COMUNICAR LA ARQUITECTURA

DEL ORIGEN DE LA MODERNIDAD A LA ERA DIGITAL

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DAVID ARREDONDO GARRIDO
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LA MUTACIÓN DEL DIBUJO PLANO A LA REALIDAD AUMENTADA. UNA NUEVA FORMA DE COMUNICAR EL ESPACIO Y SU CONSTRUCCIÓN EN LA ARQUITECTURA 1673
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¿INVESTIGACIÓN O ACTIVISMO? EL CASO DEL *MAPA INTERACTIVO DIGITAL DE ARQUITECTURAS IDEADAS POR MUJERES EN ESPAÑA, 1965-2000* 1683
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Steeped in Influence: The Impact of Tea Advertisements on Black Urban Domesticity in the South African Press

Empapado en influencia: el impacto de los anuncios de té en la vida doméstica urbana de la comunidad negra en la prensa sudafricana

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Abstract

La introducción del té en las colonias por parte de Gran Bretaña trascendió la bebida en sí misma; representó una profunda influencia cultural y social. Su impacto se extendió a la arquitectura y modernizó la vida, dando forma a las historias domésticas en colonias como Sudáfrica durante y después del siglo XIX. Para establecer y mantener un monopolio sobre el comercio del té, el imperio implementó políticas públicas y una estrategia de marketing extensa para respaldar un "movimiento de compras del imperio" que fusionaba el comportamiento del consumidor con sentimientos nacionalistas, confundiendo el cuerpo personal con el de la nación. La prensa impresa fue instrumental en difundir estas ideologías, aunque fue resistida por los consumidores negros seleccionados que se oponían a aspectos de estas identidades que estaban entrelazados con caracterizaciones coloniales y estatales de la negritud. Los comercializadores de té respondieron a estas reservas designando embajadores que reflejaban representaciones idealizadas de la modernidad negra en sus anuncios. Este estudio tiene como objetivo identificar casos en los que el té, una importación colonial, se infiltró en el ámbito del espacio arquitectónico en una Sudáfrica en proceso de modernización a través de representaciones de ocupación negra en anuncios publicitarios.

The introduction of tea to colonies by Britain transcended the beverage itself; it represented a profound cultural and societal influence. Its impact extended to architecture and modernised living, shaping domestic histories in colonies such as South Africa during and after the nineteenth century. To establish and sustain a monopoly over the tea trade, the empire implemented public policies and an extensive marketing strategy to endorse an "empire shopping movement" that merged consumer behaviour with nationalist sentiments, conflating the personal body with a nation one[1]. The printed press was instrumental in disseminating these ideologies although resisted by targeted black consumers who resisted aspects of these identities that were intertwined with colonial, state-defined characterisations of blackness[2]. Tea marketers responded to these reservations by appointing ambassadors who reflected idealised portrayals of black modernity in their adverts. This study aims to identify instances in which tea, a colonial import, infiltrated the domain of architecture space in a modernising South Africa through portrayals of black occupation in advertisements.

Keywords

Domesticidad negra, modernidad negra, publicidad de té, prensa negra, viviendas modernas
Black domesticity, black modernity, tea advertising, black press, modern housing

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[1] Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2017), 225.

[2] Les Switzer, "Bantu World and the Origins of a Captive African Commercial Press in South Africa", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 14, n.º 3 (April 1988): 351–370. Literate, educated adults formed 12% of the population in the 1930s and were largely modern, African nationalists.

Introduction

Tea has a rich social history of dedicated practices and accompanying accoutrements used for its consumption. Consequently, China's tea leaf trade with the British during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also included the sale of drinking and storage vessels, such as porcelain crockery (subsequently referred to as "china"), kettles, and ornate tea caddies[3]. The British adopted and often modified the use and appearance of these items while also observing and reinterpreting tea drinking etiquette. Similarly, tea consumption was spatialised in adherence to preceding Chinese practice through early British residential tea houses and rooms. By the late nineteenth century, the formerly exotic ritual of drinking tea had become an instituted British custom and a part of daily life, establishing itself firmly as a presence in homes across classes. Initially, it was members of the upper classes that did much to make it a fashionable, social practice and influenced its regional domestic character. They accomplished this by setting trends in hosting practices, serving preferences, and the desired times of consumption. Subsequent consumer education and instruction was executed through the print media influence.

The drive for economic and imperial dominance remained a priority for Britain in the twentieth century, and the empire continued to pursue trade superiority through foreign goods, particularly during the Great Depression. The Empire Marketing Board (EMB), a government-funded agency, was employed to create an empire-wide propaganda campaign to increase sales and facilitate cultural infusion by establishing a presence in more homes and workplaces[4]. Aspiration remained a focal incentive in campaigns, and it was embodied by a progressive tea-drinking character, often represented as modern, upper-class individuals.

The early twentieth century marked a critical juncture in the history of South Africa, as illustrated by competing ideas of modernity that were heavily influenced by British colonialism and the subsequent formation of the Union of South Africa (Union, hereafter), an intermediary dispensation established in 1910 until the country became a republic in 1961. The press performed a similar role in disseminating colonial ideology and normalising representations of the Union's idealised, modern society[5]. Simultaneously, the burgeoning African nationalist press promoted black modernism by giving voice to African experiences that were largely ignored by the white press[6]. In this context, modernity emerged alongside the economic success of the manufacturing and mining industries that relied on the exploitation of cheap, black migrant workers. The requirement for a substantial migrant labour force led to the forming of vast, planned black communities or "townships" on the outskirts

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[3] Jane Pettigrew, Bruce Richardson, *A Social History of Tea: Tea's Influence on Commerce, Culture & Community* (Danville: Benjamin Press), 2015.

[4] Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire*..., 235. The EMB campaign ran between 1926 and 1933, between two economically challenging periods, WWI and the Great Depression when general consumption was low.

[5] The Union of South Africa, established in 1910, was a self-governing territory and of the British Empire and intermediary dispensation until the country became a republic in 1961.

[6] Les Switzer, "The Ambiguities of Protest in South Africa: Rural Politics and the Press during the 1920s", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 23, n.º 1 (1990): 87.

of white settlements in the urban areas where industrial development took place. These segregated areas were built according to planning and construction regulations aimed at reinforcing their spatial inferiority. Distinct group identities were imposed onto labourers as a result of stratifying the urban industrial societies, and further reinforced the Union's exclusionary spatial design[7].

At home with the press

By the early 1930s, white advertisers had successfully established a corporate presence in the burgeoning flagship *Bantu Press* with a black target audience. Several years later, Argus Printing and Publishing Company, a subsidiary of the mining industry had purchased it. Although this move ensured the business was exceptionally equipped and maintained, all of the original black shareholders were removed[8]. The editor and journalists of the *Bantu Press* remained black, however it's difficult to discern how much of the black, modern perspectives presented on this platform was unaffected by the influence of external advertising and corporate influence. That is to say, the newspaper's role as a civil rights informant and medium of African nationalist propaganda are intermingled.

The evolving attitudes towards black urban domesticity, residential infrastructure, and depictions of the black body were all reflected in press campaigns for modernism, as presented in articles and advertisements from both influences. Advertisements for residential consumer goods endorsed this notion of nascent national identities by normalising a "modern" appearance for individuals and their homes. However, advertisements rarely depicted black models occupying black modern homes. Instead, furniture and equipment, modern home interiors and black models were often depicted as isolated product illustrations or adjacent to one another, but rarely as an integrated composition of autonomous, urban black domesticity. Thus, urban home ownership was progressively implied as conventional by consumer product adverts but not fully realised as spatialised marketing imagery.

This development coincided with the emergence of experimental migrant labourer housing typologies and townships such as Orlando in Soweto, Johannesburg[9]. A 1935 issue of *Bantu World*, a weekly black newspaper, has an article with a photograph of the exterior of a cluster of these units in an article titled "All Quiet in the Model Township" about the virtues of living in a clean, orderly African neighbourhood and also a bid to "leave the slums"[10]. The two-year-old units shown were representative of the typology that was widely adopted in the years that followed and were accessible for rent (not ownership) to the black qualifying

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[7] A. J. Christopher, "Racial Land Zoning in Urban South Africa", *Land Use Policy* 14, n.º 4 (October 1997): 311–323. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0264-8377(97)00025-2.

[8] Switzer, "Bantu World and the Origins of...", 351–370.

[9] Orlando Township was founded in 1931 within the larger Soweto township complex and first ever township established.

[10] "All Quiet in the Model Township", *Bantu World newspaper* 3, n.º 41 (26, January, 1935): 9, Series 1, CULL0002 - Bantu World, Historical Papers Research Archive, Wits University Research Archives. The "slums" were often racially mixed neighbourhoods that were declared unsanitary to justify often forced removals and to racially homogenise communities.

public[11]. They were also an early and uncommon depiction of modern black homes in the general press and the occupied interiors had yet to have a public image. The domestic interiors that did on the other hand, were traditionally associated with urban white homes in which urbanised black labourers worked in decidedly subservient roles. Exclusionary spatial planning that perpetuated community racial segregation, curfews and access laws ensured that black bodies had an especially ephemeral relationship with these spaces. The positive portrayal of home occupation held significant importance for migrant workers aspiring to improve their social standing. This aspect was particularly crucial in the emerging urban culture that was portrayed in lifestyle publications, as a considerable proportion of migrants found themselves in these new environments during that period. Despite this, there was a delayed adoption of its depiction in advertorial imagery in the black press between the 1930s and the 1960s —the peak of migrant residential occupation in Johannesburg townships[12]—.

What appears to have mitigated this was the illustrated nature of common advertising in the 1930s and 1940s and images of product use and spaces that could not be accessed or photographed were conceptually simulated. These fictitious environments and their staging became the scenographic framework for aspirational urban domestic spaces. Tea advertisers in the black press took advantage of this strategy, by incorporating images of modern black models into tea adverts and associating them with the ritual's symbolism, then synonymous with contemporary British practice. Often as in British tea adverts, the modern character was centralised and their environment and class if not stated, were implied through coded language and symbols that alluded to an idealised domestic space[13]. Homes provide the recognisable scenographic setting for tea-drinking advertisements and, more importantly, support the product's two key marketing attributes in the urban South African context: vitality and the domestic ritual of tea hospitality. A healthy, productive body was a necessity for employment that supported modern lifestyles, and hospitality as it was framed in the adverts, was a privilege was the tradition that could be performed by modern homeowners. The branding of the tea merchants focused on both the product and the performance of habitual tea consumption, with the goal of permeating modern consumers' daily lives. This strategy effectively produced the visual intersection of the black model, the product, and the contemporary residence.

Infusing bodies with ideals

When engaging in with the discourse of marketing imperial products to African audiences, the history and controversy surrounding the global colonial tea trade cannot be disregarded despite tea advertisements making advances to represent black modernity. Specifically, the deliberate manipulation of the general public's taste for a product by crafting messages to

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[11] Paul Maylam, "The Rise and Decline of Urban Apartheid in South Africa", *African Affairs* 89, n.º 354 (January 1990): 57–84. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.afraf.a098280.

[12] The data surveyed for this study is from the *Bantu World newspaper* (1935-52), *Drum, Africa! and The Townships Housewife* magazines during this period.

[13] Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire*...

appeal to consumers by emphasising their connection to the empire, its power, or prestige. Moreover, though originally a Chinese product, the ritual of consuming tea had become intertwined with western notions of the home and, by extension, with the Christian nuclear family's ideological structure. This type of domesticity was accompanied by a new set of habitation and hospitality practices aimed at black immigrant families and occasionally contradicted cultural presentations of domesticity[14].

The urban black body was also a symbol of numerous and often problematic commercial representations in adverts. Notably, it was presented as the embodiment of high standards of hygiene, physical strength, and westernised beauty. The adverts romanticised these as desirable attributes, while simultaneously espousing regressive colonial views of blackness that reduced black bodies as utilitarian within white territories. Hygiene, strength, and beauty in particular were implied means to acquire work and to access urban white spaces of employment with relatively less resistance.

The widely circulated newspaper, *Bantu World*, was inundated with such adverts from the 1930s onwards. Published between 1932 and 1977, it was a major vehicle of the New African Modernity or Nationalism movement[15]. The paper was intended for the black middle-class intelligentsia and distributed nationally. It was published primarily in English but also included articles and advertisements in the Nguni and Sotho-Tswana languages. The paper was a predecessor to *Drum* and similar lifestyle magazines established from the 1950s onwards. One can trace a continuity of the same furniture, beauty and domestic product brand advertisements from the newspaper through to these later publications. Tea adverts run by the Ceylon Tea Company promoted tea as a generic product. Later, however, brands like Joko and Five Roses[16] were featured in large format on several pages of a single, 18-page issue of the paper[17]. These adverts regularly exceeded other products' adverts in number, including those for furniture, the latter being a product more closely associated with the production of domestic spaces.

Mr. Tea-Drinker (fig. 1) was a recurring character created by the Ceylon Tea Bureau in their print adverts as a narrative device to present the various benefits of tea and the attributes of a black tea drinker. The adverts aimed to normalise who it was that consumed tea and what they looked like doing so. The middle-aged character had a friendly and formal appearance; he wore a three-piece suit with a pocket square and drank tea from a teacup and saucer at

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[14] Natasha Erlank, *Convening Black Intimacy: Christianity, Gender, and Tradition in Early Twentieth-Century South Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2022).

[15] The South African movement established during the late 1800s promoted a sense of racial pride, autonomy and self-expression and the Bantu World was credited to be a vehicle for many of its principles from the 1930s onwards. Ntongela Masilela, "New Negroism and New Africanism: The Influence of United States Modernity on the Construction of South African Modernity", *Black Renaissance: New York: Institute of African American Affair*s 2, n.º 2 (1999): 46-59 (ref New Negro).

[16] Joko and Five Roses are brands of black tea that remain popular staples in South African households. The latter is a Ceylon tea and often promotes women's social causes.

[17] A February 1935 issue ran 3 tea adverts and were exceeded in number by one other product only: vitality pills of various brands. *The Bantu World* 3, n.º 42 (February 2, 1935), accessible at The Bantu World Digital Archive, Wits Historical Papers Research Archives.

all times. He embodied the politically respectable aesthetics of the cohort of upper men in the African press, who were the primary broadcasters and consumers of news, opinion, and entertainment[18]. Mr. Tea-Drinker adverts were half or full-page spreads with a prominent quote by the character, who shared wisdom about the social practices associated to- and benefits of drinking tea. He was positioned at the foreground of cartoon subplots of scenarios applicable to- and supporting his quotes, placing him in the context of a community in the role of a paternal instructor.

Figure 1. Mr. Tea Drinker. Source: *Bantu World*, 1935.

The adverts mirrored early English ones, where the tea-drinker's physical body was conflated with a national and political one[19]. G. G. Sigmond, Professor of the Royal Medico-Botanical Society, notably assigned to the medium of tea the desired traits of English men and women, including "industry", "health", and "national happiness" in his book Tea: *Its Effects, Medicinal and Moral*[20]. On a larger imperial scale, subjects of the Empire seem have been expected to cultivate a similar culture and perspective concerning modern, black domesticity.

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[18] Switzer, "Bantu World and the Origins ..., 351–370.

[19] This largely referred to temperance but also domestic virtues that helped define English identity, character and class.

[20] Sigmond's book was an informal combination of academic, travel and marketing essays but has been cited as influential in Victorian-era tea marketing. Julie E. Fromer, "'Deeply Indebted to the Tea-Plant': Representations of English National Identity in Victorian Histories of Tea", *Victorian Literature and Culture* 36, n.º 3 (2008): 531- 547.

Connecting private practice with public character through performative acts or creating a "spectacle of intimacy"[21] is exactly what colonial-era tea marketing sought to do in a modernising South Africa. This aligned with the greater imperial goal of remodelling black society and intimate practices from its pre-colonial cultural performance. What became of domesticity, then, was of national importance and tea, a symbolic commodity as part of an ideological campaign, became a valuable interface for social instruction.

From 1936 onwards, Mr. Tea-Drinker was joined first by a Mrs. Tea-Drinker, and later, their two children. As a couple, they remained instructive and focused above all on the health benefits of tea aimed at labourers of all classes. Mrs Tea-Drinker had a less formal appearance, which was a common portrayal of middle-aged homemakers, and she served as an adept foil to her husband's paternal portrayal. Her presence was likely due to more consumer goods being promoted to African households, along with the concurrent rise of women's home improvement societies[22]. During this time, two pages dedicated to women's articles was introduced in the 16-page newspaper. Page 12, titled *Page of Interest to Women of the Race* and page 13's *Bantu Women in the Home* featured articles and adverts about childcare, marriage, love and issues concerning morality and Christian piety. The adverts that included the entire family had noticeably changed the slogan from "Tea is good for you!" to "Tea is good for us" (fig. 2). The word "us" alluding perhaps to the social identity that tea drinkers are forging as a class in addition to the expanded Tea-Drinker family unit.

Figure 2. The Tea-Drinker family. Source: *Bantu World*, 1939.

[21] Karen Chase, Michael Levenson, *The Spectacle of Intimacy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009). The term is borrowed from Karen Chase and Michael Levenson's book about the increasing visibility of Victorian-era domestic family.

[22] Katie Carline, "Wise Mothers and Wise Buyers: Marketing Tea and Home Improvement in 1930s South Africa", *The Journal of African History* 63, n.º 3 (October 14, 2022): 291–308.

The adverts swayed thematically to include more domestic storylines of young couples and their social or parenting lives, and young wives became the protagonists or narrators of more of the comic-strip stories. "*Give a bride a tea-set*" became an accompanying slogan within the adverts, associating the ritual of tea further with that of western marriage and homemaking. Specifically, the centuries old British adapted customs of domesticity.

The Tea-Drinker family was gradually replaced by illustrations of a younger, nameless and childless couple in the 1940s and early 1950s , whose roles were to promote the affordable price of the beverage, possibly due to the post-war financial constraints. The slogan was also changed to "Tea Refreshes You and is so Cheap to Use". Following that, at the advent of regular photographic adverts in the 1950s, celebrities became ambassadors. *Drum* and magazines like it increasingly showcased the lives of sports stars and famous radio and film personalities in lengthy features during this time, showcasing their homes and lives beyond the spotlight. These celebrities gradually became endorsers of products and modern lifestyles either as official spokespeople or inadvertently as models of urban, modern living.

The Ceylon Tea Bureau's message remained similar, but the delivery was decidedly gendered towards women at that point, and pageant queens were the most popular choice for ambassadors. A change in the type of consumer goods advertised may have contributed to this change —particularly the increased presence of pharmaceutical and beauty product adverts in print media—. The type of printed publication also played a role in this sway; *Drum* and *Grace* for instance, were targeted at female readers whereas *Bantu World* and similar early newspapers were intended largely for men and had only small sections dedicated especially to women[23].

The element of explicit instruction remained but the instructor was adapted to reflect the consumer and the instruction- stipulating how to prepare tea- was certainly aimed at the young homemaker. Likewise, the implicit instruction of who the Tea-Drinker nation should be was present in the recurring promotions of the tea. By aligning with younger, female influencer testimonials, the merchants were reacting to the contemporary interpretation of modern domesticity.

In the mid-1950s, urban domesticity was founded on older conceptions of Christianity and industrial forms of modernity, but it was also reinforced by a newly emerging spatial typology that favoured the traditional nuclear family and westernised gender roles. The modern, private home became the new confluence of morality, respectability, and a middle-class education for the westernised family, with the male as provider and head, and the wife at the helm. For urban black women in early industrial South Africa, Christianity was as much about a particular family structure as it was about a new faith in Christ. Domestic philosophy was deeply intertwined with women's purported spiritual calling as housewives. Both her Christian identity and the current, industrial notion that women's bodies should be

[23] This is particularly true of earlier prints of Bantu World and newspapers like it between 1935-1939.

valued based on their professional proximity to the house, determined the woman's function in domestic production[24].

Women pursued this vocation under the brand of modernity allocated to them within the economic and racial constraints of the time, sometimes with the support of improvement societies. These groups were inspired by African American rural industrial education initiatives such as the Jeanes movement, which recruited Black women educators to teach practical skills in rural Southern towns as a form of racial uplift[25]. They often manifested as religious or social groups in urban South Africa, where they had a significant impact on the material objects that modernised women were expected to own in their modern homes. Newspaper advertisements aimed at aspirational middle-class black women or young black wives, who were the new key protagonists of black, urban modernism and new modern home ownership. Advertisements for other types of domestic products, such as cleaning supplies and culinary equipment, had started juxtaposing the two in illustrated adverts to create context for their products. None, on the other hand, had a history of depicting instructive imagery and black-occupied modern, domestic spaces in the extent tea advertisements had. This coincided with the mass rollout of labour housing to meet the demand for urban black homes.

Domesticity in apartheid housing

Public and labour housing were both a much-needed pragmatic solution for a rapidly growing urban population and an experiment in modernist development, predominantly pursued by architecture school graduates of the 1930-1940s[26]. The state approached the solution to the urgent need to house low-income black with the different variations of the 1920s Housing Act "to provide for loans of public moneys for the construction of dwellings"[27]. The funds were allocated to municipalities and intended to subsidise the ownership and leasing of houses. D.M. Calderwood was a South African architect and researcher responsible for addressing the so-called "Native Housing problem", during the 1950s by developing national standards for state-funded housing while minimising costs for the new Nationalist government's township building programme[28].

New houses designated for "native" or black residents were under the group category known as Non-European (NE) housing which was introduced in 1951 to categorize and segregate housing for different racial groups. The typology succeeded a handful of experimental

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[24] Victoria Vygodskaia-Rust, "Housewives as New Women: Marital Relations and Domesticity in Vicki Baum's Zwischenfall in Lohwinckel (1930)", *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 54, n.º 2 (September 2021): 157–182. https://doi.org/10.1353/mml.2021.a901610.

[25] Carline, "Wise Mothers and Wise Buyers...", 291–308.

[26] Giorgio Miescher, "The NE 51 Series Frontier: The Grand Narrative of Apartheid Planning and the Small Town", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 41, n.º 3 (May 4, 2015): 561–580.

[27] Miescher, "The NE 51 Series Frontier...", 444

[28] "Calderwood, Douglas McGavin", *Artefacts (website)*, accessed July 2023, https://www.artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/archframes.php?archid=2679.

housing typologies that were considered either inefficiently designed or unsustainable[29]. The NE 51/6, NE 51/8, and NE 51/9 were for Indian, Coloured and black South Africans respectively, each category represented the living conditions and opportunities associated with different racial groups. These were prototypes designed as a result of an architectural thesis and were intended to be conceptual diagrams to guide future development[30]. Amongst the considerations made by the architect, D.M. Calderwood in designing this typology, was the importance of "proper" township housing to the morality of its inhabitants[31]. According to him, this was essential in preventing broken homes. Creating conditions for the ideal urban black citizen was a shared aspiration by policymakers and the National Housing and Planning Commission who selected Calderwood's proposal for mass reproduction. However, these house designs were also selected on the merit of their low implementation costs. The rental categorisation and designs of the models implied that these were homes intended for middle-class non-Europeans[32]. The 51/9 houses were the least developed of the typology, but the NE 51/6 house for Indian families were relatively better in terms of infrastructure and amenities compared to other NE housing categories[33]. They often featured better construction quality, access to basic utilities like as running water and electricity, improved sanitation facilities and more spacious living areas suitable for middle-class living.

The 51/9 prototype design, named the "3 roomed house" had two bedrooms but was and was designed to house 6 to 7 individuals. The presentation drawing's furniture layout shows the option of having six beds - a sleeping space for two people could be arranged in the living room (fig. 3).

The living room area, as with all other rooms have been reduced significantly from earlier housing typologies and the dining room function is absorbed into the kitchen. Calderwood claimed this closed floor arrangement afforded more privacy, which was true and in fact a requirement if multiple or extended families lived there. The insistence of this design arrangement could be further owed to the post-industrial style of separate living rooms for family life being standardised and considered middle-class[34]. These spaces were insufficient for

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[29] D. M. Calderwood' thesis used existing experimental housing as case studies to produce a more efficient typology design. He dismissed the designs of various native housing schemes as "wasteful", "awkwardly planned" or in need of improvement. These were generally larger than his low-cost proposal.

[30] Calderwood's thesis became the blueprint of township homes around the country, much to his dismay after stipulating the drawings were a result of a theoretical exercise.

[31] Jason Hickel, "Social Engineering and Revolutionary Consciousness: Domestic Transformations in Colonial South Africa", *History and Anthropology* 23, n.º 3 (September 2012): 301–322.

[32] *Economic, sub-, and sub sub-economic* rental housing were the available low-income native house options designed according to income and survey results and made with the assurance of the fiscal dependability of each social group.

[33] The NE 51/9 houses were built at the legally mandated "minimal standards" of building or National Housing Office's, Minimum Standards of Housing Accommodation For Non-Europeans.

[34] This was also influenced by Victorian design principles. Working classes traditionally lived in cramped, open planned conditions. The design arrangement and the residential living room became a symbol of modernity and social status, reflecting Western ideals of domesticity.

comfortable family living in the high occupancy numbers projected for each unit, let alone for the portrayal of aspirational middle-class living that urban black people would associate with being in a modern settlement, far away from the lesser developed homelands. Calderwood's review of a built unit he visited in 1954, three years after the initial publication of his design in *An Approach to Low-Cost Urban Native Housing in South Africa*:

> It is intended at the beginning to sell the economic houses and rent the sub-economic and sub-sub- economic dwellings. The tenants have, in the short period of occupation, improved their houses by the addition of floors, ceilings and plastered walls and have developed such attractive gardens that the original decision may have to be reviewed. [35]

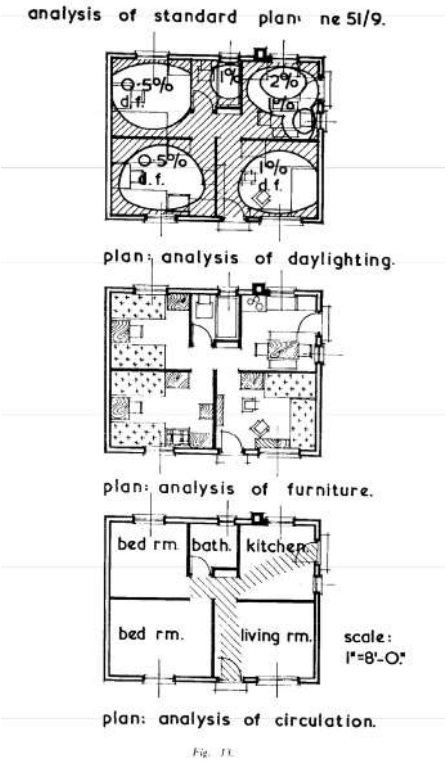

Figure 3. D. M. Calderwood, "Native Housing in South Africa". Source: PhD thesis. University of the Witwatersrand, 1953.

This implies that despite the sub-economic NE 51/9 houses being marginally equipped to be lived in comfortably, long and short-term renters were earnestly invested in improving them and to perhaps to emulate the social practices accommodated in modern homes of

[35] D. M. Calderwood, "An Approach to Low Cost Urban Native Housing in South Africa", *Town Planning Review* 24, n.º 4 (January 1954): 312. https://doi.org/10.3828/tpr.24.4.w9625x4640683512.

a higher class[36]. This was achieved through small interventions, decorative finishes and investments in objects of contemporary material culture that could transform the aesthetic and function of the occupied space. Betty Spence, who was also a South African architect, surveyed the township house interiors in the 1950s and recorded the transformation of how living rooms took on different forms at different times of the day based on their occupation. According to Spence, homes were dynamic spaces in constant flux and informed by social, economic and infrastructural informants of each household[37]. Some families did not require to transform the living room space for a secondary function or to accommodate large numbers. In those instances, the rooms would undergo smaller transformations to host events as small tea parties or larger affairs in accordance with the traditions of each practice. Tea advertisements, which had dominated the visual culture of hosting images by then, became a point of reference of how such occasions were performed.

Postures of hospitality

The Ceylon Tea (Bureau) adverts were formulaic. In each, an aspirational ambassador (whether real or fictional) introduces tea's purported health benefits, give instruction on its preparation and provide a visual reference for a tea-drinker. For decades, the message and image were widely disseminated, reinforcing the public's perception of a Ceylon Tea consumer. The prominent visuals were of the models and as with most educational cartoons, the illustrated behaviours used convey the message. The cartoons' backgrounds were frequently left blank or sparsely furnished.

Major tea merchants with brands such as the popular Joko and Five Roses ran adverts concurrently to the Ceylon Tea Bureau's in *Bantu World* from the 1930s to 1950s and in *Drum Magazine* beyond those dates. Their adverts regularly consisted of illustrations of the tea packaging accompanied by a slogan or new price promotions. Joko Tea's 1950s ad campaign in *Drum magazine* was, much like other products with higher budgets a photographed campaign. What made it stand apart from other tea adverts were the elements of domestic scenography that were not commonly photographed in adverts for household goods. This campaign's thematic premise was frequently hospitality, with at least one host or hostess serving guests or relatives. Everyone included appears to be youthful, well- dressed, and in a fragment of a modern home (fig. 4). Although hospitality in was already practiced as part of Ubuntu, or humanity (or similar African practices of co-existence), it was a domestic practice that did not typically involve the performative display of one's best possessions or attire as implied in these images.

A formally prepared table with a cloth and a tea set from which guests are drinking occupies each the foreground. The image presented became the typical aspirational posture for black, urban entertaining. Though probably not the originators, it appears the tea adverts were at the forefront of representing home entertainment in this manner. In the same

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[36] Calderwood, "An Approach to Low Cost Urban...", 323. This unit had the thinnest walls of the typology, no ceilings or insulation, and no floor finishes except a concrete slab in the kitchen and passage.

[37] Rixt Woudstra, Hannah le Roux, "'Build Your Own House': Betty Spence's Design-Research in 1950s South Africa", *Architectural Theory Review* 26, n.º 3 (September 2, 2022): 427–457.

way that Mr. Tea-Drinker (and later, his family) became a visual motif for the modern tea drinker, the Joko tea party was a visual culmination of many of the social aspirations of black domesticity that had been theorised or partially composed in print media. Postures of hosting or specifically, those intended for publishing mimicked Joko's stills of a tea party dramatization.

Photos from the Robert Ngilima Collection for instance are testament of this. Ngilima was a self- taught photographer from the township of Wattville where he owned a 'sub-economic house'[38]. He made a residential studio of it, furnishing and staging it for his mostly working-class clients. He depicted the aspirational daily lives of his clients. Amongst the most popular staged scenarios was the serving and drinking of tea (fig. 5, fig.6). Clients would dress up in formal clothing and pose at the staged tea party, similar to that of a Joko advert. Similar postures are seen in magazine feature stories where middle class subjects assume a similar pose in their own homes.

Figure 4. Joko tea print adverts. Source: *Drum,* 1955.

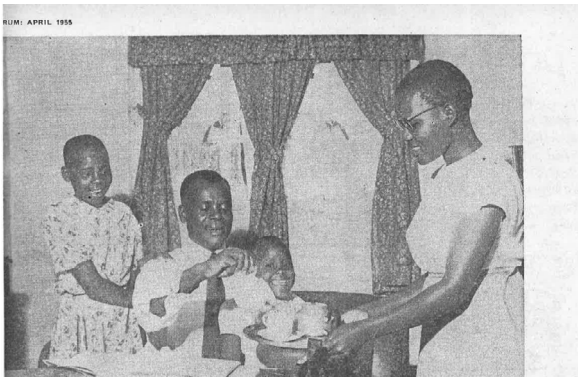

Figure 5. Radio personality story feature: Masterpiece in Bronze. Source: Drum, 1955.

[38] Calderwood, "An Approach to Low Cost Urban...", 312. Sub-economic houses were labour homes for families who could afford to only pay part of the rent, built commonly during the 1950s.

Figure 6. Performing a teatime scene. Source: Box X, Roll 13, Ngilima Archive Ngilima Collection, 1940-60.

Conclusion

The intricate interplay between tea advertisements, colonial ideologies, and evolving notions of black urban domesticity in the South African press reveals a complex narrative of influence and transformation. Tea adverts produced a visual and behavioural blueprint for modernised black urban domestic sociability extending beyond mere product promotion and blending aspirational ideals of modern black domesticity with a legacy of cultural practices related to British tea drinking practices. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that while they embraced certain aspects of modernity, they did so within spatial constraints of racially exclusionary practices and were a largely aspirational portrayal of a lifestyle that could be achievable by a small demographic of black labourers.

These advertisements are not merely a reflection of a stylistic trend of portraying an internationally recognised social tradition; they are evidence of enduring occupancy ideologies that the black aspirant class adopted and then assimilated. Furthermore, early and consistent portrayals of tea's spatialised and material culture in black modern homes ensured a permanent legacy of domestic performance, even for individuals who could only afford modest, symbols of upward mobility and ownership.

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