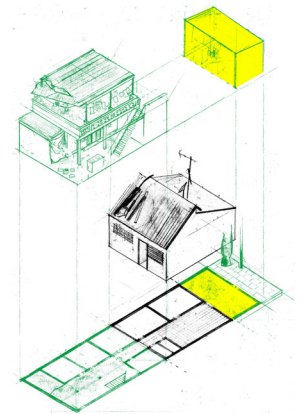
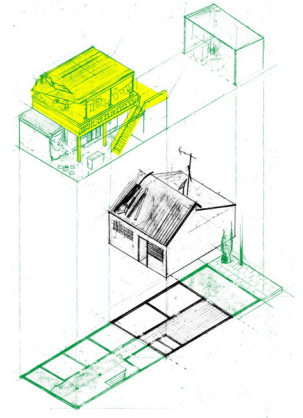
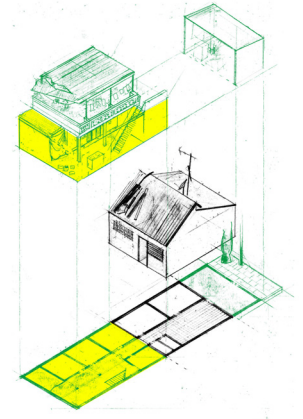
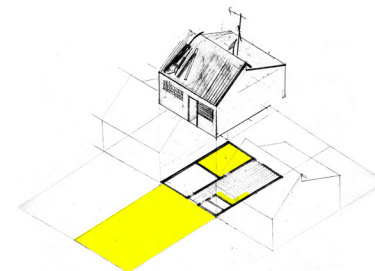
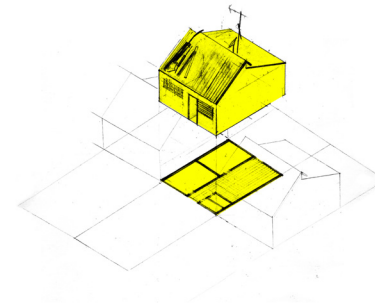
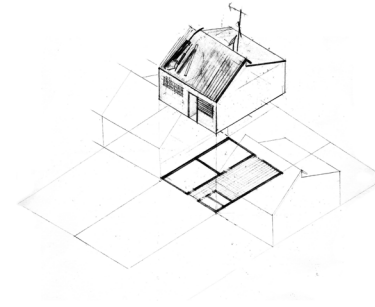


LIVED MODERNITY IN TEMA: STUDYING HOME HISTORIES

HANNA VERA BAUMANN



<u>01.INTRODUCTION</u>	03
<u>02.METHODS</u>	06
<u>03.SOCIAL AND FAMILY MODERNIZATION PROCESSES DURING NKRUMAHISM</u>	07
<i>PLANNING AND BUILDING A NEW TOWN</i>	07
<i>LEAVING BEHIND COLONIAL TIMES WITH A GREEK URBANIST</i>	08
<i>TRACING DOMESTIC CONCEPTS IN TEMA</i>	11
<u>04.A MICROVIEW ON LIVED MODERNITY IN TEMA</u>	16
<i>BARBARA'S HOME HISTORY, REMODELLING A HOME</i>	16
<i>KOJO'S AND SANDRA'S HOME HISTORY, REINTERPRETING „WORKING AT HOME“</i>	21
<i>A PLAYGROUND IN BETWEEN</i>	25
<u>05. CONCLUSION</u>	29
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	32

01. INTRODUCTION

“The most fundamental thing about life is that it does not begin here or end there, but is always going on. And for the same reason, (...) environments are never complete but are continually under construction.”

(Tim Ingold, p. 173 in: the perfection of the environment, 2011)

In Tema, people live in a town that was planned and built at the turning point of Ghana's move towards independence under the regime of Kwameh Nkrumah. Doxiadis, a Greek urbanist and architect, designed a very rasterized and rational plan, providing homes for workers that would move to Tema from all over Ghana. This was a plan that promised fast modernization and included social engineering. Walking through the streets of Tema today with the plans and visualizations of Doxiadis in mind, one can easily recognize that the city has changed over its sixty years of existence. Many of the families who live there have remodeled their homes. Small stores, bars, and food stands in front of the houses have appeared and almost all the inhabitants have extended their houses in

the backyard in order to meet with their needs for more space, as the families grew over time. Did people in Tema completely reject the ideas of the Greek planner? And should we look at Tema as a complete failure where the urban planner didn't care about the future inhabitants of his town, but rather wanted to build what was to him an ideal city? By taking a closer look at Tema as it is today as well as the planning of this town, a process framed by many contradictions, one understands that the picture is not as black and white as it may appear at first glance. In order to answer the previously stated questions and gain an understanding of Tema's history and existence today, I proceeded as follows. The procedure is more or less in line with the organization of the paper. First of all, I looked at the history of planning Tema from its very beginning, which reaches back seven years before Ghana's independence. The town was planned and built at a milestone in Ghana's history and under frictions of old colonial ideologies and modernization processes intended to lead Ghana towards independence. Further, I looked at the social engineering, family modernization proces-

ses and ideas on domesticity and gender implemented in the planning by analyzing the plans and visualization of Doxiadis and tried to understand how they did or perhaps did not go together with Nkrumah's vision of a new independent Ghana. In the last part of the paper, I tried to understand how people live in Tema today, through a micro-analysis of two houses and the space in between that I've visited. By gathering these family and home histories, I wanted to understand how people in Tema have adopted or rejected the ideas implemented in the top-down planning of Doxiadis. By looking at the changes the houses have gone through and by talking to their inhabitants about their family histories, I wanted to learn how people in Tema have created their own modernity.

02.METHODS

While the first part of the paper has been done mostly by library and archive research, the second part builds on material that I've gathered during a ten-day fieldtrip to Ghana with the University of Basel. I would like to anticipate in the beginning of the paper that this was the first time in my life that I've been to Ghana, in fact the first time that I've visited sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the readings I've done on Tema, I was a total stranger in the city, and I am aware that the picture I have drawn of Tema, even on the specific site I chose, is by no means complete. Not to mention that especially for an extremely intimate topic, such as gathering home histories and looking at people's houses, the time was very short. Coming from the background of architecture, I decided to bring in my previous studies by focusing on a spatial topic and visually capturing the sites that I have looked at, but the methods I used also included very different ones from what I was used to. The material for the home histories I gathered during informal conversations, spending time in Community IV in Tema, talking to strangers about their homes and family histories. I was lucky to get Barbara's contact

before I went to Tema the first time, and she was very willing to participate in my studies. The second Time I went to Tema, I got to know Kojo independently from Barbara in front of his sister's Bar. He, too, was very helpful and willing to show me around his house and talk together with Sandra about their childhood and how it was growing up in Tema. Since it made sense for me to narrow my studies down to a very small part of the city due to the limited time, I decided to focus mainly on this specific area. I spent the few days in Tema almost only in these two homes or on the playground in between, talking and spending time with Kojo, Sandra and Barbara. I am aware that the family histories are told in a very one-dimensional way since I only talked to one family member in Barbara's case and two in Kojo's case all of whom where about the same age as I am. However, these two home histories should not be seen as representative but serve as two of many possible case studies. In the paragraph about the playground, I also included testimonies of other people I talked to in Tema, these as well are based on informal conversations I held during my time in Tema.

03. SOCIAL AND FAMILY MODERNIZATION PROCESSES DURING NKRUMAHISM

THE BEGINNING OF PLANNING A NEW TOWN

The city of Tema has been planned during an era marked as a political turning point of Ghana. The time that passed between planning and birth of the city saw the transition from colonial conditions to a postcolonial situation. While the planning of a New Town in Tema Harbor reaches back seven years before Ghana's independence, when the building site came to an end, Kwame Nkrumah had led the country towards an independent state freed from former colonial power. As early as in 1950, the idea came into being of the establishment of a new port and an industrial city near Accra, on the site of a small fishing village. The essential idea behind it was to more efficiently extract, produce and circulate precious resources, such as bauxite and aluminum. From the very beginning of its existence, Tema was already in between local, colonial and impending neo-colonial powers' aspirations. (D'Auria, 2014: 42)

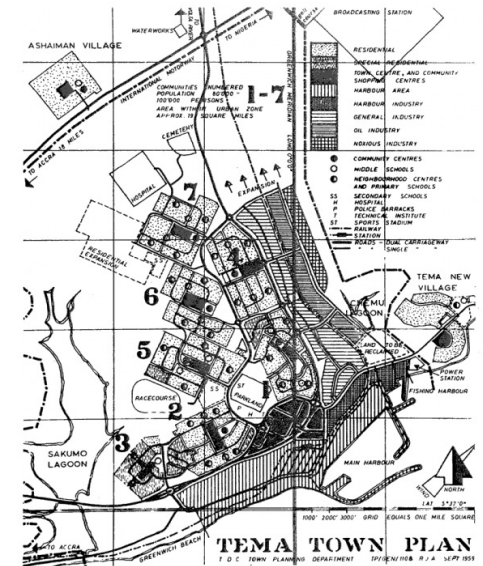
Two years after, in 1952, the plan was set in motion, as it was finally decided to erect a new town. The

“Tema Development Corporation”, which managed the building of the new town (and is until today the administrative body of Tema) was founded, modeled after English New Town administrative bodies. Alfred Alcock, an English planner, drew the first layout for the town. The similarity of his design with a typical English New Town were conspicuous. In fact, by then the idea of Tema was quintessentially an imported concept from England, “a complete package that had been exported from the motherland to Ghana”. (Provoost, 2015) 1952 was not only the final birth hour of Tema, it was also the year when Kwame Nkrumah, who would later lead Ghana towards independence, was chosen to be president of what was then still the English colony of the Gold Coast. An overwhelming majority voted for the imprisoned activist, who was then released from jail and rapidly grew into a popular hero. Nkrumah, who was politically considered a Marxist Socialist, aimed to lead Ghana towards independence in the shape of a modern state-run industrial power, rather than relying on the traditional agriculture. The industrialization of the

country was a key element in his modernization efforts. (Provoost, 2017: 318)

LEAVING BEHIND COLONIAL TIMES WITH A GREEK URBANIST

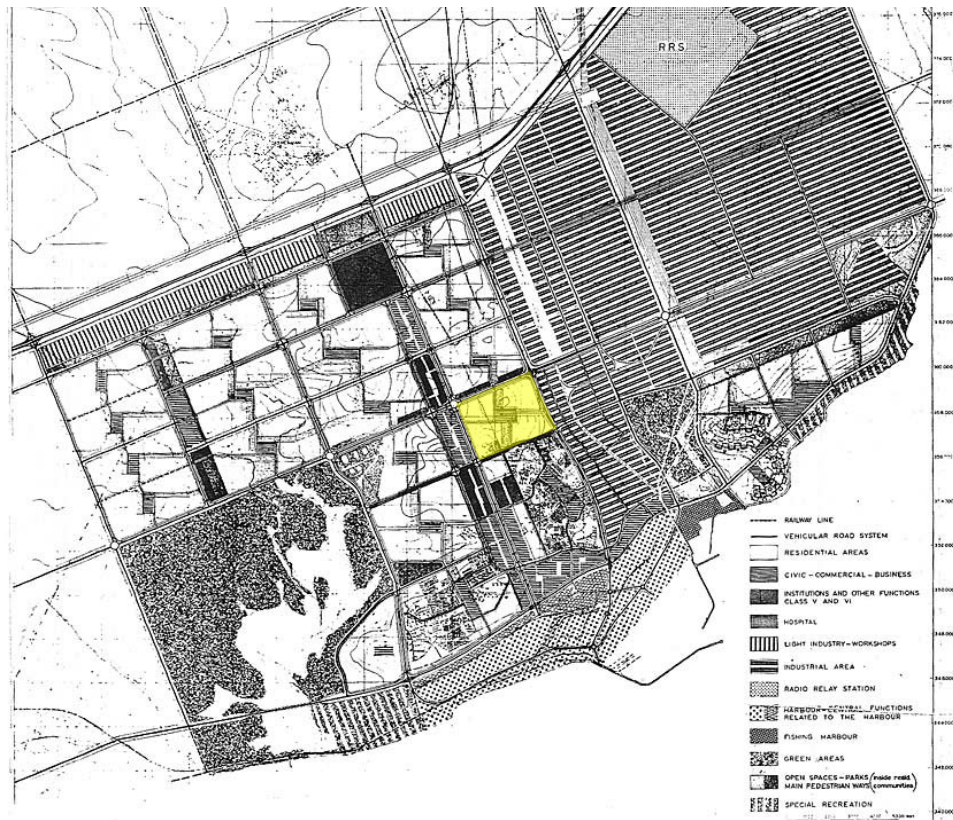
By the mid 1950s, many people from all over Ghana already started to move to Tema, attracted by the opportunities of the new harbor and the city, which at that time were growing into a major economic project. Most of these people were impoverished peasants who tried to find labor in Tema. The town by then only consisted of temporary barracks in community IV and Tema village that later got built over. Soon an extensive slum without infrastructure, running water, or sewage emerged right next to the planned area. The existing urban plan as well as the building capacity of the Tema Development Corporation were obviously not prepared for the influx of people attracted by the port and the new city. (Provoost, 2017: 13) Alcock's picturesque utopia of an English Town seemed to be unable to match with Nkrumah's ambitious plan



„Tema Town Plan“ by the Englishman Alfred Alcock. Even though Doxiadis changed the plan to a gridiron city, some of the Ideas from Alcock's plan are visible in the built city of Tema today.

Source: Overseas Building Notes, no. 87, May 1963

and the reality of the high speed of urbanization. Nkrumah got rid of Alcock and instead hired Constantinos Doxiadis, a Greek architect who had made himself a name with big scale urban projects such as Islamabad or Rawalpindi in Pakistan. Not only his goal-oriented and rational way of thinking seemed to make him the perfect man, but also the fact that he was not an Englishman, which reminded too much of the recently left behind colonial power. Doxiadis convincingly presented



Master layout of Doxiadis for Tema from 1961. On the right is the industrial area and on the left the residential communities, of which not all were built. Marked in yellow is the Community IV: A community for low and lower-middle income housing and also the community where I did the research for this Paper.

Source: Constantinos A. Doxiadis Archives

Greece in a favorable light, as a country on the frontier between developed and developing. (Provoost, 2017: 342) He himself had a close tie to international development aid organizations and since he, as already mentioned, had experience in working outside Europe, he was

prepared and familiar with issues such as enormous demographic and economic growth. When Doxiadis got involved into the planning of Tema in 1961, the nearby urban village Tema Manhean as well as Community 1 and 2 were already completed by English architects

Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew. The winding roads of Alcock's first Plan for Tema were straightened wherever possible. Systematically Doxiadis got rid of all the irregularities. An orthogonal grid of main roads, in which he subordinated the already existing communities as well as a series of newly built, almost identically organized communities. Nevertheless, the masterplan that Doxiadis proposed for Tema embodied several aspects that you would find in a classical English New Town, like the one of Alcock. For example, the subdivision into communities that should work as independent neighborhoods, each with its own schools, or the hierarchy of roads. However, Doxiadis raised the concept of "Building a New Town" to another level: "The neighborhood units were standardized and enlarged; they were submerged in an ever-expanding grid, which was not supposed to contain or limit growth, as were the original English New Towns, but on the contrary: to facilitate growth." (Provoost, 2017: 342) It was a concept Doxiadis invented, made use of in his earlier urban designs, and called "Dynapolis": A systematic approach to how cities of the future

should potentially look. Doxiadis didn't predominantly aim to meet local cultural conditions, he rather wanted to offer a new cultural ideology to the people that would move to Tema. Rather than first analyzing the area by talking to the inhabitants or taking a deeper look into the local culture, he decided to go with a more abstract approach. Maybe the fact that he was planning for a largely unknown population played the key role in this, but certainly it was also a conscious decision of Doxiadis's. A highly generic system of roads and houses which should, instead of meeting local cultures, serve "as a container for a complex of social goals, such as community creation, emancipation, modernization and economic progress." (Provoost, 2017:350) In fact, Doxiadis underlaid and somehow justified his ideology with a self-invented science, he called "Ekistics, the Science of Human Settlements", where all aspects of human settlements were classified in a system that consists of five elements: Nature, Man, Society, Shells,

and Networks. (Doxiadis, 1968: 22) It begins with the carefully designed public spaces and public institutions, like schools and churches, and reaches into the smallest entity, the organization of the many small houses. Nevertheless, there are few local factors that Doxiadis allowed to determine his design: Thus, he decided for the diagonal orientations of street networks inside the communities in order to take the most advantage of the wind coming from the nearby ocean. The backyards behind the houses, meant for growing vegetables can be seen as an adoption to the local tradition of cultivating agriculture.

TRACING DOMESTIC CONCEPTS IN TEMA

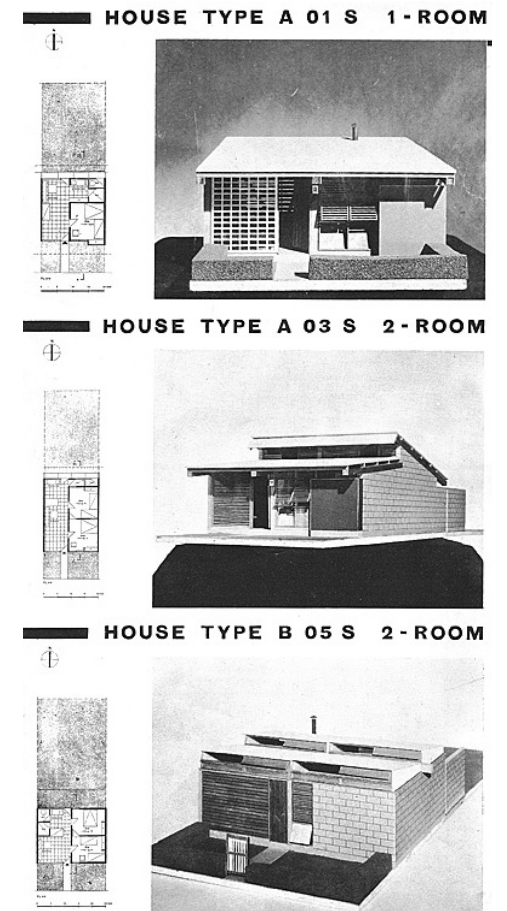
As it transpires, Tema is not only the mathematical rasterized top-down plan that it may look like at first sight. In fact, social engineering in order to create a modernized society was a major factor that influenced the planning strategies of Tema, where Nkrumah and Doxiadis, both of whom “did not particularly intend to brutalize existing lifestyles, but did aim to educate the Ghanaian people and guide

them in the direction of economic progress and modernization” (Provoost, 2017: 318), seem to make a perfect match. For Nkrumah’s party, the CPP, it was important that the citizen herself had to be reoriented, even modernized, in order to meet the assumed realities of the postwar world. “Here, the labor movement, the nature of work itself, family and gender relations, youth culture, ethnicities (...), among others, all came under the purview of the CPP’s long view of decolonization.” (Ahlman, 2017: 12) These ideas on education and guidance contained in the planning of Tema reaches deeply into intimate questions of domesticity, family concepts and gender roles and become visible in plans and documents Doxiadis produced for Tema.

Traditionally, Ghanaians tend to arrange their lives around the extended family; they live together with spouses, their children, grandparents, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces and cousins. (Dzramedo et al., 2018: 45) Nkrumah and Doxiadis both saw this traditional extended family model as unfit for a modern industrialized society and aspired to introduce the nuclear family model in the city of Tema. (Provoost,

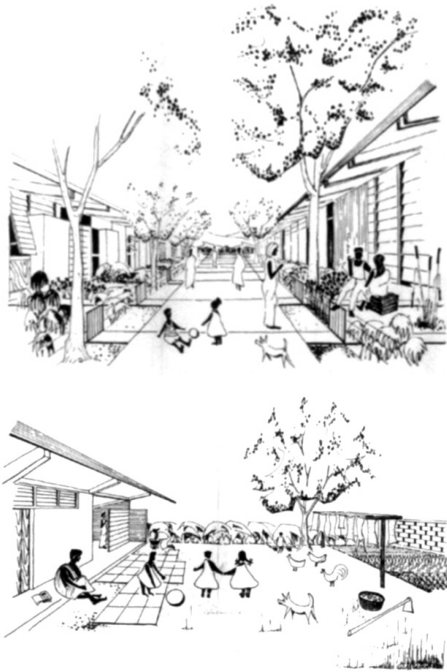
2017: 457 / Global Housing: 195) Precisely for this reason Doxiadis rejected the concept of the traditional compound house, which is fitted for the extended family. Looking at the original floor plans of the small row houses framing the streets of Community IV in Tema, this intention becomes evident. Instead of relying on local building types, he designed simple homes that consist of one or two bedrooms, a living room, a small bathroom and a toilet, perfectly aligned for young couples with one or two children. Behind each of the houses, there is a quite generous backyard meant for growing vegetables, drying laundry and the opportunity to extend the house at a later stage with one or two rooms, as the families would eventually grow. In the front there is a small terrace, which aims to connect the house with the street. In fact, for Doxiadis and his Team the row house did not only represented this ideal of the nuclear family, but combined several advantages, such as the opportunity for cultivating agriculture, enough space to extend the house at a later stage as well as privacy to families coming from different tribes and origins. As Viviane D’Auria writes:

„(...) a projected lifestyle emerging out of an odd combination of traditional and post-rural ingredients: urban agriculture and intensive



Experimental housing types that Doxiadis designed for low and lower-middle income families. While in the layout they remind of houses you would find in English New Towns, the appearance is nevertheless a different one. Unisolated brickwalls with sheet metal roofing and unglazed openings for air-conditioning.

Source: Constantinos A. Doxiadis Archives



Visualizations Doxiadis did in addition to the plan. Titled: „view of a pedestrian road with one-story houses“ and „view of back yard in one-storey one-family houses“.

Source: Constantinos A. Doxiadis Archives

industrial labor, incremental growth and extended family, tribal coexistence guaranteed by the single allotments of modern rowhousing – an incongruous if not impossible blend of ingredients.“ (D’Auria, 2010: 55) However, the image Doxiadis creates in visualizations he made in addition to the plans, then again propogates a very western-styled domesticity and can give us a sense

on how he imagined family life in Tema. In the first visualization we see a day scene which takes place in one of the many streets in the domestic area of Tema. The streets in the communities between the family houses are all designed as pedestrian streets. As we can guess from this drawing, they are intended to work as social spaces, where the inhabitants would meet with each other, have time to mingle, and children from different families would play together. It is noticeable that mainly women and children are shown on the drawing; perhaps this can be read as an indication that Doxiadis thought that since the men were full-time employed, the streets would be filled mostly with women taking care of their homes during the daytime. The second visualization, which shows a mother with children in the backyard of the house, manifests the image of the housewife who looks after the children at home and takes care of the garden and the laundry. In contrast to this image of the housewife seen in Doxiadis’s visualizations stands the high amount of nurseries, schools and

middle schols he included in the master layout of each community, offering free education to all the children in Tema, which would relieve the women from bringing up their children all by themselves. Of course, this unusual amount of schools in Tema cannot only be assessed as a measure to relieve women from care work. Much more, these schools were a further step towards Nkrumah’s vision of a modern Ghana with an university-educated population, which would be helpful in building and developing this new era. In fact, the improvement of the education system was a main priority for Nkrumah and Tema should serve as a pilot project for Ghana’s educational reform. (Provoost, 2017: 351) Doxiadis never made clear statements about the role of women in Tema. In my interpretation, an ambiguous picture emerges that may be linked to the contradictory views on gender roles and domesticity propagated by the Nkrumah and his Party the CPP during the sixties. The CPP argued that the Nkrumahist revolution should be as much a gender revolution as a

political one. Women should be included in the revolution in different areas and the goal of the revolution should be a “complete equality between the sexes”. Publications of the party featured Ghanaian women as historical as well as contemporary actors with the task of advancing the anticolonial struggle and cultivating a nationalist consciousness. (Ahlman, 2017: 164, 165) This attempt to establish equality between the sexes can be read as an action to break with former colonial times. As we read in Sarah Akrofi-Quarcoo’s thesis, scholars have contended that the oppression of women in Europe had a direct bearing on the treatment of women in the colonies. According to Takyiwaa Manuh, while precolonial women enjoyed economic autonomy and it was normal that they combined both work in and outside the home, during colonial times the women’s sphere of influence was limited to the home “perceived as the place where women naturally and legitimately belonged and where they should exercise

power.” (Akrofi-Quarcoo, 2015: 31/32) Cultural Indoctrination, the imposition of Victorian-style domesticity, and the separate sphere of women were all factors which decreased the status of women in Ghanaian society, exposed to discrimination they suffered in economic and political structures. Even though this may be a romanticizing picture of precolonial times, one could argue that the gender roles read in Doxiadis’s visualisations and the domestic concepts of Tema were rather in line with old colonial traditions than keeping pace with the modern independent Ghanaian society that Nkrumah aimed for. However, soon the status of women during Nkrumah’s revolution also developed in another direction, since members of the party feared antisocialist dangers of a feminizing revolution, which party members observed in postwar countries such as United Kingdom or Germany. (Ahlman, 2017: 150) In the 1960s, the image of the modern male breadwinner became a revolutionary ideal and represented male respectability. Women who left home for the workplace faced discrimination and skepticism from their male colleagues and always needed to

defend their status and ability to balance out obligations in the home with those in the job for the nation. (Ahlman, 2017: 168)

04.A MICROVIEW ON **LIVED MODERNITY** IN TEMA

BARBARA’S HOME HISTORY, REMODELLING A HOME

Walking through the gridded streets of Tema, and then arriving at the playground I will later describe in more detail, Barbara’s House is hard to miss. Not all the houses in Community IV look exactly the same. There is a big variety in how the inhabitants have remodeled their entrances but the colorful facade of Barbara’s home definitely attracts attention between a row of mud-colored houses. Barbara’s uncle has given the facade a fresh coat last year and decided for a very bright

yellow with red dots on it. Barbara is 24 years old and “born and bred in Community IV in this house” where she still lives today. She lives here with her mother, her aunt, some cousins, her step-nephew and step-niece. However, this changes from time to time as family members move in and out. It has to be mentioned here that first, the terms of uncle or aunt are used in a much broader context in Ghana than we use them in the Western World. Secondly, this data of who is living in this house is maybe not all accurate, since I got different answers by repeatedly asking the

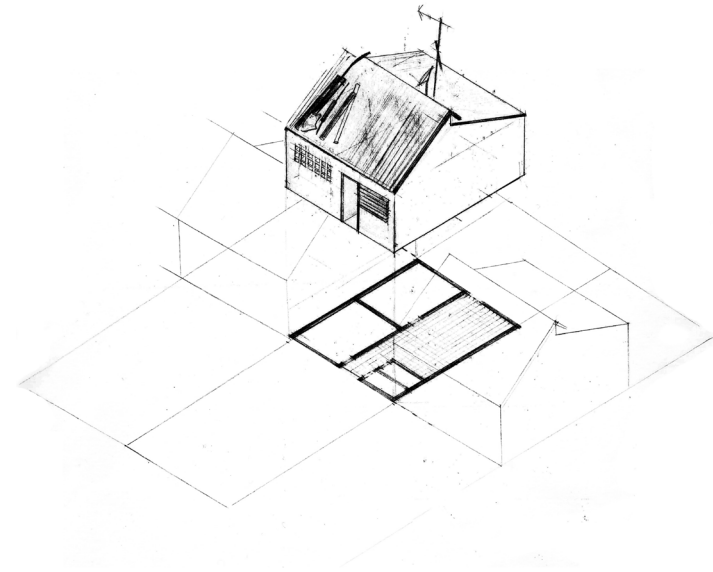


same questions. I cannot give an explanation whether this was because the people who lived there changed continually or if it was because my informants just did not want me to know the exact number of how many people lived in the house, since this would reveal to a certain extent the economic status of their families. This explanation also applies to the second home I shall elaborate on later.

Barbara works in Tema Community 10 as a teacher and through that earns money for her and her mother. Her mother used to work as a market woman but today she mostly takes care of the two-year-old step-nephew. The house was given to her Grandfather due to full-time employment at “Elder Dumpster Agencies”, one of the many agencies that were founded in order to elaborate an industrialized society. At a quite young age, her Grandfather was able to move away from his family and start his own life in Tema. Back then, he lived in the house with his first wife, with whom he had no children. His second and third wife lived with their families and their children and would only come to Tema to visit from time to time. Barbara’s grandmother was

his third wife. All of his wives had employments, Barbara’s grandmother for example used to work as a trader.

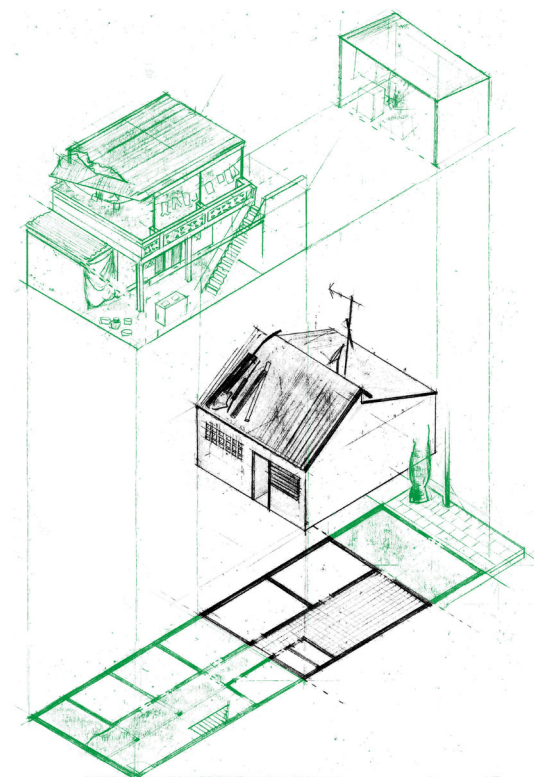
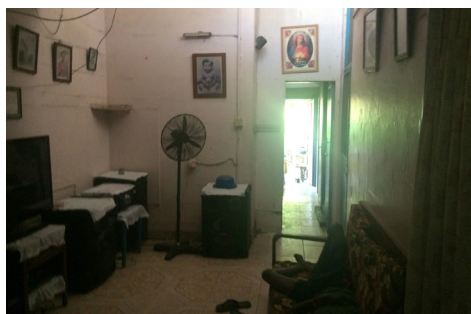
In the mid sixties, when her grandfather lived only with his first wife in the house, they used the small kitchen corner inside the living room, which the family later decided to rip out, to cook and they grew plants in the backyard. Despite the grandfather’s polyamorous lifestyle, which is until today not unusual in Ghana, how the two of them lived in the house and made use of the space quite met with Doxiadis’s imagination. The room where her grandfather used to sleep is today still kept as his room, even though he passed away seven years ago and the space of the house is very limited. The family still keep all his belongings inside this room and almost never enter it, only Barbara’s mother would go in from time to time. It seemed to me that even though he passed away, the house still belongs to him, as Barbara always speaks of “my grandfather’s house”. The family is clearly proud about the grandfather’s story: like other young people I talked to in Tema,



The original structure of Barbara’s house, as it was provided to her grandfather due to full-time employment at „Elder Dumpster Agencies“. The grandfather first lived here only with his first wife. The other two wives lived with their families and would only come from time to time to visit.

Barbara told the story in a positive manner. It was a chance for her grandfather that he was able to move away from the countryside and find a full-time employment, have his own house and earn his own money, being financially independent from his family. The family even keeps a certificate that Barbara's grandfather got for "Ten Years' Service at Elder Dumpster Agencies" prominent on the wall in the living room. As the time passed, more and more family members moved in with the Grandfather and his first wife, so did Barbara's mother when she

was pregnant, since there was no space in her grandmother's home in Jamestown. "It is normal in Ghana", Barbara told me "that when you're in need of a home and someone in your family has space, they will give you shelter" By that time, about 20 years ago, when Barbara was a child, there were about ten people living in the house, including her mother, her grandfather, his wife, cousins, uncles and her aunt; all in a house that was originally designed for a couple with one or two children. The family decided to extend the house in the backyard, since they were in need of more rooms.



Barbara's house as it is today with the extensions marked in green. Today it is still the "Tema Development Corporation" that manages the Administration of the City. If the inhabitants want to extend their houses, they have to get permissions stamped by the office. This is also the reason why there are many red writings on outdoor walls in Tema. If the people of Tema build without permission, the "Tema Development Corporation" writes on the walls that if they will not tear the walls down in a specific limited time, the corporation will come and do it for them. By doing so, the "Tema Development Corporation", once founded in the very beginning of the history of Tema New Town, today still somehow has the control over the view of the place.

The original house stayed exactly the same, but they surrounded the house with rooms in front and in the back. Her uncles built a new kitchen, a storage and two new sleeping rooms, today Barbara shares one of these sleeping rooms with her mother and they use the narrow space between the rooms that is left of the backyard for cooking. On top of these rooms, they added a roofed terrace to dry the laundry outside even when it's raining. In front of the house they immured the terrace to create an entrance for safety and so that people wouldn't step directly into the living room when entering the house. It is sometimes as well used as an extra sleeping room.

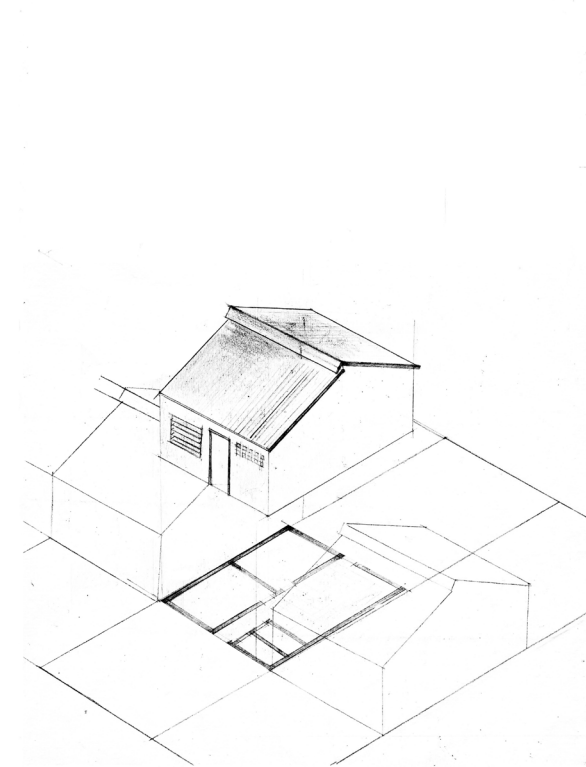
As we learned earlier, Doxiadis did take into account that the families might build one or two extra rooms in the backyard but he was probably not aware of the extent of the modifications. Through this planning, the family had the option to build extensions but to the price of living together extremely closely and losing a garden intended for cultivating plants and livestock.

It becomes obvious the family lives today as we would find it in many other households in Tema, in the extended family that Doxiadis and

Nkrumah aimed to overcome in the project of Tema. Even though Barbara talked positively about growing up in the extended family, since you not only have your mother as an attachment figure and it is definitely convenient for the grown-up family members to share the upbringing of the children, it can also be difficult, she said. "Your family always comments on your decisions and we live very close with each other, which can cause conflicts that otherwise would maybe not arise."

KOJO'S AND SANDRA'S HOME HISTORY, REINTERPRETING THE TERM „WORKING AT HOME“

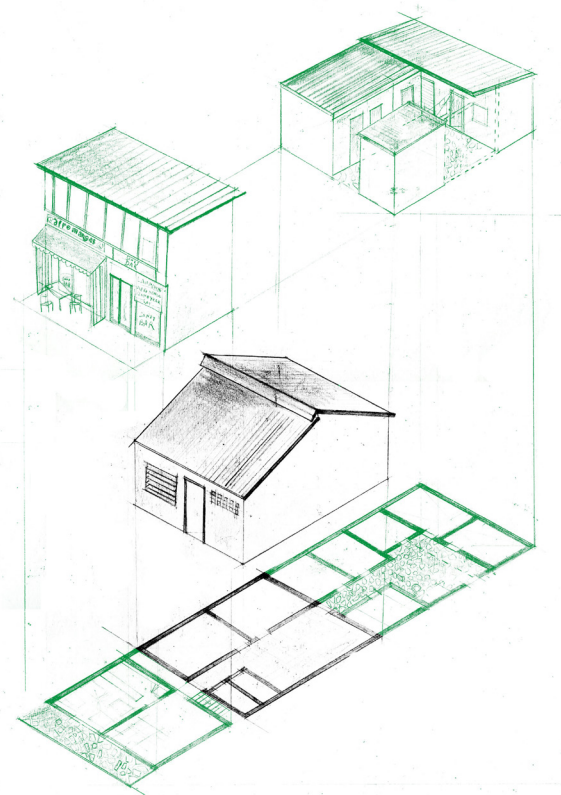
Right vis-à-vis Barbara's Home across the Playground, the "Sandy-Bar" is located. I met Kojo in front of this white, two-storied construction, which hides the view on the original structure of their house, as it was built in 1961. Kojo is 26 and studies mechanical engineering in Accra, but he has no job these days and therefore lives with his family in Tema. His sister Sandra runs the bar in front of their home. As many others, their grandparents moved here in the



Kojo's and Sandra's house as their grandparents found it when moving to Tema. Today the original structure still exists but is wrapped in the self-built extensions the family made and invisible looking from the playground.

sixties. The house was provided for rent to the grandfather, to whom a job at a sailor's company was offered. Kojo, like Barbara, referred to very positively to the fact that his grandparents had the chance to move to Tema and leave the family and the countryside behind. He as well aspires to be able to afford his own house for his family one day. In this home, too, the space of the house got more and more tight, as different family members moved in. Today Kojo and Sandra live here with their mother, their aunty, their aunty's children, and two more cousins. Some uncles come by

occasionally and help with renovations that incur from time to time. In Kojo's and Sandra's family, there is a tradition of women working in the trading business. The grandmother started to work in the fish market near the harbor when she followed her husband to Tema. When they were children, the mother of Kojo and Sandra started a small bakery in front of the house, where today you will find Sandra's Bar. The mother baked bread inside the house and sold it to the neighbors in order to make a living for herself and her children, since the father of the children was not around.



Kojo's and Sandra's house with the Sandy-Bar in front and the private extensions in the backyard both marked in green. It was mostly young men to whom the jobs and through that the houses were provided. While they were given a clear role, the women were somehow left alone with the decision what their contribution was to a modern society.

Ghanaian women, as Oppong and Abu identified, traditionally were acting simultaneously in several roles; “in the household, including those of wives, mothers, workers and housekeepers. Men also occupy multiple roles but within a much narrower band of activities.” (Kinyanjui, 2014: 323) About five years ago, Sandra took over the space in front of their house. They rebuilt the construction in front of the house. Sandra and her cousin started a hairdresser’s shop at the second floor and a bar on the street level. When the cousin moved away, they closed the hairdresser’s shop and today only the bar is open. Sandra manages the bar, she shares the business with a cousin who has a shop at community 7. The upper floor is now only used for storage. If Sandra is not at home, Kojo or whoever is around sells the beverages to the people on the playground. “It is very practical if you have your shop in front of your home, there is always someone around who can sell the drinks to the people, even when I’m not around. We are almost open 24 hours a day”, Sandra explained. In this home history we see how the women have incorporated themselves into the circuits of capital

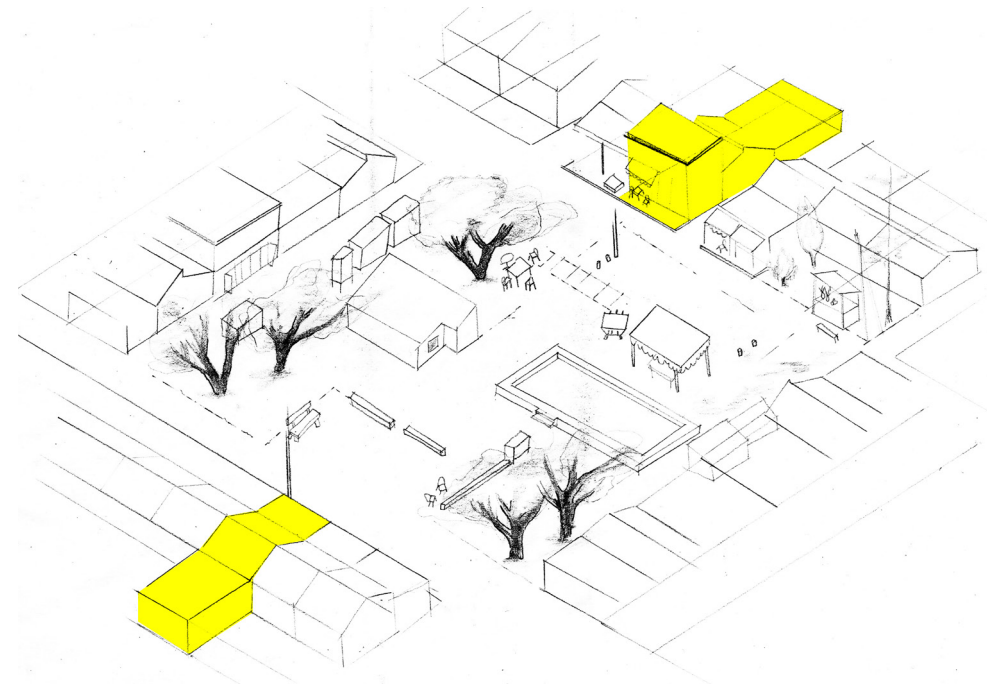
through social infrastructure. (Kinyanjui, 2014: 53) It can be debated if they strictly follow the line of Ghanaian traditions, where women have long worked in the trading business or if the mother and the daughter somehow adopted to the domesticity which was imposed on them by making use of the domestic space in order to make a living. However, their actions can be seen as an act of creativity in defining one’s own roles, which have not been clearly set by the urban plan of the city, made by men. This hypothesis is supported by Kinyanjui, who states that “To a large extent, urban planning may be said to be gender blind. Women have had to deal with an urban planning ideology that does not include them. The failure of African planners to plan for economic informality means that they do not plan for women, who form the majority.” (Kinyanjui, 2014: 5)

A PLAYGROUND IN BETWEEN

As elaborated earlier, while designing Tema, Doxiadis put a lot of effort into the design of public buildings, public space, and green areas, in order to facilitate social

cohesion within the communities. Not only was this essential in a city where every inhabitant was a newcomer without existing social structures to rely on but also important in a country with ongoing feuds between different tribes. (Provoost, 2015) In between the two homes that I visited, there is a playground, of which there are many around the neighborhood. In a mathematical system, Doxiadis placed one every

fourth street in the community. It is exactly one of these many public spaces Doxiadis planned in order to bring the people living in Tema together. I spent a lot of time on this playground, coated with brittle asphalt, when I visited Tema. Although it is a contradictory place, I felt that somehow I got a sense of how Doxiadis imagined the social life in Tema on this very spot. The people spend time together,



The so called „Playground“ in between the houses is one of the many social spaces, Doxiadis included in his design in order to bring together the inhabitants of Tema coming from different tribes. This goes hand in hand with Nkrumah’s vision of a united Ghanaian state with a shared pan-african identity amongst its people. Today People meet, drink and talk with each other on this playground. From what I observed, the place is highly gendered. As women mostly sit in front of Barbara’s home under the trees chatting, men play billiard or football under the huts and drink in front of the „Sandy-Bar“.

escaping the narrowness of their houses. Women are chatting under the trees, men play billiard and foosball in small huts, buying beer and soft drinks in Sandra's bar. Right next to them, children play football on the asphalt using broken stone poles to mark the goals. Ernest, a young Uber driver who lives in Tema and one day drove me back to Accra, told me that he liked this the most about Tema: that people are talking, playing and drinking with each other on the street. "My parents live in Accra. It is so quiet there I could not live in a neighborhood like this, in Tema

there is always someone on the streets." A young girl stands in front of her house selling fresh fruits, the family right next to her is selling wrapping paper and ribbons in a small self-made wooden hat. The place and the stories I've heard about the playground illustrate quite well the lifestyle but also the problems in Tema these days. Kojo, Sandra and Barbara reported from their childhood, when there were a lot more facilities to play, for example a climbing frame in front of Barbara's house, a music studio in one of the huts, or even a swimming pool. "It was much more

fun for us children back then." Sandra repeatedly explained. An older lady called sister Lily, who runs a care center for children, was very displeased with the transformation these places have gone through since the "Tema Development Corporation" stopped taking care. "The people are drinking right next to the children and the children have less and less space to play. The Corporation starts to sell these public grounds to private institutions." she explained. Indeed, many of the other playgrounds around community IV are hardly recognizable as playgrounds anymore. The

open space is almost fully covered with small huts, serving as offices or even homes to people.



LIVED MODERNITY IN TEMA: STUDYING HOME HISTORIES - 27



28 - A MICROVIEW ON LIVED MODERNITY IN TEMA

05. CONCLUSION

It is definitely noticeable that Tema was built during turbulent times. and somehow even shows characteristics of an experiment where ideas are not completely thought through and partly over-ambitious, hasty conclusions were made. One could say that Ghanaian society was not ready for the fast social and family modernization Nkrumah and Doxiadis envisioned. And the dream of an industrialized society where the people of Tema would work in state-led companies is far away from the reality of today's Tema. With only this information, one could look at Tema as a failed project where the planners stubbornly wanted to impose their ideology of a better world and in fact didn't spend any time on thinking about the humans that would live in this city. But as already mentioned in the introduction, that conclusion would not take into account all the diverse layers and contradictions out of which Tema arose and to this day consists of. Tema Community IV, as it I perceived it during the few days I spent there, presents itself as a livable space and most people I met enjoyed living in this area. Even though the city probably is far beyond what Doxiadis and

also Nkrumah imagined, few results of their ideology are noticeable in the Tema of today. For example, the big effort Doxiadis put into the planning of public spaces definitely plays into the urban everyday life of Tema. The inhabitants escape their dense homes and make full use of the many open and free spaces, chat with each other, or play football together. As I would argue, the people in Tema neither were back then nor are they today specifically averse to the plans of Nkrumah and Doxiadis. Following this conclusion, the remodeling of the houses should not be seen as an act of protest, but rather as an adaptation to their own requirements. Even though it was not fully intentional, the generic and adaptable forms of the houses and the unusual amount of free space in the city gave the inhabitants the possibility to adapt their environment to their needs and imaginations. Through that, the people had the opportunity to not only submit to the urban planning but rather to build up on their traditions and normalities and through that create and live their own modernity. But when talking about the houses of Tema, Community IV and how the families live in

them we cannot miss the fact that the families live together extremely closely. The houses were originally designed for four to five people; today most of them are inhabited by eight to ten family members. Even though some of the houses are extended with further levels or further rooms, the people nevertheless share a very limited space at the expense of privacy, as we learned earlier from Barbara. Lily, the older woman I mentioned earlier, explains that this extremely high density of Tema Community IV today also engenders other problems, such as a lack of social control and by that a higher criminal rate. "Twenty, thirty years ago everyone knew everyone here in Tema. You wouldn't dare to steal from someone, since everyone knew to which family you belong, everyone knew where to go to accuse you. Nowadays there are so many people living in Tema, it is impossible to have an overview. People started to commit crimes and steal from each other." And finally, coming back to the quote by Tim Ingold I placed in the beginning of this paper: Even though it was not all intentional during the planning of Tema, the city today illustrates well that we should

think of cities and architecture as dynamic spaces prepared for transformation rather than as static built environment.

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