dyes.

10. Techniques used in production of the various modern items included: building of pots through the coiling method; carving of wood and stone; assembly of prepared materials as is the case in jewellery; plaiting as in basketwork; weaving of textiles using the hand loom and; silk screen printing on fabrics.

Following the establishment of characteristics of outlined qualities of traditional and modern works, from observations, we proceed below to answer research question three; which seeks to establish evident traditional qualities in each of the FIVE productions.

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1. Hand printed fabrics.

The two modern designs sampled from this production, provided an opportunity to examine closely traditional-modern linkages in characters of figurative and geometric ornamentations.

(a) Geometric rather than figurative ornamentations, related most to traditions.

(b) Triangular shapes, prominent in ornamentations in traditions, were also exhibited in the one modern geometric design.

(c) Figurative ornamentations of both modern and traditional works displayed distinct stylization of form. Nevertheless, that of the modern design tended more towards naturalism; whereas traditions were more towards abstraction.

(d) Form in ornamentations of modern and traditional designs were both largely linear in presentation.

2. Carvings.

Out of the two sampled modern carvings, the Kisii rather than the Akamba carving related most to traditions. Notable traditional-modern relationships were evident in characters of subject matter, ornamentation and technique of production.

(a) Subject matter represented in both modern and traditional items comprised of flora and fauna.

(b) Ornamentation of the Kisii piece displayed geometric shapes and stylized representations as common in traditions.

(c) The technique used in ornamenting the Kisii piece was similar to that used in ornamenting traditional items of the pot and more so the gourd. This involved scratching of a smooth surface. In the cases of the modern piece and the gourd, contrasts in colour of background and decorations was used in highlighting decorations. However, in the modern piece, the process of introducing colour was in reverse to that of the traditional gourd; with colour being applied before inducing decoration in the case of the former and after decoration in the case of the latter.

3. Pottery.

In the two modern pieces of pottery, linkages with traditions were observed mainly in qualities of decoration, technique of decorating and colour.

(a) Besides decoration by rouletting those induced by scratching of the surface of modern pots were also characteristic of traditional ornamentation. Again, the nature of these scratched decorations were related to traditions in that they were scalloped

lines that tended towards geometric triangular shapes.

(b) Dark colourations of browns and black, prominent in traditions, were also presented in the two modern pots.

4. Weaving.

Of all FIVE areas of productions examined, that of weaving appeared to show least connection with traditions despite one of the two modern items - the basket - being a wholly traditional item. Relationships of significance were observed in qualities of colour and decoration.

(a) Colours of brown, black and white - common in traditions - were presented in the two modern items.

(b) Decorations involving broad parallel bands, evident in decorations in traditional items of the pot, mat and gourds were also presented in the two modern pieces.

(c) As in traditional jewellery, the technique of assembling prepared materials was evident in the two modern pieces.

As the final question of the study, answers to similarities in the FIVE productions in terms of (A) Their development and (B) Their connections with

traditions - were received from the interview and observations respectively.

A. Development.

From evidence received from the interview, it was clear that commercial arts and crafts is a recent artistic development in Kenya. The earliest form of commercial arts and crafts were probably the Akamba wood carvings, first produced just after the second world war. Great expansion of commercial arts and crafts has since taken place, with the majority of productions having been introduced within the last fifteen years or so. Much of this expansion has been a consequence of the spectacular post-war tourist influx into East Africa; and the subsequent realization of a great potentiality inherent in the making of art for tourist consumption.

Commercialization and tourist patronage were found to have been instrumental effecting productions towards the following directions.

1. Emphasis appeared to have been placed on practical items (Practical from the viewpoint of consumers) as opposed to purely decorative items. But even so, on these useful items, there was a tendency to accord more attention to their appearances rather than their practicality. This

shift in emphasis is clearly evident in productions of jewellery, basketwork and pottery.

2. Items have increasingly been standardized, so much so that now one has only to look into a catalogue to order replicas of items contained therein. Standardization of items is certainly a result of simplification of form and decoration, which has increasingly been adopted owing to a need to mass-produce in order to reduce on time and effort taken in making of a single item.

3. Portability of items appeared to have been taken into consideration in production of almost all items. This has given rise to a tendency towards minituration. Production of small items has been promoted further by the fact that they are usually cheap and sell easier.

4. It is clear that traditions have been incorporated into "foreign" or recently introduced productions and that continuation of traditional productions have been encouraged and even revived. In addition to this, encouragement has also been accorded to productions that depict Kenyan peoples, their flora and fauna.

B. Connections with Traditions.

From results of observations; it was clear that

although each modern item related to traditions in its own special way, sometimes more or less than other items, certain universal links with traditions in outlined qualities of most modern items emerged.

1. As in traditions, geometric rather than figurative presentations was dominant in both structural and decorative forms. Geometric decorations, often displayed triangular shapes contained within a broad band around a structure and appearing as zigzag or scalloped lines. In other cases, bands contained no decorations and was distinguished only by its colour which differed from that of the background. In the few figurative decorations presented in traditional and modern forms, all were stylized representations of objects from nature.

2. Traditional colours of black, brown and white were prominent in most modern items.

3. As in traditions, most materials used were obtained locally, many of these materials were same as those used in traditions.

4. All techniques used were traditional except for those used in production of the textile and printing on fabrics.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Results of this study explicitly show substantial traditional qualities in artforms constituting commercial arts and crafts. Also evident is that, continued presentation of traditions in artforms has for the most part been the prerogative of tourists who comprise the bulk of consumers. Tourists appear to demand, simultaneously, works that they understand and those that are sufficiently in line with traditions of their creators. It is this situation of foreign patrons, rather than creators, pre-determining the nature of resultant works that gave occasion to this study.

Most tourists have no real knowledge of the background in which the arts have operated, consequently; much of their pre-conceived ideas, infiltrating into the arts and amplified by the market, are in many instances a direct negation of reality. This situation does not allow for a meaningful upgrowth of the arts; and has harmful instigations for producers and consumers alike. For producer communities, stereotypes when played over a long period of time tend to produce detrimental effects on their self-image - they eventually come to believe what others have wrongly thought of them as being true of themselves. For consumers, on

the other hand, the hands of the clock makes a full circle. They get exactly what they would like to see - This does not augur well with their "emotional" investment.

To improve this situation, emphasis must be laid on the creation of an environment conducive to the development of honest productions. An environment whereby artists and craftsmen come to play an active role in the final production. And above all, production of art which makes sense to the local community.

But such a situation is rather idealistic. Indeed, too much emphasis on meaningful creations could easily result in terminating production of art. We must therefore reconcile two important yet contradictory functions of these arts; namely, their symbolic and their economic significance.

Suggestions furthered by various writers have included: 1. The need to stimulate local people into demanding high quality work, more so; those reflecting their true feelings and thoughts and 2. The need to lay emphasis on and give credit to individualism on the part of enterprising artists and craftsmen. These suggestions, however, are superficial in their understanding of the problem and seem to

diagnose effects rather than the cause.

Perhaps a more sound solution would be, to educate artists and craftsmen and instil in them an awareness to the effect that these arts entail more than just their monetary value. This idea is not new. To this end, reference is made to those seminars at times organized by The Kenya External Trade Authority in conjunction with The Ministry of Culture and Social Services and craftsmen so as to upgrade the quality of their produce and thereby bring about better rewards. At present, such workshops or seminars appear to be the most appropriate points of departure towards improving the on going situation.

This study may find its relevance in providing factual information necessary in developing guidelines for workshops of the kind mentioned above. Needless to say, traditions in commercial arts and crafts is one important factor which makes these arts commercially viable; and one that is regulated in the special relationship between consumers and producers. Thus, this study in its attempts to establish the traditional basis of commercial arts and crafts has given an idea to the existing state of events. This assessment should hopefully prove invaluable in tasks towards making the arts socially and economically productive.

Recommendations for further study.

In view of the fact that this study could not possibly take into consideration all questions related to the traditional basis of commercial arts and crafts in Kenya, the following questions are strongly recommended for further study.

1. What are the relative influences or factors that help retain traditions into the arts, namely; consumers, producers, materials and techniques?
2. Exactly how accomodative to change is the present state of commercial arts and crafts? Is it absolutely restrictive or does it give room for some constructive development of traditions?

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Modern

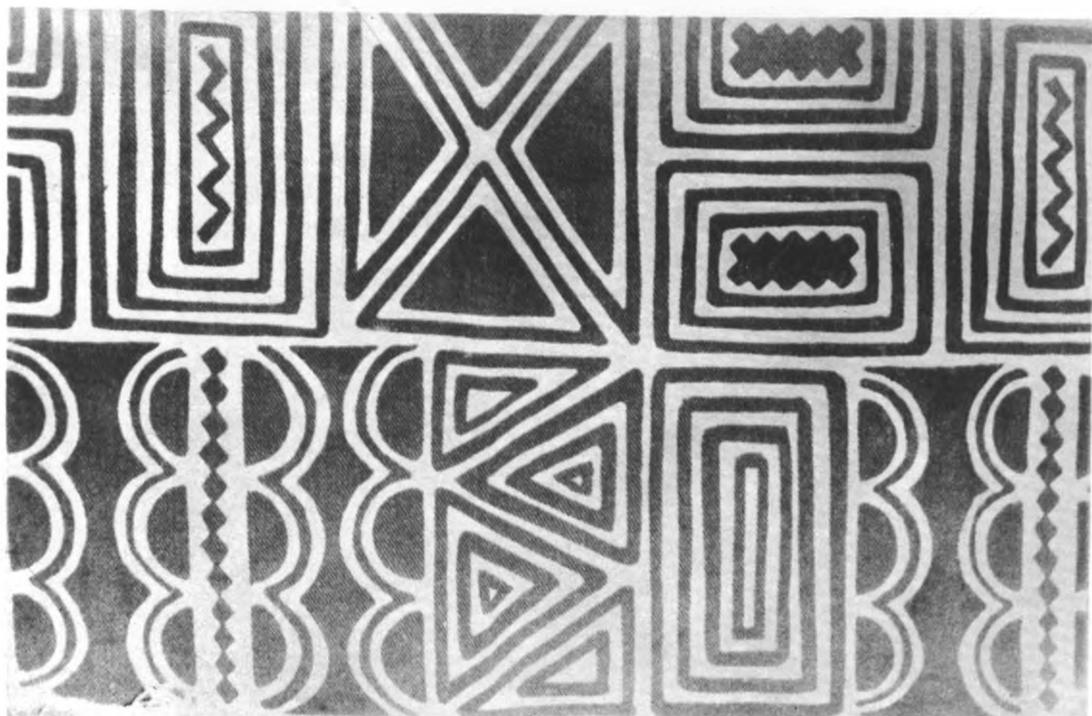


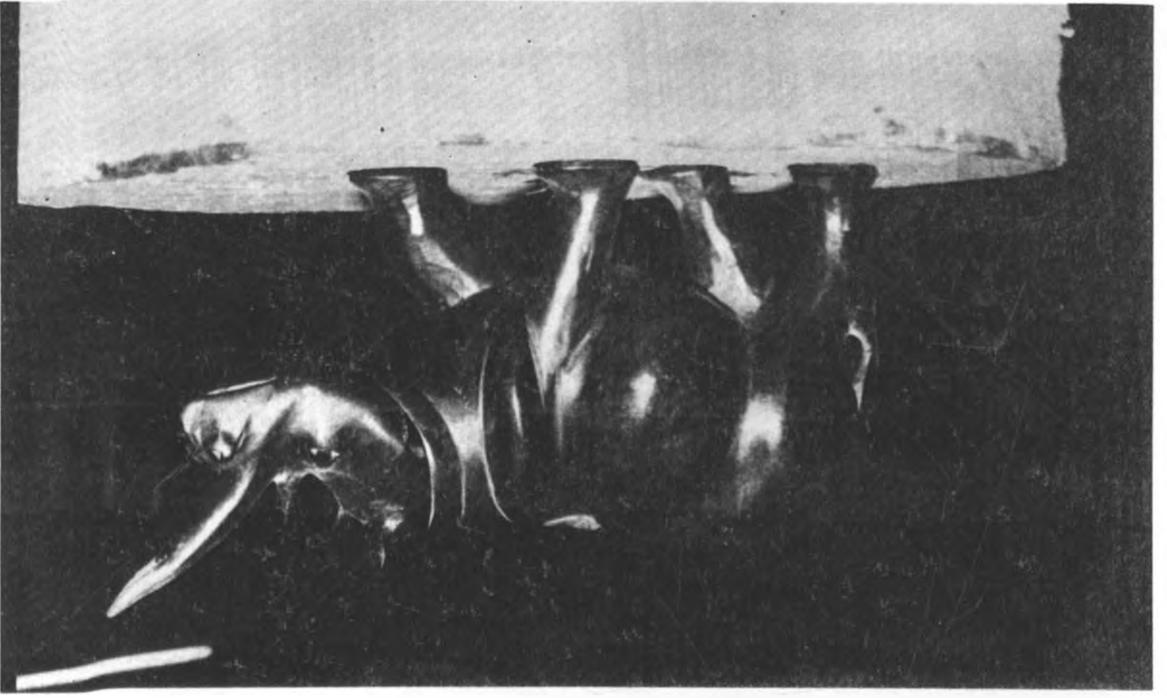
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pp. 205-211.



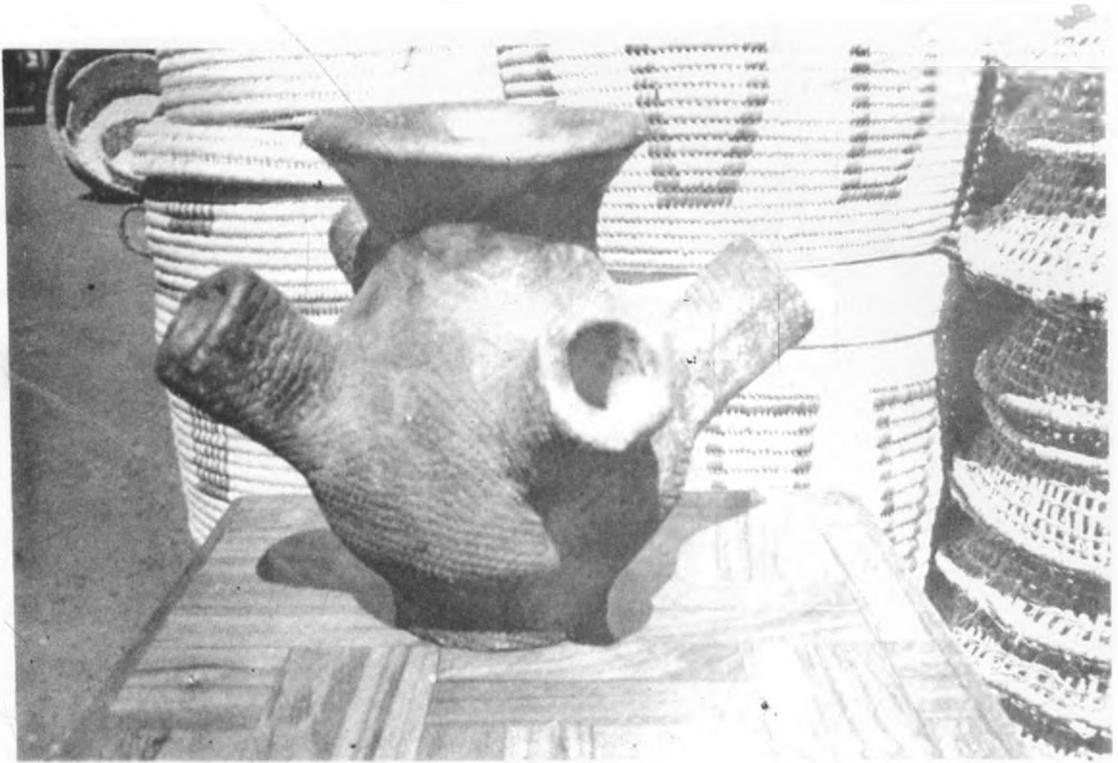
Modern HANDPRINTED FABRICS (Photo.1&2)



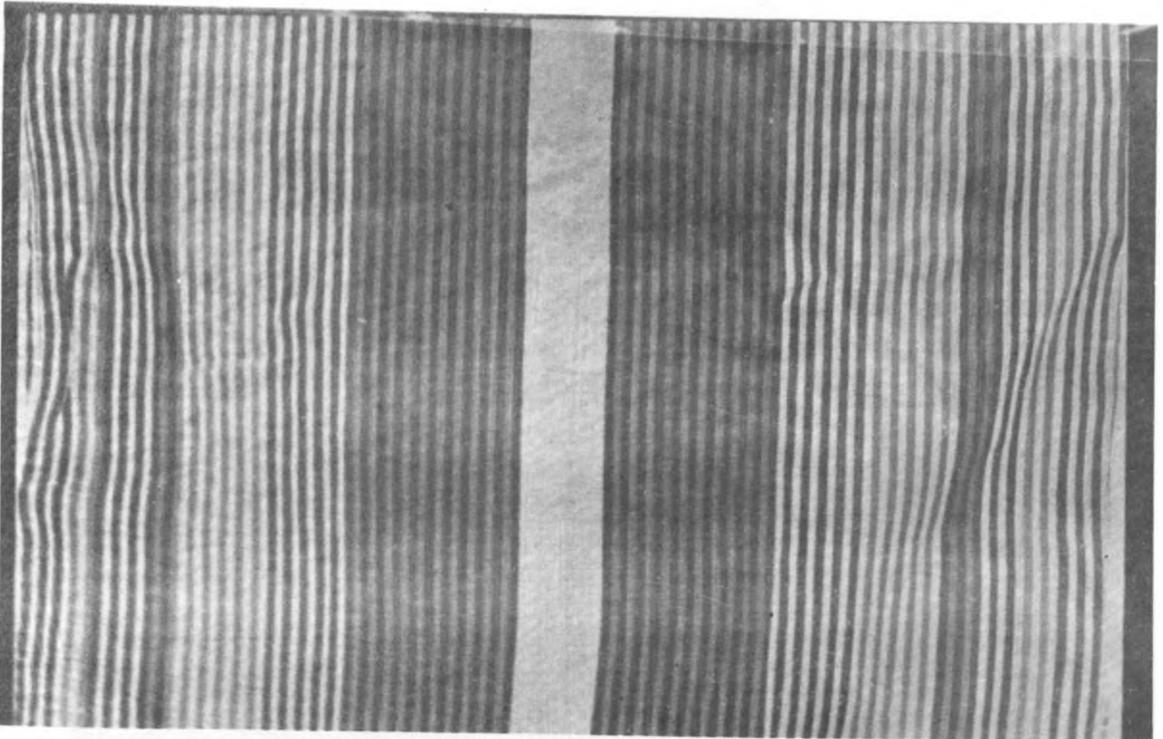
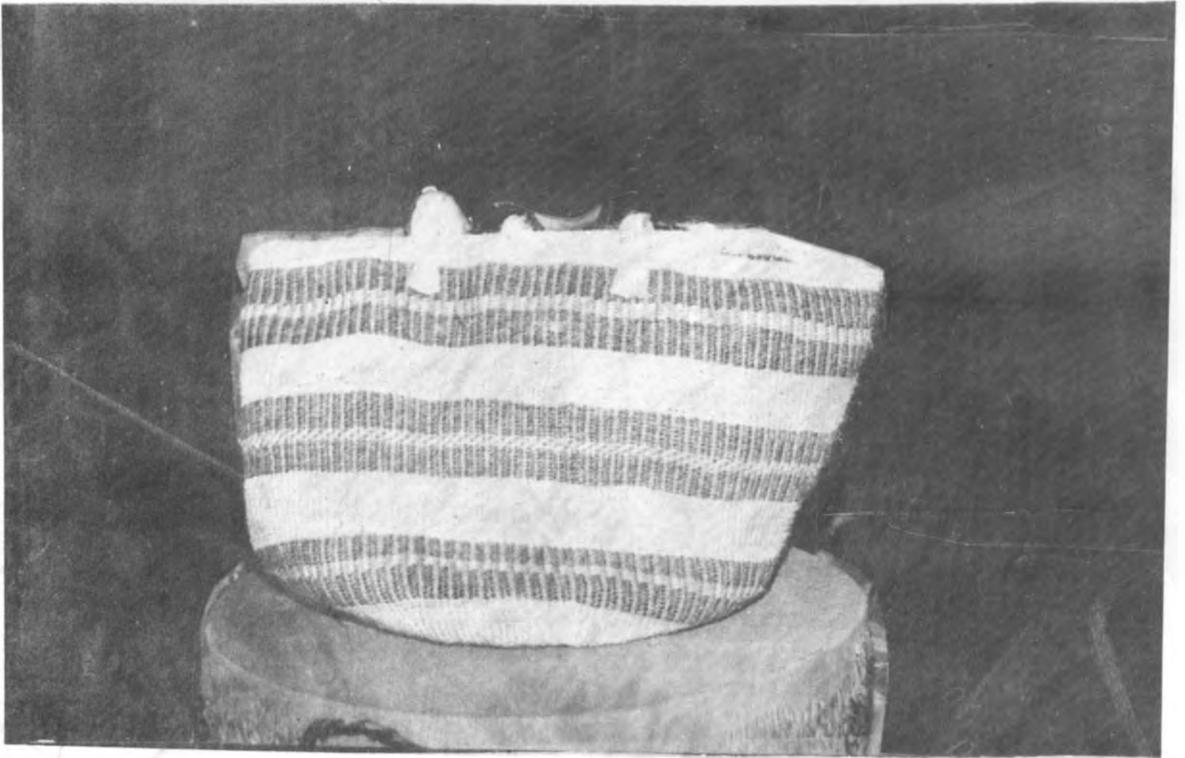


Modern CARVINGS (Photo. 3&4)

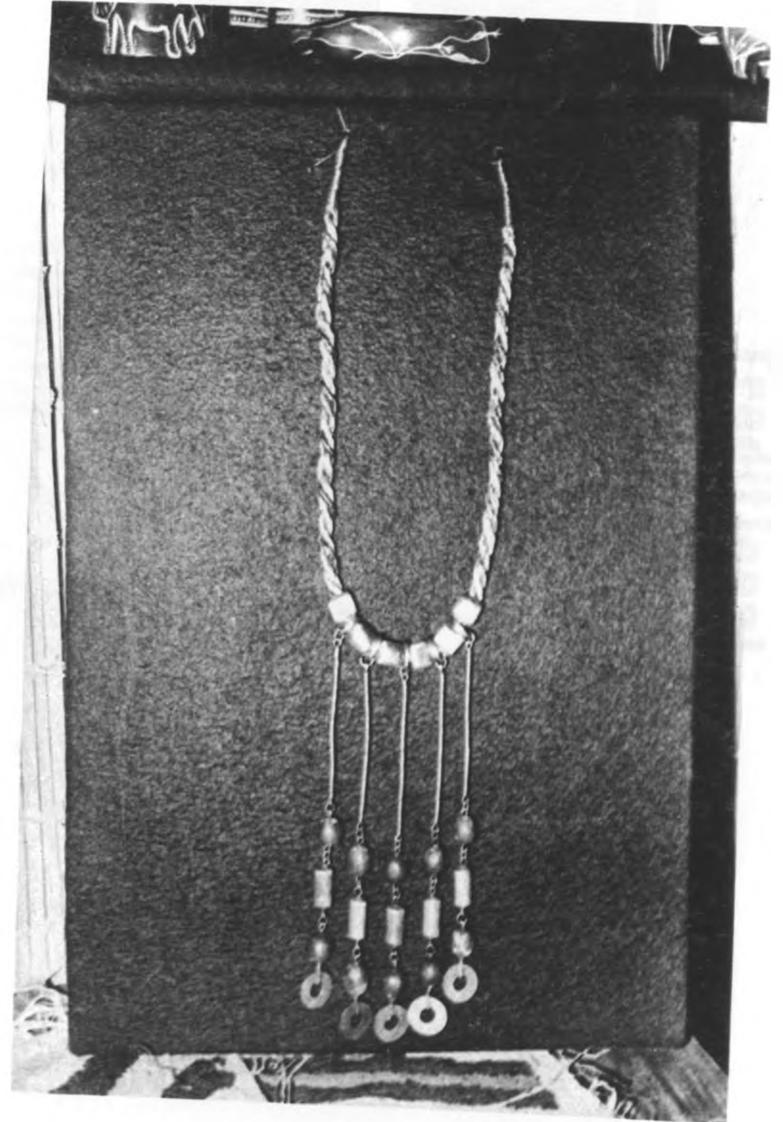
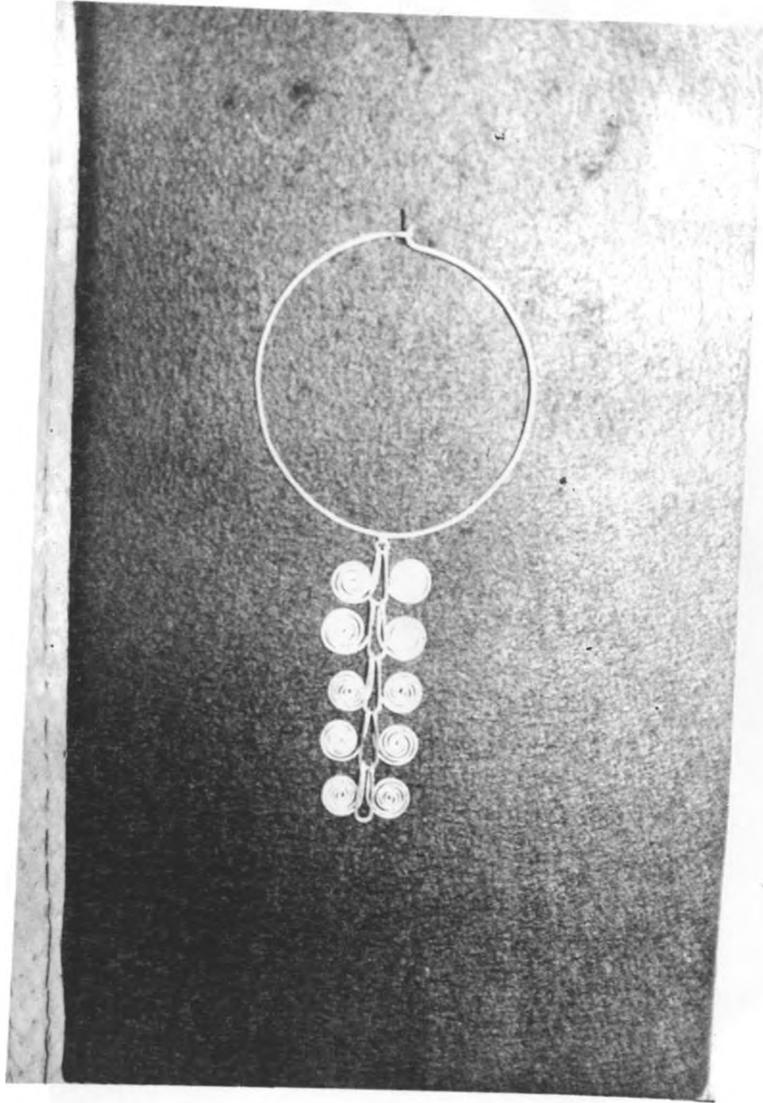
Modern POTTERY (Photo. 5&6)



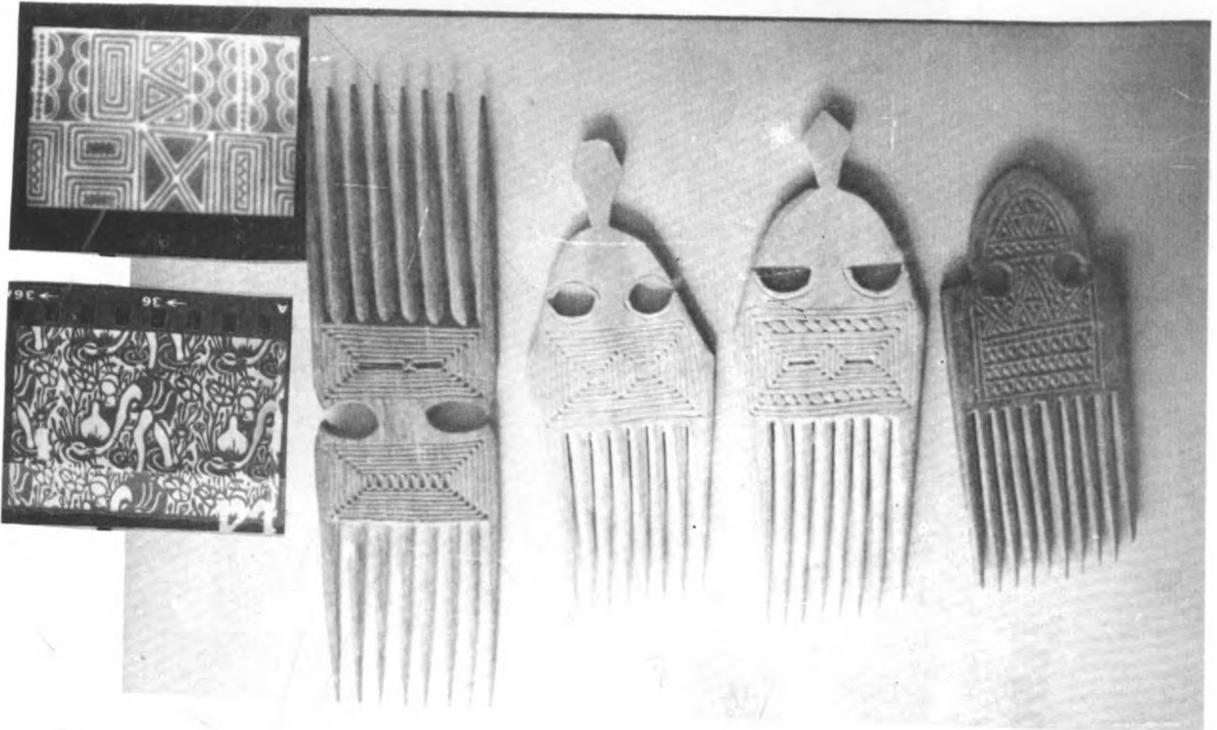
Modern WEAVING – Basketwork & Textile(Photo. 7&8)



Modern JEWELLERY (Photo. 9&10)



Traditional (Photo. 11)



Traditional (Photo. 13)

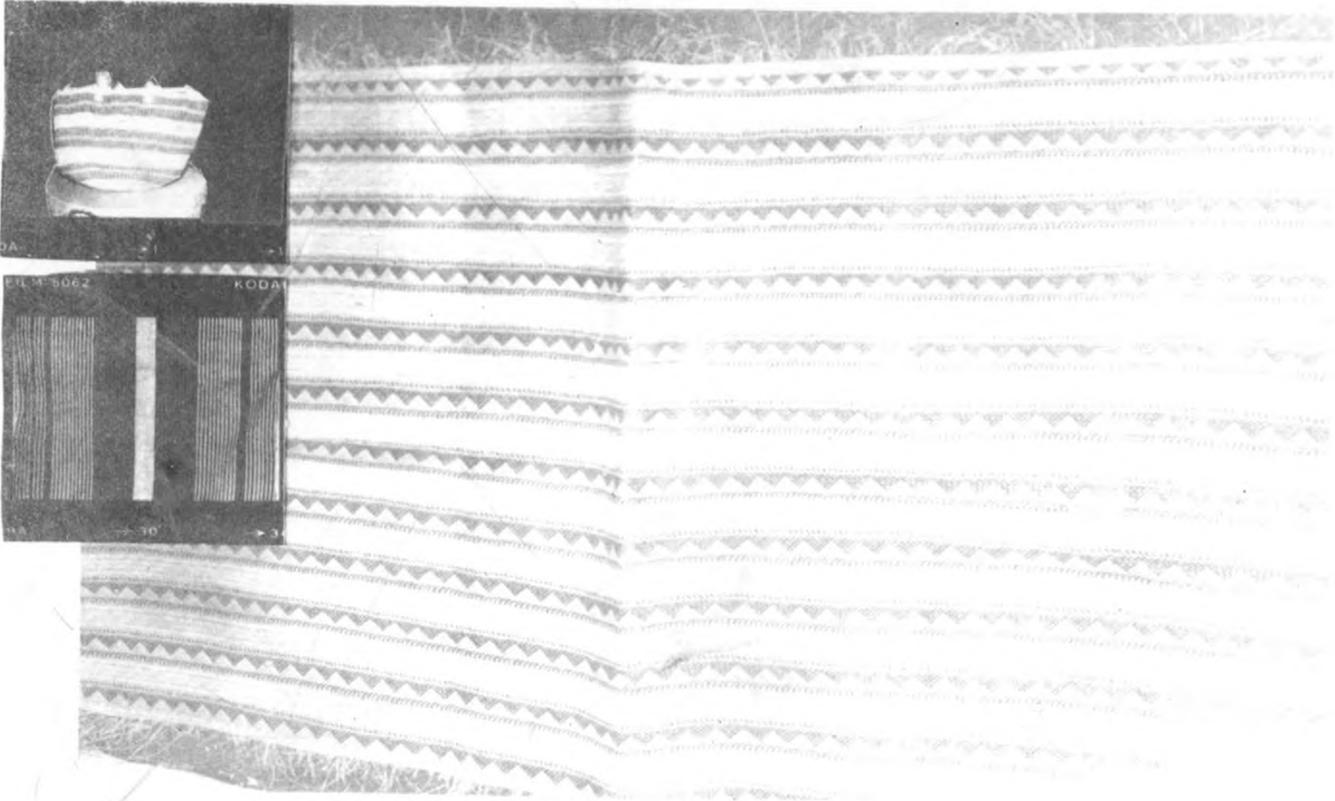




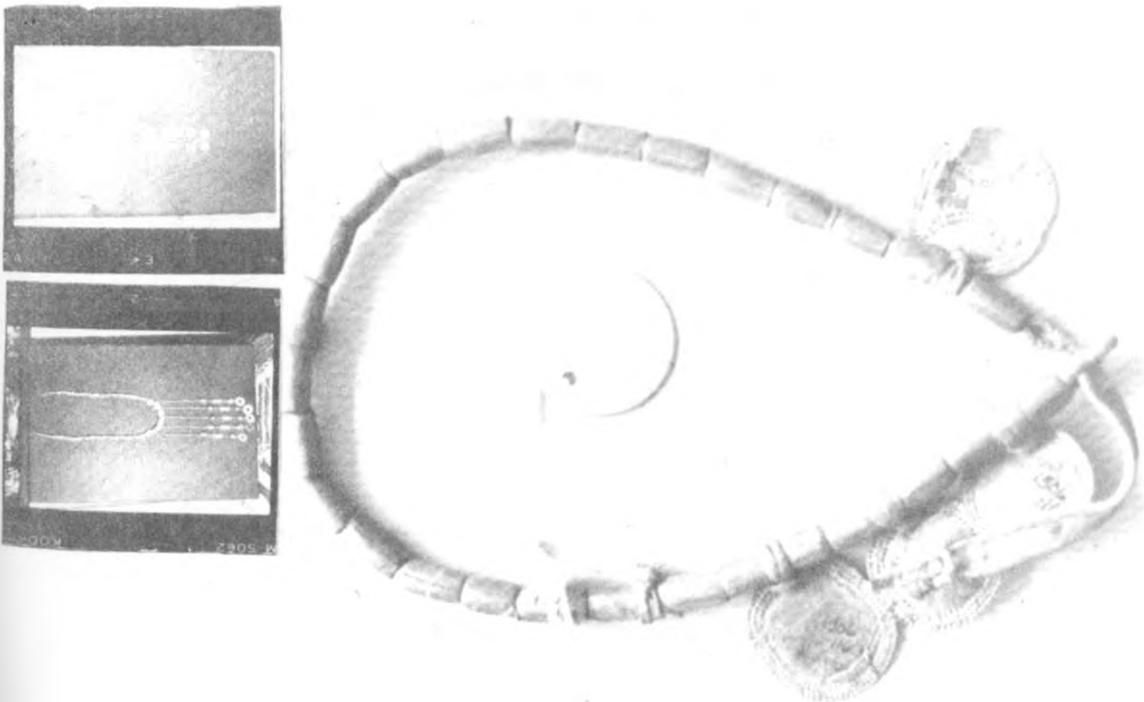
Traditional (Photo.12)



Traditional (Photo.14)



Traditional (Photo.15)



APPENDIX 1

THE INTERVIEW: IN AID OF PROVISION OF INFORMATION
ON THE SETTING IN WHICH COMMERCIAL ARTS AND CRAFTS
EXIST IN KENYA.

Below are Guiding Questions to the interview that was administered to a total of 75 artists and craftsmen involved in productions of; Hand printed fabrics, Carvings, Pottery, Weaving and Jewellery. The interview sought to provide part solutions to Research questions One, Two and Three.

Recorded as first items in each interview were:-

- (a) The date of interview.
- (b) The type of production being reviewed.
- (c) The name of the workshop being reviewed and its location (e.g. Shauri Moyo - Nairobi or Kakamega Town)
- (d) The level of education attained by the respondent and
- (e) Sex and estimate age of Respondent.

Guiding Questions.

1. How long have you been involved in this particular art-making?
2. How did you train?

3. Why did you choose to become an artist?
4. Do you have another occupation other than the present? e.g. farming, trading, etc.
5. Do you consider your present occupation to be:-
 - (a) Strictly a job.
 - (b) Something to be enjoyed or
 - (c) Both.
6. In your opinion, is there any need to make something a little different from the usual?
7. What factor or factors dictate conformity?
8. Have you ever been involved in any traditional art-making? Which?
9. How has your involvement in the traditional art-making influenced your present work?
10. Approximately when were the first artforms of this kind, made strictly for sale to foreigners?
11. Can you single out any individual or individuals instrumental in the initiation of these productions?
12. When was this workshop initiated.
13. Can you give a brief account on the circumstance that lead to initiation and development of these productions.

14. Do local people consume these products?
15. What, in your opinion, is the essential difference between those products consumed by local people and those consumed by foreigners?
16. Amongst products available here, which do you consider to be good pieces and which ones are not so good?
17. Are there any noticeable similarities between these productions and traditional Kenyan art-makings? If yes, then, which are these?
18. Are there any other traditional products that you think, relate to the present productions?
19. Do you recall any noticeable changes in the development of earlier forms to present state?
20. Can you explain step by step the procedure taken in production of these artforms?
21. Which materials are used?
22. Which of the mentioned materials are available locally?
23. For what use, do the majority of consumers purchase these products?
24. (If applicable) what are the traditional usages of these products?
25. (If applicable) can the present-day productions be used in the traditional sector?

APPENDIX II

THE RESEARCHERS OBSERVATIONAL RECORD SHEET

OBSERVATIONAL RECORD SHEET

TYPE OF PROD. _____

MODERN	TRADITIONAL	REMARKS
Form/ Shape		
Space		
Line		
Colour		
Texture		
Size of Product		
Function of Product		
Subject Matter		
Materials Used		
Technique Used		

APPENDIX IV

THE INTERVIEW: SCHEME IN AID OF ANALYSIS

A. Artists/Craftsmen.

TYPE OF PRODUCTION _____

1. SEX: (a) Male (b) Female
2. AGE (YEARS): (a) Under 20 (e) 36-40
(b) 21-25 (f) 41-45
(c) 26-30 (g) 46-50
(d) 31-35 (h) Over 51
3. LEVEL OF EDUCATION: (a) No formal Education.
(b) Primary Education.
(c) Secondary Education.
(d) Post-Secondary Education.
4. EXPERIENCE (YEARS): (a) Less than 5
(b) 6-10
(c) 11-15
(d) 16-20
(e) Over 21.
5. TRAINING: (a) On-the-job (b) Self taught
(c) Formal.

6. REASONS FOR BECOMING AN ARTIST:

- (a) Talent (b) Interest (c) Rewards (d) Chance
(e) Others.

7. OCCUPATION: (a) Full-time (b) Part-time.

8. ATTITUDE TOWARDS OCCUPATION:

- (a) Strictly a job (b) Something to be enjoyed (c) Both

9. ATTITUDE TOWARDS NEED FOR INNOVATIONS:

- (a) Postive (b) Negative.

10. FACTORS DICTATING CONFORMITY TO CERTAIN
ESTABLISHED PORTOTYPE MODLES:

- (a) Consumers demands (c) Technological factors
and tastes.
(b) Establishment's (d) Other factors.
Expectations.

11. PRIOR ENGAGEMENT IN TRADITIONAL ART-MAKINGS:

- (a) Yes (b) No.

12. ANY TRADITIONAL INFLUENCES RESULTING FROM PRIOR
ENGAGEMENT IN TRADITIONAL ART-MAKINGS:

- (a) Yes (b) No.

6. REASONS FOR BECOMING AN ARTIST:

- (a) Talent (b) Interest (c) Rewards (d) Chance
- (e) Others.

7. OCCUPATION: (a) Full-time (b) Part-time.

8. ATTITUDE TOWARDS OCCUPATION:

- (a) Strictly a job (b) Something to be enjoyed (c) Both.

9. ATTITUDE TOWARDS NEED FOR INNOVATIONS:

- (a) Postive (b) Negative.

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- (a) Consumers demands (c) Technological factors
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- (b) Establishment's (d) Other factors.
Expectations.

11. PRIOR ENGAGEMENT IN TRADITIONAL ART-MAKINGS:

- (a) Yes (b) No.

12. ANY TRADITIONAL INFLUENCES RESULTING FROM PRIOR
ENGAGEMENT IN TRADITIONAL ART-MAKINGS:

- (a) Yes (b) No.

B. Workshops.

13. DATE OF INITIATION OF WORKSHOP (YEARS):

- (a) Under 5 years Ago.
- (b) 6-10 years Ago.
- (c) 11-15 years Ago.
- (d) Over 21 years Ago.

14. CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO INITIATION OF WORKSHOP:

- (a) To help others help themselves.
- (b) A realization of an economic opportunity.
- (c) Close proximity to raw materials.

C. Art forms.

15. APPROXIMATELY WHEN THE FIRST ARTFORMS OF THIS KIND WERE MADE STRICTLY FOR SALE TO TOURISTS (YEARS):

- (a) Under 5 years Ago.
- (b) 6-10 years Ago.
- (c) 11-15 years Ago.
- (d) 16-20 years Ago.
- (e) Over 21 years Ago.

16. DO LOCAL PEOPLE CONSUME THE PRODUCTS

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.

23. USE TO WHICH CONSUMERS PUT THE PRODUCTS:

- (a) Some practical usages (b) For decoration of interiors and souvenirs.
- (c) Both.

24. SOME OF THE PRESENT PRODUCTS HAVE TRADITIONAL USAGES:

- (a) Yes. (b) No.

25. SOME OF THE PRESENT PRODUCTS FUNCTION WITHIN A TRADITIONAL SET-UP:

- (a) Yes. (b) No.

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