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Quadraro: Neighborhood Analysis

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An Overview of Quadraro

I. Introduction

Quadraro is a unique Roman neighborhood because of its urban form, history, and populace. The neighborhood is composed of the older portion to the north, Quadraro Vecchio, and the newer portion to the south, Quadraretto. In this neighborhood analysis we will focus on the area identified as Quadraro Vecchio, which we will refer to simply as Quadraro.

Quadraro is a peripheral neighborhood, or a *borgata*, that retains much of the urbanism of its past (ACAVQ). It has a reputation for being working class, and its residents are known for their leftist ideological preferences. Quadraro is a neighborhood of rich history and dynamic residents, as one local artist told us, “*Queste quartiere e vero*,” or “This is a real neighborhood.” During World War II, the Nazis nicknamed Quadraro “the hornet’s nest” because of its anti-fascist resistance. After the war, Quadraro maintained this nickname because of the continuing presence of communist gangs (ACAVQ). Quadraro historically is associated with a reputation of being a place of danger and crime. However, today residents argue that the neighborhood is a tranquil place, and the belief that Quadraro is still a “bad” neighborhood is no longer true.

Quadraro’s elderly population still embraces the neighborhood’s history, and the older residents feel bound together by this collective memory. The neighborhood is currently in a period of transition as more immigrants, students, and middle-class Italians have migrated here during the last 15 years. Quadraro now faces the challenge of transcending the boundaries between these groups to improve community cohesion and support the neighborhood’s further development. Residents of Quadraro envision a neighborhood that can be historically preserved while simultaneously promoting the growth and preservation of small business ventures, social gathering points, and nighttime activities.

II. Quadraro’s Growth in Context – A Peripheral City

Quadraro began as an outer suburb of Rome in the late 1910s, and since then it has developed outward around from its center. The initial development plan divided the neighborhood’s housing into lots that were between 1,500 and 2,300 square meters (ACAVG). Quadraro experienced growth before and during World War II when thousands of poor Italians were forced to move to peripheral neighborhoods – known as *borgates* – during Mussolini’s modernization projects. During its dramatic growth in the 1950s and 1960s, Quadraro was not built as an expansion from downtown Rome but instead expanded upon its own already existing nucleus (Agnew 136). It was accessible by an aboveground tram before the underground line A was built, which eventually provided access by the Porta Furba Quadraro stop.



Neighborhood boundaries

III. 17 Aprile 1944

During World War II, Quadraro became known for its resistance to fascism. It was a refuge for political hideouts because of the presence of communist sympathizers and the elaborate underground system of tunnels, which were old Roman aqueducts. These hideouts were used as refuge by the antifascists during the frequent Nazi raids, which led to the Nazis nicknaming Quadraro “*Nido di Vespe*,” or “the hornet’s nest.”

Near the end of the war, anti-fascists from Quadraro attacked and killed a group of Nazi soldiers during a raid. On the dawn of April 17, 1944, SS captain Herbert Kappler, the man behind the Ardeatine Massacre, gathered 947 males between the ages of 18 and 50. He took the men first to piazzalone establishments in the neighborhood Cinecitta, and then to Nazi camps in Germany and Poland. Many of these men were sent to the concentration camp at Dachau and less than half of survived to return to Italy (Pugno 2003).



The shared memory of this defining historical moment for Quadraro helps create a more cohesive neighborhood

and inspired the names of buildings in the neighborhood. The sports club located behind apartment buildings to the west of Via dei Quintili is called *Nido di Vespe*, which means “hornet’s nest.” The largest park in the neighborhood, located on the eastern border, is called *17 de Aprile* and has the famous monument of a SS soldier pulling a man away from his family. The contemporary context to Quadraro’s history is further discussed in this paper.

IV. Current Issues

One of the major issues in Quadraro is the empty ground floor business spaces. Several mixed-use areas in the neighborhood, especially along Via dei Quintili, reveal an estimated 90 empty commercial spaces. Small businesses are important to the life of a neighborhood where the majority of the socializing and meeting points are inside private stores and food markets. Interviews conducted with neighborhood residents and leaders offer several hypotheses for this trend.

A. Multi-Party Ownership

The composition of the neighborhood has changed dramatically in the past ten to fifteen years. Owners have died, divided their properties, and passed them on to children and grandchildren. This multi-party ownership complicates decision making on property. New owners often live outside Quadraro and have little connection to the neighborhood. This theory is supported by observations made in the field that few empty ground floors advertise renting opportunities.

B. Residential Neighborhood

The neighborhood has never had a strong commercial presence because it was built as a residential neighborhood. People live in Quadraro and shop elsewhere. Businesses that open in the neighborhood have difficulty intercepting a network of people interested in buying their products.

C. Illegal Rent

Many building owners prefer to rent apartments illegally. Immigrants are willing to pay higher rents and fill living spaces beyond legal capacity, providing owners with higher rents and the opportunity to escape paying taxes to the government. One person believed that the rate of illegal rent was as high as 40% of the total use of empty commercial spaces.



Closed Ground-level shop

D. Commercial Alternatives

Many residents spend their money in stores outside Quadraro, and the proliferation of malls and supermarkets over the past 30 years has killed small business districts all over the city.

E. Other Important Issues

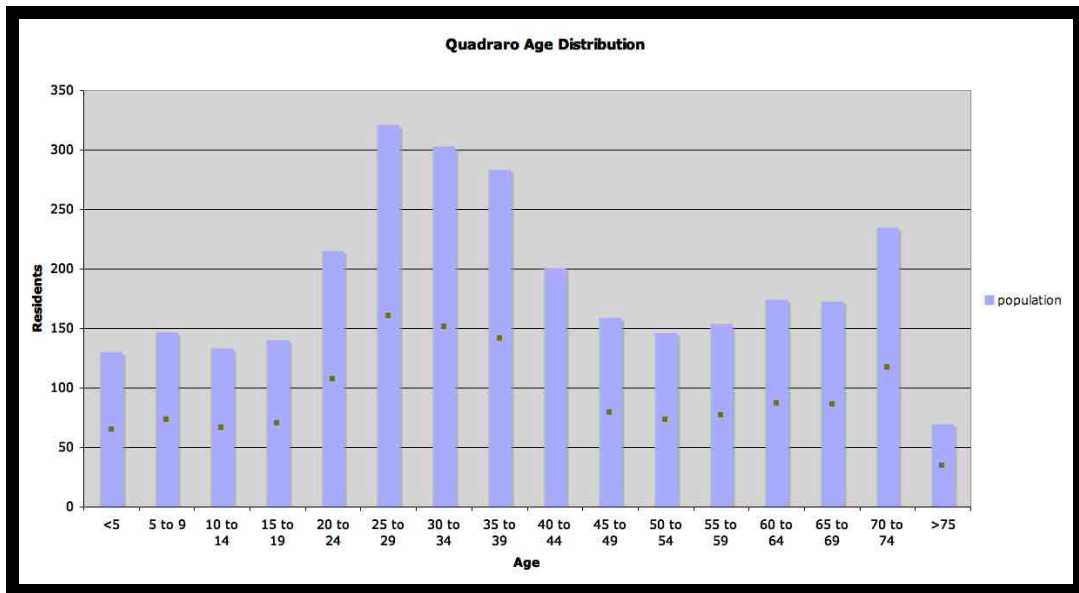
Efforts at gentrifying Quadraro are less successful than those invested in the improvement of the neighborhood would hope. The owners hope that improving the lots will allow them to sell the gentrified spaces to students and families that are looking for a quiet, inexpensive neighborhood. However, Quadraro's reputation for being poor and dangerous discourages migration into the neighborhood.

Another major issue is the lack of public space and social meeting points. Small businesses are vital meeting points in the area, but while they are dwindling there are few large places where people can gather freely. The lack of a piazza means that there is no busy open space where people encounter one another and conversations arise organically.

Political parties are a critical component to providing meeting spaces within the neighborhood. The Partito Democratico and the Partito Comunista often have meetings that typically take place in privately owned buildings. Because the political parties meet regularly, they are popular among residents as a form of social networking and active participation. Many members say that they participate because it provides them a way of improving their neighborhood as well as being a fun way to meet new people. Engaging in political activity provides young people with opportunities to interact with others in the neighborhood.

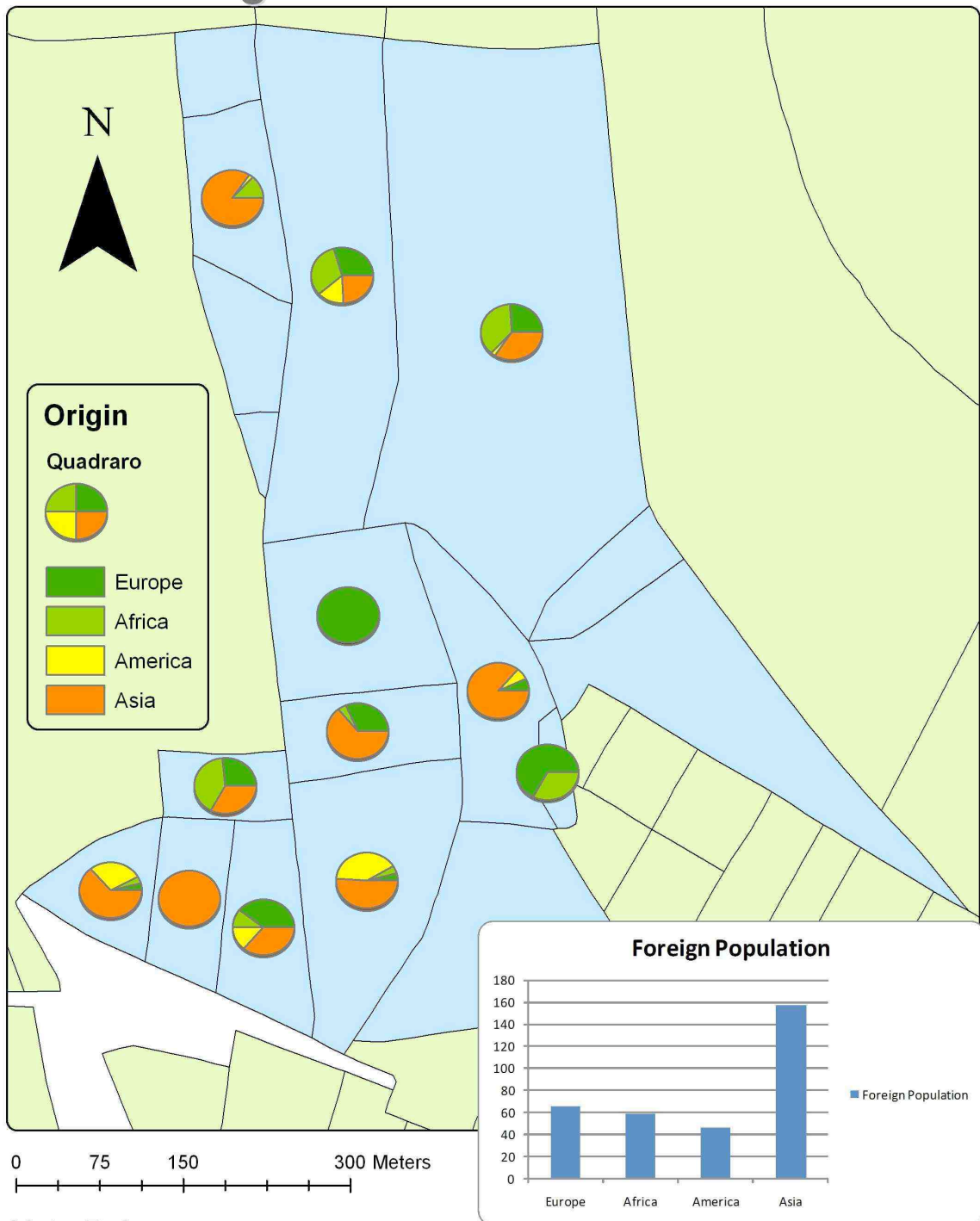
In interviews, almost everyone said that they were aware of the lack of piazza and would prefer to have one. Residents felt a piazza would be important not just as a meeting point or place to socialize but also as a site to help create an identity for Quadraro. Because there are few open meeting spaces, residents use street corners, sidewalks in front of local stores, and private spaces to congregate.

The older residents stressed the importance of the Quadraro Vecchio's history, especially with its development as a *borgata* and its hornet's nest identity. This history also gives the neighborhood a unique identity, creating a sense of place. The elderly residents shared many stories about the neighborhood and its identity, yet the younger generations seemed ignorant of Quadraro's history. This generation gap may be due to the lack of piazza and because people are constantly moving in and out of the neighborhood.



There are many different layers of social networks in Quadraro. This diversity creates social exclusion and causes difficulty in organizing across cultural boundaries. Language and culture prevent residents from mixing in social and political gatherings. The networks include older people, students, new families, and immigrant groups from Bangladesh, Korea, North Africa, and Peru. A positive aspect of the coexistence of different cultures is the increase in opportunities to shop or use services based on the variety of schedules.

Immigrants in Quadraro



Nate Baker
 Sarina Cirit
 Mia Ficerai
 Ryan Richards

Source: ISTAT (2005)
 Istituto Centrale di Statistica,
 14° Censimento della popolazione
 e delle abitazioni (2001) (Rome)

Note: Map based on 2001 ISTAT data and includes only legal immigrants

The immigrant networks develop because people associate with those who share the same culture and language, and they benefit from economic security. North African residents usually leave early in the morning and arrive late at night to work as vendors in various places throughout the city. The Bangladeshi work at the various fruit shops in the neighborhood, and interviews have shown us that this population is well liked. One resident claimed that Peruvians live in basements throughout the neighborhood, and the only evidence of a Peruvian presence was a restaurant located in a basement area that also advertises as a place to send remittances to Peru. Koreans do not live in Quadraro, although they do attend the Evangelical church on Via dei Quintili and dine at Yam Yam's restaurant after mass. Some residents claimed that people were unhappy that the historic cinema, once a symbol of the neighborhood, was converted into the Korean church. A strong theme we saw throughout the neighborhood was, as one of our interviewees stated, that "memory is precious here."

The main artery of Quadraro, Via dei Quintili, is one of the only main roads to connect Via Tuscolana, which borders the south of the neighborhood, to Via Pasolina, north of Quadraro. Because there are no other connections to these two major roads, Quintili is a busy street with fast-moving commuters. Heavy traffic pollutes the neighborhood, creates a hazard to residents, and makes the neighborhood noisy.

In this paper, we will present Quadraro's building typology, public infrastructure, cognitive maps, and citizen interviews. Together, these outline a comprehensive description of the neighborhood and help to better explain the policy issues that we encountered.

Review of Quadraro's Building Typology

I. Introduction

To gain a better understanding of the building typology in Quadraro, we made several trips to the neighborhood to study the function, age, and size of the buildings. We used AutoCAD to obtain a map of the street and building layout, and we created a color-coded system by which to sort different building types. Analyzing the building typology and distribution through the neighborhood allowed us to better understand not only the spatial makeup of Quadraro, but also underlying issues within the neighborhood and potential influences of the physical environment on its residents.

II. Methodology

Data Collection

Our system for data collection began with dividing our group into two sub-groups to survey the neighborhood. We divided Quadraro for the purpose of conducting a building survey analysis along Via dei Quintili, which we will argue to be the main axis of the neighborhood. The data collection process consisted of each group walking along their respective streets and drawing maps of the streets with every building and lot. The groups took notes on building type, condition, function, age, and size. We also recorded notes on interactions with Quadraro residents and took photographs of each building type.

The first group, Sarina and Nate, focused on Via dei Quintili, the longest north-south street corridor in our designated area, and all areas of the neighborhood located to the west of Via dei Quintili. These streets to the west of Via dei Quintili include Via dei Lentuli, Via dei Pisoni, Via Re Filippo, Via dei Juvenci, Via dei Corneli, and Via degli Arvali. The second group, Mia and Ryan, surveyed all streets within the designated neighborhood area located to the east of Via dei Quintili, which include the eastern two main north-south streets, Via Cincinnato, which run parallel to Via dei Quintili; as well as Via Diana, Via Cerere, and all other subsidiary small streets that branch off the previously mentioned primary street arteries.

Challenges in Data Organization

To create our electronic maps, we reviewed our drawings and made a color-coded classification system. The system classifies each building into different maps according to function, relative age, and height (number of storeys). In designing our classification system, we had some difficulty determining how to define certain building types. For example, we needed to decide which buildings to define as commercial units and which to define as residential units. In terms of the three major building types in the neighborhood, we concluded that we would define commercial buildings as buildings with the sole purpose of offering a commercial service; mixed-use buildings as buildings with commercial property on the ground floor-level; and residential buildings as buildings that are single-family homes or multiple units but include no commercial space. Additionally, we determined there to exist two other minor building types: religious institutions, which are buildings

devoted to any religious organization, and public institutions, which are buildings devoted to public services, such as schools or police headquarters.

III. Results and Analyses

Building Types

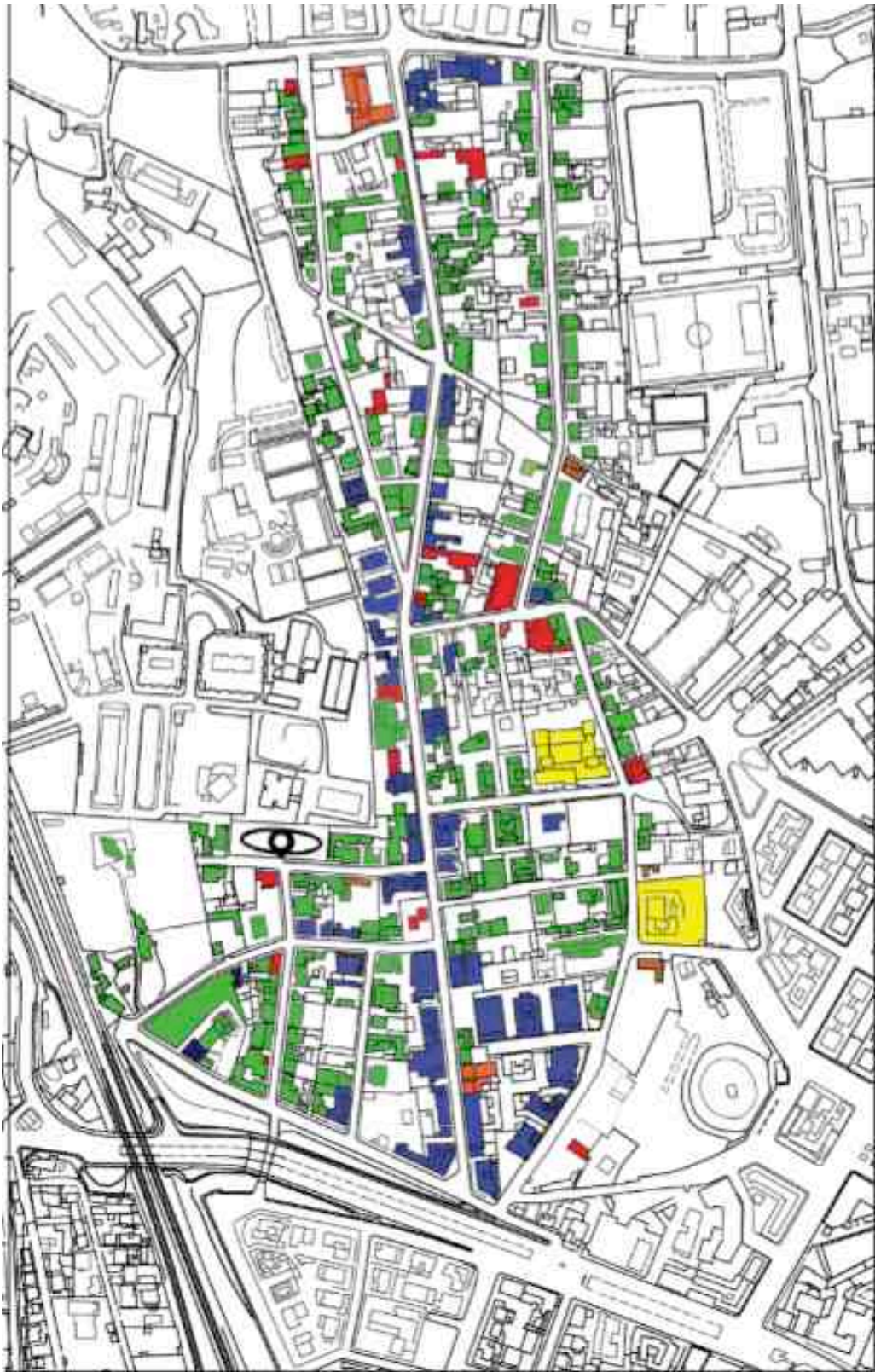
We sorted the buildings in Quadraro into three maps, each possessing different categories of relevance.

The first map depicts the function of buildings in the neighborhood according to whether the building is residential, mixed-use, commercial, religious institution, and public institution.

The second map expands upon the first map by also including the other relevant land-uses within the neighborhood, which include parks, abandoned lots, parking lots, open spaces (private/undeveloped), and agricultural land.

The third map depicts building height in the neighborhood, which are divided into the follow categories: low-rise (1-2 stories), mid-rise (3-4 stories), and high-rise (5 or more stories).

Building Typology: Map 1, Building Typology



QUADRARO BUILDING TYPOLOGY

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------------------|-----------|
| Mixed-Use
(ground floor shops) | Blue | Religious Institutions | Dark Blue |
| Residential | Green | Vacant Buildings | Orange |
| Public Institution | Yellow | | |
| Commercial | Red | | |



Residential

Residential buildings are defined as buildings that only contain residential units and no commercial space.



Commercial

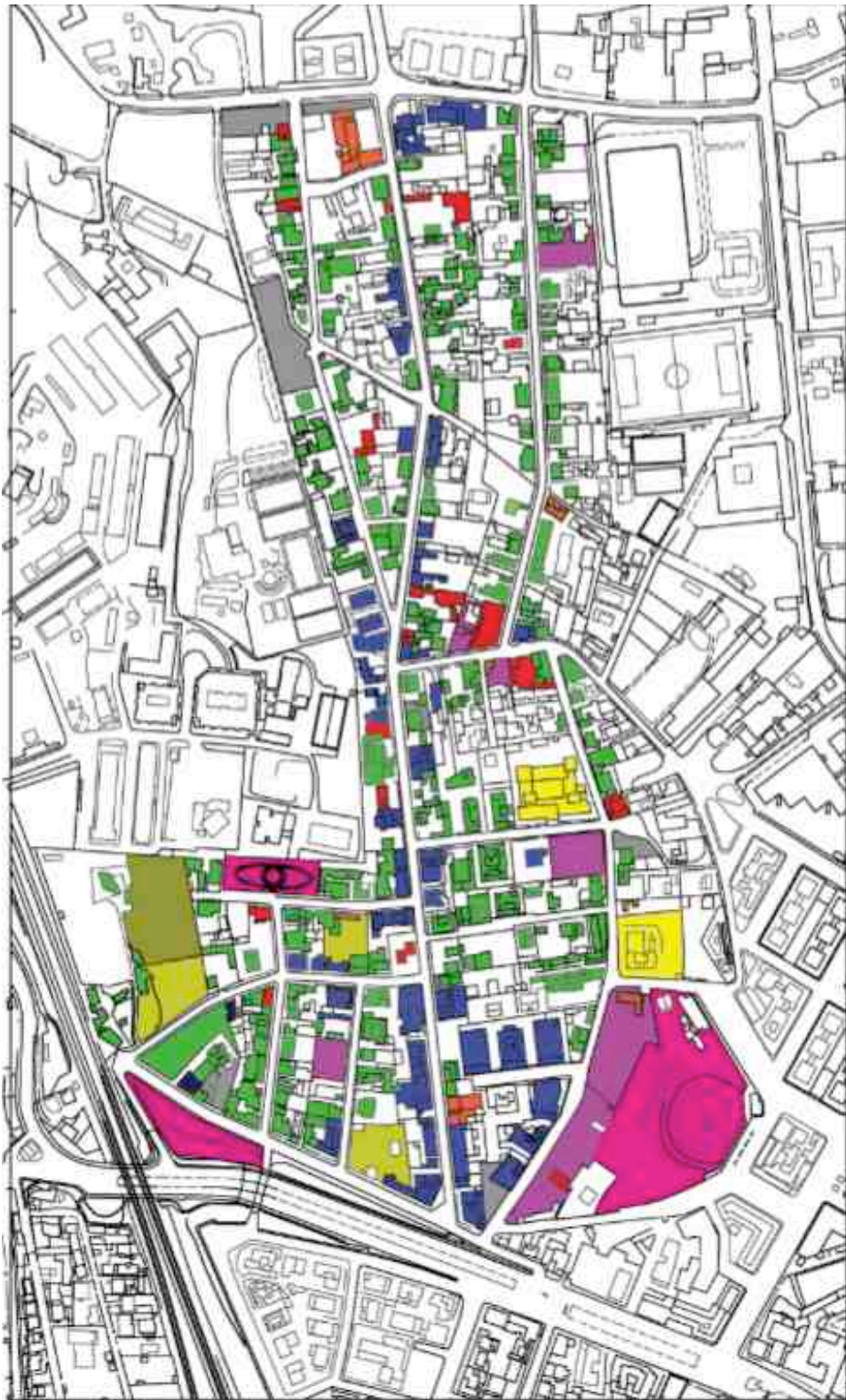
Commercial buildings are defined as buildings with the sole purpose of conducting business activities.



Mixed-Use

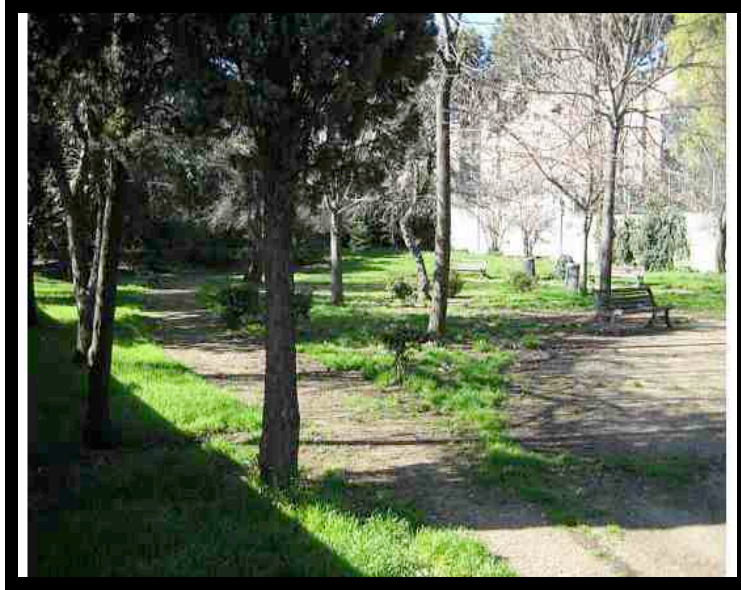
Mixed-use buildings are defined as buildings that are residential but include a commercial space on ground floor-level.

Building Typology: Map 2, Land-use

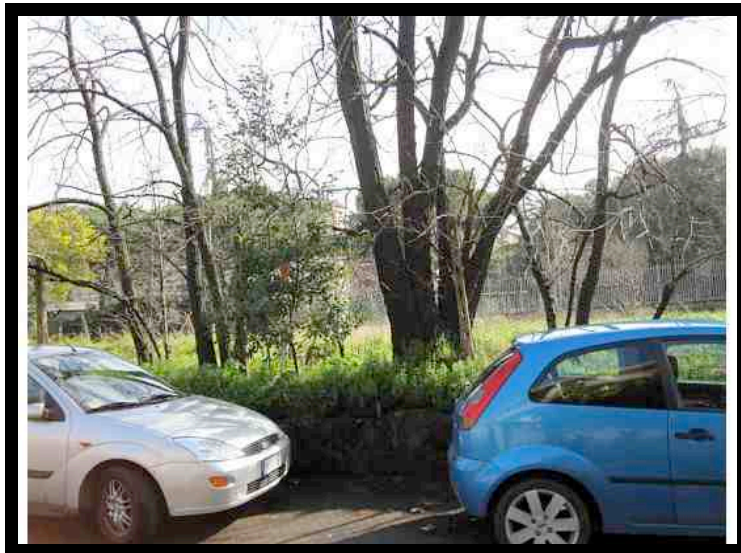


QUADRARO LAND USE

Mixed-Use <small>(ground floor shops)</small>	■	Park	■	Open Space <small>(grassland/undeveloped)</small>	■
Residential	■	Abandoned Lot	■	Vacant Building	■
Public Institution	■	Parking Lot <small>(general)</small>	■	Agricultural	■
Commercial	■	Religious Institution	■		



Parks



Abandoned Lots



Open Space

Building Typology: Map 3, Building Heights



QUADRARO BUILDING HEIGHTS

- Low-Rise Buildings [1 - 2 storeys] ■
- Mid-Rise Buildings [3 - 4 storeys] ■
- High-Rise Buildings [5 + storeys] ■



Low-Rise Building



Mid-Rise Building



High-Rise Building

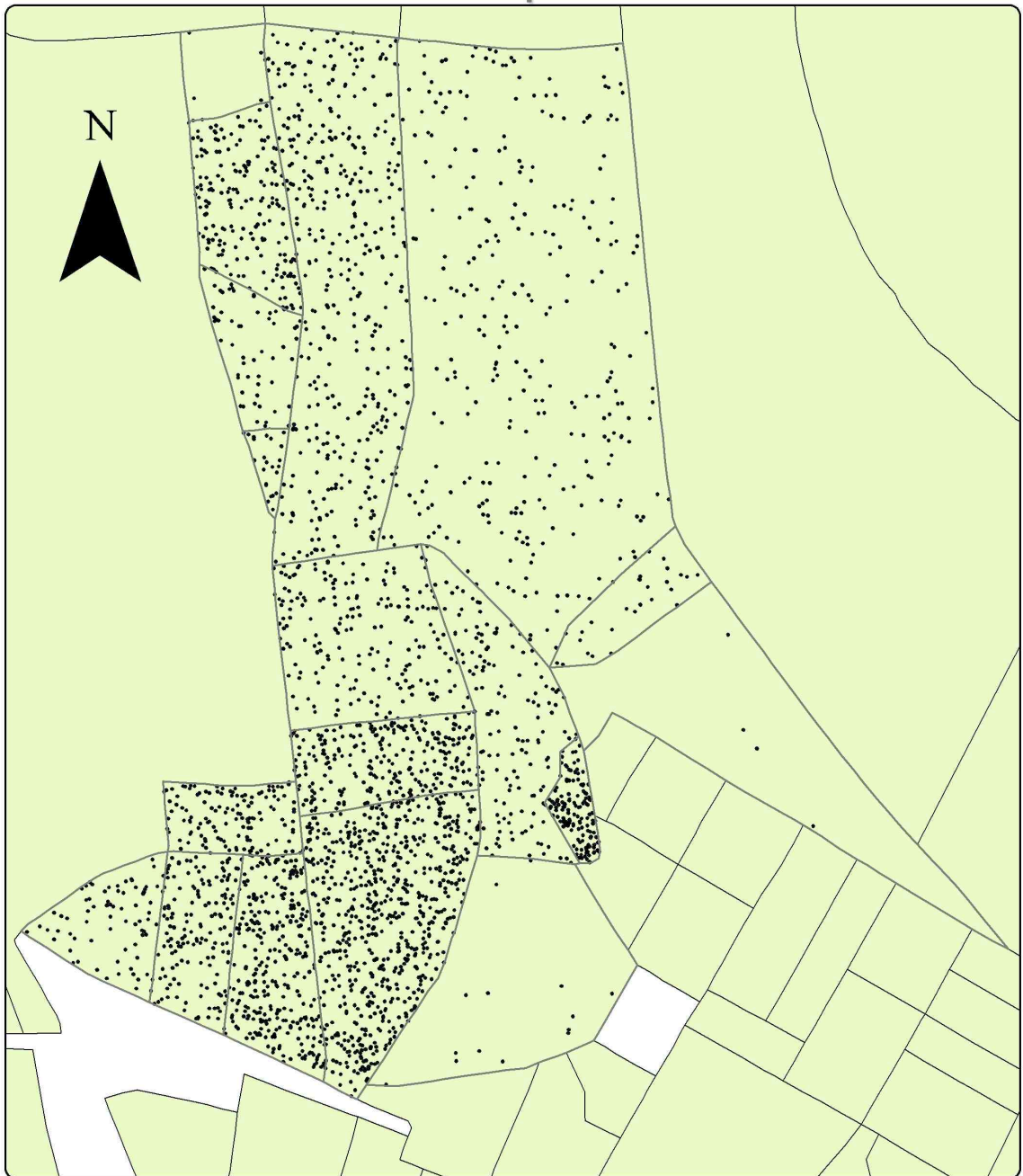
Patterns in Building Layout

Through the combination of our on-site observations and creation of these maps of Quadraro, we were able to discover some patterns in the layout of building types.

Residential and Commercial Building Analysis

Quadraro is a primarily residential neighborhood, as its overall composition consists of buildings is dedicated exclusively to residential usage. However, the vitality and vibrancy of the neighborhood lies with its commercial establishments, which supports outside interest in the community as well as the neighborhood's own local needs. Though the neighborhood is in a highly desirable location within Rome, multiple interviewees expressed that Quadraro is still a relatively affordable neighborhood, which is apparent by the influx of students, immigrants, and young families moving into the area.

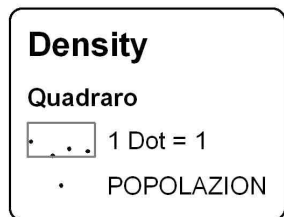
Total Population



0 75 150 300 Meters

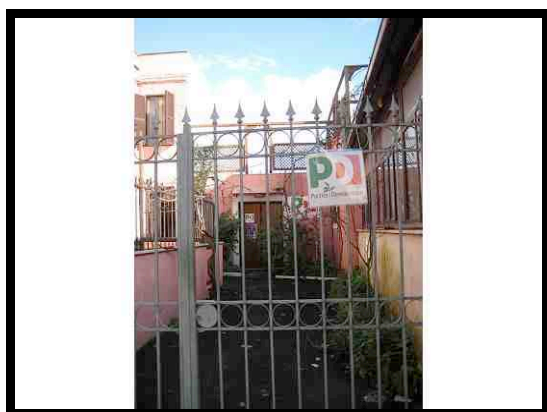
Nate Baker
Sarina Cirit
Mia Ficerai
Ryan Richards

Source: ISTAT (2005)
Istituto Centrale di Statistica,
14° Censimento della popolazione
e delle abitazioni (2001) (Rome)



The Total Population GIS map displays the census tracts that are most densely populated. The tracts furthest south are near the Porta Furba metro stop and Via Tuscolana and therefore contain the highest number of people. The tracts on the east side contain the fewest number of people because they mainly contain industrial and storage space. Similarly, the tract furthest south has very few inhabitants because most of the area is park space.

In Quadraro, commercial spaces are distributed throughout the neighborhood in the form of mixed-use buildings and specifically commercial-use buildings. Mixed-use buildings are defined as having a commercial space located on the ground floor of an otherwise residential building. These mixed-use buildings are concentrated at the main entrance to Quadraro from the highway-like street, Via Tuscolana, and additionally along the main street corridor through the neighborhood, Via dei Quintili. The types of businesses located in these ground floor shop levels include bars, restaurants, estheticians, grocery stores, international telephone centers, barber shops, legal agencies, housing supply stores, deli's (specialty food shops), automobile mechanics, pet stores, clothing stores, reused electronics stores, Stanhome centers (at-home personalized sales of home care and family care products), and political party headquarters (Partito Democratico and Partito Comunista Italiano).



Partito Democratico Headquarters

In addition to these mixed-use buildings, there are commercial buildings used for specifically commercial-usage, which do not include residential units within the building. These commercial buildings are located throughout the neighborhood, however in terms of commercial-use, the number of commercial buildings is much less than the number of mixed-use building. Commercial buildings can be seen dispersed throughout the neighborhood amongst the residential buildings. The types of businesses located in these commercial buildings are auto-mechanics, construction supplies, real estate offices, and gas stations.

Graffiti

There was also graffiti on almost every type of building in Quadraro, from apartments to commercial spaces. Although residential buildings and mixed-use buildings were gated, graffiti was still painted on the gates of some homes. The graffiti type ranged from love letters, name tagging, and communist and anti-fascist proclamations.



Love Letter Graffiti

Vacant Store Spaces

An important finding we discovered was that many of the commercial spaces on the first floor of the mixed-use buildings in Quadraro are not open. We asked Quadraro residents why this was the situation, and learned that the owners of the spaces do not have the need to rent them out to shop owners. The owners of the commercial spaces have neglected to keep the spaces in good condition, yet they nevertheless want to charge high prices for the rent. However, because of poorly maintained quality and excessive price of these ground floor commercial spaces, some of these spaces have gone unutilized for over 30 years.

Public Institutions, Religious Institutions, Vacant Buildings Analysis

The last three building types seen in Quadraro are public institutions, religious institutions, and vacant buildings. These three building types are much less in their numbers than residential, mixed-use, and commercial buildings. The two public institutions within the neighborhood are a technical school (Istituto D'Instruzione Superiore Statale), which is located on Via Diana, and Carabinieri headquarters, which is located on Via Cincinnato. Religious institutions also have a visible presence in the neighborhood of Quadraro. There are two religious institutions located in Quadraro, a Korean Church and a Catholic Church, which are both located on Via dei Quintili.



Instituto D'Instruzione Superiore Statale



Carabinieri

The Korean Church is located toward the front of Via dei Quintili near the front entrance, Via Tuscolana. This building used to be the site of Quadraro's old movie theater, but was purchased by the Korean community to serve as the location for their church. The selling of this movie theater was a negative event for the general population of Quadraro because it was an important gathering place in the neighborhood, resulted in the loss of memory and history. This Korean Church is extremely visible to both residents and visitors in the neighborhood because of its location on the primary street in the neighborhood and front façade directly facing the street. One interviewee stated that year-round you can hear members of the church singing from inside, and that many of the people who attend the Korean Church do not live in the neighborhood and they belong to a higher income group than average Quadraro residents. This interviewee also stated that she believed that the Korean community had the strongest sense of community cohesion in the neighborhood. On the other hand, the Catholic Church is located at the end of Via dei Quintili, where there is less of a presence of people. This church is also behind a steel gate that was locked every time we visited the neighborhood, and it does not appear to function as a community center. Though the neighborhood possesses multiple public institutions as well as religious institutions, the neighborhood still does not have a concrete and effective community center. We believe that creating a community center could help promote civic cohesion in Quadraro.



Korean Church

Lastly, there are buildings that we defined as vacant buildings. These vacant buildings appear sporadically amongst the predominantly residential buildings in Quadraro, and the presence of these buildings leave a distinctive mark on the overall appearance of the neighborhood.

Unique Areas of the Neighborhood

While surveying Quadraro, we noticed some unique areas in the neighborhood. The first unique space we noticed in the neighborhood was the residential housing area located on the lower western-side of the neighborhood bordering Via dei Pisoni. These houses seemed very disconnected from the rest of the neighborhood, as they were evidently single-family homes in a much worse condition. The streets leading to these houses off of Via dei Pisoni were gravel streets, unlike the paved streets throughout the rest of the neighborhood. While we were walking down the gravel streets to look at these houses, a woman came outside and told use we could not walk down this street and to leave immediately. After asking one of our interviewees about this area, she stated that the people who live in these houses seem to take a deliberate effort to separate themselves from the rest of the neighborhood.

Contrastingly, the area of residential houses located along Via Ciceri between Via Columella and Via degli Angeli had fancier homes, many of which were newly renovated and had their own private gardens. We noticed a pattern in which one side of the street (for example, the west side of Via Cincinnato) had nicer, newer buildings than the other side of the street.



Houses in “Disconnected” Area

Building Heights

As a primarily residential neighborhood, Quadraro possesses mainly low-rise buildings (1 – 2 storeys) and mid-rise buildings (3-4 storeys). We infer that is mostly likely because many of the buildings in Quadraro were self-built, and thus built as walk-up buildings. The buildings in the neighborhood that are high-rise buildings (5 or more storeys) are always mixed-use or residential buildings. Most of the high-rise buildings in Quadraro are concentrated toward the southern end of the neighborhood, near the main entrance off of Via Tuscolana. These buildings are usually more recently built and do not fall under the category of self-built buildings. In general, the neighborhood is very much built at a human scale.

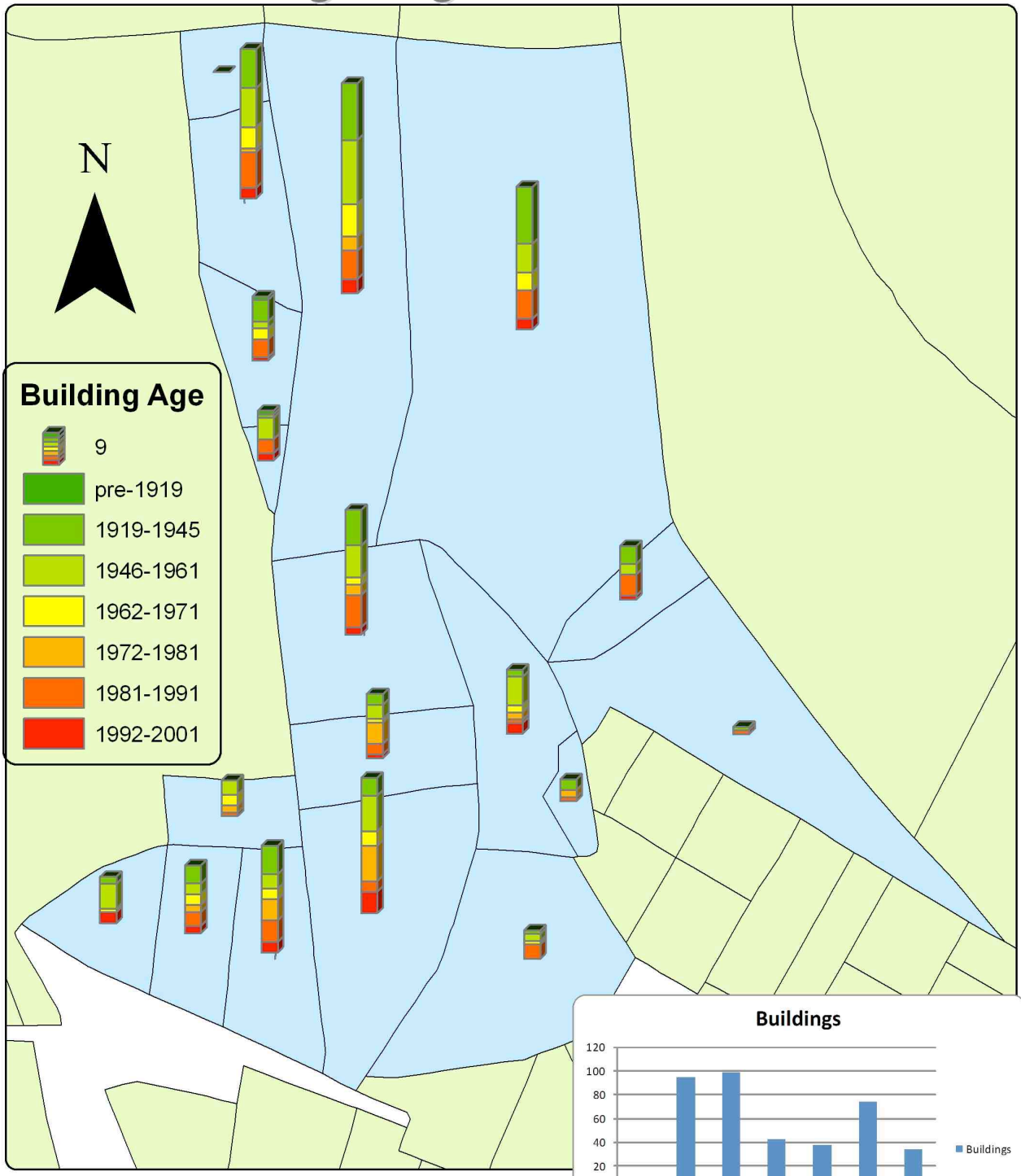
Differences between Old and New Buildings

The most apparent aesthetic differences that we perceived amongst buildings in Quadraro were whether buildings were “new” or “old”. However, given that many of the buildings in Quadraro have been renovated, this made it difficult to estimate the ages of homes: were the nicer homes built more recently or simply renovated?

New buildings, compared to old buildings in the neighborhood, were freshly painted with bright colors, with stucco exteriors, and they were often smaller than old buildings. Especially along Via dei Ciceri, we observed nicer single-family homes painted bright oranges, pinks, and yellows. There were no distinguishable regulations regarding the paint colors for houses, the type of fencing, gardening, clothing hanging from windows, or other external decorations. This lack of uniformity in the neighborhood further exhibits the lack of community presence in Quadraro. The individuality of each house and lot in Quadraro reiterates the feeling that the houses are not necessarily part of an interactive neighborhood, but rather homes coexisting in the same space.

Every residence was gated and equipped with a yard or some kind of green space, but the newer homes had more attractive gates and better kept yards. Another significant difference is that the older, apparently self-built homes were built with no regard for the streets. When building initiated in Quadraro, the builders of the homes only had to leave space for the roads to be paved within the neighborhood after the housing construction, and thus they did not necessarily orient their houses according to the street design. An elderly gentleman explained to us that when people were moving into the neighborhood to build homes in 1920s, the municipal government offered the right to self-build homes in exchange for leaving space in front for public access.

Building Age in Quadraro



Nate Baker
 Sarina Cirit
 Mia Ficerai
 Ryan Richards

Source: ISTAT (2005)
 Istituto Centrale di Statistica,
 14° Censimento della popolazione
 e delle abitazioni (2001) (Rome)

This GIS map presents the proportion of buildings from a range of years of construction in different areas of Quadraro. The map shows different patterns in the expansion of the neighborhood since the 1910s, specifically the location of new building constructions. Each bar graph on the map can be seen as section of a historical timeline. The graph is slightly deceptive because each color is not representative of an equivalent number of years. Light green, for example represents a span of time of 26 years while orange represents only 10 years.

Analyzing this map reveals transition as well as development trends in Quadraro. Most importantly, we can see that the most densely built blocks are those along the eastern rim of Via dei Quintili, which is the vertical line that runs up the left side of the neighborhood. The northern block just east of Quintili reveals a large number of earlier constructed buildings while the southern part of the neighborhood contains more newly constructed buildings. These trends are probably both due to preservation through restoration in the north, which is almost purely residential, and reconstruction in the south, where buildings are more commercial and closer to the busy thruway. This GIS data parallels the empirical research that we did in the neighborhood, where we saw a mix of old self-built houses, new and taller buildings, and renovated housing.

Land-Use in Relation to Building Types

Distinctive land uses, such as parks, abandoned lots, open space (private/undeveloped lots), and agricultural land, are primarily concentrated at the southern edge of Quadraro. Residents of the neighborhood lack effective community spaces, as residents express that there are no outdoor spaces where they commonly gather despite the neighborhood's three parks.

Abandoned lots and Open Space (Private/Undeveloped Lots)

The lots that we determined to be abandoned lots and open space (private/undeveloped lots) had no distinguishable development or ownership rights. We asked Quadraro residents about why there were undeveloped lots in between occupied residences, and they explained that more than 30 people (none of whom wanted to buy out the property and invest in its development) owned the lots. We had difficulty determining which lots were abandoned and which lots were owned but undeveloped, but we did our best to distinguish between the two types.



The lots that we determined to be abandoned can be seen along Via Cincinnato. These abandoned lots were overgrown with vegetation and fenced off by wire-gates in poor condition. The lots that we determined to be open space (private/undeveloped) can be seen along Via dei Pisoni and Via dei Lentuli. These lots were in better condition than the abandoned lots, but were still gated-off from public use. We believe that both of these unutilized spaces could more efficiently be used for community space or more

housing units. They are currently unused “eye sores” within the neighborhood. Because many residents have cited the lack of communal gathering places within Quadraro, converting these lots into spaces for community activity would solve one of the major neighborhood issues.

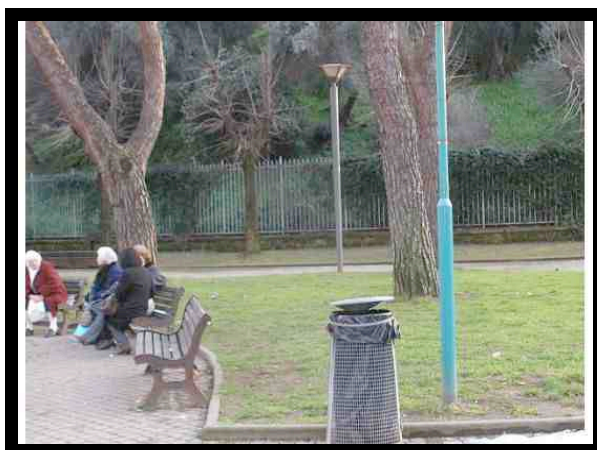
We also found that because Quadraro contains many self-built residences, it is difficult to make the distinction between what is public and private property. Touring the neighborhood with our teaching assistant, Claudia, we repeatedly experienced the problem of being uncertain of whether unoccupied lots were public or private property. Claudia offered the suggestion that in the transition from the original, illegally self-built homes to legal parts of the Quadraro neighborhood, ownership rights were not clearly negotiated.

Parks

There are three major parks in the neighborhood of Quadraro. The first and most significant is located at the southeastern end of the neighborhood, near Via Columella. There is only one entrance to the park, which is titled 17 Aprile in remembrance of the events of World War II. There is a large World War II memorial statue at the entrance of the park, further exemplifying the rich history of the neighborhood and the importance that its residents place on remembering the war. There are paved walkways throughout the park, and during every visit to the park we saw many people utilizing the benches along the paths. There is also a playground where mothers or nannies can be seen playing with their children.



Memorial Statue



17 Aprile Park

One of the park's unfortunate aspects is that it is completely surrounded by a metal gate with only one entrance on Via Asconio Pediano at the northern end of the park. Though this gate can be inconvenient for Quadraro residents that do not live close to its entrance, the park's safety has gone up since the park began to close at night. Crime and vandalism in the park used to be a bigger concern for residents until the community decided that it was better to close the area to the public after dark.

The other two parks are much smaller than Parco 17 Aprile, however they offer different amenities to the neighborhood residents. The park located on Via dei Lentuli is a green space that divides the neighborhood from the highway up above. Its amenities are limited to one bench and a trashcan, making it a more limited gathering location than the large park. Another element that discourages use of this park is its specific location near the tunnel connecting Quadraro Vecchio to Quadraretto, which we learned from our interviews in the neighborhood that it is considered to be a dangerous location. The park is highly and visibly underused, as during our multiple visits to the neighborhood we never saw anyone using the park.



Park on Via dei Lentuli

The third park located on Via Re Filippo is the *Giardino dei Ciliegi*, or the Cherry Orchard. Although it includes many more amenities than the park on Via dei Lentuli, the *Giardino dei Ciliegi* is not in nearly as good of a condition as the large park. The park was a 1996 neighborhood initiative that cleaned up one of Quadraro's overgrown lots and converted it into a public green space for families ¹. It offers eleven benches, five trashcans, and a water fountain, and it is walled in on all sides with one gated entrance across from Via dei Corneli. The gated entrance has two metal iron doors, but one of the doors has been broken off so that the park can never be locked. The park is not well maintained, as the pavement is cracking, the wood on the benches is coming apart, the trashcans are falling apart, and the ground is seen covered in paper trash. When we visited this park, there was only one man who was at the park with his dog. This man was the only user we saw at the park. Additionally, one interviewee that we asked about the park said that there was an initiative to renovate the park a couple years ago, but it never was completed. The same interviewee stated that though she knows about this park, it is a park that she never thinks to visit.

IV. Conclusions

In our studies of Quadraro, we have discovered the coexistence of new and old buildings among abandoned lots, public institutions, and a limited commercial presence. We had the opportunity to engage with the residents of Quadraro to discover how the physical layout of different building typologies affects social interactions. These interviews revealed that residents in Quadraro lack community space in which to gather. We learned quickly from the first people with whom we spoke that the neighborhood has recently transitioned from a dangerous place to a much safer area. Situated near the metro, it is strategically located and inexpensive. Many young couples and families have recently moved in, and there is a large immigrant population.

A social issue on which we are interested on focusing is related to the large immigrant population, which includes Bangladeshi and North Africans. In an interview with the owner of a café, he told us that some of the unused first floor commercial spaces were actually being rented out to poor immigrant families. This illegal renting allows the owner of the space to make a profit without having to pay taxes, as they would if they rented the space to a commercial business. We would like to follow up on this issue, and on the issue of other vacant spaces such as lots and abandoned homes.

Research suggests that Quadraro is on the upswing from being the declining neighborhood it was a mere ten years ago. Interviews with residents have informed us that Quadraro is “changing radically, and in a positive way.”

Review of Quadraro's Infrastructure



Quadraro's infrastructural map

I. Introduction

Conducting street-by-street surveys allowed us to create systematic descriptions of the various paths through Quadraro. We collected data on the physical aspects of the streetscape and observed human interaction along pedestrian ways. Our results provide an in-depth look at the interaction between the human and physical characteristics of the neighborhood.

II. Methodology

Data Collection System

We organized Quadraro into four quadrants that split along important neighborhood streets to systematically examine Quadraro's housing types, commercial establishments and services, and public spaces. The western quadrants are bordered to the east by Via dei Quintili (including the street Via dei Quintili), to the south by Via dei Lentuli, and to the north by Via degli Angeli. The northwest and southwest quadrants are further defined by their separation along the east-west Via dei Columella axis as if the street continued west through the rest of the neighborhood. We defined the eastern quadrants as the streets east of Via dei Quintili, and are bordered to the north by Via degli Angeli, to the south by Via dei Lentuli, and to the east by Via dei Ciceri, Via dei Columella, Piazza dei Tribuni and Via del Monte del Grano.

In order to examine all four quadrants, our group broke into two separate teams: Ryan and Mia examined Quadraro's two eastern quadrants, while Sarina and Nate looked at the two western quadrants. Each team designated one person to record the businesses, building architecture, and take photographs of key things, which defined each space we observed. Meanwhile, the other member of each team took structured notes on public spaces, services, and infrastructure on a street-by-street basis.

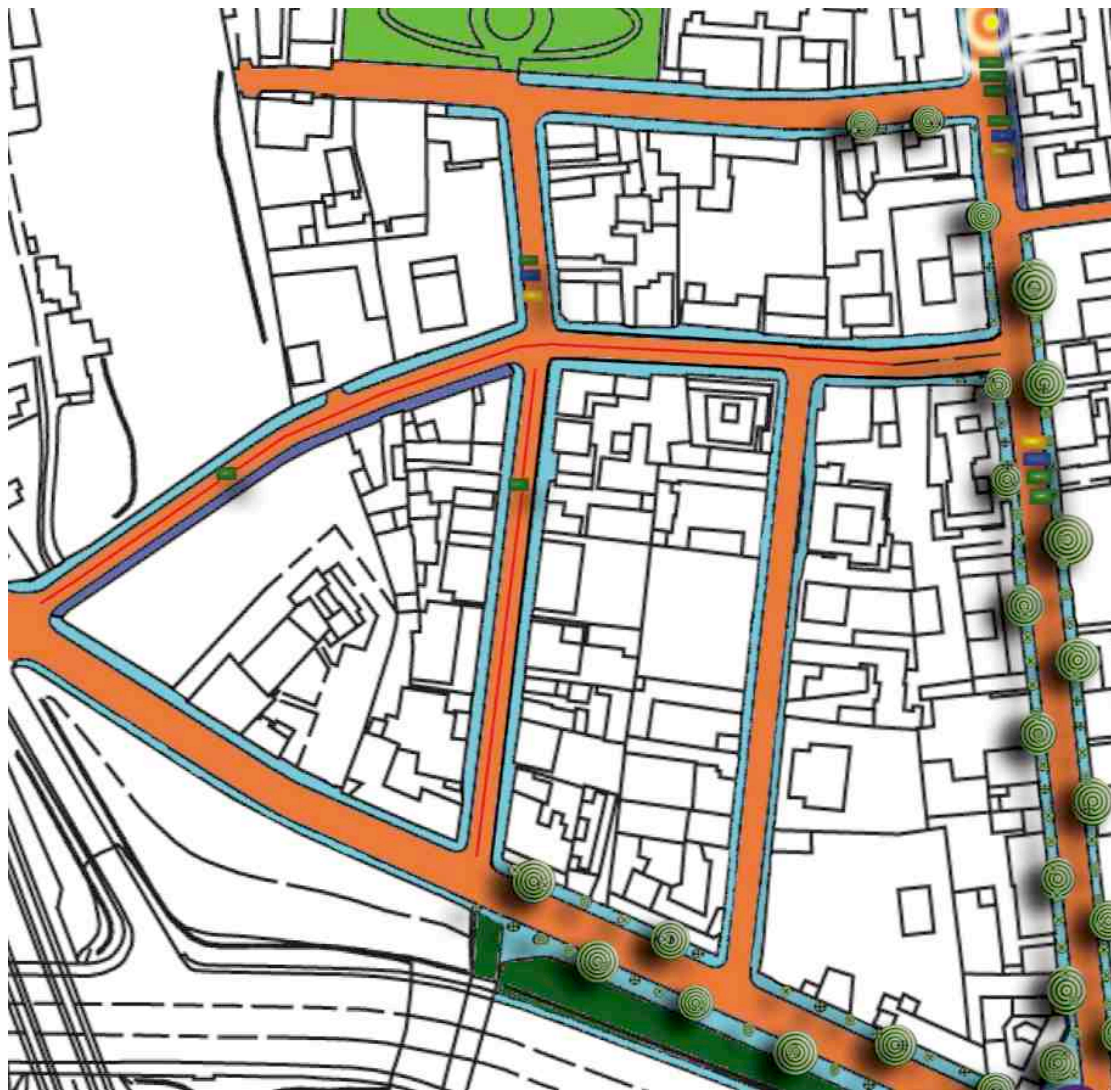
Observations of which we took note included the location of each observation, street types, the presence of sidewalks, the quality of the infrastructure, traffic intensity, the presence of parking, the presence of trees and shrubbery, noise level, building typology, the presence of people, and conversations with Quadraro residents and workers. Often, locals who approached us while we were working would initiate conversations, and if they consented we would record their opinions and comments on the neighborhood. More commonly, we would initiate conversations with local businesses and inhabitants using an interview-like question and answer approach.

We marked trash and recycling points, quality and presence of sidewalks, presence of public green space, and other notable features of Quadraro's infrastructure as detailed as possible. To graphically represent our data we used AutoCAD software to display a detailed aerial view of the streetscape and building typology within Quadraro.

III. Results

Through using AutoCAD maps our group was able to generate an infrastructural map that described locations of street types, sidewalk types, bus stops, phone booths, public parks, parking (abandoned lots, private parking lots, and public car parks open to the public not including street parking which exists on all streets during the daytime), and the presence of public green space (landscaped and not landscaped). The infrastructural and building typology maps are meant to be viewed as inverses of one another: the former maps highlight the street infrastructure in Quadraro, and the latter maps which detail the private and public property between streets in Quadraro. Both groups of maps provide information on parking lots, undeveloped lots, and parks, but we included the repetition so to highlight those spaces relative to their significance to each type of map.

Description of streets



The Southwest Quadrant: in this map, the viewer can see Quadraro's only two bi-directional streets. These streets are designated by red lines that run through the middle of them.

For the sake of reducing traffic congestion, almost all the streets were organized on unidirectional patterns except two streets in the eastern quadrants, Via dei Juvenci and Via dei Pisoni, which were bidirectional. Though some residents have their own parking spaces in driveways and home garages, parking exists along all streets and often constricts the streets to one narrow lane for cars. A few streets, like Via Giulio Iginio, are unpaved and better suited for pedestrian use because house fronts extend to the edge of the street. One section of Via Columella that creates a loop around a single apartment building with Via Asconio Pediano is constantly blocked off from motor traffic by concrete barriers.



Blocked off portion of Via Asconio Pediano



Via dei Cincinnato street parking

Retrofitting and Its Effect on Street Layout

Sidewalks line most streets in Quadraro, they tend to be retrofitted to the street space in the older Quadraro districts while they are more invested and nicer looking in the more upscale areas of the neighborhood. This characteristic is a result of Quadraro's history as a working class neighborhood that was largely built before municipal services and infrastructure were placed in the neighborhood. During Rome's population expansion after its 1870 unification with the Italian State, many fringe neighborhoods sprouted around Rome's downtown too quickly for proper regulations to coordinate growth. Accordingly, Quadraro's retrofitted sidewalks are often an extension of the street pavement and many occupy only one side of the street, like the sidewalks lining Via Cincinnato. These are typically separated from the street by a metal railing that physically blocks cars from parking on the pedestrian space. Otherwise, the only other unplanned pedestrian walkways we observed were not paved at all but would advance through grass beside the paved road like the sidewalks on Via dei Pisoni. As a result, pedestrians typically walk on the street pavement and do not always strictly adhere to the sidewalks.

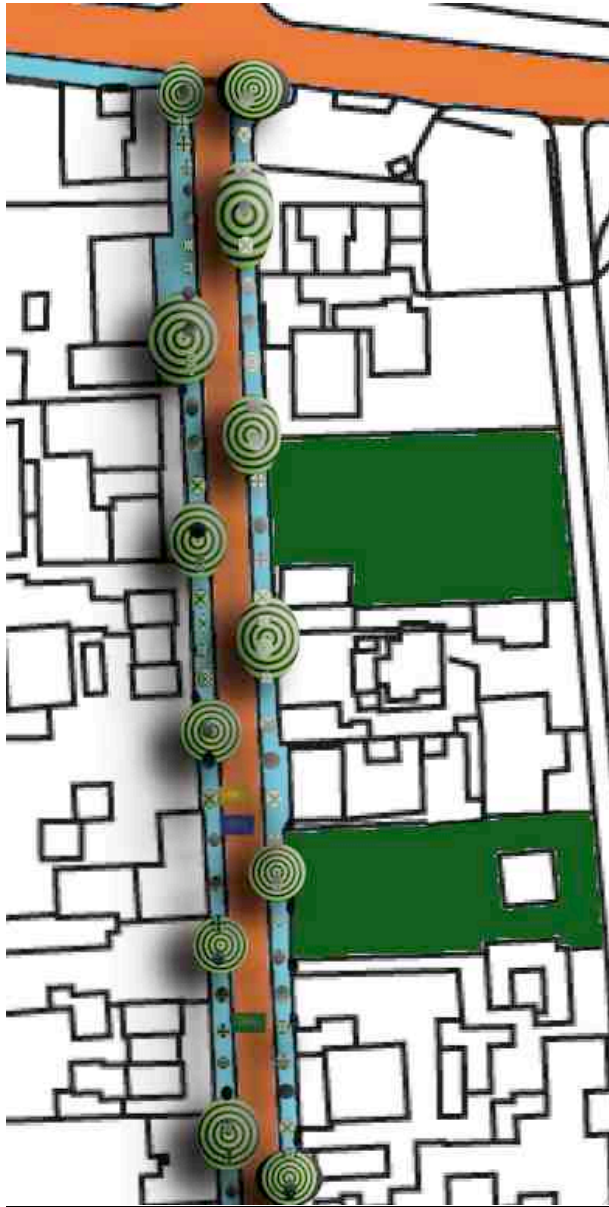


Retrofitted sidewalk on Via dei Pisoni



Retrofitted sidewalk on only one side of Via Cincinnato

Sidewalks are often composed of the same asphalt material as the streets, but the sidewalks in the wealthier parts of Quadraro (especially in the northern quadrants) are more elegantly separated than unplanned sidewalks by use of concrete curbs, landscaped trees in the pavement, and an elevated walking level. Generally, the level of investment in sidewalks is directly related to the wealth and condition of the street within Quadraro, and the streets with trees lining each side of the street, like on Via dei Quintili in the northwest quadrant, accommodate the most upscale residences in the neighborhood. This investment concerns the quality of life in these parts of Quadraro and does not reflect gentrification within the neighborhood.



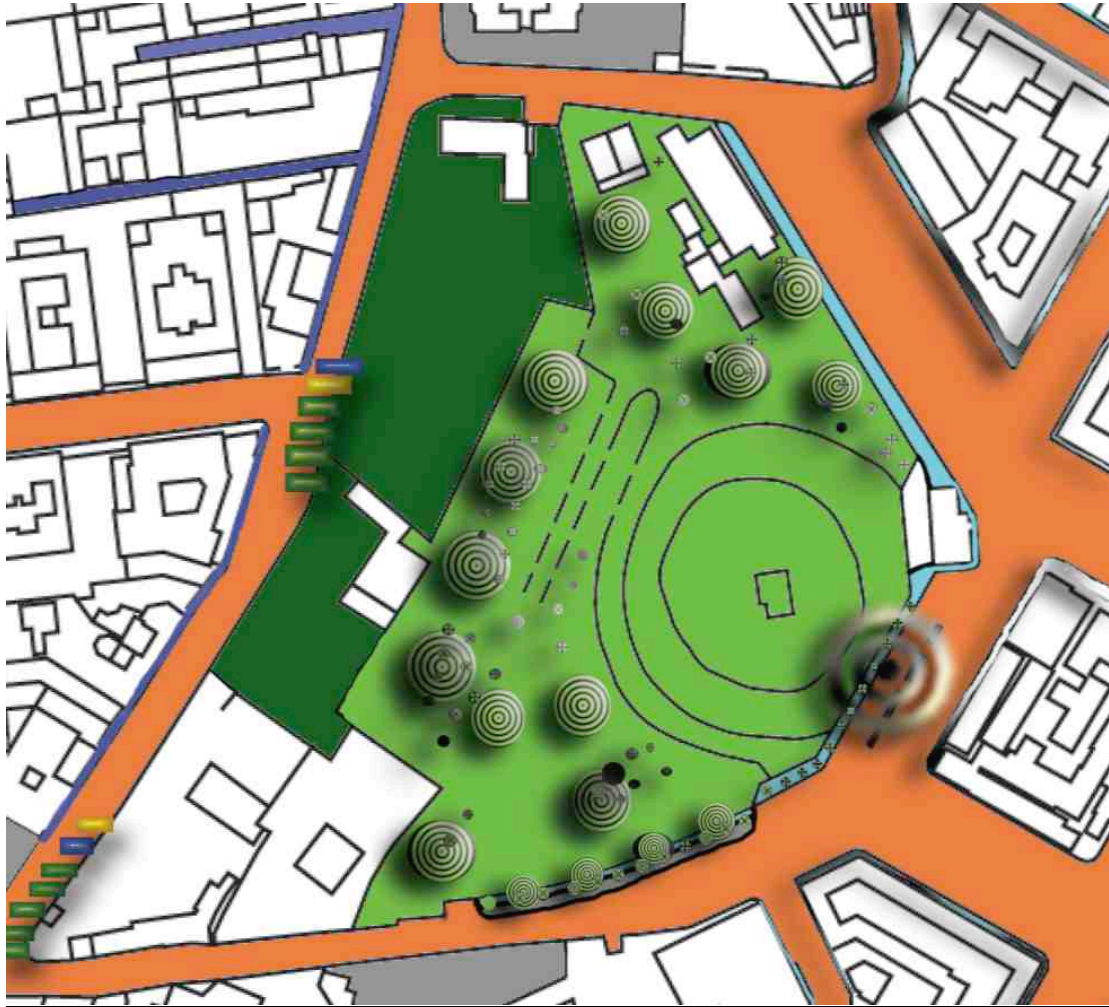
Northern properties on Via dei Ciceri , where sidewalks are lined with trees on either side of the street, and the two empty lots in dark green represent unintended green space.



More invested sidewalks in northern quadrants

Public Spaces

Other than the parks, Quadraro's green spaces are composed of undeveloped private lots, medians on busy roads (the medians on Via Tuscolana), and landscaped trees lining certain streets. Some of Quadraro's undeveloped lots are the result of multiple co-owners who are unable to agree on development, or they believe that development would cost more than they could make through renting out the space. The most outstanding example of this is the sunken overgrown lot on the corner of Via Diana and Via Cincinnato across from the large Istituto D'Instruzione Superiore Statale. Another large empty lot in the neighborhood is in the huge flat lot on the edge of the Northeast quadrant and the adjacent sports association in the neighborhood east of Quadraro. The space occupies entirely all the land between Via dei Rufi and the contemporary trailer homes on Via Giulia Iginio, and additionally, it is the site of a former gymnasium operated by the Catholic Church. A new fitness center is located across the street from the site, but all that remains on the lot is overgrown foliage and a brick gate separating the lot from Via Columella.



Parco 17 Aprile 1944

This image zooms in on Quadraro's historic park and the features that define it. There are many trees in the light green section of the park that is enclosed by the metal fence, and the light blue sidewalk adjacent to this side of the park also highlights the level of community investment in this area of the neighborhood. There is a bulls-eye symbol where the park's bus stop is located and there are grey parking spaces on the southern edge of the light green park space as well as across the street to the south of the park. The dark green space is not associated with the park but is an overgrown lot with no associated development within it, and the buildings that do border the green space are abandoned. This green space is clearly visible from the park and the street to the west of the space.



Sunken and abandoned property on the corner of Via Cincinnato



Abandoned green space, former site of demolished gymnasium

Trash and Recycling

Trash and recycling in Quadraro is disposed of in large dumpsters along major streets in the neighborhood. The dumpsters tend to be spread evenly along a main north-south axis, with the exception of the dumpsters on one east-west oriented street, Via Diana. We noted on every visit to our neighborhood that the trash dumpsters were relatively empty while the recycling and paper dumpsters were full to over-flowing.



The rectangular shapes represent different trash types , while the purple colored spaces represent retrofitted sidewalks

Street	Trash Dumpsters	Recycling Dumpsters	Paper/Cardboard Dumpsters
Via Cincinnato (N-S)	9	2	2
Via Diana (E-W)	2	2	2
Via Ciceri (N-S)	5	3	3
Via Quintili	11	6	6
Via degli Arvali	2	0	0
Via dei Corneli	2	1	1



Trash and recycling

Public Transport – Bus and Metro

Access to public transportation helped make Quadraro a desirable residential location for working class Romans when the neighborhood was first being built at the turn of the last century. Although there is no longer a tram to Quadraro, the neighborhood is still served by three buses and a Roma Metro Stop on Line A. These convenient access points to the center of Rome, most especially the Metro stop, still make Quadraro a desirable location for students and commuters today.

Of Quadraro’s three bus stops, two are located in Quadraro’s southeast quadrant where the 542 and 553 buses arrive hourly: one is on the north east end of Via Columella close to a public elementary school in the adjacent neighborhood, and the other is on Piazza Tribuni outside of the large park. The third bus stop is in the southwest quadrant on the corner of Via Quintili and Via Re Filippo, where buses 553 and 557 come once an hour. The Line A Metro Stop, officially labeled Porta Furba with the subtext “Quadraro”, is located fifty meters west of Largo dei Quintili and is in the very bottom corner of the southeast quadrant. Most of Quadraro’s public transport is on the community’s east side which reflects the residential density of the neighborhood as well as the density and mixed use of the adjacent neighborhood to the east of Quadraro.



Bus stop near park entrance

Street Pattern

Quadraro's street system is interesting in that it has few entrances from Via Tuscolana, the main road leading in from the center of Rome. That access point is also the Porta Furba/Quadraro stop on the Metro Line A. This organization causes a lot of movement with flourishing businesses at the entrance point, while the streets break off from one another as you go deeper north into the neighborhood.

The most important street for our organization of the neighborhood is Via dei Quintili, which cuts through the neighborhood's center, splitting the neighborhood into its eastern and western quadrants. It is both Quadraro's longest north-south axis, and, due to its location, is also the main street for small businesses. The sidewalks on both sides of the road are busy with pedestrian traffic and are lined by young recently planted trees.

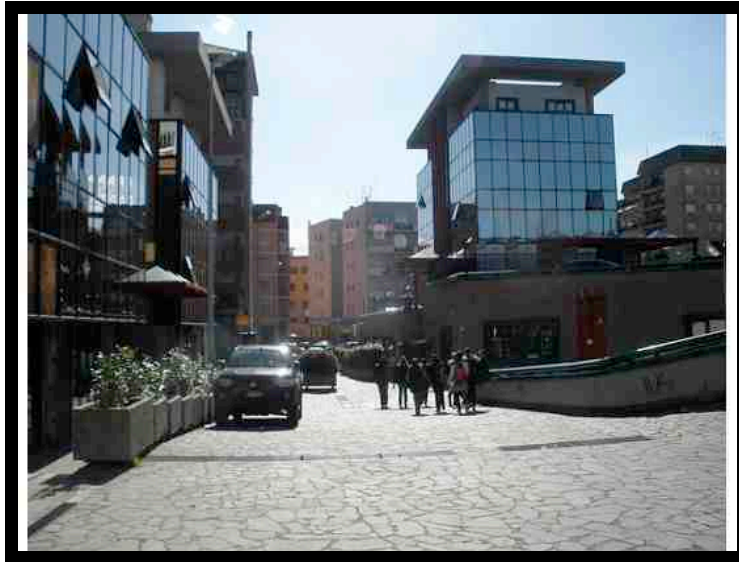
Aside from occasional pieces of trash and domestic animal excrement, the streets and sidewalks are clean and in good condition. On some small roads there are no sidewalks and on others there is a sidewalk on only one street. Some streets lack trees or streetlights.

IV. Analysis

How the physical layout of the neighborhood affects social interaction

The neighborhood becomes more residential and higher income as one travels north towards Via degli Angeli along Via dei Ciceri and Via dei Quintili. Going east the neighborhood's architecture becomes newer and taller to accommodate

more residential space per building. This, combined with the large park access, two of the three bus stops, the metro stop, and the street market in Piazza Tribuni make the Quadraro's southeast quadrant most desirable for commercial entities and more convenient for its residents to access the neighborhood and its resources. An office park outside the neighborhood's southeast edge reflects the gentrification that is beginning to filter into Quadraro, and is also an indication that the property in southeast quadrant is the more desirable space for investors to build upon.



The office park on Via del Monte del Grano

Other Areas for Continuing Research:

- *Neighborhood Community*

In addition to the single access point's economic value, the location functions a nexus for social interaction in Quadraro. In interviews with local businesses, owners explained that they know most of their costumers, and we observed that many of the customers know each other and interact with each other in those businesses.

- *Safety*

Recently added fixtures like trees and streetlights have also made people feel safer and have welcomed in young families, students, and women.

- *Commercial Space*

Many first floor spaces are closed, something that dissuades social interaction. Residents, especially young people, leave Quadraro at night because neighborhood offers them no activities.

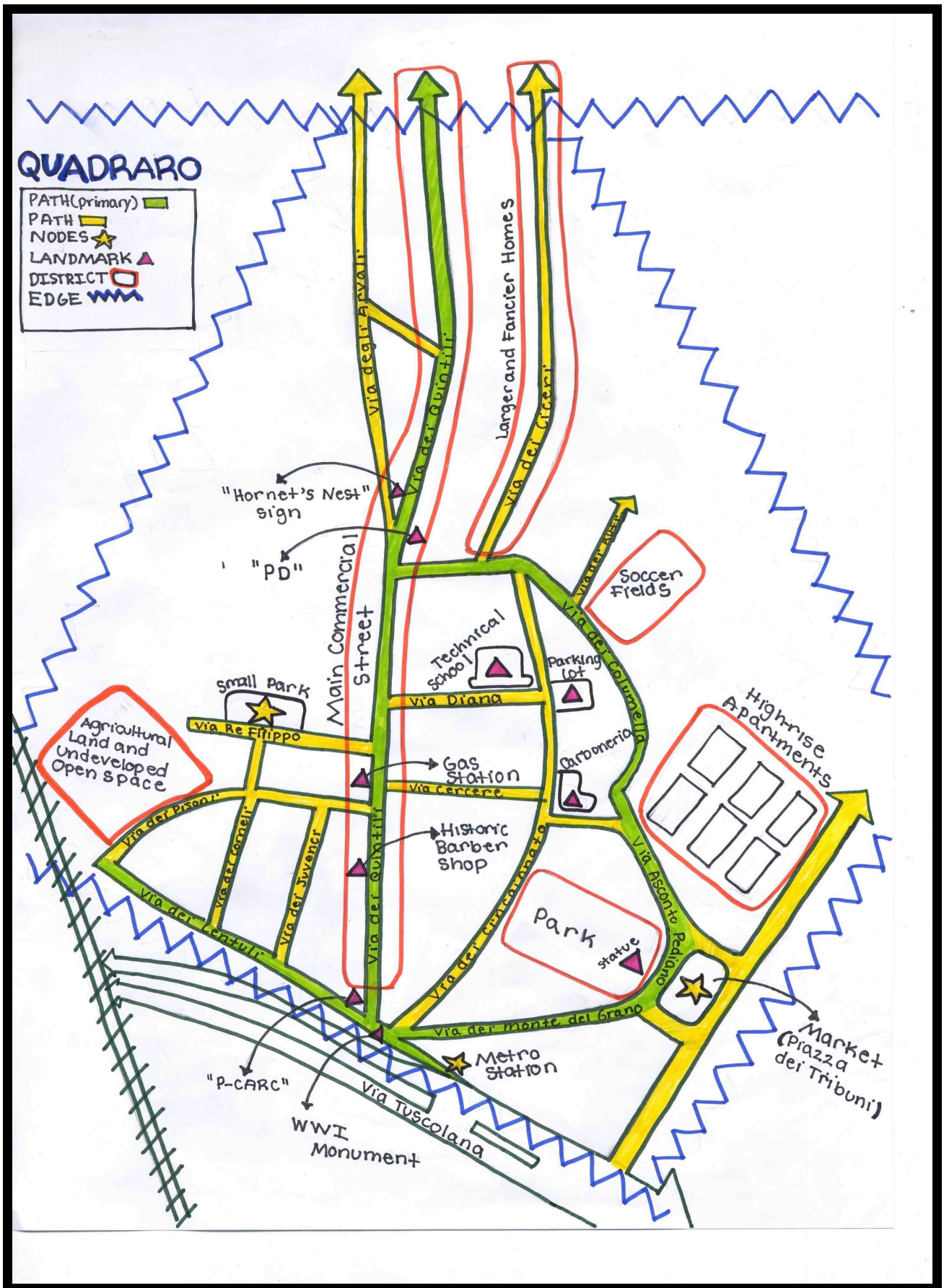
V. Conclusion

While physical infrastructure was simple to record, lack of information thus far about zoning laws and historical data make it difficult to understand exactly how and why the landscape looks as it does. The language barrier has also somewhat limited our ability to communicate with all of the citizens that we want to.

Furthermore, several citizens seemed distrustful of our motivations, which also limited our ability to gather social information.

Nevertheless, we have found Quadraro to be a very distinctive neighborhood. While recently considered dangerous, the neighborhood is now becoming a popular place for students and young families to live. Much of this is because of the attractiveness of the neighborhood's older physical landscape, which has its roots in the 1930s and 1940s but has also seen much change since then. Our map and data help us to connect the present Quadraro to its historic past and explain some of the social and physical features that we see today.

Quadraro's Cognitive Map



Quadraro is a small but dynamic neighborhood located to the south of the city center of Rome. In our mental map of Quadraro, we use the five elements of paths, nodes, landmarks, districts, and edges to analyze the legibility of the neighborhood.

Methodology

To begin our analysis of Quadraro, we drew out the most important paths of the neighborhood, and we distinguished whether these routes through the neighborhood were primary or secondary paths. In Quadraro there are no pedestrian streets that exclude cars, thus all of the paths that we choose are roads that accommodate pedestrians, with the use of sidewalks, as well as cars.

Results

Primary Paths

We found the primary paths of the neighborhood to be Via Lentuli, Via dei Quintili, Via dei Monte del Grano/ Via Asconto Pediano, and Via dei Columella. All of these roads serve as major channels that facilitate the movement of residents and visitors to different points within the neighborhood or subsequently behave as “entrances” and “exits” of the neighborhood. Via Lentuli is the primary corridor entrance to Quadraro. The street is lined with trees and has a small green hill that separates it from the highway that runs parallel to it. Via dei Quintili is arguably the main artery of the neighborhood, and serves as the connection between the top and bottom of the neighborhood. The great concentration of people within the neighborhood can be seen on this street, as well as the highest concentration of commercial activity. Via dei Monte del Grano is another starting point into the neighborhood, ultimately developing into Via Asconto Pediano and finally Via dei Columella. Via Asconto Pediano is significant because the park and the neighborhood market border it. Via dei Columella loops around the east side of the neighborhood to meet the main artery of Via dei Quintili. Via dei Columella is a major passageway to the center of the neighborhood, and there is a significant pedestrian presence due to the road’s proximity to major nodes and districts.

Secondary Paths

The secondary paths in the neighborhood are used for inter-neighborhood movement. All of these paths have a high concentration of residential buildings. The roads that we found to be secondary paths in Quadraro are Via Re Filippo, Via dei Pisoni, Via dei Corneli, Via dei Juvenci, Via dei Cincinnato, Via Diana, Via Cercere, Via dei Ciceri, and Via degli Arvali. The reason we chose these roads as important paths in Quadraro is because without them areas that are distinctively part of the neighborhood would be inaccessible. These roads compliment the primary paths of Quadraro and complete the larger neighborhood network of transportation circulation.

Nodes

For the purpose of these mental map analysis of the neighborhood of Quadraro, our group defined nodes to be points, which are strategic spots in a city

into which an observer can enter, and additionally serve as intensive foci to and from where the observer is traveling. Quadraro has a minimal amount of public-oriented spaces, in which residents as well as members of the community can interact. Thus, the nodes in Quadraro are constituted only by three different points in the neighborhood, which are the market on Piazza dei Tribuni, the small park on Via Re Filippo, and the metro station at the entrance to the neighborhood on Via dei Lentuli.

- The market consists of several small pavilions in which vendors sell fresh fruits and vegetables, cheese and meat, bread, pasta, food preservatives, and clothing items. Most of the vendors are immigrants, and the customers seemed to be very familiar with each other, which further enforced the feeling of the market as a node in which neighbors interact.
- The small park on Via Re Filippo is small and not well maintained, however it is one of the few options residents have as community outdoor space within the neighborhood. It is important because though its use might be minimal, it still offers a preserved open space with play equipment and seating that can promote civic interaction within the community. The small park also has the potential to be improved in the future and therefore even more beneficial to residents of Quadraro.
- The metro station is an extremely important node in the neighborhood, because it is the primary means of arriving and departing from Quadraro besides the use of a car. It is also conveniently located at what can be considered the “primary entrance” to the neighborhood at the beginning of Via dei Lentuli.

Landmarks

While the number of nodes in Quadraro is minimal, it is full of landmarks that serve as important points of reference within the neighborhood because these points have some memory or spatial significance associated with them. For the purpose of the mental map, it is valuable to note that we distinguished landmarks to be points within the neighborhood that observers cannot enter, unlike nodes, but rather are usually external physical objects, such as buildings, signs, stores, or monuments. The landmarks of Quadraro are WWI monument on Via dei Lentuli, P-CARC headquarters on Via dei Lentuli, PD headquarters on Via dei Quintili, Statue in Park on Piazza dei Tribuni, Carabinieri on Via dei Cincinnato, Parking Lot on Via dei Cincinnato, Technical School on Via Diana, Historic Barbershop on Via dei Quintili, Gas Station on Via dei Quintili, and the Hornet’s Nest sign at the road split between Via degli Arvali. Two important Italian political parties have local centers in Quadraro, the “P-CARC”, which is communist party, and the “PD”, which is the democratic party.

Districts

The districts in Quadraro have a distinctive character that allows these areas to be highly distinguishable as “different” than the overall residential composition of the neighborhood. These districts areas are internally homogeneous and allow observers to feel as if they are entering a space within a space in terms of the district compared to the overall neighborhood. Although our interpretation of “districts”

may differ from Lynch's in that his definition requires that districts consist of a larger amount of space, we felt that with respect to the size of our neighborhood it was necessary to categorize certain smaller spaces. The areas we described as "districts" meet all but the spatial criteria of Lynch's definition, and we felt it was critical to our analysis that they be distinguished as such.

In Quadraro the districts can be characterized as "agricultural land and undeveloped open space", "main commercial street", "park", "large and fancier homes", "soccer fields", and "high-rise apartments." On the western side of the neighborhood lies an area of land that feels as if you have left the neighborhood of Quadraro. This area, which is on the border of Via dei Pisoni, has homes that are characteristically more self-built and in a worse condition than the majority of houses in the neighborhood. Also, surrounding these homes is a significant amount of undeveloped open space as well as agricultural land, which cannot be seen through the other spaces of Quadraro. The entirety of Via dei Quintili can be considered the "main commercial street" district as the highest concentration and main functions of the neighborhood lie on this street. The "park" off of Via Ascontio Pediano is a large green area with benches, paths, and a playground. The area is well maintained and highly used by the community. The "large and fancier homes" at the northern end of the neighborhood, on Via dei Ciceri, are much nicer than the other homes in the neighborhood. There are larger green spaces for each property, and the houses are better maintained. The "soccer fields" off of Via dei Rufi are a place for community members to gather recreationally, and there are lights that illuminate the playing area for evening games. The "high rise apartments" behind Via dei Ascolto Pediano are a district because they are much higher than any apartment buildings within the neighborhood, and they are in worse condition.

Edges

After doing the mental map analysis of Quadraro, our group found distinctive edges to the neighborhood. We considered edges to be the distinctive spatial separation between the neighborhood of Quadraro and its surrounding neighborhoods, based on the character of the community. We considered the distinctive edges of the neighborhood to be differentiated by the train tracks, the area to the west of and behind the houses on Via Quintili and Via degli Arvali, Via degli Angeli to the north, the area to the east of the route that includes Via dei Ciceri and Via dei Columella, and Via Tuscolana to the south. On mapping sources, such as Google Maps, the neighborhood of Quadraro appears to extend outside of the boundaries that we found to separate what we believed to be the main heart of the community. The Quadraro that we are analyzing in this mental map can be considered "Quadraro Vecchio."

Quadraro: Interview Analysis

In the interviews that we conducted in the neighborhood of Quadraro, we saw three major themes – community cohesion, community space, and vacant shops - to be prevalent throughout all of the interviews. These themes will be analyzed and discussed in the following section.

Community Cohesion

According to the interviews we conducted in the neighborhood of Quadraro, the neighborhood has experienced a great transition in the composition of its population. In the beginning of the neighborhood's history, Quadraro was primarily a working class Italian neighborhood. One interviewee stated that historically half of original population came from Southern Italy to work in construction, and the other half of the population came from the city center where Mussolini was clearing out people from the city center, and it is those displaced people that ended up in Quadraro. However, in recent years increasing numbers of students, artists, immigrants, and young couples have moved into the neighborhood. With these new residents there has risen a disjunction between the neighborhood's new residents and its old residents. An interviewee stated that with the immigration of this young as well as immigrant population, there is a change or loss in the identity of the neighborhood.

The older and “established” residents in the neighborhood have a greater amount of community cohesion amongst themselves. They are united by collective memory, especially in regards to the WWII activities in that occurred in the neighborhood. The new populations in the neighborhoods have their own separate communities, while the overall community of Quadraro is not cohesively united, but rather lives peacefully and simultaneously in the same area. These new communities have integrated well into the neighborhood, but on the other hand, they have made the neighborhood's identity much weaker.

An interviewee stated that they believed there to be three separate communities within the neighborhood. First, there is the elderly population of people, who are much more linked together than other groups in the neighborhood because of collective memory. Second, there is the student, artists, and young family population in Quadraro, who is the newest population in the neighborhood that tried to gentry the neighborhood, but failed. Lastly, there is the immigrant population that works through strong social networks.

In regards to the existence of actual community cohesion, interviewees believed that the only “real” communities existed within the immigrant communities. Interviewees expressed that they believed that the immigrant communities in the neighborhood had the strongest social cohesion and the strongest social network within Quadraro. However, an interviewee also expressed that the immigrant community is cohesive amongst themselves and not necessarily with the rest of the Quadraro community. This interviewee also thought that the community with the strongest internal community cohesion was the Korean community, who comes together frequently at the Korean Church in the neighborhood. The Korean community does not live in Quadraro, but rather

commutes from outside the neighborhood to come to the church and belongs to a higher income group than the average income group in Quadraro.

Though an important issue in the neighborhood is the lack of community cohesion, interviewees seemed to express that they enjoyed the diversity of the neighborhood. One interviewee stated that because of the diverse population of people living in the neighborhood, you feel as if you are living somewhere that is “an exception,” not mainstream Rome, but unique. The diverse population creates a rich context to live in, however the same interviewee stated that with such a diverse group of people living in this community, it is hard to put together such a diverse range of opinions, and thus create a balance within the neighborhood. The community accordingly has difficulty thinking about and planning for the future. An interviewee stated that it is hard in Quadraro to make horizontal relations amongst the different groups in the neighborhood. An imperative concern within the neighborhood is finding a way to connect all of these groups in the neighborhood to increase community cohesion and identity.

Community Space

Quadraro has three distinct park areas within the neighborhood, however these parks lack a true connection with the neighborhood. When we asked interviewees if they used the parks in the neighborhood, they said that they only used parco 17 aprile, but that they did not consider this park a part of the boundaries that constitute their understanding of Quadraro. One interviewee stated that there was a park restoration effort for the park on Via Re Filippo, and it was the first time people thought about the community as a place for people to interact. However, she never frequents that park, because she prefers the larger park as a space where she can meet people from all around the world. She additionally stated that she distinctly feels she is leaving the neighborhood of Quadraro when visiting parco 17 aprile. When we asked her why she felt that way, she said it was maybe because of the change in building sizes in that area and there is only one entrance to the park, which faces away from the neighborhood of Quadraro. In further research of parco 17 aprile for policy analysis, we discovered that the park is used a great deal in the afternoon hours. At 5 pm, we counted over 100 people in the park, which included the elderly, children, parents, couples, teenagers, a variety of ethnicities, and dog walkers.

Despite the use of Quadraro’s largest park, resident interviews revealed that the lack of other community spaces was a negative aspect of the neighborhood. They noted the lack of piazza, and the market was never referenced as a place for social interaction. Other than storefronts, there are few places for residents to meet each other. The strong political history of the neighborhood has provided Quadraro with the opportunity to meet at the political parties’ headquarters to provide some forum for community cohesion.

Vacant Shops

Interviews provided some incite as to why there are so many closed shops in the neighborhood. We consistently asked interviewees why they believed there were so many closed shops. While some interviewees actually contradicted each

other, what we discovered is that there is no single overlying explanation for the shop closings. Rather, each shop must be examined on a case-by-case basis.

All of the interviewees suggested that more business activity would be a positive change in the neighborhood. They did not agree on why the businesses were closed in the first place. The business owner that we interviewed blamed building owners for not renovating the commercial spaces, while the PD politician said that there was a lack of a buying network. One employee of L'Associazione Diversamente speculated that crime organizations prevent initiatives and shops from opening, though he didn't elaborate on why he believed this was true. The first interviewee believed that the lack of foot traffic on the street and the thin density of the residential area hurt the shops because they must work harder to capture a sufficient consumer base for their businesses.

Some strategies to combat the declining neighborhood economy have been proposed by Quadraro inhabitants. For instance, the PD politician told us that he believes that the neighborhood shops could benefit from an association that promotes the shared historic identity of the neighborhood. He believes that this investment would require a revitalization effort for the entire neighborhood using both private and government funds. The first interviewee told us that many of the residents leave Quadraro to go to pubs, to go shopping, and to enjoy nightlife. Most of the shops within the neighborhood cater to the residents' basic needs – such as groceries - and offer little more.

General Conclusion

Quadraro was founded originally by lower class Italian workers and has now transitioned into a dynamic neighborhood that includes immigrants, students, and artisans. Though the earliest residences were self-built, the infrastructure and quality of life has improved over time. The gentrification of Quadraro consisted of paving the streets and sidewalks, planting trees, and founding parks. More recent improvements, such as the addition of streetlights, have helped to improve Quadraro's historic reputation as a dangerous neighborhood.

Quadraro, like so many Roman neighborhoods, continues in a constant state of physical and social transition. It is becoming a popular place for students and young families who are attracted to Quadraro's affordability and small town feel. Meanwhile, immigrants continue to flow in, bringing with them cultural differences that are observed by some established locals with trust and others with skepticism.

Nevertheless, Quadraro left us with little to conclude upon definitively, because the neighborhood's continually changing nature creates an elusive environment for one who attempts to establish concrete facts and patterns to characterize Quadraro.

Issues For Further Future Investigation:

1. What will be the effect of subway line C, which will be constructed just north of the neighborhood? How will this affect traffic? If access to Quadraro is easier, then how will this affect the process of gentrification and building property values?
2. What will be the effects of gentrification in the neighborhood? People move to Quadraro for its human scale and its convenient access to lines of transportation

and infrastructure, its low density, small town feel, and the fact that people know each other. Property values are comparatively low and people are betting on rising prices yet property values have not risen significantly. We have observed restoration of buildings with the intention of selling to new owners at higher prices (creative class, students), as well as speculated upon the presence of illegal overcrowding of marginalized people to avoid paying taxes.

3. How will Quadraro's historic past contribute to its future? Will its history be forgotten or preserved and celebrated? Will its self-built architecture be appreciated and valued?

The answers to these questions are unfathomable both for outside researchers and for the residents themselves, who desire basic improvements while preserving Quadraro's historic identity. We hope that in the future, Quadraro will be able to strike a balance between achieving the necessary improvements and sustaining community cohesion.

Appendix:

Quadraro: Interviews

Interview #1

Profile

Female Resident

Date and Time: March 4, 2010; 10:00 AM

Location: At her home in Quadraro

Description: She is a planning student who has lived in the neighborhood since 2004.

Account of Interview

Q: What do you believe to be the major problems in the neighborhood?

A: The traffic problems on Via dei Quintili, which have increased in the last five to six years, because Via dei Quintili is the primary corridor street through the neighborhood. This causes increased levels of noise and pollution for the neighborhood. However, you cannot feel the major impact of these increased traffic levels as you move to streets away from Via dei Quintili.

Q: How has the neighborhood changed?

A: First, there has been a transition in the population of the neighborhood. In a social view, there is now a contrasting population of increased students and artists and marginal people. Second, there has been significant restoration of buildings.

This is because as elderly population died within the neighborhood and left their properties to their children, a real estate enterprise came into the neighborhood and bought these houses. The real estate enterprise then restored these houses and sold them back to different residents. Quadraro is still one of the lowest priced neighborhoods within Rome in terms of housing. You know your neighbors, because they have their “eyes on the street.” Lastly, people within Quadraro are no longer tied to the community.

Q: What other comments do you have about the current population of Quadraro?

A: Within the neighborhood there are elderly people with social problems that live on the edge of marginality within the neighborhood and do not leave. Additionally, there is a strong migrant network within the neighborhood. They all know each other and help each other find housing.

Q: What do you think about the condition of the vacant ground floor shop spaces?

A: I do not think that immigrants are renting out the spaces. I never remember the neighborhood being “full of life” with stores selling lots of goods and having streets with a strong “foot traffic” presence.

Q: What can you tell us about the immigrant population in the neighborhood?

A: The North African population arrived in the neighborhood about fifteen years ago. They are very well integrated in the neighborhood. The North Africans are mainly street vendors that live but do not work in the neighborhood. They leave early to the city center and then return to the neighborhood at night. It is the Bangladeshi population in the neighborhood that owns the fruit shops. It is the South American population that we know live in the basements of houses. Lastly there is also the presence of a Korean community within the neighborhood. However, these people do not live in the neighborhood.

Q: What do you think about the immigrant populations cohesion with the rest of the neighborhood?

A: The immigrant community is cohesive amongst themselves and not necessarily with the rest of the community. I believe that the community with the strongest internal community cohesion is the Korean community. The old cinema was sold to the Korean community and is now the Korean Church. This was a negative event of the neighborhood because the selling of the cinema, which was an important gathering place in the neighborhood, resulted in the loss of memory and history. In the collective imagination of the community of Quadraro, memory is extremely important.

Q: What about overall community cohesion?

A: I believe that there are three separate communities within the neighborhood. First, there is the elderly population of people, who are much more linked together than other groups in the neighborhood because of collective memory. Second, there is the student population, who is the new population that tried to gentrify the neighborhood and failed. Lastly, there is the immigrant population that works through a strong social network. However, I believe the two actually "real" communities in the neighborhood come from the immigrant population: the Korean community and the South American community. The Korean community shares the same place and do not live here in Quadraro. These individuals are much more similar to each other than the rest of the neighborhood. They work towards a common shared ideology and goal. They have a higher income. Many Koreans come to Rome to study opera. Also, the South American population has a visible presence in the neighborhood. For example, there is a Peruvian restaurant in the neighborhood.

Q: Quadraro is a historically politically active neighborhood. What can you say about the presence of political activity in the neighborhood nowadays?

A: There is a large amount of informal political activity. You can see its presence on the walls and buildings in the neighborhood in the form of flyers and graffiti. There are also strange stores/clubs that are open at strange times, which are most obviously for informal political meetings.

Q: Do you use the parks in the neighborhood?

A: There was a park restoration effort for the Park on Via Re Filippo, and it was the first time people thought about the community as a place for people to interact.

However, I never go to that park. I go to the large park instead (17 de Aprile). I like that park much more because it is where you can meet people from all around the world.

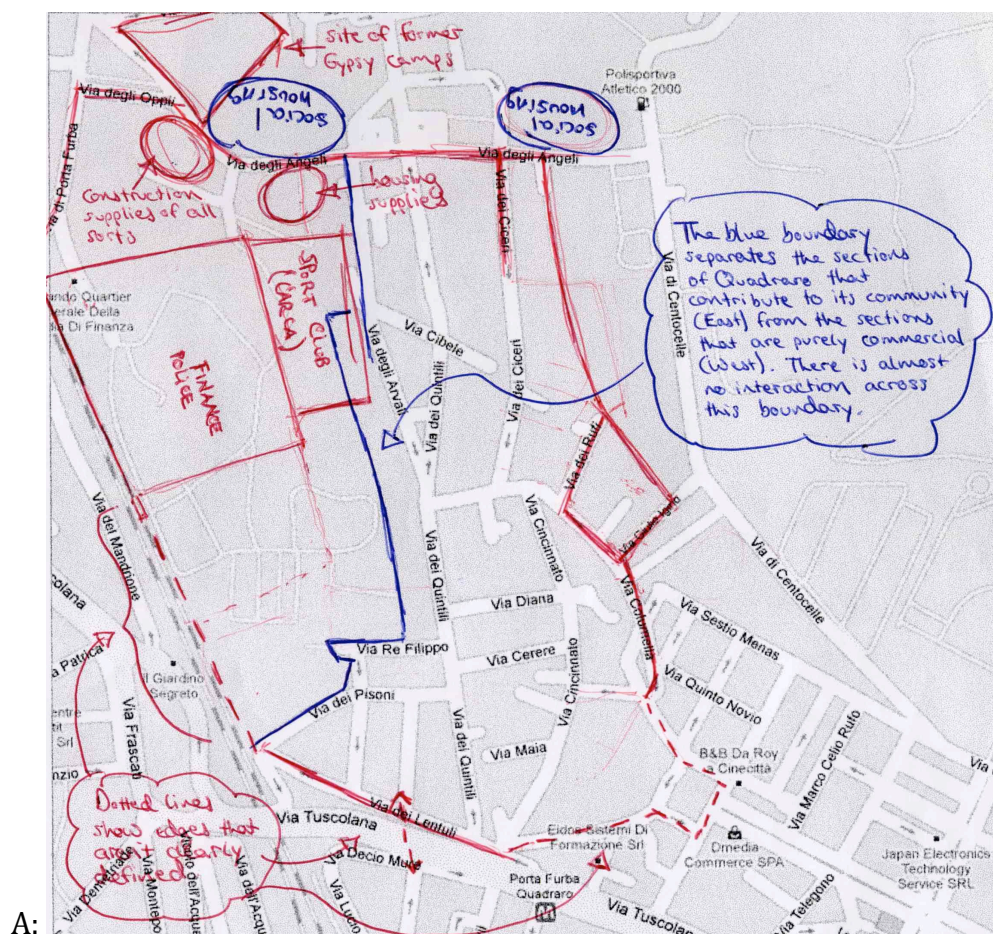
Q: Do you find the park (17 dei Aprile) useful and/or important to life in Quadraro?

A: I feel like I am leaving the neighborhood of Quadraro when I go to that park.

Q: Why do you think you feel that way?

A: Maybe because of the change in the building sizes in that area and there is only one entrance to the park. I perceive a strong boundary between that area and Quadraro because Via Columella is closed off.

Q: What are the boundaries to the community?



Q: What do you think about the reputation of the neighborhood?

A: Quadraro still has a “bad neighborhood” reputation, but in reality that reputation is inexistent. People, such as artists and photographers, invested in the neighborhood hoping that it would change, but then it did not.

Q: What are the means of transportation that people in the neighborhood use?

A: They use scooters, metro, car, and sometimes bikes. They use bikes very rarely.

Q: What are the best things about Quadraro?

A: There is a diverse group of people. I like that there are no supermarkets in Quadraro, only food shops. You can find everything you want in Quadraro even though it is a small neighborhood. It feels like you are living somewhere that is “an exception,” not mainstream Rome, but unique. It is great that Quadraro is not spatially separated from the heart of Rome. This is because of the convenient metro. We are lucky here to have the combination of informal and formal. It is a rich context to live in.

Q: What are the worst things in Quadraro?

A: With such a diverse group of people living in this community, it is hard to put together such a diverse range of opinions, and thus, create a balance. The community has difficulty thinking about and planning about the future. The traffic, like I said before, had gotten to be a problem. The lack of public space and public gardens is a serious problem. People use the street corners for community space. Ability to think about the future

Q: What are the important events that have made a significant change in neighborhood?

A: The “oak tree controversy” in which residents of the neighborhood fought for an old oak tree in the neighborhood to not be cut down, though others argued that it was a danger to neighborhood residents with its falling branches.

Q: Why are there so many empty shops in Quadraro?

A: I believe there exist an urban level explanation as well as a local level explanation. At the urban level, lots of empty shops are seen through Rome. At the local level, it is hard here to open a store. You have to intercept the portion of the Quadraro population that leave the neighborhood for certain needs, such as pubs, nightlife, and shopping for clothing. The neighborhood is very residential, and people do not come from the outside for the shops in this neighborhood. The shops are meant to cater the basic needs of residents, such as groceries.

Summary

The first interview gave us a better sense of Quadraro’s major issues from a resident’s perspective. We also ascertained a broad sense of the community dynamics between the different groups that both live and occupy Quadraro’s spaces.

Interview #2

Profile

Male Employee of L’ Associazione: Diversamente

Date and Time: March 4, 2010; 1:00PM

Location: At L' Associazione: Diversamente center in Quadraretto

Description: Member of L' Associazione: Diversamente, a community outreach center located in Quadraretto

Account of Interview

Q: What are the hours of this center?

A: We are open during the afternoon and night because there are not places for the community to gather in the neighborhood. We have been open at night for two years now. Our philosophy is that there needs to be "a light on: to make the neighborhood a safe place.

Q: Who comes to this community center? What part of Quadraro? Quadraro Vecchio or Quadraretto?

A: Quadraro Vecchio is municipio 6, while Quadraretto is municipio 10. Because of this administrative discrepancy, the people who come to this center are mostly from Quadraretto, but sometimes from Quadraro Vecchio. We really want to develop great relations with Quadraro Vecchio.

Q: Why do you think people from Quadraro are not coming to this community center?

A: There is a tunnel under Via Tuscolana that connects Quadraro Vecchio to Quadraretto. It is a strong link between the two sides of the neighborhood, but people feel extremely unsafe in the tunnel. Via Tuscolana is a strong barrier between the two sides of the neighborhood. It physically prevents people from Quadraro Vecchio from coming to Quadraretto.

Q: What do you know about the composition of Quadraro? What do you think about the existence of community cohesion in Quadraro?

A: Historically, the original population ½ people came from Southern Italy to work in construction (creating self-built homes); ½ population came from city center when Mussolini was clearing out population from city center, displaced population ended up here. Now, with immigrant population of non-Italians there is a change or loss in the identity of the neighborhood. I believe immigrants have integrated very well into the neighborhood, but on the other hand, they have made the neighborhood's identity much weaker. Our goal is to make the identity of the neighborhood stronger.

Q: What are some programs you are initiating to promote identity in Quadraro?

A: We promote the program "Architecture without boundaries," which is an initiative that tries to re-functionalize spaces in the neighborhood. We also closely follow the goal of promoting culture in the periphery ("culture in periferica... musica... cinema... teatro... scrittura...")

Q: Why are so many of the ground level shops vacant?

A: My theory is that there are crime organizations preventing initiatives and shops from opening in Quadraro Vecchio.

Q: What do you think about housing prices in Quadraro?

A: I think that housing prices have gone up, but Quadraro is still attracting people.

Q: What is affecting the loss of identity in Quadraro?

A: The student population is weakening the neighborhood's identity. Also, there are no public spaces or gathering places, which makes it hard to make horizontal relations amongst groups. Immigrant networks stay within the same group, and do not venture out to different groups in the community. The immigrants in particular effect the community cohesion in the overall neighborhood. This association (community center) is trying to fill the gap by teaching young people about the history of the neighborhood to increase cohesion.

Summary

The second interview gave us a better sense of the community composition and how the different groups assimilate and function in Quadraro's historic identity.

Interview #3

Profile

Partito Democratico (PD) Representative for Quadraro (Municipio 6)

Date and Time: March 4, 2010; 2:30PM

Location: At the PD headquarters in Quadraro

Description: PD representative for Quadraro, who is trying to create a business association in Quadraro,

Account of Interview

Q: What can you tell us about the projects you are promoting in Quadraro?

A: The projects we are promoting in this neighborhood are aimed at making different actors in the neighborhood protagonists. We want to give them a voice by using a bottom-up process. In the end we hope to find help in institutions. We want to use a private and public partnership to revitalize the neighborhood because Quadraro has so much history.

Q: Does your interest in revitalizing Quadraro have a political agenda?

A: No, we want to make a difference in Quadraro regardless of being a part of a political party. We are also citizens of this neighborhood and want to see it improve for the better.

Q: Can you explain to us about this business association to hope to create in Quadraro?

A: The greatest resource of Quadraro is its small shops, which are getting more rare in Rome. Although shopping malls are more competitive and can sell items for cheap, these small shops offer quality products. We aim to make a pact between the shops in the neighborhood and the public authority, which would entail an agreement in which shop owners, for example, would take care of the street space in front of their shop, and then the government would allow the shop owners to pay lower taxes for providing a public service. What we have in Quadraro are “natural shopping malls.”

Q: How will creating a business association benefit the greater community in Quadraro?

A: Shops in this neighborhood are not just shops, but are also important gathering places.

Q: What do local shop owners think about your business association proposal; being that just last week you had a meeting to present your proposal?

A: Older business owners are skeptical about the business association. I believe this is because they do not want to pay the fee that accompanies being a part of the business association.

Q: What is your final aim with this plan?

A: Our final aim with this plan is to revitalize the area, but that is what I believe to be the goal of the entire community. I think the best way to reach this goal is through the participation of shop owners.

Q: What else are you promoting other than this business association?

A: We are also promoting farmers markets in which produce come from local surroundings. This is much more sustainable and supports the “slow food movement” in which food is seasonal and more locally based. We also hope to initiate another project called “Spread Hotel.”

Q: What is “Spread Hotel”?

A: In “Spread Hotel” families within Quadraro would rent out spare rooms in their homes. This would be a type of informal hotel and mean cheap rooms for visitors. It would not be private, but an association would link these beds.

Q: Why do you think you people in the neighborhood would want to participate in these projects?

A: I was born and raised in this community. I have lived here for 39 years. People in this community trust me.

Q: From what we have been hearing you will need to transcend the boundary between students, elderly, and immigrants or else all projects will fail. How do you plan to transcend the boundaries between these groups?

A: Immigrants are a resource to the neighborhood because their shops are open on different days and at different times. I do not feel like there is a problem of exclusion in this neighborhood. I am looking for a big foreign investor to invest in Quadraro. There are currently 94 empty shops.

Summary

The third interview gave us an idea of how local businesses have tried to cooperate to collectively create a better economic environment within Quadraro. We saw how Quadraro's residents and shop owners are actively trying to work together for the benefit of the local economy and the neighborhood as a whole.

Interview # 4

Profile

Male Resident/Business Owner

Date and Time: February 18, 2010, 11:30 am

Location: "Natural" Clothing Store

Description: Resident in his late-twenties. He has owned this clothing store for about four years in Quadraro, however the company's primary means of business is by selling their merchandise on the Internet. The actual store in Quadraro was simply used as a showroom until about a year ago when it was opened to the public.

Account of Interview

Q: What changes have you observed recently in Quadraro?

A: The neighborhood is becoming trendier, more young and attractive. This young population is attempting to gentrify the neighborhood. There is a university at the end of the metro line so a lot of students prefer to move here.

Q: How did you end up putting your shop in Quadraro?

A: At the beginning I did not need a shop, just a place to store my merchandise, like a warehouse/showroom. That is why I picked to place my store in this location. I also live in Quadraro; it is extremely convenient to have my store here. Also, the rent in

this neighborhood is cheap.

Q: Why else do you like Quadraro?

A: I like living here and having my store here because it is a neighborhood that is not too crowded, and everything I need is close-by to me here, such as banks and supermarkets.

Q: What do students do in this neighborhood?

A: There is a park at the end of Quintili where lots of young people go to ride bikes. Students stay longer at school and then after school surf the Internet. They also go to the regional park, Parco dell'Acqueducti, which is located across Tuscolana. It is a park with private ownership but public use. There is a swimming pool on Via dei Conseli and there are lots of private gyms.

Q: What are your opinions of the neighborhood?

A: There are some really nice people here but lots of lower class. Quadraro still has a reputation as a dangerous place. Fifteen years ago you would not walk around here at night. There has been a generation change. Illegal activities are more hidden now than they were in the past.

Q: Why are many of the ground floor shops closed?

A: They are closed not because people do not want to start up new enterprises but because the current owners of the spaces do not want to rent them out. These shops have been closed for twenty years and require lots of restoration work. Perhaps a public intervention is necessary. I think that these closed shops are the main problem of Quadraro. People want this to change to help transform Quadraro for the better.

Summary

The fourth interview allowed us to learn more about the younger generation that now exists in Quadraro. This younger generation hopes to gentrify Quadraro and turn it into a more trendy or "cool" neighborhood. Also, he revealed to us possible explanations for why many of the ground-floor shop spaces are closed, and that residents are eager for improvements.

Interview #5

Profile

Elder Male Resident

Date and Time: February 11, 2010; 10:30 AM

Location: Sidewalk, Via dei Quintili

Account of Interview

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about the history of this neighborhood?

A: The neighborhood buildings are from around 1918. These buildings are self-built and residents left space in front of buildings for roads to be built in the future. In the 1920's the government brought in water and public utilities to the neighborhood, and building rights were exchanged for putting in roads. There used to be a tram connecting Quadraro to the city center, but it was taken out in 1960. However, luckily the Metro was put in its place in 1982. The "Claudia" sacred aqueduct and the "Felice" aqueduct attracted people. Quadraro is a working class neighborhood. Most people worked in the center using the efficient tram service. The neighborhood was an attractive place for workers to live. This was a strong anti-fascist neighborhood.

Q: Are there any defining events of this neighborhood?

A: In March 1943 there was an attack on two German soldiers initiated by people in the neighborhood. In retaliation, Germans rounded up as many men between the ages of 16 and 60 as they could that lived here in Quadraro. It totaled to around 700 people. They sent them to deportation camp in the north on April 17 1944, then to a concentration camp in Germany. Only a few of these men ever returned.

Q: We are near Cinecitta. Are there any artists involved with Quadraro?

A: This is a "Borgate" – neighborhoods on periphery – Pasolini took inspiration from these kinds of neighborhoods. In the 1940s and 1950s these neighborhoods were not surrounded by the built environment but were separate. There is a book called *Nido di Vespo*, which is a good resource on neighborhood. Check out zoning laws of historic interest. In Quadraro there has always been laws that restore but do not replace. We will see what happens when developers keep coming into the neighborhood.

Summary

The fifth interview gave us a lot of information about the historical background of the neighborhood, and its strong political identity.

Interview #6

Profile

Female Artist, Resident

Date and Time: February 11, 2010; 11:30 AM

Location: Artist studio, Via dei Quintili

Account of Interview

Q: What are some opinions that you have about your neighborhood?

A: The neighborhood is losing its charm. Rich people are starting to see it as a trendy neighborhood and they are moving in, gentrifying it. This is one of Pasolini's neighborhoods. There are lots of films that were done near here, Cinecitta is near. This is a historically "underground" neighborhood. "Este quartieri e vero" – this is a real neighborhood.

Q: How long have you lived here and what are some changes you have witnessed?

A: I have spent 30 years here in this neighborhood. Communism is no longer an ideology, it is just idealism. The problems of this neighborhood are the problems of the world. There are too many cars and not enough people in the street socializing. After the war destroyed many beautiful buildings, large buildings were developed. This is a very diverse neighborhood. Transsexuals are welcomed. This is a microcosm of the world. There is lots of diversity in age, sex, and ethnicity. The Bangladeshi immigrants are well liked because they are good people. Since I moved here around 30 years ago and knew it was my neighborhood.

Summary

The sixth interview allowed us to learn that all residents do not consider the recent gentrification in the neighborhood positive. The neighborhood is an extremely dynamic and diverse place, full of people with all different interests and backgrounds, which is what makes Quadraro a special place to many of its residents.

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