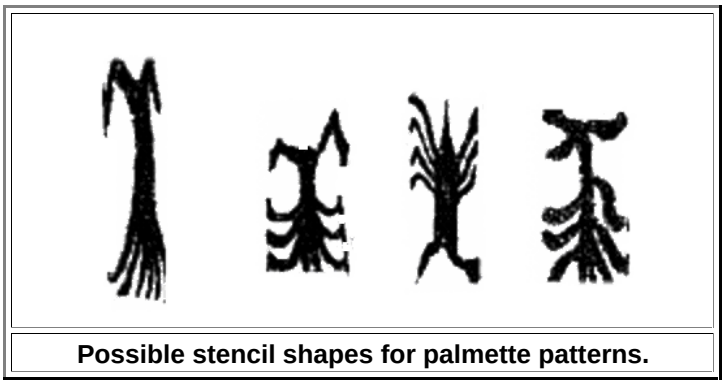
Making Palmette Patterns

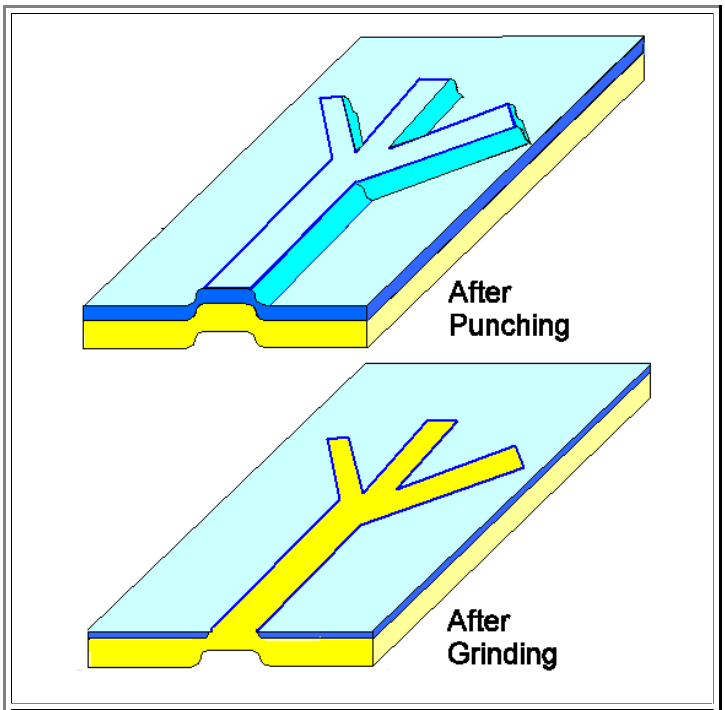
Science

- I put the "how to make a palmette pattern" module in the science sections because this is a genuine scientifc "discovery" - it has not been described before. I have alrady put it under the general heading "mosaic damast" in this module and here I will give details.
  The recipe I give below is my interpretaion of how to make palmette patterns. I'm pretty sure that it comes close to the truth but il can't prove it.
- First you follow the essence of the procedure that resulted in "striped bars" except that you produce a bar from only two kinds of steel - a bright and a dark one. Fore the bar into a thin ribbon of the right width for one strip of plamettes.
  - Now yo need to produce stencil of had steel with the palmette shape you like. Maybe like the ones shown below:



Possible stencil shapes for palmette patterns.

  - This are, of course, the patterns found on actual swords as shown in the Illerup books or here. Your actual stencil might be simpler and more symmetric because the pattern it tranfers will be distorted quite a bit during forging and welding.
- Now use your stencil to punch the pattern into your two-.metal strip. You want to use a soft base, e.g. lead, so you can make relatively deep impressions. After punching your strip (now turned over) should look like this:



After punching and grinding

  - I apologize for my poor drawing skills but trust that you get the idea.
    Now grind off the upper layer (in the drawing) until you reveal the second (yellow) metal. Your pattern (after proper etching) will now be visible.

- You might want to grind off the back surface too, to obtain a flat surface again. But you might just hammer-weld the strip as it is onto your blade. That's it. Just repeat the procedure for as may strips as you want, just like in any other "veneering" process.
  - Of course, the welding procedure will distort the pattern to some extent. You may even do this intentionally, e.g. if your strip is a bit shorter than the blade, you will lengthen it. You could also add some more features, e.g. verticla lines by proper punching.
- It's certainly not easy. I can't tell if it is more diffcult than veneering with ground-down twisted rod strips. I would guess, however, that a smith who could to a sword like this one, could master palmetes, too. ,