

**Figure 9.31** Zaria, local mosque

**Figure 9.32** Emir's Palace, Kano: reception suite

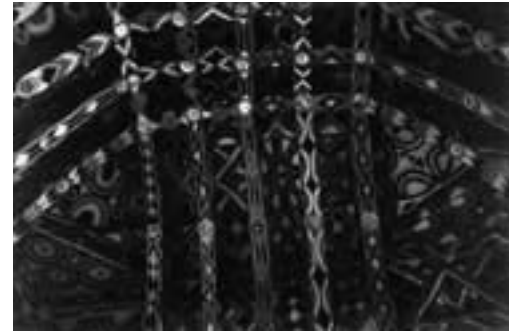
**Figure 9.33** House of Tafida, Sokoto



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have a small decorated Mosque (Figure 9.31). At the *dendal*, the centre of political and religious life, is located the most impressive decoration.

The map of sixteenth century Rome by Nolli reproduced in *Urban Design: Method and Technique*, emphasizes the relationship between external public space and internal semi-public space within buildings such as churches: both types of space are treated, graphically, in a similar manner,



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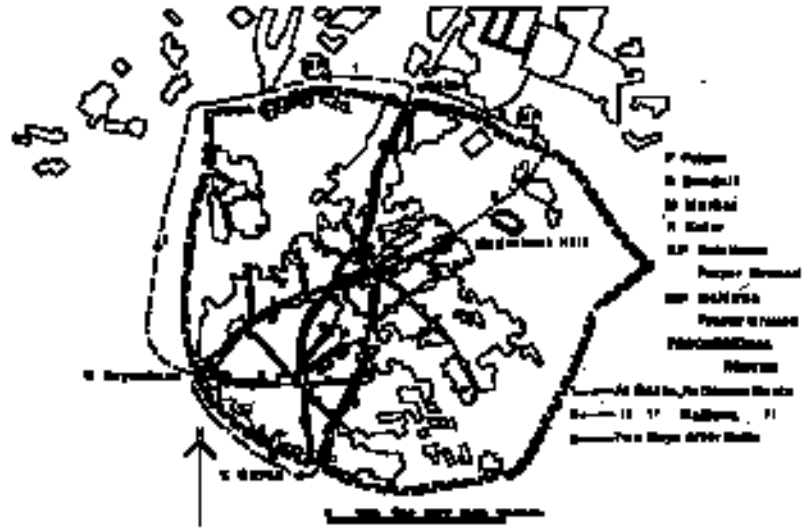
distinguishing the public realm from the private domain which makes up the bulk of the city. The main nodes or places of activity in the Hausa city follow this model: they comprise the public space beyond the boundaries of the compound together with the semi-public entrance huts, *zaure*, courtyards and semi-private meeting rooms, *sbigifa*, within the compound walls of the Hausa home. The climate of northern Nigeria is such that much socializing occurs indoors away from the heat. It is in these semi-public rooms of the palace, the great house or the more humble home, that decoration is often lavished. Figure 9.32 illustrates the decoration used in the reception rooms of the palace in Kano. Figure 9.33



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illustrates the type of design used in the reception rooms of less prestigious homes.

The Friday Mosque is part of the central place of the Hausa city: it is where the community meet once a week to pray and socialize. The Friday Mosque in Zaria is one of the finest examples of Hausa decoration. The mud relief patterns in the interior are sober and formal, the dignified work from an age of religious reformers. The first impression of the mosque, before it was redeveloped, was of big sculptural forms. Decoration was restrained



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and in the background: deeply incised verticals, triangles, and circles on piers, while horizontals on the underside of arches emphasized and complemented the main forms. The more complex designs, such as the decorated architrave surrounding the *mihrab* niche on an otherwise undecorated *qibla* wall, together with bold designs on adjacent pier faces, were purposely placed to enrich the *mihrab* area indicating the direction of Meccah (Figure 9.34).

Some of the pathways in the old cities have significance as processional routes. For example, on the day of the *Salla*, the Emir of Zaria and his retinue process on horse back along the routes shown on Figure 9.35. Parts of these and other important paths in the cities leading to the market, *dendal* or gateways are enriched with a repetitive mechanical pattern which contrasts with the more highly modelled patterning which is used around the doorways and other openings (Figure 9.36). Decoration in the traditional Hausa city is restrained

Figure 9.34 Mihrab area, Friday Mosque, Zaria

Figure 9.35 Processional routes in Zaria