



Quarticciolo

Perceptions from the Inside Out

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Context

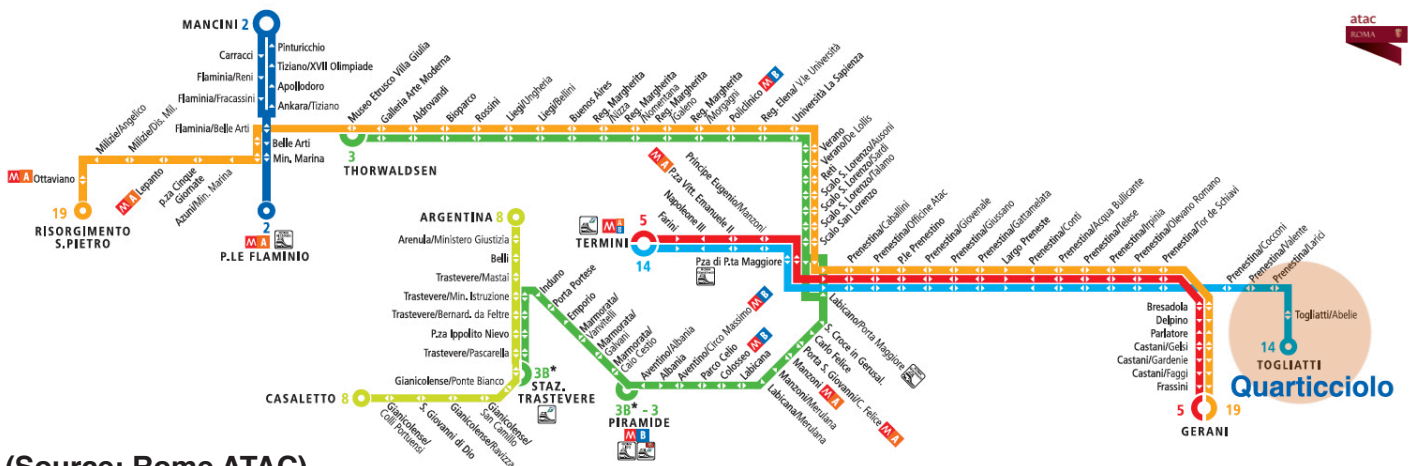
Quarticciolo is a neighborhood of approximately 6,000 residents located in Rome's Municipio VII. Located seven kilometers east of Termini Train Station and the city center, Quarticciolo is a predominantly working class neighborhood. It consists almost exclusively of public housing built during Rome's Fascist era, and finished after World War II. Notable neighborhood landmarks include the Teatro/Biblioteca Quarticciolo and Piazza Quarticciolo, which both function as nodes in the neighborhood.

Public transportation connects Quarticciolo relatively well to the rest of the city. Viale Palmiro Togliatti is the terminus for Tram 14, which runs every twelve minutes and takes approximately 40 minutes to arrive at Termini. The neighborhood is also directly served by multiple bus routes (114, 213, 450, 541, 543, 556 and 565) which connect

Quarticciolo to surrounding neighborhoods. Quarticciolo is two kilometers south of A24-Viadotto Botanica and four kilometers west of GRA Autostrada- A90, Rome's outer-beltway.

Quarticciolo lies at the southeast corner of the major arterials of Via Prenestina and Viale Palmiro Togliatti. Quarticciolo's southern and eastern boundaries are made up of vacant fields and areas of decreased density and self-built housing. This leap frog development is a common characteristic of Rome's peripheral neighborhoods, especially those in the eastern part of the city.

The history of Quarticciolo plays a significant role in the neighborhood's identity today. Construction of the original borgata started in 1938, when Benito Mussolini's *sventramenti*,



(Source: Rome ATAC)



(Source: Google Maps)



Aerial View of Quarticciolo from the Roof of La Talpa
 (Photo: Diana Folla)

or “gutting out” of the city, evicted many lower income residents from the center of Rome. The borgata of Quarticciolo served to house those displaced during this process and to keep them far from the center. The residents today still have generally low income and education levels.

The outside stigma of the neighborhood as one associated with drugs and crime came up during several interviews. Other interviewees noted the neighborhood’s isolation and lack of any but the most basic services. Agnew describes the area

as historically “deficient in basic services and relatively inaccessible to the city centre” (122).

However, residents of Quarticciolo seem generally satisfied to live there. Several factors make Quarticciolo different from other less desirable public housing neighborhoods. One is the deliberately planned layout of the neighborhood, with lots of defensible semi-public space. Another relates to the strong social fabric of the neighborhood and its well-defined identity.



1945



1991

Methodology

Surveying Streets and Buildings

To prepare the study's maps, the group surveyed various physical aspects of Quarticciolo. For the building typology map, each building cluster was assigned a number on a satellite photo; the group then filled out a building typology form for each number. The data recorded included number of floors, number of entrances, number of units, external informal modifications to buildings, level of maintenance, and presence of satellite dishes and air conditioners. For the street typology map, the group completed street typology forms for each street in the neighborhood, with one form for each section along a block. Recorded information includes number of lanes, presence of sidewalks and parking, overall state of repair, noise level, presence of greenery, and amount of traffic. In addition, the group filled out a small amount of street typology forms outside of the primary study area, in Centocelle across Viale Togliatti, to better understand Quarticciolo's urban context. The sites of extra street typology surveys were chosen with a photogrid, by overlaying a grid on a satellite picture and choosing points as close as possible to a random selection of intersections on the grid. The neighborhood's land use map was made by systematically observing the neighborhood's building fronts.

Talking to People

Most information about Quarticciolo is not to be found in journals and articles; its traditions, history, and perceptions are first and foremost embedded within its residents. It follows that in order to understand the neighborhood as much as possible within the timeframe of this study, the group conducted several interviews. In an attempt to gain the broadest possible picture, the group conducted formal scheduled interviews with various neighborhood associations and tried talking informally to people encountered on the street and in caffès.

Formal interviews were conducted with the Comitato cittadini Quarticciolo e dintorni, a

worker at Teatro Quarticciolo, Età Libera, and a resident of La Talpa. In addition, people spoken to informally included elderly from the neighborhood and younger people working there. The longest of these informal conversations was with an elderly retired man at Bar Conte; men working at the theater; a barista; and passers by asking surveying group members what they were doing in the neighborhood.

While it would have been ideal if everyone the group spoke to was from Quarticciolo, most people from the formal interviews commute to work there and thus are not Quarticciolo residents. More of the people happened upon on the street were residents; however, the conversations with them were much shorter and more general due to the nature of the encounters. Another challenge was the issue of language. The formal interviews were all conducted in Italian, meaning the group needed a translator.

Formal interviews were processed as follows: questions were prepared and printed out in advance. Two group members kept these and focused on interacting with the interviewee(s) and the translator. Two members wrote down as much as they could understand of the interviewee's words and then summarized what the translator transmitted. The remaining group member focused on the overall atmosphere, recording set and setting, body language, and other observations not centered on the interview's direct content.

This procedure is geared towards extracting as much information from the interview as possible without being intrusive or disrespectful of the subject's privacy. The language barrier makes it impossible to have a direct transcript of the interview; it follows that all reported information is paraphrased and unless in quotes and in Italian, none of the sentences written came directly from interviewees. However, in an attempt to keep the information as true to the interviewee's meaning as possible, this study refrains from analyzing the interviews and simply presents their paraphrased content for the reader to draw their own conclusions.

Cognitive Maps

A person's experience of a neighborhood is based on where and how they travel through it. Everyone follows different trajectories, emphasizes different things, and frequents different places for different amounts of time. One way of transmitting how a person lives, perceives, and sees a neighborhood is through Lynch maps, which show a person's perception of urban space by showing their perceived relationships between paths, edges, nodes, landmarks, and districts (Lynch, 1960). The group collected ten Lynch maps from interviewees and from people asked on the street. Each member also produced their own map.

When asking people for Lynch maps, the group did not give specific instructions on how to draw them. The group explained that only things important to the drawer and to the neighborhood were needed. The group did not explain the concepts of paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. While people drew their Lynch maps, one or two group members took notes on the order in which elements were drawn, and what the person was saying and doing while drawing, which might not have been translated onto the map.



Group members compiling street typology notes (Photo: Cindy Yu)

History

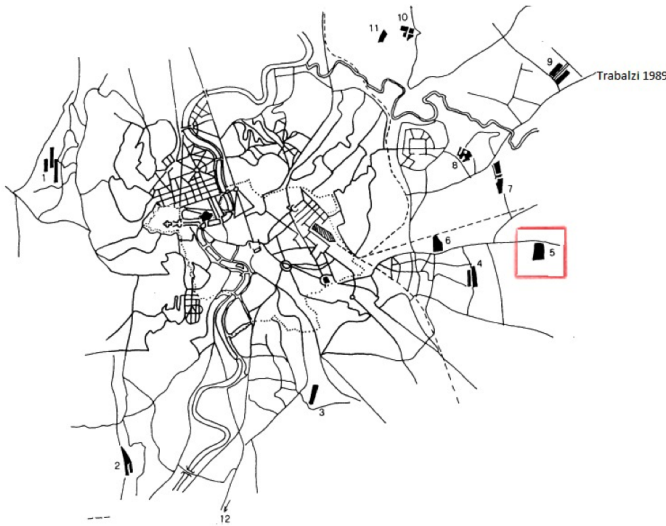
There is not much literature available about Quarticciolo, so in order to piece together its history the group relied on a few academic sources in addition to oral testimony by residents. Scholars Rhodes and Trabalzi were useful in helping us understand Quarticciolo's history by placing it in the context of the development of borgate in Rome's urban periphery. Villani's book *Le borgate del fascismo* was extremely helpful in providing information specific to Quarticciolo's development.

Other dates and occurrences, such as the development of a black housing market and the arrival of Tram 14, were drawn from interviews with residents. These testimonies generally dealt with less tangible or measurable occurrences and with perceptions of Quarticciolo's history. Facts and statements could only be ascertained by the corroboration of other residents who gave us the same information, although interpretations of events were sometimes in stark opposition. Interviews with residents were invaluable to helping the group construct a narrative of Quarticciolo that goes beyond dates and gives more insight into the role of the neighborhood's history in the contemporary state of Quarticciolo.

In addition to books and interviews, the group utilized the little information available on the internet. This includes an article on the Gobbo and various photographs pulled from digital historical archives. Photographs were otherwise drawn from group members' personal collection.

History

In order to understand Quarticciolo as a contemporary urban space, it is imperative to understand its rich and complex history as a peripheral Roman neighborhood. The neighborhood's built environment, demographics, social relations, and stigmatization are inextricably linked to its historical context.



Plan of Rome with the Borghate
(Source: Trabalzi 1989)

Sventramenti e Borgate Ufficiali

The formation of Quarticciolo is the result of a confluence of historical occurrences and impacting factors. It is a *borgata*, a pejorative derivation of the word *borgo*, which Rhodes likens to an English equivalent of “working class suburb.” The borgate were built as result of Mussolini’s sventramenti, or gutting out of the city, to make way for his grandiose public works projects. The borgate were intended to house the large displaced population from the city center. Called borgate rapidissime, or quickly built peripheral neighborhoods, they were often made of the cheapest, lowest quality materials and were poorly serviced with water, transportation, and sanitation (2007, pg. 2-5).

Quarticciolo was founded in 1938 as a *borgata ufficiale*, or a formally planned neighborhood. According to members of the Comitato Cittadini Quarticciolo e Dintorni, most of the population came from the displacement caused by the



Quarticciolo Family
(Photo: archiviofoto.unita.it)



Quarticciolo Family
(Photo: archiviofoto.unita.it)



Quarticciolo Aerial View
(Source: digilander.libero.it)

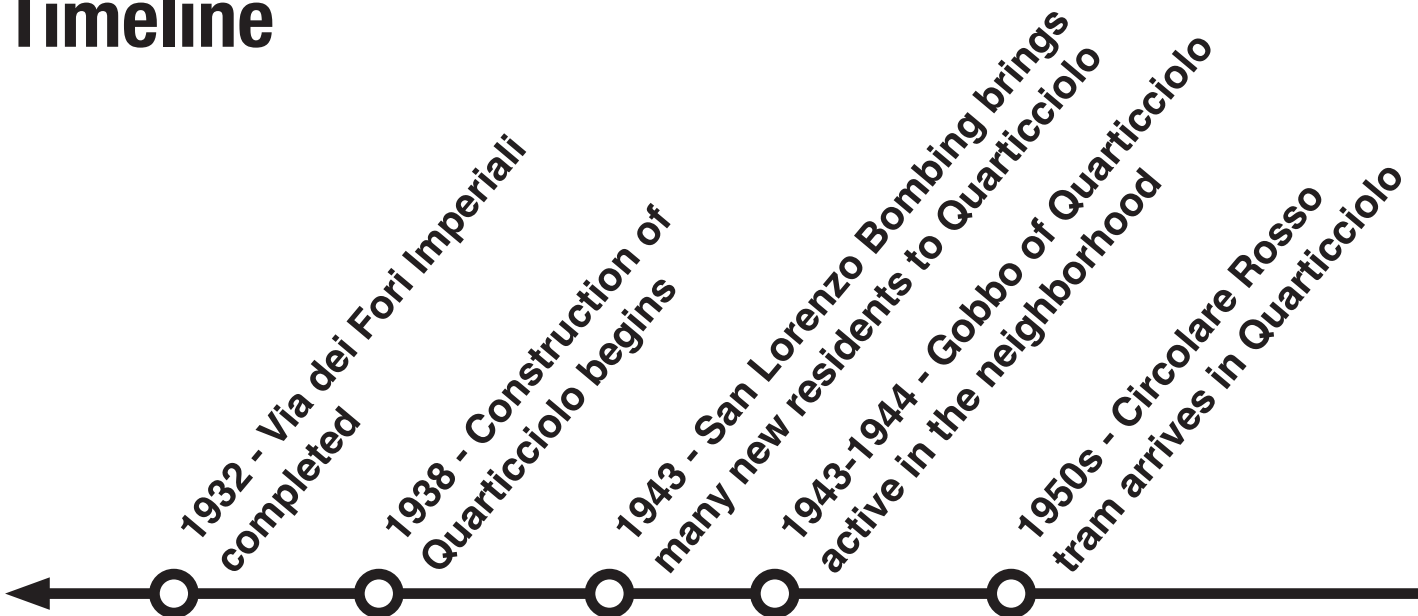


First Arrival of 14 Tram in Quarticciolo
 (4.bp.blogspot.com)

construction of Via dei Fori Imperiali. The famous 1943 bombing of Rome brought many more to Quarticciolo, among who is one of the study's interviewees. He is originally from Puglia, like many other residents of Quarticciolo. The neighborhood's streets are named after towns in Puglia to honor this connection.

The construction of Quarticciolo saw a shift from the previously used style of large-scale building complexes for public housing. Instead, it adopted the design of small village-like structures not meant to be more than five stories tall. Due to issues financing the project and to the outbreak of World War II, the construction of Quarticciolo was constantly interrupted and restarted, with

Timeline





Quarticciolo Buildings
(archiviofoto.unita.it)

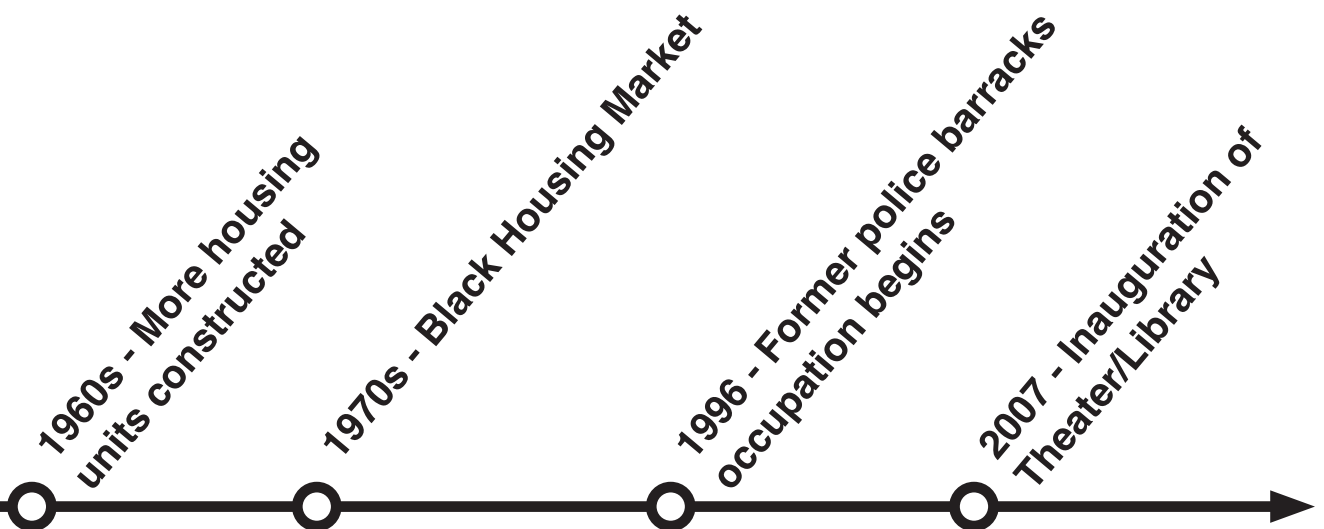
some complexes built later in the 1960s (Villani 2012). The members of the Comitato describe Quarticciolo as the only formal settlement in this eastern area of Rome's periphery during the

1950s and 60s. These buildings were built as *casa popolare*, or public housing. The buildings that followed, they told us, continued throughout the 1960s, but were not done in Fascist style.

Like many of the *borgate rapidissime*, the living conditions in Quarticciolo were squalid, and the neighborhood was poorly serviced. Residents describe the area Quarticciolo was built in as deep countryside, becoming an area that could be considered neither rural nor urban, and that was isolated from the city. One elderly resident recalled extreme poverty, with children running around in church issued underwear, unable to afford any more clothing. The apartments were equipped with only one toilet and one washbasin, in which he remembers bathing once a week.

The sense of isolation is heightened by the region's long wait for public transportation linking it to Rome's city center. Interviews with residents describe one single bus that used to service the neighborhood, which people used to hang off the sides of in order to get into the city. Members of the Comitato mentioned that before the arrival of Tram 14 in the 1950s (formerly known as the Circolare Rosso), the only way to get into Rome was by walking through the swampland. Tram 14 still operates today, in addition to several buses that now serve the neighborhood.

Trabalzi (1989) describes the insularity of the *borgate* as a way of controlling the lower classes and Rhodes (2007) adds that is was also to render them invisible from the city center.





Quarticciolo Communist Party (PCI)
(archiviofoto.unita.it)



Quarticciolo Communist Party (PCI)
(archiviofoto.unita.it)

These intentions are evident in Quarticciolo's location and design, as well as the delay in providing it with services and transportation. It is also noticeable through the former police station, the tallest structure in the neighborhood, which towers above all the other buildings. Interviews with residents echo this sentiment of extreme isolation and marginalization. They believe this contributed to the stigmatization of Quarticciolo, but at the same time, fostered neighborhood solidarity. It is this history of forcible displacement, isolation, and struggle for improved living conditions and services that creates the social dynamic found in Quarticciolo today.

History of Political Activism

The political nature of Quarticciolo's founding at the hands of Fascism created a neighborhood dynamic characterized by political activism. Residents describe a neighborhood with a long history of heightened political activity and resistance against Fascism and Nazi occupation. According to one resident, the Italian Communist Party (PCI – Partito comunista italiano) once had its headquarters in Piazza Oria. Today the separate Italian Communist Proletariats (Proletari comunisti italiani) has an office in the neighborhood. The politically involved Center for the Catholic Association (L'associazione centro cattolico) is also located in Quarticciolo.

Il Gobbo di Quarticciolo (the Hunchback of Quarticciolo) was a famous resident who best illustrates this spirit of resistance and political activity. Born in Calabria as Giuseppe Albano, he became a Robin Hood-like figure who would steal from Fascist government officials and distribute the goods among the poor of the neighborhood (INFOaut 2013). He played a prominent role in the historical narrative and oral tradition of Quarticciolo, though opinions of him vary from person to person. Some residents celebrate his actions as the best representation of resistance and organization the neighborhood is capable of. Others disparage him as a thief who only reinforced the stigmatization of Quarticciolo. As controversial a figure as he may be, his name is featured prominently in graffiti throughout the neighborhood and he illustrates the contentious, political spirit of Quarticciolo.

Resistance and informality is linked to the construction history of Quarticciolo's built environment. The constant stopping and starting of construction due to financial problems and the war, in conjunction with the severe housing shortage faced by the displaced population, led to occupation of unfinished dwellings in the 1940s (Villani 2012). From the very beginning of Quarticciolo's history, then, squatting and disregard for housing laws and regulations were present. Our interviews with residents elucidated a relationship with housing authorities consisting of awareness and inaction. It is not a secret that homes are illegally occupied, that rents are underpaid or not paid at all, and that homes tend to be transferred within families or by word of mouth, as opposed to through a waiting list. While this does not appear to have been problematic or a source of conflict, according to the members of the Comitato, these practices created a black housing market in the 1970s that unjustly denied housing to those who direly needed it. This history of informality and lack of regulation with public housing has had profound impacts on the social relations of the neighborhood, in addition to the physical appearance and form of the built environment.

Contemporary Struggles and Recent Developments

The culture of resistance and informality persists in contemporary Quarticciolo, with the most prominent example being the squatted social laboratory, La Talpa. It has been occupying a former police barracks for fourteen years. It serves both a residential and political function. According to Marco, an interviewee from the squat, it provides a safe space where the neighborhood's youth can gain a political education and spend time instead of getting involved in drug activity. The very location of this squat is of historical significance, since its physical structure was once used for neighborhood control and surveillance. This significance is honored and promoted by the organization's activities. Marco stated that an important objective of the squat is to educate the younger generation on the neighborhood's role in antifascist resistance to keep the history alive, and to encourage similar participation and political awareness.



*ALBANO GIUSEPPE
(IL GOBBO DEL QUARTICCIOLO)*

(archiviofoto.unita.it)



Via Lucerna
(tracciatidiviaggi.blogspot.it)



Quarticciolo Market
(archiviofoto.unita.it)

Another important organization in the neighborhood is the Quarticciolo Library/Theatre, which an employee informed us is the only one of its kind in Rome. It was founded in 2007 in a building that formerly housed a neighborhood market. Like La Talpa, the library places cultural importance on the history of the neighborhood. It contains materials relating to Quarticciolo's history, as well as serving as a meeting spot for students from the neighborhood and beyond. The theatre is currently undergoing privatization, which was met with much resistance and demonstration by residents. Despite significant protest, the plans for privatization are set to continue.

Quarticciolo: A History for the Present and the Future

Quarticciolo is a product of a rich and complex history that links it to various urban processes and important historical events. The evolving character of this neighborhood is not only a product of its history, but an influencing force upon it, as well. Quarticciolo's historical narrative is so entrenched in its contemporary social fabric, assets, and problems, that in order to properly study this neighborhood it is necessary to understand how it came to be. The efforts by organizations such as the library and the squat to preserve this illustrate reverence and pride for this neighborhood's story. It is evident that understanding Quarticciolo's history is not only critical to understanding its current state, but also its future direction.



Police Barracks from Piazza del Quarticciolo
(www.romasparita.eu)

Street Typology

The street typology is divided into four categories: One-lane, two-lane, major arterial, and piazza. Additionally, areas paved in ornamental stone are marked on the street typology map in case they prove to be indicative of things like social capital or history.

All streets have parking on both sides, mostly parallel but occasionally slanted. The noise levels are low throughout the neighborhood, with louder areas near Viale Palmiro Togliatti and Via Molfetta. The interior is almost completely silent, with faintly audible voices coming from inside buildings and from bird songs.

Most east-west streets in the primary study area are one-way, with the exception of Via Molfetta at the south and Via Conversano at the north. Two of the three north-south streets (Via Manfredonia and Via Ugento) in the primary study area are two-way. The two-way streets do not all have the same width: Via Molfetta is significantly wider than all streets inside the neighborhood, which is why it serves as a boundary for the study area. It was not counted as a major arterial because it remains closer in width to Quarticciolo's other two-way streets than to Viale Togliatti, which has three lanes going in either direction and a tree-lined center strip with two sets of tram rails. Many of the single lane streets are used to go in both directions, which is likely an informal adaptation of original one-direction streets. Furthermore, Via Conversano, a two-way street, is roughly as wide as the neighborhood's one-way streets. It may have been informally adapted from a one-way to a two-way street.

In the secondary study area, the eastern fringes of Centocelle, most sampled streets are one-way, with the exception of Via dei Gelsi, which acts as a continuation of Via Molfetta. The streets here are no louder or calmer than those in Quarticciolo proper. However, Centocelle has on average more tree-lined streets than Quarticciolo, where only Via Manfredonia, Via Molfetta, and Viale Palmiro Togliatti have trees along the streetscape.

The two piazzas, although placed in the same category, are quite different. Piazza

del Quarticciolo is a green public space designed for pedestrians, while Piazza Oria is a parking lot. However, both are lined with businesses, and were described as important by the interviewees at the Comitato cittadini Quarticciolo e dintorni. Piazza del Quarticciolo is currently being remodelled for the third time. One of the interviewees stated that the current project is essentially reversing the work of the second and restoring the space to its original state. She explained that the previous Piazza design was too dark and its raised level made it uninviting, while others mentioned that the most recent Piazza design made accessibility for elderly difficult.

The decorative stone areas along Viale Palmiro Togliatti and the west side of Via Manfredonia are travertine, while the intersection of Vias Manfredonia and Ostuni, the area by the library, the streets surrounding Piazza del Quarticciolo, Via Cerignola, and Via Ascoli Satriano are cobblestone. Besides the pavement quality, the cobblestone streets are generally no different than the asphalt-paved streets to their south.

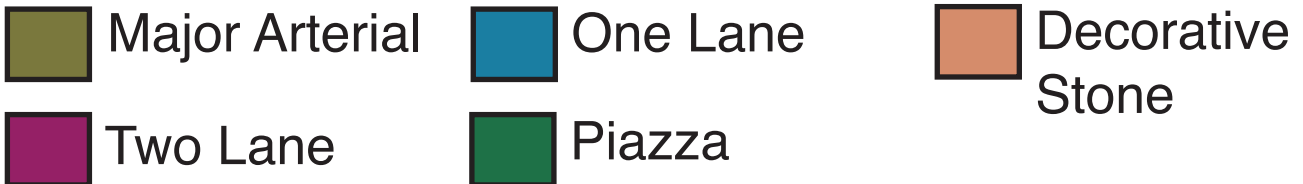
Overall, the streets are in good condition. The sidewalks are not badly cracked anywhere, and everything is reasonably clean and maintained. The only abnormal conditions are the renovation of Piazza del Quarticciolo, which has been at a standstill for over a year, and the newly cobblestoned intersection of Via Manfredonia and Via Ostuni, which, though recently completed, remained blocked off for several months. These projects were or are at a halt for either economic or bureaucratic reasons, according to most of the interviewees.



(Photo: Jil Sanchez)



Street Typology Map



Building Typology

At first glance, Quarticciolo appears to consist of clusters of similar buildings arranged in rows and columns within their street blocks. However, the building typologies can be classified into four different categories: *Stecche*, *Palazzi*, *Palazzine*, and Other.

Stecche

The *stecche* are long series of attached buildings with several entrances along their length. They stand four to five stories tall, and comprise a small proportion of Quarticciolo's buildings. They can be found on the edge of blocks, facing and lining the street.

Palazzi

Palazzi are five stories tall, each contain 40 housing unit, and have several entrances. They were built in regimented columns and rows, enclosing open courtyards inside blocks. *Palazzi* comprise about a quarter of Quarticciolo's buildings.

Palazzine

Palazzine are smaller versions of *palazzi*. They are three to four stories tall and each contain between six and eight housing units. Each building only has one entrance, often onto a small courtyard abutting the larger courtyards formed by *palazzi*. Most face the street, but some are wedged inside a block between other buildings. They comprise almost two thirds of Quarticciolo's buildings, making them the most common building type.

Other

Buildings in this category do not fit into any of the other three categories. Most serve purposes other than housing and are, for the most part, quite different from each other. The most important are the dually functioning theater and library, the tall police building turned into a squatted social center (La Talpa), and the cluster at the neighborhood's northeastern corner, including a supermarket, shops, a church, and a pizzeria.



Stecca (Photo: Diana Folla)



Palazzo (Photo: Cindy Yu)

showed signs of informal modifications, such as walled-in balconies. Satellite dishes, antennae, and air-conditioners are common. Also, almost all apartment units have at least one laundry rack under a window. Their style is quite different from that of neighboring Centocelle. As soon as one crosses Viale Togliatti, once notices that the buildings there are made of brick, and have balconies, roof gardens, and terraces. This indicates higher building quality in Centocelle than in Quarticciolo.



Palazzina (Photo: Cindy Yu)

The neighborhood's palette corresponds to that of Rome, consisting of warm tones from deep ochre to pale yellow and off-white. The library, however, stands out with blue accents. As for graffiti and tagging, there are several tags strewn about the neighborhood, most dealing with anti-fascism, communism, or the Gobbo. The only intricate, planned street art can be found on the walls of La Talpa.

The library/theater was once the neighborhood market. It is detached from residential buildings, stands two stories tall, and has more modern and ornamental architectural features that the surrounding buildings.

At eight stories tall, La Talpa is Quarticciolo's tallest building. Because of its height, locals refer to it as a *grattacielo* (skyscraper). The building's former function as a carabinieri station explains this height, since the entire neighborhood can be observed from its roof. Its lower floors are covered in elaborate political graffiti.

The businesses at the northeastern corner are one-story buildings, which appear to be of roughly the same age as the nearby residential building. The supermarket is much more recent, with a modern look complemented by bright colors.

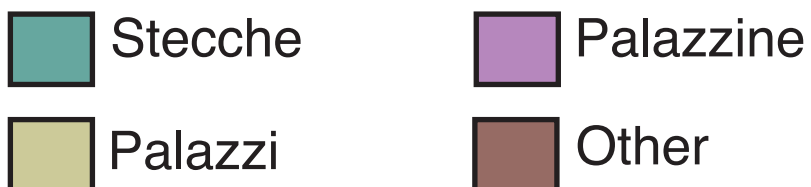
Quarticciolo's buildings are in various states of repair, ranging from freshly painted and well maintained to rather dilapidated. Many buildings



Grattacielo (Photo: Cindy Yu)



Building Typology Map



Land Use

Land use typology is divided into four categories: Residential, Commercial, Mixed-Use, and Other, which includes a church, a school, La Talpa, and the theater/library.

The study area is mostly residential, since Quarticciolo was conceived as a borgata. Some of the housing buildings are mixed-use, with commercial functions on the ground floor or basement. Most businesses are oriented toward the street, as opposed to the interior courtyards.

Piazza Oria, located in the northeast corner of the study area, contains most of the neighborhood's commercial activities. Interviewees indicated that the presence of nearby shopping malls has been detrimental to local businesses, and the area now contains only the most basic services.

The squatted *grattacielo* (skyscraper) and the theater/library are located in the center of the neighborhood. The theater and library serve as spaces for people to gather, especially youth from Quarticciolo and nearby neighborhoods. It is a very popular space for studying and socializing, particularly because the library is the only one in Rome open on Sundays.

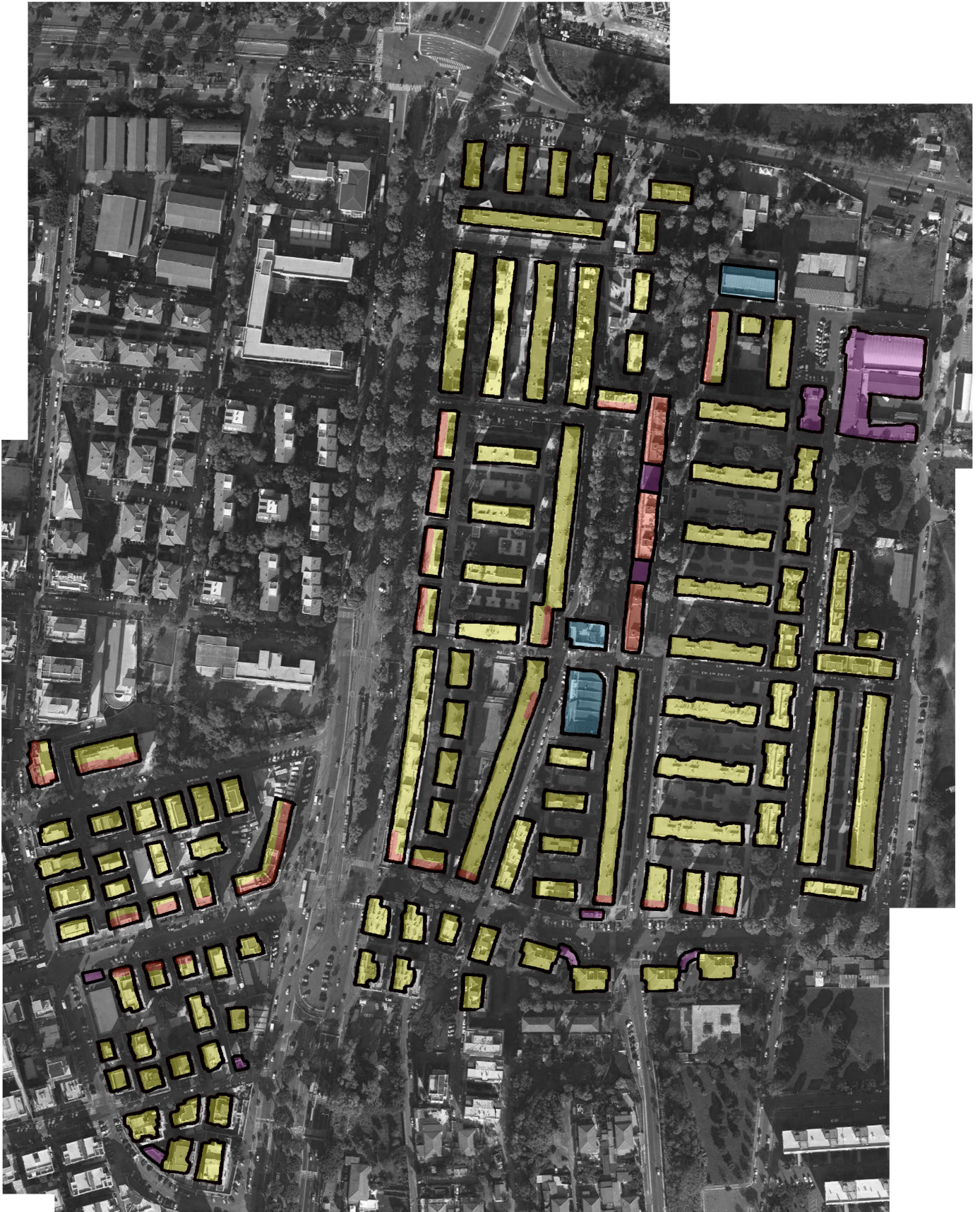
La Talpa is as a “social laboratory,” which hosts evening activities and serves as a hub for radical political activism. The upper floors contain twenty housing units occupied by mostly individuals and couples.

Many residents attend the church in the neighborhood's north-east corner, which also hosts social activities, such as after-school homework help for children. A science secondary school (*liceo*) is located on the other side of Viale Palmiro Togliatti, one block into Centocelle. Though not in the study area, interviewees mentioned that all levels of schooling, from preschool to high school, are available in the area.

The Mercato Rionale Locorotondo (marketplace) is along Via Molfetta, where the once central neighborhood market was relocated. Its stands are all empty, except for one flower seller. Some interviewees mentioned the market's relocation as the cause of its decline, while others blame new nearby supermarkets.



(Photo: Jil Sanchez)



Land Use Map



Business & Commercial Space

Commercial space in Quarticciolo is spread across various portions of the study area. These areas are summarized in Table 1 by number of commercial units and vacancy rates. Table 2 displays the different categories of businesses and commercial spaces within the Quarticciolo study area.

Examination of commercial composition in Quarticciolo shows that residents of the neighborhood have access to a wide variety of businesses and services. Despite being a neighborhood of lower socioeconomic status, access to necessities such as food does not appear to be a major issue. Combined, over one third of the occupied commercial units in Quarticciolo are eateries (typical Roman cafes, bars and restaurants) and groceries (fruit/vegetable markets, butcher shops and small convenience stores).

While Quarticciolo enjoys access to a relatively diverse selection of businesses, vacancies are a growing issue. Though the struggling Mercato Rionale Locorotondo significantly increases this vacancy rate by over 11%, these numbers still present what may be indicative of a troubling trend within the neighborhood. Although Piazza Oria appeared to maintain the status of a vibrant neighborhood commercial space, three out of ten commercial spaces appeared to be recently vacated.

The area surrounding Piazza del Quarticciolo seems to present more of a significant issue. Vacant storefronts, which have fallen into neglect and disrepair, line Via Castellaneta. With the Piazza del Quarticciolo renovation project



Vacant Stalls in the Mercato Rionale 'Locorotondo' (Photo: Cindy Yu)

stalled, businesses surrounding it seem to be hurting. During neighborhood visits throughout what would normally be prime business hours, certain eateries along the piazza remained closed. In other words, commercial spaces in Quarticciolo confront a “triple punch” in terms of vitality and competitiveness:

1. The stalled Piazza del Quarticciolo project has negatively affected the area. Because the Piazza is now mostly closed off, the space is no longer an attractive place to gather, which has in turn caused a recent rise in vacancies.
2. The opening of larger stores and malls with relatively easy access to Quarticciolo has caused more businesses to close in recent years. Given what appears to be an aging, lower class population, the incentive to open up businesses in Quarticciolo remains low.

Table 1: Commercial Space & Vacancy Rates in Quarticciolo By Section

Neighborhood Section	Total # of Commercial Units	# of Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
Via Togliatti	11	0	0
Piazza Quarticcolo (Including Library)	34	11	32%
Northeast Stripmall	10	3	30%
Via Molfetta	12	0	0%
Cento Cello	23	1	4%
Mercato Rionale 'Locorotondo'	14	13	93%
Totals	104	28	27%

3. The previous factors combined with the economic downturn currently plaguing the entire country of Italy all work against the economic vitality of the neighborhood and create a trend of growing commercial vacancy.

Because official statistical data on Quarticciolo was not available, these predictions are not based on quantitative evidence from previous years. Rather, this study relies on data collected on different types of businesses and vacancy rates in the neighborhood. This section also relies largely on the spatial context of Quarticciolo, particularly the Piazza, to produce certain inferences on the future of commercial space.

Table 2: Breakdown of Businesses throughout the Quarticciolo Study Area

Business Type	Total
Eateries (Bars, Cafes, Restaurants etc.)	17
Household Accessories (Furniture/Electronics/Appliances)	10
Groceries (Including Specialized Foods)	10
Private Offices	7
Gas Station/Mechanics	5
Pharmacy/Tabacchi	5
Beauty Salon	3
Miscellaneous Services (Telecomm/Photo Processing)	3
Unknown	3
Specialized Household Products	2
Health Services	2
Gambling Hall	2
Clothing/Fabric	2
Art Studio	1
Dry Cleaners	1
Post Office	1
Day Care Center	1
Flower Stall	1
TOTAL	76



Vacant Storefront (Photo: Cindy Yu)



Produce Vendor in Nearby Centocelle (Photo: Cindy Yu)



Gambling Hall (Photo: Cindy Yu)

Statistical Analysis

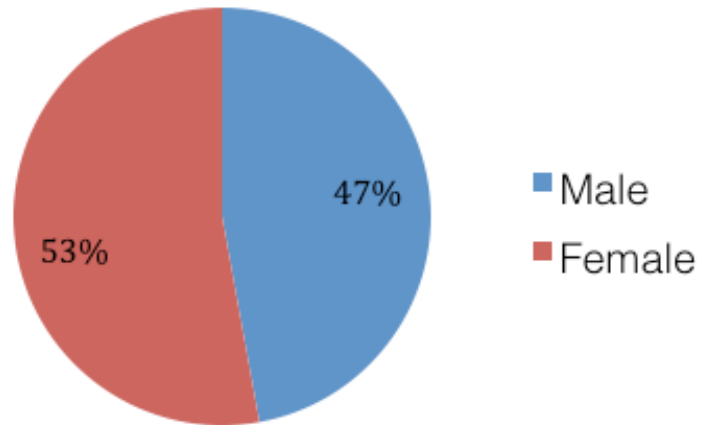
This study also analyzes census data from Rome's ISTAT Report. Since the 2011 data was not yet released at the time of this study, 2001 data is used. To better define the neighborhood of Quarticciolo, the group examined demographics in the form of gender, family size, ethnicity, and real estate ownership rates. Since ISTAT does not present income data, education and diploma attainment statistics are used to examine the neighborhood's socioeconomic class. Statistical data was collected for twenty-four census tracts that make up the Quarticciolo study area. This area is bound by the borders of Via Pietro Romulato Pirotta, Via Ernesto Mauri and Via della Saggina to the west, Via Prenestina to the north, Via Trani to the east, and Via Molfetta to the south.

This data on Quarticciolo was then compared to twenty-one census tracts located in the adjacent neighborhood of Centocelle. These census tracts form an area of similar size to that of the Quarticciolo study area. The Centocelle comparison area is bounded by Via Tor De Schiavi to the west, Via Prenestina to the north, Via Dei Ciclamini to the east, and Via Delle Palme to the south. Each of these study areas was compared to the entire city of Rome. The purpose of including portions of Centocelle within the actual Quarticciolo study area was not so much to determine the precise statistics of Quarticciolo, but instead to determine how the neighborhood functions in comparison to similar neighborhoods, as well as the city of Rome as a whole.

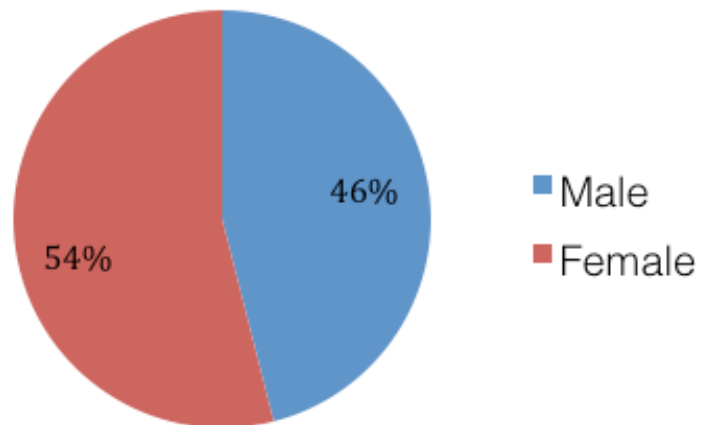
Gender

Gender breakdown provided no significant differences between Quarticciolo, neighboring Centocelle, and Rome. In all three cases, females composed 53% to 54% of the population. Age distribution however proved to present a more valuable insight to defining the neighborhood.

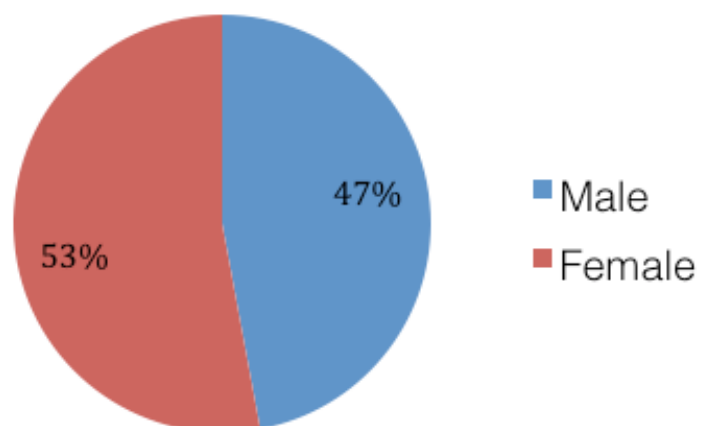
Quarticciolo



Centocelle



Rome



Age Distribution

During preliminary visits to Quarticciolo, the group observed a large elderly population present on the streets. This led to a hypothesis that the neighborhood has an aging population. Given Quarticciolo's history as a neighborhood designed for poorer residents displaced from the city center during the late 1930s and 1940s, this hypothesis seemed to be well-supported. Although Quarticciolo appears to have a larger elderly population than the city of Rome, neighboring Centocelle registers the largest proportion of residents 71 and older by 3% when compared to Quarticciolo and 5% when compared to all of Rome. The age distribution graph shows that Centocelle experienced the strongest surge in elderly population. In reality, Centocelle would better fit the idea of an aging neighborhood given age distribution statistics.

Especially in the case of age distribution, it is important to keep in mind that these statistics are from 2001. Since twelve years have since passed, three scenarios are possible in relation to current age distribution:

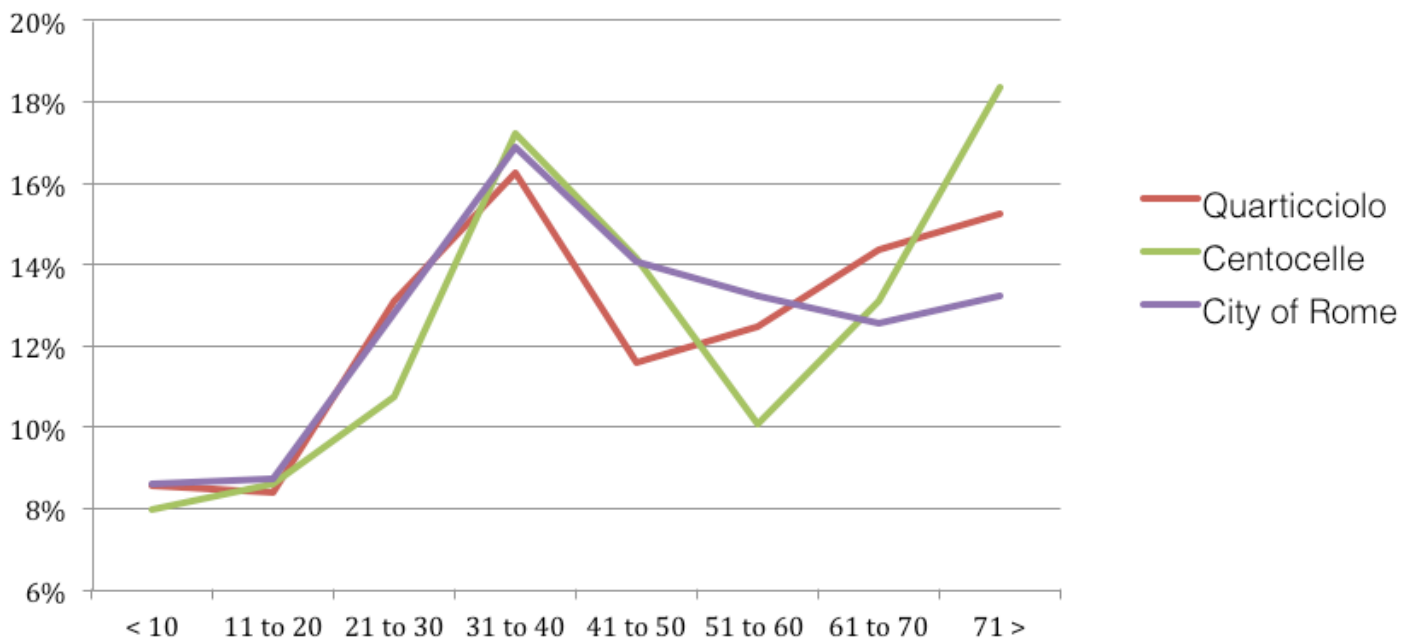
A. The population may have remained constant, with no significant influxes and/or outward migrations of residents. In this case, the age group of 41-50 would see the largest proportion of residents.

B. The age distribution may have remained constant due to possible influxes and/or outward migrations. In this case, the age group of 31-40 would still see the largest proportion of residents.

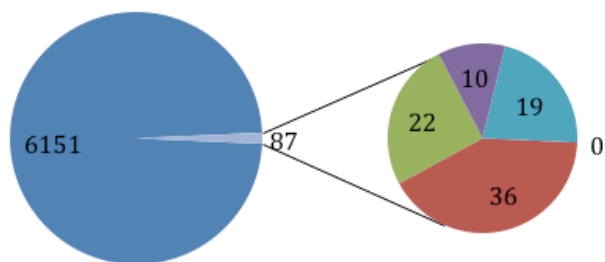
C. The age distribution may have been completely altered over the past twelve years due to factors such as altered immigration policies and the global economic downturn. In this case, it would be difficult to predict which age group would see the largest proportion of residents based on this study alone.

Assuming Scenario A has occurred over the past twelve years, these statistics would suggest that Quarticciolo would have a larger elderly population than Centocelle or Rome. Although Centocelle has a larger proportion of residents over the age of 71, Quarticciolo has a large proportion of residents between ages 51 and 70. Assuming these residents have remained in the neighborhood, Quarticciolo could today in fact have a larger elderly population than Centocelle, even if 2001 statistics dictate otherwise. This is one illustration of the limitations of using outdated census data.

Age Distribution

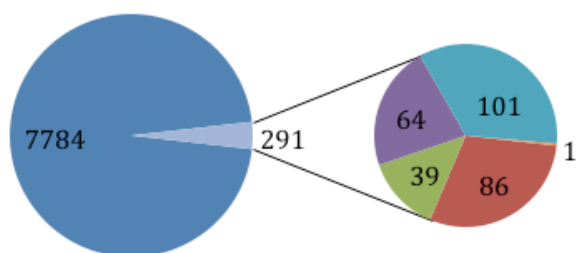


Quarticciolo Ethnic Composition

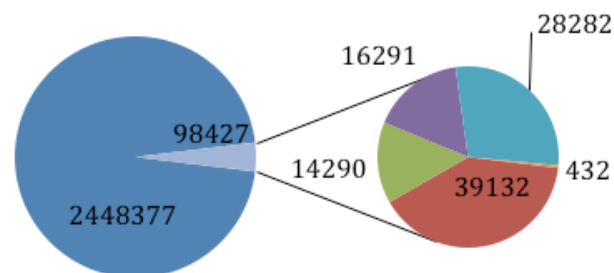


- Native Italian
- Other European Descent
- African Descent
- American Descent
- Asian Descent
- Other

Centocelle Ethnic Composition



Rome Ethnic Composition



Ethnic Composition

In terms of ethnic composition, Quarticciolo, Centocelle and the entire city of Rome had similar breakdowns. Surprisingly, all three had an overwhelming number of Native Italian residents, totaling between 96% and 97% of the population. Because minorities represented such a small proportion of the population, the breakdown ethnicity does not offer much more insight. Of the minority groups however, Asians and other European ethnicities made up most of the population in Centocelle and Rome. On the other hand, Quarticciolo minorities of

African descent made up a larger proportion than minorities of Asian descent. Other Europeans still made up the largest group of minorities for Quarticciolo as well. However, none of these minorities were significantly concentrated enough in any particular section of Quarticciolo to draw any conclusions about the spatial distribution of minorities within the neighborhood. From the ethnicity breakdown, it can be concluded that Quarticciolo is mainly a homogenous neighborhood. Similar to the scenarios regarding age

distribution, it is possible that these statistics have changed over the past twelve years. In this case, factors such as migration and immigration policy could have a direct impact on these statistics. Given the rising number of immigrants and migrants into Rome and Italy, the minority population throughout the city is sure to have increased. Lastly, it is also important note that the term “Native Italian” could possibly be misleading. Because ISTAT does not give details as to what defines a “Native Italian”, the term could come to mean a person who is first generation Italian. In reality, many ethnic groups in Rome could consist of residents actually born in Italy. As a result, ISTAT would count these residents as Native Italians as opposed to their multi-generation ethnicity.

socioeconomic class. Unlike ethnicity and age distribution, Quarticciolo’s graduation rates differed significantly from those of Centocelle and Rome. High school graduation rates in Quarticciolo were almost half the totals of Centocelle and Rome. University graduation rates were even lower in Quarticciolo, where only 3% of residents possess such a diploma. In Centocelle, approximately 7% of residents possess a university diploma. In Rome, this number doubles to 14%. Assuming a higher graduation rate translates into a higher socioeconomic status, Quarticciolo’s graduation statistics fit the characteristics of a lower socioeconomic-class neighborhood.

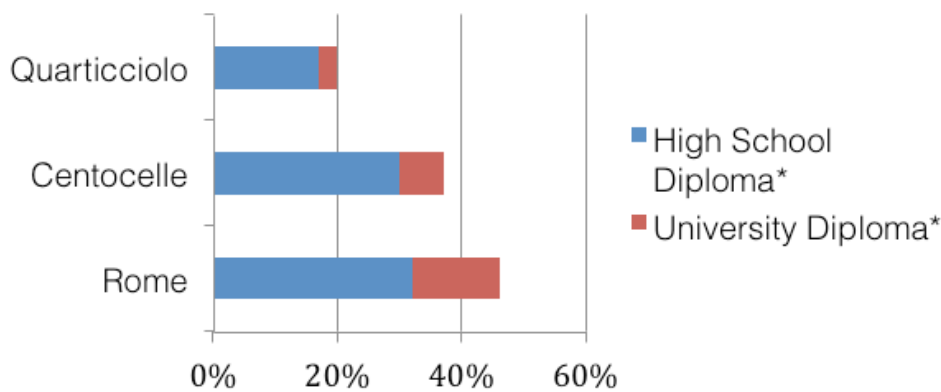
Graduation Rates

Because ISTAT does not directly present income statistics and distributions, graduation rates are used to make similar inferences on

Family Size

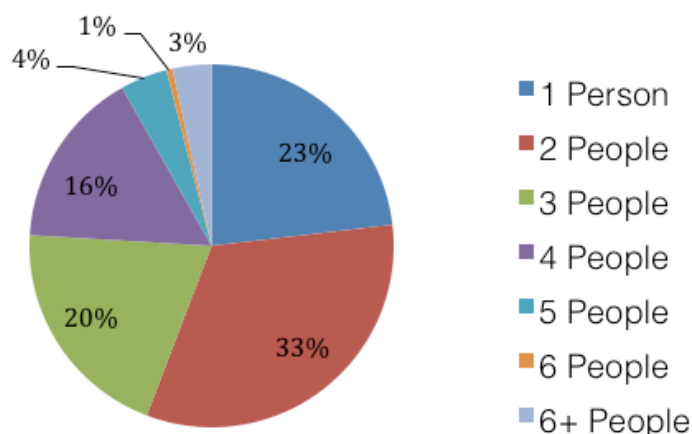
Family sizes throughout Quarticciolo, Centocelle, and Rome did not produce any significant insight in regards to the study area. Family size (measured in persons per family) within Quarticciolo was on par with the average for the

Education Attainment and Graduation Rates

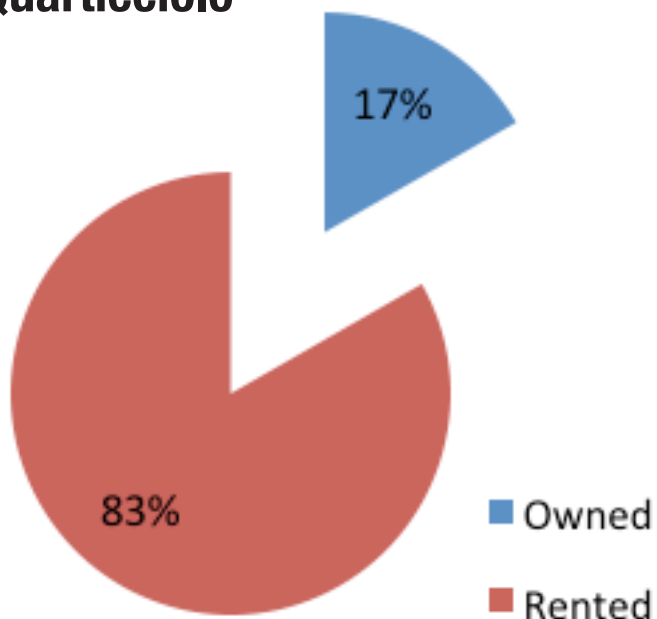


*Or equivalent certificate of education

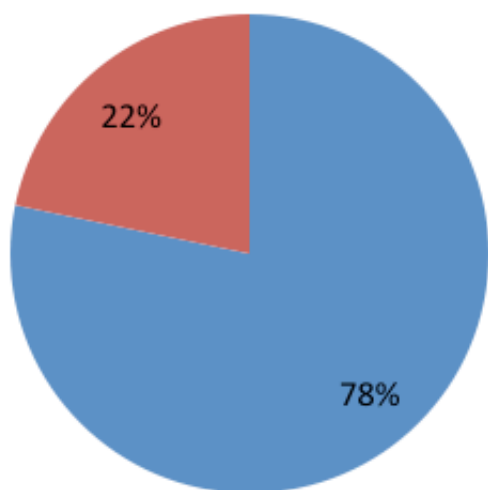
Quarticciolo Family Size



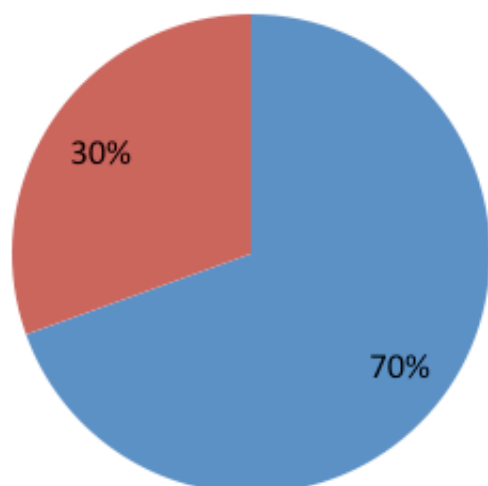
Quarticciole



Centocelle



Rome



entire city of Rome at 2.61 persons per family. Centocelle on the other hand proved to be surprising, totaling only 2.11 persons per family. Centocelle also had a significantly larger number of families consisting of only one resident when compared to Quarticciole. Centocelle's smaller family size fits the characteristics of an aging neighborhood, since the chances of widowed residences would increase as age increases.

Based on these combined statistics, inferences can be made most clearly about Quarticciole's socioeconomic status. Quarticciole's low graduation rates are indicative of a lower income and possibly struggling neighborhood. Besides graduation rates, statistics on ethnicity and family size did not produce any significant inferences about Quarticciole. Age distribution statistics actually produced results that were almost the opposite of the original hypothesis. While Quarticciole does have a larger number of middle-age to older residents, Centocelle recorded the largest number of residents of 71 years and older.

Real Estate Ownership Rates

Like graduation rates, real estate ownership rates significantly distinguished Quarticciole apart from neighboring Centocelle and the entire city of Rome. Quarticciole has an ownership rate of 17%, compared to Centocelle and the city of Rome as a whole, which have nearly opposite rates of 78% and 70% respectively. This data closely reflects Quarticciole's history as a public housing borgata. Unlike neighborhoods like Testaccio where many public housing units have undergone a process of privatization, Quarticciole continues to be comprised mostly of rental units. The resulting effects of gentrification, caused mainly by privatization have not yet begun to affect Quarticciole.

Interviews

Early Informal Conversations

The first people we spoke with were casually met while walking around the neighborhood. They talked mostly about the neighborhood's antifascist history. The group first heard about the Gobbo from an elderly man walking down Via Molfetta. On the first day of field research, the group also talked to men working at the theater who mentioned that the area between the theater/library and La Talpa turned to a drug dealing point at night. A barista at the library cafe seemed to have a negative opinion of the neighborhood, saying that it was unsafe to be there after 18:00 and that the Comune di Roma does not seem to care about Quarticciolo very much. However, he was not a resident of the neighborhood, which almost certainly influenced this opinion.

Comitato cittadini Quarticciolo e dintorni

The Comitato cittadini Quarticciolo e dintorni is a two-year old association of mostly professionals (an archaeologist, journalist, psychologist, lawyers, a 'neighborhood watcher') working with the neighborhood. It was founded and is headed by Umberto Felice, the only person there who appears to be born and raised in Quarticciolo. The Comitato functions as a mediator between residents and housing agencies, providing advocacy services dealing mostly with housing problems. It also provides after-school child care and homework help, and was involved in the founding of a women's clinic.

The Comitato spoke about the murky practices in the succession of public housing units (not just in Quarticciolo but all over Rome): despite a waiting list, people sometimes break into newly vacated units and occupy them before beginning to pay rent and bills as any 'normal' public housing resident would. It then becomes impossible to evict them, since they also need the housing. Furthermore, inheritors often come into possession of public housing units, whose

right to keep them is protected by a regional law which takes priority over the waiting list.

The group also asked the Comitato about safety issues in the neighborhood, to which they replied that although drugs, prostitution, and crime are present in Quarticciolo, they are not more of an issue here than in other parts of Rome. According to the Comitato, residents feel safe being outside at night, though it recognizes that the laws of common sense always apply - as in any large city - and that outsiders may feel uneasy, as anyone would in unfamiliar territory.

The Comitato shared a particularly interesting piece of information regarding Quarticciolo's status in the city-wide context. The Comune's Piano Regolatore defined four different *città* within Rome: *consolidata*, *storica*, *della trasformazione*, and *da ristrutturare* (cities consolidated, historic, of transformation, and to be restored). Quarticciolo belongs to the *città storica*, meaning that the Comune recognizes, values, and protects the neighborhood's history and heritage.



Teatro/Biblioteca Quarticciolo
(Photo: Cindy Yu)

Teatro Quarticciolo

Stefania Minciullo has worked at the theater in Quarticciolo since December 2007. She commutes to the theater from Alessandrino, the neighborhood directly south of Quarticciolo. She moved to the area after beginning to work there. She describes it as “un quartiere molto popolare” which, although not so tranquil, is home to many people who make her feel welcome and with whom she has developed a rapport. She claims that the neighborhood is in the process of creating a new identity for itself, which she likes.

The teatro part of the Teatro Biblioteca Quarticciolo is one of three *teatri di cintura*, a group of “belt theaters” in the periphery geared toward providing neighborhoods lacking services with cultural amenities. These teatri are managed by the main theater of Rome, located at Torre Argentina. Quarticciolo’s theater is the only one in all Rome that is joined to a library; it was a kind of experiment. Before its

privatization, Teatro Quarticciolo was focused on social functions, training, and education as opposed to making a profit. It offered low-price tickets and free-of-charge initiatives, such as workshops for local kids and adults. The decision to privatize was made outside of the theater itself. Stefania does not know the exact reason behind it, though she does know it has to do with finances. The decision came from the Roman council of culture and was met with resistance from both Teatro Quarticciolo, the neighborhood, and Teatro Valle Occupato.

The space occupied by the theater and library was originally used as a market. Stefania explained that Quarticciolo had a worse reputation as a deprived neighborhood before the arrival of the theater, which somewhat countered many outsiders’ stigma. Initially the theater was not well received among residents; it was often tagged and vandalized. This relationship has improved much over time, though some residents would still prefer the space of the theater be used as something more practical, like parking. The elevator outside the theater, though already out



Età Libera
(Photo: Diana Folla)



Età Libera
(Photo: Cindy Yu)

of order, was further damaged on new year's eve by a firecracker.

Since the library's opening hours are linked to those of the theater, it is the only library in Rome open on Sundays. As a result it is well frequented by university students, who spend time at the cafe. Furthermore, Stefania pointed out that Quarticciolo is not far from Pigneto, an area with a lively nightlife scene, resulting in some students choosing to live in Quarticciolo, where rent is cheaper. She said that the library will therefore remain a popular venue for students even after the theater's privatization.

When asked about other issues facing Quarticciolo, Stefania mentioned that there are still a lot of missing services, such as a bank, a post office, and amenities for the elderly. Its isolation on the very east of the Centocelle area makes it an area lacking vibrancy for young people.

Età Libera

The group also spoke to the president, Mario, and a secretary of Età Libera, an organization offering services such as tax and legal consultations, banking advice, social tourism, cultural activities, grocery delivery, and a time bank. These services are open to people of all ages, although mostly used by the elderly. Età Libera also makes agreements with doctors and dentists for cheaper treatment for its more



The Roof of La Talpa
(Photo: Diana Folla)

disadvantaged members, and collects almost-expired food from a local supermarket for distribution in the neighborhood.

The group was attracted to this organization's headquarters by a sign mentioning their Banca del Tempo. This service offers courses in English, psychology, computers, jewelry making, and others in exchange for time spent helping members of the community with fixing things, cleaning, getting around in a car, and the like; time, not money, is its currency.

The secretary is a retired volunteer. According to her, 99% of Età Libera's members are pensionati (retired people) or housewives. Mario, the organization's president, lives in Villa Gordiani. He explained that although Quarticciolo has always been stigmatized, it is changing and its youth is becoming more upwardly mobile than it was in the past. He also explained that the neighborhood is safe for residents despite the presence of drugs and theft, and that only outsiders are likely to be targeted. This is consistent with what Stefania and the Comitato cittadini Quarticciolo e dintorni told the group.

La Talpa

Marco Morroni has lived at La Talpa for six years. He lives in one of the upstairs apartments and is active in the *centro sociale* (social center) downstairs. La Talpa has been occupied for fourteen years since it was abandoned as a

12-12-2012
14 ANNI D'OCCUPAZIONE
DELL'EXCOMMISSARIATO
DI QUARTICCIOLO



MARTEDÌ 11

ORE 18:30
 PRESENTAZIONE DEL LIBRO
 DI LUCIANO VILLANI
"LE BERGATE
DEL FASCISMO"
 STORIA URBANA, POLITICA
 E SOCIALE DELLA PERIFERIA
 ROMANA - LECZINSKI
 INTERVENSANO:
 ROBERTO CANOCCI E LUCIANO VILLANI

ORE 20:00
APERITIVO

ORE 21:30
 PROIEZIONE
"LA STRATEGIA
DELLA LUMACA"
 DI S. CABRERA

MERCOLEDÌ 12

ORE 20:30
CENA SOCIALE
E BRINDISI!!!

A SEGUIRE
LIVE MUSIC
 FREE ENTRY OPEN PUB

COORDINAMENTO CITTÀ DI LOTTA PER LA CASA
LABORATORIO SOCIALE QUARTICCIOLO
VIA OSTUNI 7-9 BUS 451 TRAM 14

CONTRO I PADRONI DELLA CITTÀ



carabinieri barracks. The social center serves as a hub for left-wing political activity, but also works with local young people. Marco claimed that it has stronger neighborhood ties than other social centers around Rome, which operate on a more citywide level.

Residents at La Talpa do not have to pay rent or bills, but are required to participate in the social movements and manifestations organized by the social center. The building contains twenty dwellings, occupied by mostly couples and singles, and two families; most of the occupants are Italian. Some apartments in the building are managed by La Talpa, while others are managed by a citywide coordinated struggle for affordable housing, Lotta per la Casa. This organization does not squat empty housing, but only occupies empty state-owned buildings in order not to further reduce the already lacking housing stock or compete with others in need of housing.

When the first squatters arrived to La Talpa, the building had stood empty for roughly fifteen years. The carabinieri had left behind journals, reports, confiscated alcohol, and a large safe. They came to collect the safe, but left the squatters with the documents and alcohol, which was consumed at parties. There have been several false alarms concerning eviction, but the squatters were only actually evicted once; they returned to the building within two days.

According to Marco, though the squatters are perceived as outsiders within Quarticciole, the relationship between La Talpa and residents has improved in recent years, especially with the neighborhood's youth. Sixteen to twenty-two year olds often spend time in the social center with friends, and participate in football matches on Sundays. On some nights the space becomes a bar, whose revenue is used for maintenance. This is a safe Third Place for the neighborhood's young adults, who by going there spend less time in the streets and so are less likely to become involved in illegal activities. Marco explained that they may drink and smoke in the social center, but that everything else is to be kept outside. As a result, the kids learn about the squat and its political movement, thereby becoming more politically informed and more political. However, this has had consequences

QUARTICCIOLO SKA!



SERATA SOUNDSYSTEM CON:

- SELEZIONI M.A.T.
- LADY CRIME
- DJ BENNY

VENERDÌ 12 MARZO

ORE 9:00 - LA TALPA, VIA OSTUNI 9 - ENTRATA 3 €

laboratorio sociale
La Talpa 

 **RASH**
ROMA

Promotions for Events at La Talpa
 (<http://3.bp.blogspot.com>)

for Marco and others working at the social center: certain people whose best interest may be involving youth in crime have taken notice of the effect the social center is having on the neighborhood's young.

Marco describes Quarticciolo as a very homogeneous place. Almost everyone is Italian, and many people living there have never traveled. Information from the outside world has seldom entered, and he said that globalization never happened in Quarticciolo. He mentioned that the advent of the internet therefore had a huge impact on many residents' lives.

When asked about the neighborhood's traditions, Marco explained that the neighborhood's history and heritage have always been important to the squatters, and that they want to keep the traditions alive for the neighborhood's youth. This is to be expected, since Quarticciolo's anti-fascist legacy corresponds to La Talpa's leftist ideas.

Giuseppe at Bar Conte

Giuseppe came to Quarticciolo as an eight year old, after his family was displaced by the San Lorenzo bombings in 1943. They lived in a schoolhouse for ten years before moving into a home. Originally his family came from Puglia, like many others in Quarticciolo.

He describes the borgata as "neither fish nor meat," meaning it was neither urban nor rural, but a classic example of intentional isolation by the Fascist regime. Conditions in Quarticciolo and its environs used to be much worse than they are today; part of Alessandrino was a shanty town, torn down before the 1960 Olympic Games. There was only one overcrowded bus linking Quarticciolo to the rest of Rome. Extreme poverty was rampant and Giuseppe reports seeing people walking around in just their underwear and without shoes.

The neighborhood's safety increased along with its standard of living. Though a woman was robbed and beaten in the church in 2008, such crimes were more common in the past. Drugs and drug addiction are also not as big of a problem as they were before; one no longer finds syringes and heroin addicts all over the

streets. Currently, drug use in Quarticciolo is lower than in other peripheral neighborhoods; the drug of choice has moved from heroin to cocaine. Giuseppe also mentioned that now people make a better effort at keeping their kids away from drugs.

The neighborhood's youth spend little time here. They go to shopping malls instead of the neighborhood's piazzas. As soon as they can, young people leave the neighborhood to relocate to areas with more activity. He told us that Quarticciolo has an aging population and has become a kind of retirement community. However, the church services are used less by the neighborhood's elderly than by very poor immigrants from outside Quarticciolo.

Giuseppe also mentioned the inheritance practices with the neighborhood's public housing the group had first heard of at the Comitato cittadini Quarticciolo e dintorni. According to him, workers from the housing authority are rarely seen around the neighborhood. For serious problems, one must go to their central offices. Perhaps this explains how so many people get away with making illegal modifications to their homes, such as expanding and modernizing bathrooms, and adding rooms for additional children.

When asked about the Comitato, Giuseppe dismissed it as not even being in Quarticciolo, and consisting of professionals who come on public funding. He said he was not aware of their work. He also does not see the point in going to their meetings because he does not feel there are any problems. However, he speaks favorably of the Banca del Tempo and the social tourism offered by Età Libera.

Giuseppe claims that Quarticciolo is better than other neighborhoods in Rome's periphery, and that Quarticciolo's reputation has changed from negative to positive. He also mentioned that Pigneto used to have a bad reputation but that now it is hip. He wonders whether Quarticciolo shares a similar fate.

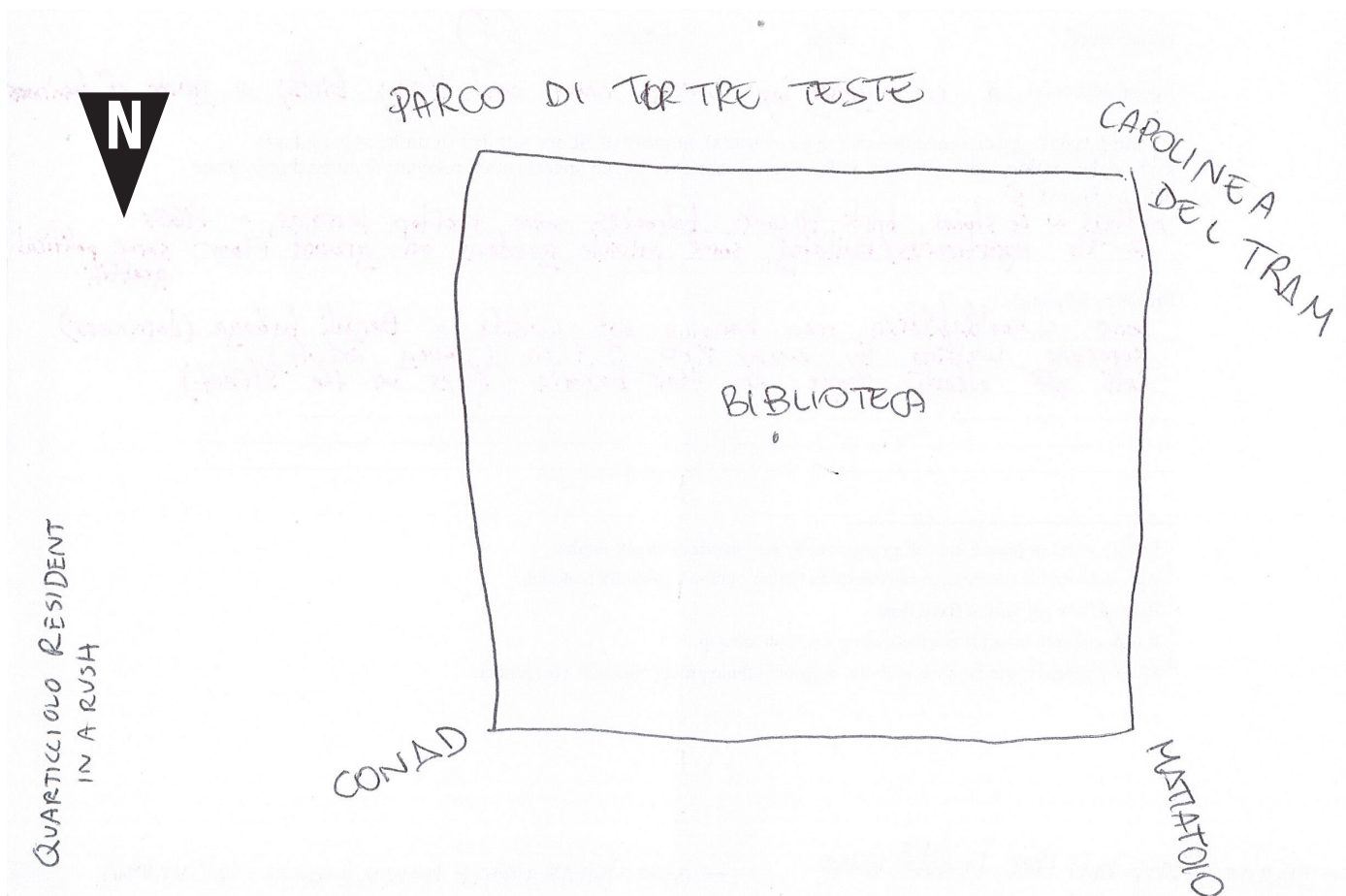
Lynch Maps

Most interviewees began their cognitive Lynch maps by delineating the neighborhood's strongest boundaries, or edges: Viale Togliatti and Via Prenestina. These were often represented as double lines, since they are major thoroughfares. Next, interviewees drew a combination of the theater/library, Piazza del Quarticciolo, and La Talpa - which serve as landmarks - centrally on their maps, which was sometimes magnified to a high proportion of the neighborhood's size. These were drawn in different orders. Some also included residential buildings as the neighborhood's fabric. Then, people either drew their own homes, or the cluster of public buildings at the neighborhood's northeastern corner: the church, the supermarket, and Piazza Oria. Next, some people considered the neighborhood's other borders and inside streets, drawing Via Molfetta and Via Manfredonia. Only few maps include the tram line.

Only one actual Quarticciolo resident could be convinced to draw a Lynch map: a young boy

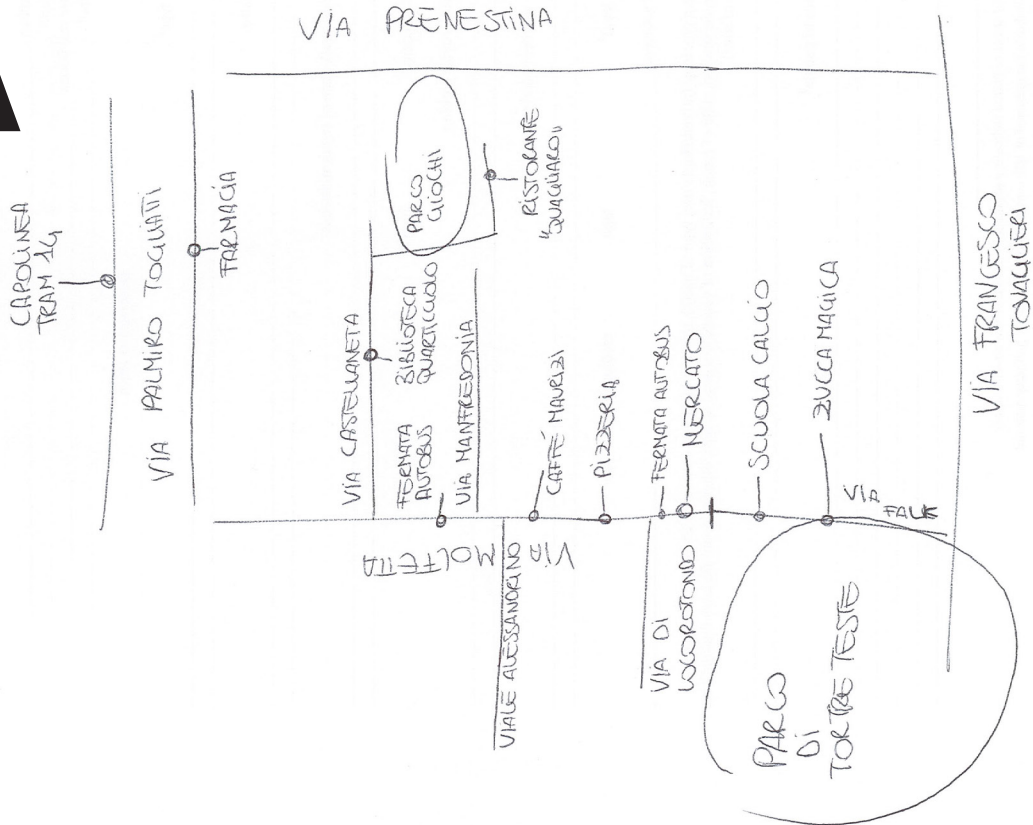
waiting for a bus on Via Molfetta. Since he was worried he would miss the bus, his Lynch map was drawn in haste, but he immediately showed his perceived boundaries of his neighborhood. Instead of being delineated by streets, as virtually all other collected Lynch maps, he sees Quarticciolo as defined by landmarks at its four corners: the supermarket on the northeast, Parco Tor Tre Teste on the southwest, the end of the tram line to the southwest, and a slaughterhouse to the northwest. All he cared to label inside the neighborhood is the library.

Because the group did not give firm instructions, a few of the mapmakers violated some of the cardinal rules of Lynch mapping. The interviewees at the Comitato cittadini discussed their maps amongst each other while drawing, when ideally everyone would have quietly drawn their own map. Roberta and Giulia - two girls met on the terrace of the library caffè, but who come from other neighborhoods - drew their maps with some help from their smartphones.



Young Quarticciolo Resident at Bus Stop

ROBERTA



Roberta - Young woman at library cafe

MARCO MORRONI

LABORATORIO SOCIALE TALPA



Marco - Resident at La Talpa

Conclusion

Objectives and Limitations

While studying Quarticciolo, our group's background and statistical research, on-site observation, and interviews tended to raise more questions than they answered. It is difficult for a group of privileged, foreign students to come into a neighborhood in an unfamiliar city, to analyze and draw clear conclusions. In addition to our extremely limited knowledge of Italian, our experiences differ greatly from those of people living and working in the neighborhood. Like many other neighborhoods with a complex history and intricate social fabric, perceptions of culture, social infrastructure, and even physical appearance vary tremendously from person to person. Thus, our objective was not to provide an objective description of what Quarticciolo is and how it functions, but rather to present the diversity of perspectives we encountered and attempt to connect differing opinions with contemporary issues and historical occurrences. With these caveats in mind, the group has identified some broad themes that have affected the neighborhood over the decades.

Well Defined Physical Boundaries and Neighborhood Identity

As a planned borgata ufficiale, Quarticciolo has had marked physical boundaries from its inception and existed in a state of isolation for most of its history. These factors have featured prominently in our study, appearing in interviews, Lynch maps, as well as our initial impressions of the neighborhood. The prevalence of these themes and the nature of Quarticciolo's history suggest that these factors have been crucial in the formation of the neighborhood's social environment and the perceptions of it by both residents and outsiders.

One of Quarticciolo's most immediately apparent traits are its clearly defined boundaries, which are enforced by the short walls enclosing the buildings and the relationship of the building façades and the streets. This creates an effect of

an enclosed space, an area markedly separate from its outside surroundings. This was one of the first things we noticed upon arriving to Quarticciolo. Interviews with residents show that we were not the only ones who feel this effect. Giuseppe, the elderly resident, mentioned that the low walls around the apartment buildings and along Viale Togliatti enhance the neighborhood's isolation from its surroundings. The physical boundaries of Quarticciolo were also the first features drawn on all the Lynch maps we collected, illustrating how strongly these boundaries are felt by people.

While Quarticciolo's isolation was more intense before the installation of the tram line in the 1970s, the neighborhood's distance from the center of the city had a significant impact upon the character of the neighborhood and the perceptions of it from within and without. Residents discussed in interviews how the physical distance fomented a strong neighborhood solidarity, but also heightened the stigmatization of Quarticciolo as a poor, run-down neighborhood. Though the stigma is discussed differently in interviews with residents and with outsiders, regardless of whether interviewees felt the stigma was present, it was clear that it is related to the neighborhood's history as a borgata and its forced isolation.

As discussed in the historical section of our study, the isolation was critical in galvanizing political activity and creating the neighborhood's social cohesion. Social bonds are strong and the neighborhood has remained a place that residents are well-versed in, but outsiders are not. Quarticciolo is rarely visited by outsiders, except for those who wish to utilize its resources, such as the library and theater. The identity formation that resulted from this history of isolation also produced a sense of territoriality by residents. Visitors stand out and are noticed when they linger. This was felt by our group during the study; often, especially while surveying buildings and streets, residents would ask us what we were doing there.

The strong social cohesion of the neighborhood sometimes manifests as a hostility or reluctance

towards outsiders, which includes individuals, organizations, or institutions. For example, Stefania, the woman we interviewed at the theatre, told us at first residents were very distrustful of the theatre and doubted what benefits it would bring to the neighborhood. Over time, though, it has become accepted as an important cultural institution for the neighborhood. It appears that the squatted social laboratory, La Talpa, is currently facing similar hostility from some residents, but not from the youth population. This territoriality and hesitance to accept outside forces may arguably serve only to enhance the stigmatization of the neighborhood, but it is clear where its socio-historic roots are. This maintains the culture of the neighborhood and has preserved its identity, which has been buttressed by the informal networks, economies, and housing systems that emerged in response to Quarticciolo's long lasting isolation.

Negative Perception from the Outside

One of the group's first conversations in Quarticciolo revolved around it being a place to be avoided after 18:00. By night, the area around the theater supposedly becomes a hot spot for drug dealing. We quickly learned that the neighborhood is stigmatized around Rome; even some people living just across Viale Togliatti do not wish to be associated with it. One woman in Centocelle made a point of telling us that Quarticciolo is 'over there', not where she lives.

As is often the case, this stigma arose from the neighborhood's historical circumstances. Overcrowding, lack of services, and isolation drove the neighborhood into the poverty mentioned by Giuseppe, which in turn led to the rampant drug use he described overwhelming the neighborhood in the later portion of the twentieth century.

However, the neighborhood today cannot be considered more dangerous than other parts of Rome. Interviewees often mentioned that outsiders are more likely to be targeted for petty crime, but this applies anywhere. Stefania explained that in the end it comes down to respect, which must be earned.

Informality

Informality is a theme present in relation to Quarticciolo's housing and alternative economy which has roots in the history of the neighborhood's formation. Our study has found that while informality is deeply entrenched in these aspects of Quarticciolo's daily life, it has produced both positive and negative consequences.

As mentioned in the history section of this report, Quarticciolo's construction was constantly interrupted due to financing and World War II. This led to squatting and occupation of empty units that has persisted into contemporary times, the most prominent example being the political squat, La Talpa. Conversations with residents delineated a housing system that is not strongly regulated by the city of Rome. It is characterized by acknowledged but unaddressed underpayment and neglect of paying rent, familial transfers of units, and squatting. Home improvements also tend to be undertaken by individual households, resulting in apartments of different sizes and levels of maintenance.

It seems that this system works well for residents, as units are affordable and sometimes even free, and the character and composition of the neighborhood is preserved by keeping deeds to the units within familial and friend networks. The strong social relations and the absence of very many immigrants in the neighborhood appear to be a testament to how this informality functions positively for residents. However, lack of regulation can also lead to abuse. As discussed in our interview with the Comitato, in the 1970s a black housing market was the result of an unregulated housing stock that was taken over by individuals who would sell the units at exorbitant rates.

Informality is also present in the alternative economies of Quarticciolo, exemplified by the work of the Banca del Tempo. The exchanges of services and knowledge occur within informal boundaries without monetary value, save the minute contribution of two euros per month for the upkeep of the space. Individuals' skills are valorized more equitably with time and by the



People waiting for the bus on Via Molfetta (Photo: Sguardoingiro)

measure of services they receive in return. This system is suitable for an aging population that no longer contributes formally to the economy. In addition, it is beneficial for the more marginalized population that does not have access to many of these resources and also may lack the ability to contribute economically in other ways.

The informality in the housing and economic sectors of Quarticciolo is integral to the rhythm of the neighborhood and to the composition of its socioeconomic fabric. However, as mentioned, it is both advantageous and deleterious. It is also increasingly pressured by the realities of contemporary issues that extend beyond the boundaries of Quarticciolo, like the housing crisis in Rome, the nationwide economic crisis, and globalization and the rise of shopping malls. As these issues grow and fail to be addressed, it calls into question the sustainability of these informal systems in Quarticciolo and what alternative infrastructures could be implemented in this neighborhood.

Uncertainty about the Future

From the interviews, it seems as though the future of Quarticciolo holds promise of a closer relationship between the neighborhood and the newer institutions at its geographic center. However, the decline of local businesses coupled with the emigration of the neighborhood's youth and an aging population puts an optimistic anticipation of the future into question. Despite these challenges, Quarticciolo's relative proximity to Pigneto and other areas frequented by students and young professionals, combined with its current popularity among students as a place to study and socialize during the day, makes us wonder whether their presence might increase in the coming years, eventually resulting in repopulation and reinvigoration.

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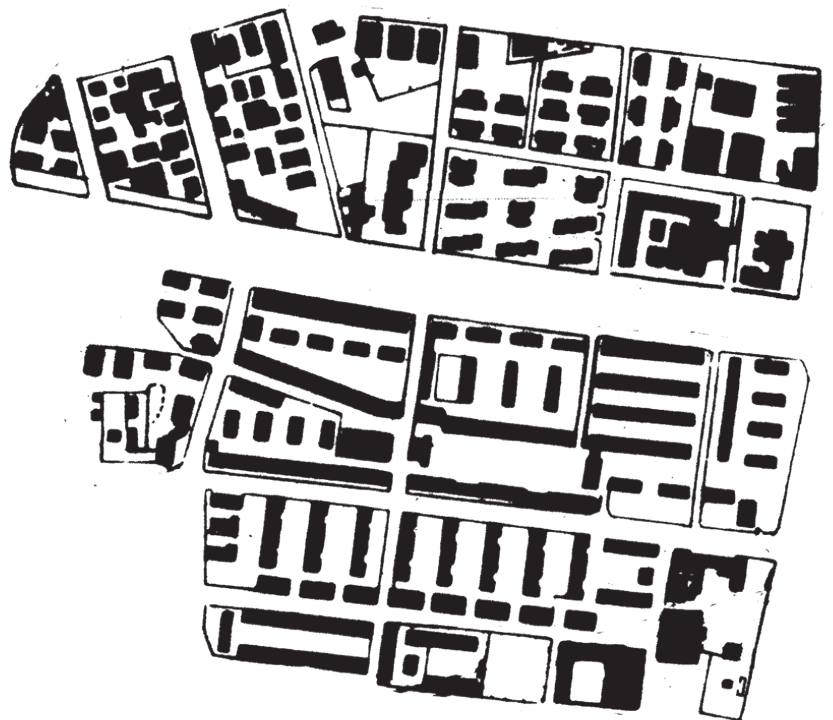
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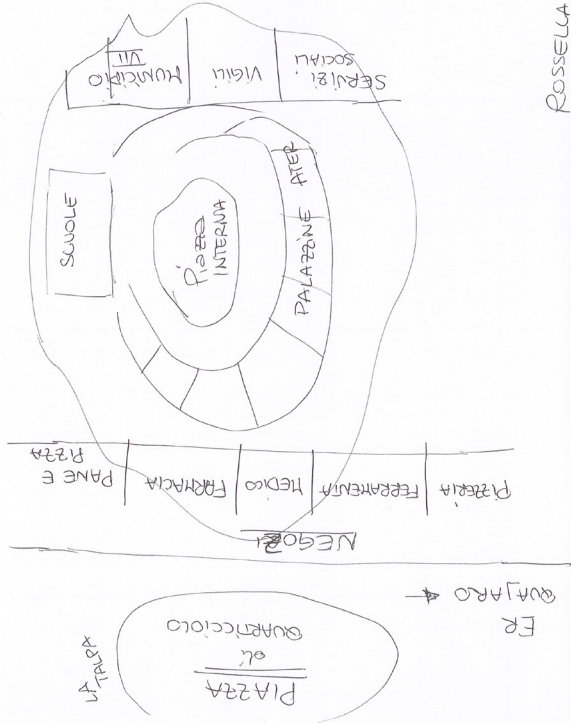


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Other Lynch Maps

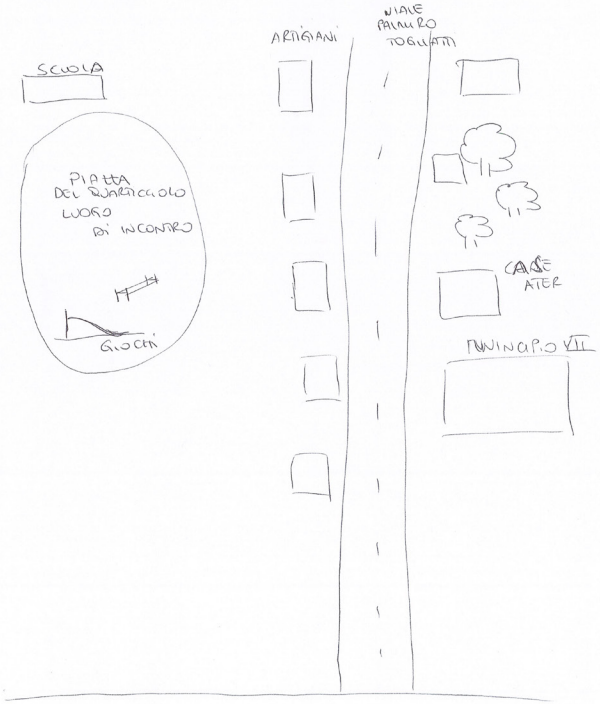
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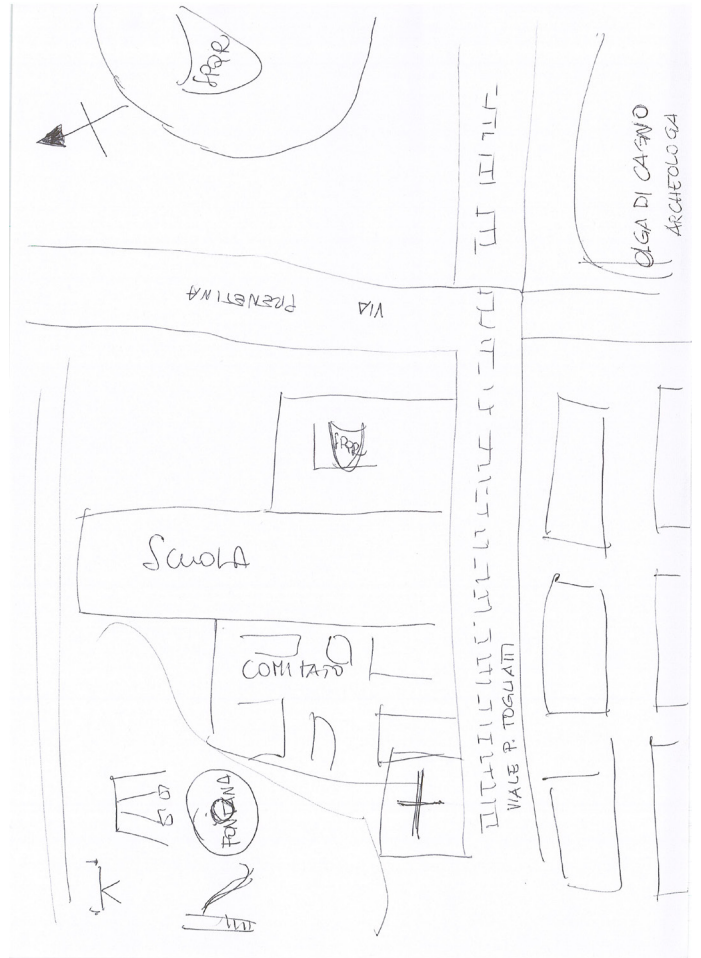
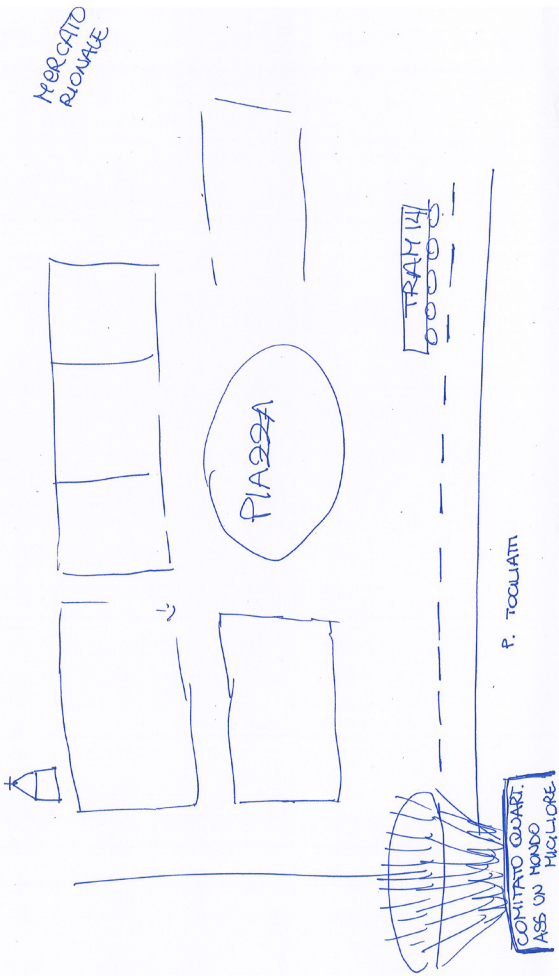
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AGOSINA DELL'COMPAGNI
GIORNALISTA



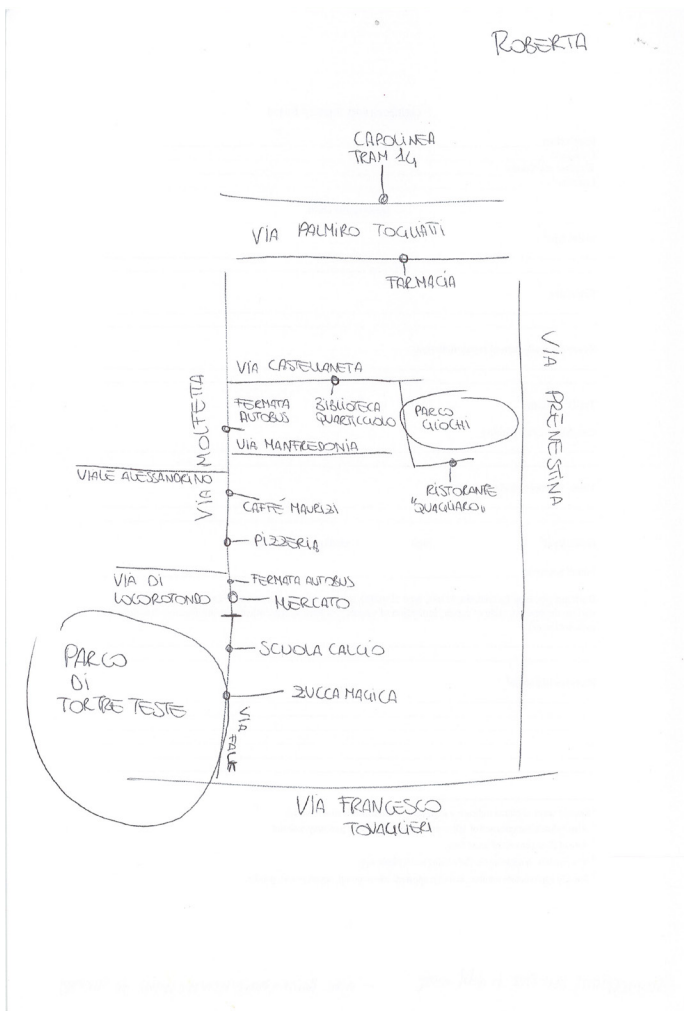
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PROFESSOR



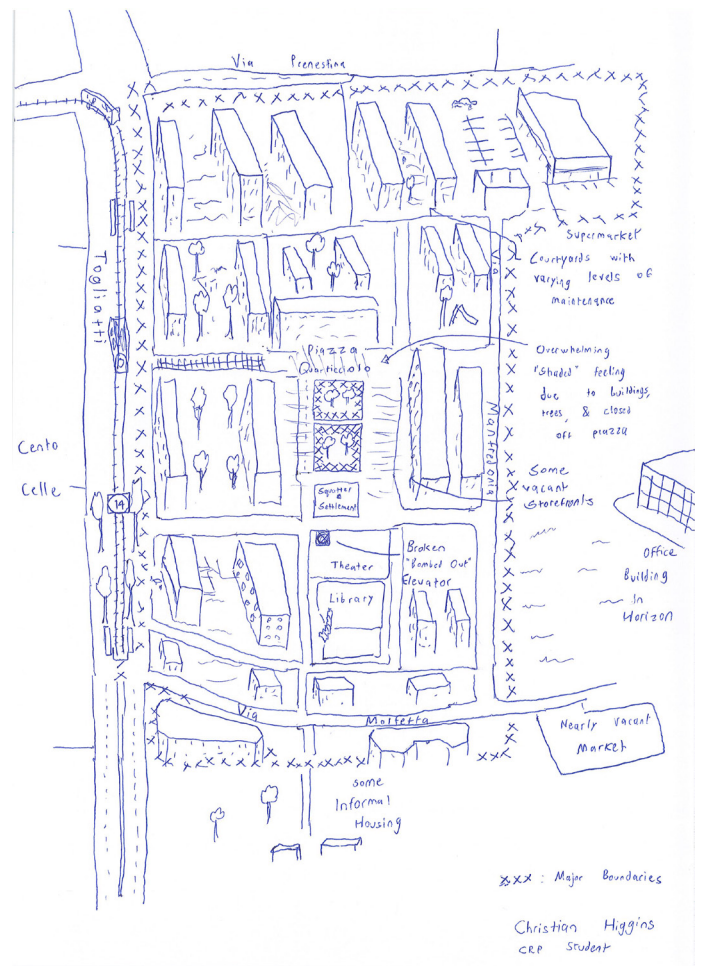


MARCO MORRONI

LABORATORIO SOCIALE TAHER

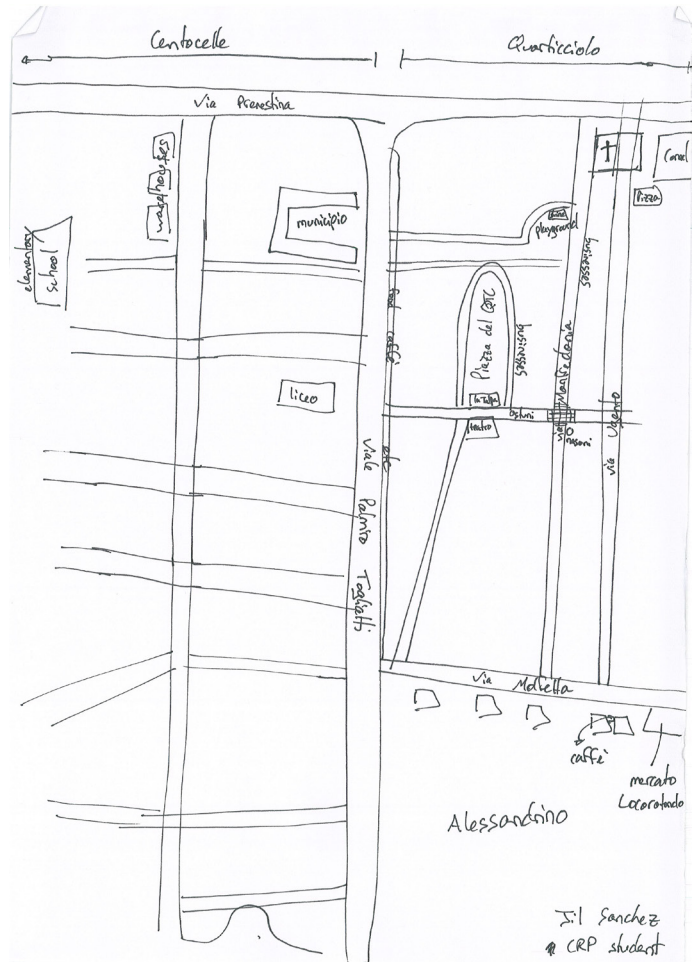
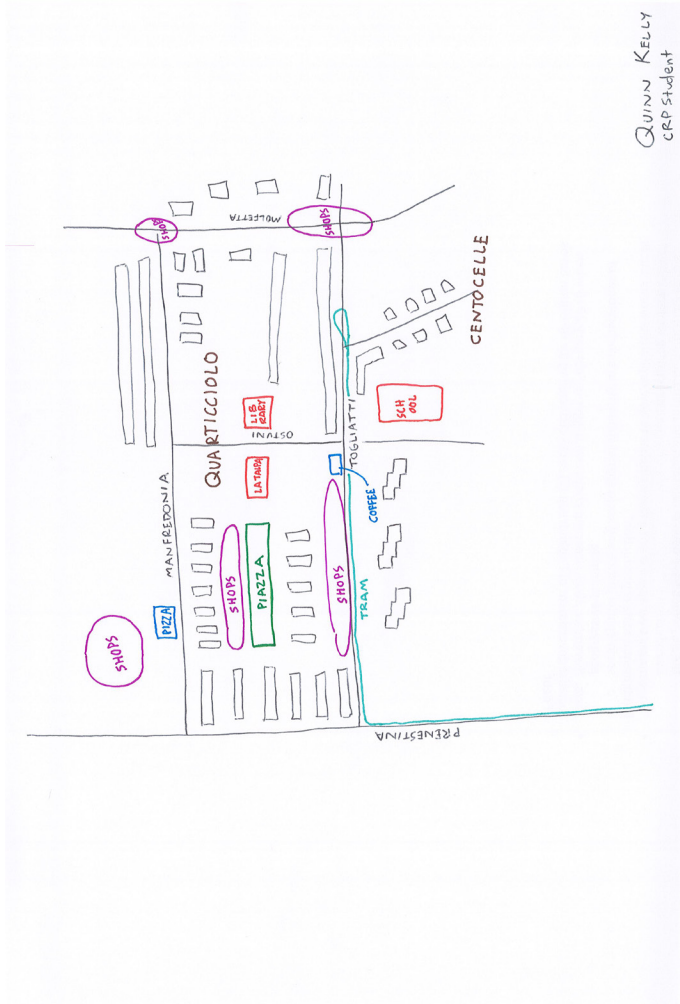
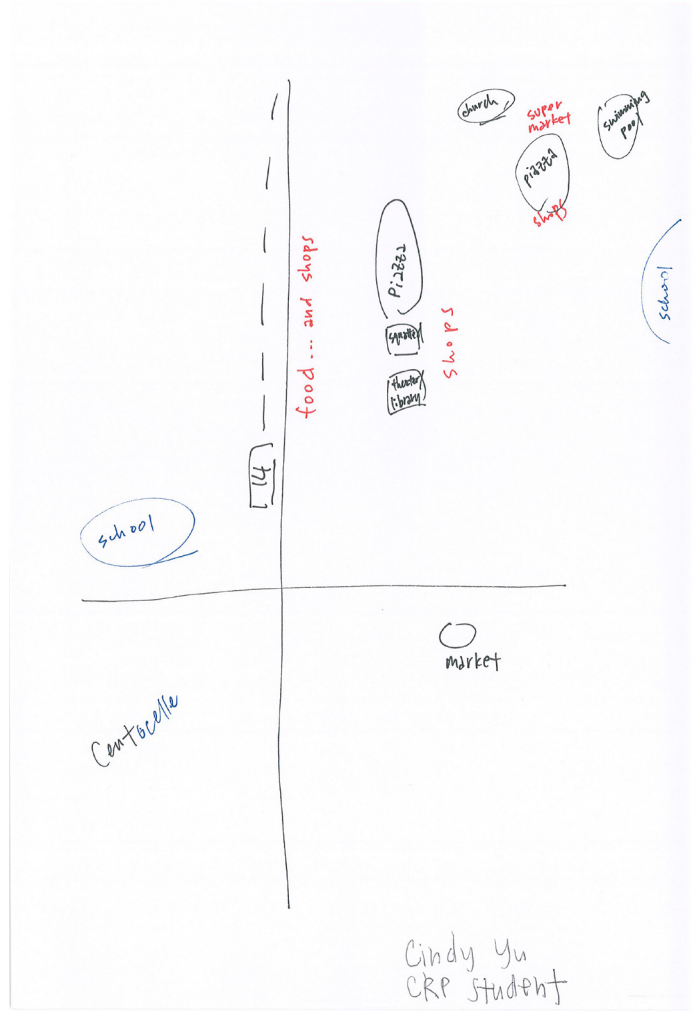
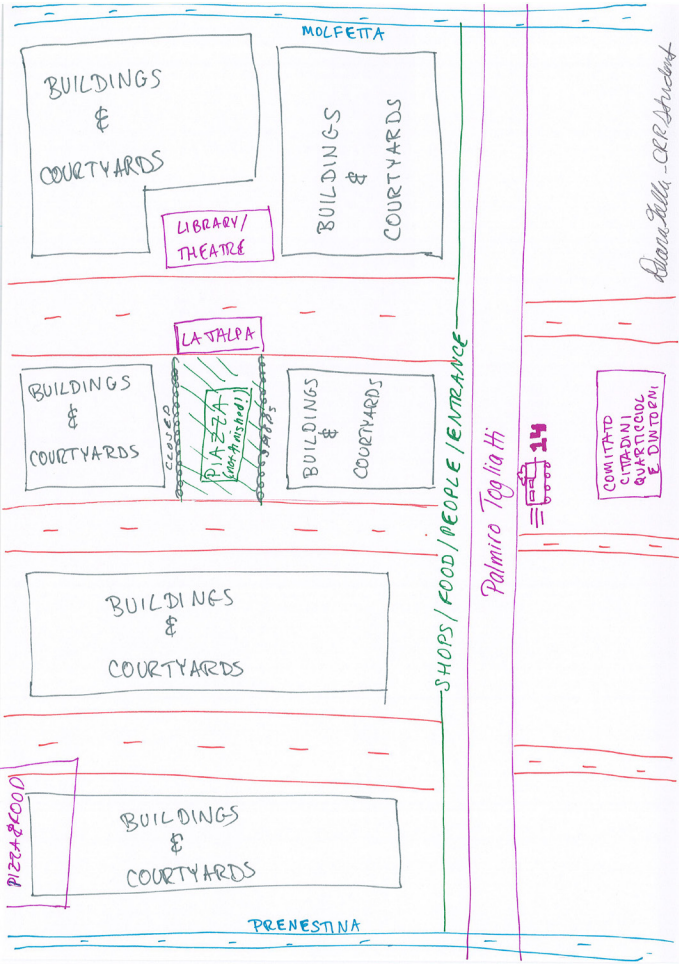


ROBERTA



XXX: Major Boundaries

Christian Higgins
CEP Student



First Impressions

Following our first neighborhood visit, the class was asked to write a few words about our initial impression of the place. These short reflections are included to give an idea of our thoughts on the neighborhood before we became more familiar with it and show how they may have changed throughout the research process.

Diana

Quarticciolo, the neighborhood my group was sent to, reminded me a lot of home because of the sense of community and resilience. As a product of forcible fascist displacement from the city center, Quarticciolo was formerly undeveloped green space turned into social housing, according to an elderly resident we spoke with. Many of the buildings were erected in the 1930s/40s, with bland, drab architecture, and some are more recent from the 1960s. The blocks are lined with these structures, with courtyards in between the buildings facing each other. Each building is about four to five stories tall, creating the sensation of an insular, removed community as one walks down the block.

It is a neighborhood very genuine in its presentation: residents on the street, no commerce other than the grocery stores, produce shops, and basic essentials of what one would need where she lives. It is aesthetically an ugly neighborhood, but the kind that I find beautiful for its character, subtly rich history, and sincerity. Residents spoke with us not quite in a welcoming manner, but in way that showed they were proud of their neighborhood and wanted us to be too. The buildings tell their own story; some are falling apart while others were newly renovated, suggesting different levels of personal investment and generational residence. The neighborhood's community center, which dually functions as a library and theatre, is modern and vibrant with activity. Its unabashed description as an important hub and simultaneous nighttime drug spot by one resident showed the honesty of this neighborhood as place that exists without a contrived, concerted effort.

Chris

For the neighborhood workshop project, Cindi, Diana, Jil, Quinn and I were assigned to the Quarticciolo Neighborhood in eastern Rome. Quarticciolo is a relatively small neighborhood that can be reached by taking Tram 14 all the way to the last stop. Overall, Quarticciolo doesn't seem to be a well-known neighborhood and because this was our first visit to the neighborhood, the precise boundaries of our study-area have not fully been established yet.

As we proceeded further away from Termini via Tram 14, it became obvious that we were heading into Rome's working class area. As the Tram entered the Quarticciolo area, the streetscape appeared quite different from what we had become accustomed to within Rome's city center. Instead of the ornate, luxury-style buildings, Viale Palmiro Togliatti, the main street through the area was lined with very plain, concrete apartment buildings, some of which appeared neglected and graffiti-ridden.

Despite the appearance of these apartment buildings, as we walked through the neighborhood, we interacted with very friendly people, many of whom were senior citizens. We were quickly and graciously educated by one of the locals about the history of the neighborhood. Quarticciolo was built during the fascist area under Benito Mussolini to house those displaced by his massive projects such as Piazza Venezia. As we continue to study Quarticciolo in more detail, it will be particularly interesting to see how the reasoning for constructing such a neighborhood impacts its quality of life.

Probably the most significant (and unfortunately negative) aspect of Quarticciolo was the local unofficial 6 PM curfew that the residents follow due to a presence of drugs at night. In the daytime however, the neighborhood appears to be function as a normal working class neighborhood. I have always had a particular interest in traveling to and exploring neighborhoods exhibiting inner-city issues such as those associated with drugs so it will be very

interesting to see how Quarticciolo functions in comparison to other urban neighborhoods, particularly those in American cities.

Quinn

Quarticciolo struck me as a very welcoming neighborhood from the moment we stepped off the tram. Along Viale Palmiro Togliatti we were greeted by a number of cafes, where older men sat, talking and laughing over drinks.

The first person we talked to was an old fellow who told us that the neighborhood hadn't changed since the 1940s, when Mussolini relocated his family there from their home near St. Peter's. Back then, he said, the buildings lined muddy roads and all around them were open fields. He spoke of the Gobbo di Quarticciolo, a criminal who became the neighborhood robin hood during the war, stealing from the fascists and giving to the poor.

His experience sharply contrasted with that of the next person who we talked to. He was a flower vendor who located his stand on the site of an otherwise abandoned market. He spoke of the chronic lack of employment in the neighborhood, which had led the rest of his family to move back to India. Unlike the older man, who shared lively stories of the neighborhood's history, he didn't even know that the area was called Quarticciolo. He spoke to us about his desire to move to Norway or Germany, where work visas were harder to acquire but jobs were more abundant and better paying.

I feel like Quarticciolo serves as a typical example of an official borgata. The urban fabric remains largely untouched but the population is constantly changing. The place is full of stories but you have to dig a little deeper to find them.

Jil

Immediately after getting off the tram, I noticed that the terraces along Viale Palmiro Togliatti were full of old men drinking coffee or smoking together. The atmosphere was warm and lively, which suggests that Quarticciolo has a fair amount of social capital. This was confirmed by the theater/library at the heart of the

neighborhood, where children attend workshops and university students study.

However, when asked if he lived here, the barista at the library café said he was glad he did not, because there was an unofficial curfew at 18:00, after which Quarticciolo "non è ben frequentato." Apparently (we were also told so by a man working at the theater), this area becomes a hot spot for drug dealing at night. This duality is very intriguing, and will probably play a key role in our research.

We also noticed a sort of ongoing graffiti battle between fascists and communists: in Centocelle (assigned area B) blue swastikas and red hammer-and-sickles compete for wall space. In Quarticciolo proper (area A) the fight seems to be in the communists' favor since we saw only red hammer-and-sickles and some communist slogans. This makes sense in light of two things: First, because Quarticciolo was a Partigioni area during the Fascist era (we were told so by a man who had witnessed the movement). Second, because of the tall squat across from the library, which was once a carabinieri station. Quarticciolo seems to have a history of radical political activism.

At this point, my most pressing questions are whether there is a connection between the drugs, the squat, and the neighborhood's politics; and how the old (seemingly peaceful) and young (not so peaceful?) populations of Quarticciolo coexist.

Cindy

When our group got around the Quarticciolo neighborhood for the first time it was around 11am. The ground was relatively clean compared to other Rome neighborhoods that I had been to in the past month. Weather of the day was sunny, opposite from the rainy days for the past few days, so there were only little puddles on the ground. Although with mostly orange/red and gray/blue/white building colors, the area still gives off a welcoming atmosphere. We passed by an empty market ground and briefly talked with an Indian flower seller, who is the only one left in the area. He told us that many immigrants came to Italy because Italy is the only place that still gives out work permits (visa) much easier

than other European countries. However, just like the market that he is at, many markets closed down after a while and the sellers will need to find a new market to go into, which can be hard for them sometimes.

It is interesting to learn that the neighborhood is actually a borgata, like what we had read in the class reading; being able to see the actual infrastructures in front of my eyes after reading it on paper is an interesting experience. Many stores around there were not open when we passed by; it might be that they were closed down already or it was simply not their opening hours yet. One interesting thing about the windows that the public apartments have is that many of them are different from each other, which is rare for a public housing because they normally would be uniform.

There is a library that was rebuilt from an old run-down industrial factory, and it is also attached to a theater. People told us that the library is the place where residents normally gather. During our stay, there were a lot of children on the second floor, and the librarian told us that they were having an activity. The librarian also told us that there are no physical documentaries about Quarticciolo yet, and if we were to do a project about Quarticciolo it would be nice to also send the library a copy. We went to the second floor's café to eat lunch, and the waiter told us that there is a "common sense curfew" of 6pm around there because it becomes a little dangerous to hang around after that time. But the waiter is not a local resident, so we are not sure if this is an outside view or if the locals also feel this way. We also talked to a worker of the theater, who told us that the public theater is currently under privatization (but still public controlled). He still has his job for this month, but is not sure if he will be hired through the next month.

Interview Notes

Comitato cittadini Quarticciolo e dintorni

March 7th, 2013. 10:30am.

- People (who were mostly from Fori Imperiali area) were forcibly moved to Quarticciolo during the Fascist sventramento.
- Constructions of the neighborhood began in 1930s and is still ongoing presently.
- Il Gobbo is the “Robin Hood” of the area.
- Isolation of neighborhood created a special solidarity among the residents.
- Built in the 1950s, Tram 14 was formerly called Circolare Rosso and was the only connection to Rome. Before the built of the tram 14, although the area between Quarticciolo and Rome was wet and swampy, the only way to get to the city was by walking.
- Quarticciolo was the only building constructed of formal buildings in the area in the 1950s and 1960s (borgata ufficiale vs. non-ufficiale). Surrounding neighborhoods (Alessandrino, Centocelle) were slowly developed later.
- Quarticciolo grew into a “regular” neighborhood where people lived, went to worked, kids went to school, etc.
- Home of important Lazio player and singer Eros Ramazzotti.
- All school levels are available in this area, it is not common for people to leave the area to go to school (materna, elementari, media, licei in Centocelle and on Via Casilina, istituti tecnici in Tor Sapienza). Roma Due university is also in the neighboring municipio.
- Palazzini was built as case popolari, but other buildings were also continuously added – especially in Tor Tre Teste – though not in Mussolini’s style (without the forced movements).
- Case popolari (borgata) were built as spots around the city, even in the fanciest neighborhoods (eg: Parioli). This spotty development all around the city center and social syncretism within a neighborhood is one of the characteristics of Rome.
- Public Housing Waiting List vs. Regional Inheritance Law: Theoretically, housing units are not owned by residents but are passed on to other people from a waiting list in the event of a vacancy. This process is (supposedly) handled by a public agency, but we are in Italy: sometimes things go the official way, but not to everybody and not at the same time. The public agency holds the apartments; theoretically there is a waiting list: when someone dies in one unit, the person at the top of the list gets in. But these formal changes in occupation (transactions) rarely occur, because usually the deceased’s inheritor takes over the apartment, according to a regional law.
- During the 1970s there was the black market of public housing where people sold their public housing for private gains.
- Borghetto Prenestino: There are many problems with people on waiting list whose rightful units were taken away by private sellers. The people from the waiting list are then forced to remain in the barrages of Borghetto Prenestino, and then had to pay their way into proper public housing.
- Majority of public housings are the property of ATER; the government are currently setting up policies to sell out the public housing Garbatella and Testaccio because of lack of money, but not in Quarticciolo yet because Quarticciolo has not that much gentrification problems.
- Comitato, this white complex housing, is the property of the Comune di Roma; the discrepancy in maintenance between this and other public housing complexes around here is not due to private owners but to institutional inconsistency.
- Main problem is that there is no checking on the criteria or need of the people who have locations/units; for instance whether an inheritor is deserving of public housing. Only sporadic occasional checks were being conducted.
- Families take priority: Some people living alone in the public housing lose their houses to families, who are perceived as having a larger need.
- In the period a unit is empty (right after a death, for instance) someone can illegally

occupy the house; it is impossible to throw such people out. When checking happens, they tell the checking officials that they also have a need for public housing and then begin paying rent regularly, thus becoming legitimate residents who have simply skipped the waiting list. This results in a war between the poor: between those on the waiting list and those who have skipped it.

- Externally visible changes (paintings, etc) are made by ATER, not the residents, however the residents do made immediate unauthorized internal changes. The closed-off balconies that are often seen in the area are considered as “abuses”. But there are the deregulation in 1980s: a lot of condoni (amnesties) issued after laws are broken (unit modifications, real estate violations, etc); it is a payoff system to real estate industry.
- Modernist developments, such as Corviale and Giorgio Marandi, had no public facilities and represented concentrations of difficult social situations. Such places were rather dangerous for outsiders (jumped bikes).
- Quarticciolo has a bad reputation, though it has a strong sense of community and lots of social capitals.
- Piano Regolatore has defined different Romes: città: da ristrutturare e della trasformazione, consolidata, and storica. Quarticciolo belongs to la città storica, which is a big deal and is positive because people related historical cities to the Rome center, and this is in the province. This also means that the commune realizes Quarticciolo’s value; it is protected and will be preserved.
- Drug question: While prostitution and drugs are present – as they are everywhere in Rome – Quarticciolo cannot be defined by them. Residents are not happy with this stigma; they do not feel unsafe being outside at night (midnight onwards) though they recognize that one always needs to apply common sense, which applies anywhere in Rome or in any large city. Therefore the 18:00 curfew mentioned by the cafe worker is most likely untrue, especially because we heard about it from a non-resident. This makes sense because people always feel less at ease in unfamiliar territory or places that are not their home.
- The Comitato: Existed for two years, acts as a mediator between residents and the housing agency. The workforce comprises an archeologist, journalist, neighborhood watcher (elderly lady), and lawyer.
- One month ago the Comitato’s president (and founder) Umberto Felice won the Formica d’Oro for resolution of social problems, such as advocacy services (mostly for housing problems), checking the prices of food and other necessities, makes sure vendors are following laws, opened a consultation for women (women’s center, clinic, offers access to birth control, ...), etc.
- The Comitato is externally sponsored.
- The most common problems worked in here involve the violation of rights connected to housing.
- Two arms: Comitato del quartiere: more militant; Associazione del mondo migliore: social projects.
- La Talpa is not connected to this Comitato, with no networking or collaboration. The social centers around here are independent, they do not connect with neighborhood groups.
- Types of housing problems: Loss of housing upon the separation of a couple, in which case the woman and the children have the right to the house; lights are cutted in public housing when people do not have the money to pay for the rent; maintenance; etc.
- Mercato Rionale Locorotondo: The market was moved to its current location from the center of Quarticciolo (Piazza del Quarticciolo) and barely exists anymore because of competition from commercial centers (Ipercoop, Carrefour, etc). The reason behind is probably because a mercato rionale makes sense at the center of a neighborhood but not on its fringes.
- The businesses in the northeast corner area (pool, supermarket, pizzeria, bakery, pharmacy) are very important in these days when Quarticciolo’s business are losing to the builds of shopping malls.
- There are a lot of artisans in Quarticciolo.
- “Chinese invasion,” as around Piazza Vittorio, is happening here as throughout Italy.
- There is a typical Roman restaurant visited by people from all over Rome that Quarticciolo is proud of.
- Piazza del Quarticciolo: The construction has been at a halt for about a year. It was a very lived-in space, used by many residents as

a “living room”, but the Commune ran out of money partway through renovations so they stopped. To fill the need for public space, residents now go to the theater/library.

- Privatization of the theater of Quarticciolo: The theater’s program control passed from being an independent organization to Zetema, which is controlled by another major organization. The problem with this is that the organization became more centralized. When there are only five or six teatri di cintura in Rome (“belt theaters”).
- Demographics: All families or relatives; respect general Italian demographics: a little bit of everyone (families, immigrants [mostly from the far East], lots of elderly people). Quarticciolo is not a dormitory neighborhood.

Teatro del Quarticciolo - Stefania Minciullo

March 14th, 2013. 10:30am.

- Interior market place was turned into the theater on December 12, 2007.
- This is probably the only example in Rome of a joint theater and library.
- Also had another theater opened in the same period at Tor Bella Monica (another bigger public housing neighborhood in Rome).
- These were the Teatri de Cintura (“belt theaters”); theatres in the periphery managed by the main theatre of Rome, which locates at Torre Argentina. The purpose of these theaters is to become the culture hub of the neighborhoods.
- The collaboration of theater and library in Quarticciolo is in hope of involving inhabitants with workshops for children and adults, and with the link with library the theater could hold public readings and perform selection of plays from the library.
- The priority purpose of the theater is for social functions, not profit making: low-price tickets, initiatives free of charge, with training and educational purposes.
- In February 2013 the theater of Quarticciolo became part of the property of the Theater of Rome, an association of eight theaters, the Casa de Teatri e della Dramaturgia Contemporana.
- Public/private partnership with Zetema:

the buildings remain public, but the managements are given through a bidding procedure to private companies (“House of theater” is public, but each have private management).

- Stefania first came here for work, then decided to move into the neighborhood around Quarticciolo, Alessandrino. After the privatization of the theater she will work elsewhere (Villa Torlonia) but will keep living where she is now.
- “Quarticciolo e un quartiere molto popolare”: even if it is less tranquil, people are nice here; she has a direct rapport with people and feels very welcome.
- To Stefania, Quarticciolo is a part of Centocelle (as is Alessandrino). People here are trying to create a new identity for themselves, which she likes. She also called this a dormitory neighborhood, since there is nothing here but the theater.
- Safety issues: drug dealing and uses, thieves, and some inhabitants are former inmates.
- At first, some inhabitants saw the theater as an outsider, therefore sometimes tagged and vandalized it. But the relationship between the theater and the neighborhood has since improved.
- Matter of respect: safety issues only really apply to outsiders (she told a story of how her scooter is safe outside the theater since people know it is hers and know her, but recently a complete outsider’s scooter was stolen); one must earn respect in this neighborhood.
- The privatization of the theater was decided by the council of culture of Rome (ie politicians). She does not know the motivation for the privatization, but it is most likely because of finance. The privatization meets resistance, with two strongest participants: the neighborhood and Teatro Valle (in Centro, self-managed and squatted). The demonstrations featured strong involvement of individuals and organizations.
- Quarticciolo had a worse reputation (crime, deprivation) before the arrival of the theater, which then became a positive identity for Quarticciolo. Residents like it later because people don’t think of them negatively anymore. It reverse the stigma from the outside. However, some residents prefer practical (ex parking lots) use of the space.

- Other issues facing Quarticciolo: still lots of missing services (bank, post office), especially for the elderly; it is very isolated (the “last” neighborhood of Centocelle area), therefore not lively enough for young people; the square (now a standstill for economic reasons) was very dark and unwelcoming before renovations began in September; weaker physical accessibility (one step higher than the street).
- People don’t come to Quarticciolo without a purpose.
- The elevator outside was already broken but on new year’s eve someone put a firecracker/ fireworks inside, thus looks like how it is now.
- The cafe will probably remain as a meeting place for students from around here and outside the neighborhood after the privatization, since it is the only library in Rome open on Sundays (opening hours linked to those of the theater). Also, Pigneto is not far from here, so a lot of students live here since rent is cheaper here.
- The joining of theater and library was kind of an experiment; they wanted more cultural functions for a neighborhood lacking other services.
- The market was moved to Via Locorotondo; was doing well before the move, but not anymore now.
- During the morning, they carry administration stuff; while in the afternoon until 6 are for courses that are mostly taught by working people.
- Mario lives in Villa Gordiani.
- Quarticciolo has always had a negative stigma, which is also linked to the legend of the Gobbo, who is revered by some as a hero but was really just a thief.
- The neighborhood is built after WWII, with mainly working class residents. In the 1950s and 1960s, neighborhood was completely isolated from Rome, and people did not know the existence of Quarticciolo.
- For people living in Quarticciolo, the neighborhood is safe; some drugs and theft are present, but nothing serious; outsiders are more likely to be targeted.
- Neighborhood is changing: upward mobility of children and aging population; younger people move out while new poor people move into the public housing.
- Because it is a poor neighborhood, there are a lot of needs from the people. Eta Libera tries to answer the needs of the people: delivering groceries for old people, crossing guards for school children, etc. They also take almost expired food from Coop Supermarket and distribute it to the residents who need them in Quarticciolo. They make agreements with local dentists and other professionals so that poor people, depends on wages, in the neighborhood who are members of Eta Libera can have more affordable services such as discounts.

Età Libera

March 14th, 2013. 11:45am.

- Età Libera is a “free age” association, which opens to people of all ages, but used mainly by retirees. Banca del Tempo is part of Eta Libera, along with services such as consultant, tax, social tourism, and cultural activities.
- They offer courses in English, Psychology, Computers, etc, in exchange of things like rides in their cars, helping fix things and clean around the house, etc. There is no exchange of money.
- The secretary is retired and volunteers for Banca del Tempo. She lives in a nearby neighborhood but says most of users are from Quarticciolo.
- 99% of users are retired people and housewives: people with more time on their hands.
- The courses in Banca del Tempo only cost 2 euros per person per month so they can pay for cleaning, electricity, etc. Their space is owned by the Municipio and they pay no rent. They also get some funding from province, EU, etc.
- The market went down because of the rise of the supermarket; also, with family size of one or two, they don’t need that much stuff, and supermarket is cheaper.
- The square was the place where people used to hold parties, but after it became a stand still, the new landmarks became the theater and the library.

La Talpa - Marco Morroni

March 14th, 2013. 1:00pm.

- La Talpa has been occupied for 14 years (or since 1996), and used to be police barracks.
- Marco has been here for six years; he lives in one of the upstairs apartments and collaborates/organizes the social space (centro sociale) downstairs.
- The social space is independent from the living quarters, which does a lot with left-wing politics, but also works with local young people; it has stronger neighborhood ties than other social centers, which work more on the citywide level.
- The only requirement to live in the units upstairs is participation to the manifestations and social movements of La Talpa; nobody living here needs to pay anything (rent, bills).
- Marco used to work at the social center and paid rent at another apartment, but then got problems with that and moved into the squat.
- Some apartments here are managed by La Talpa, while the others are by the city-wide coordination for housing struggle, Lotta per la Casa, which wants more affordable housing and runs about twenty squats throughout Rome. The housing movement is very strong in Rome. There is also Action, another housing occupation movement that has about 100 squats around Rome.
- They do not squat empty houses but prefer occupying state-owned buildings, where they will not further reduce the already lacking housing stocks. When the first squatters arrived at La Talpa, the carabinieri had been working here from after the war to the 1960s-1980s; they had left behind illegal journals, reports, alcohol, and a big safe. The carabinieri took the safe and left the squatters with documents and alcohol in the 1994 to 1996, which were later used in parties.
- There were a few false alarms concerning eviction; in reality the squatters were only actually evicted once, and they came back two days later.
- In these years, problems arise more from the neighborhood itself than from institutions, because the squatters are perceived as the outsiders of Quarticciolo. The squatters arrived because the building had been empty for years while Quarticciolo residents did nothing with it, which is probably because it was associated with the carabinieri. A school building was once squatted by Quarticciolo residents, which then turned into a formal housing. Lately the relationship of La Talpa with residents of Quarticciolo has improved, especially with the youngs.
- There are twenty dwellings occupied by couples and single people and two families, who are almost all Italians (usually there are more families and immigrants in squats in Rome), with a median age of 30.
- People at La Talpa engage in political and social movements, but usually squatters are in it just for the housing. Two-third of the residents are involved in in La Talpa centro sociale while the other residents are involved with other social centers.
- There are linkages between housing movements. For examples, La Talpa works with Metropoliz. Both have social space and housing, though Metropoliz is much younger (has only been squatted for three years).
- In the past two years 16-22 year olds of Quarticciolo have come more and more to La Talpa social center. They hanging out in the social center, participates in the football matches on Sundays, and other activities (drinking and smoking cannabis are permitted here). Kids learn about the squat and its movement when they come here; as a result they become more politically informed and more political. On Thursday nights the centro sociale is used as a kind of cafe/restaurant. The revenue goes to the maintenance of the space.
- The centro sociale gives the kids growing up around here an opportunity to spend less time on the street and thus a way of avoiding becoming involved in illegal activities. Use of this space is kept separate from what happens on the streets. This is a safe Third Place.
- Isolated neighborhood: demographically very homogeneous: it is as if “globalization never happened” on this side of Viale Togliatti. There are people here who never travelled; the advent of the internet was a huge deal, almost a “cultural shock” to the people.
- Of course, the historical tradition of the neighborhood was important to the squatters since their arrival. This has always been an anti-fascist neighborhood, although it was

built by Mussolini. However, there is a large gap between young and old, so they want to link it, to keep this tradition (anti-fascism, resistance) alive for the younger people.

- Neighborhood embellishments (plants, flowers, gardens) were all done by residents.
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- Piazza del Quarticciolo: it was a gift from the president of the Municipio to the community; it has already been renovated three times, while the last time they decided to make it the way it was originally. Marco does not know precisely who decided to do the renovations.
- Other constructions: Ostuni - Manfredonia intersection, a preschool, and a small playground, and others. These were done by the program for the renovation of public housing neighborhoods. They lets citizens participate in the decision-making processes. However, most (all) sites are currently at a standstill for bureaucratic reasons.
- Theater: The La Talpa squatters participated in making the theater possible. The market building was already empty (had moved to Locorotondo) before the arrival of the theater, so the squatters at La Talpa said they would squat it if nothing was done with the space. Majority of theater goers were from outside Quarticciolo. Some young people were against the theater; they would have preferred a cinema or something more "commercial". However, the purpose of the theater is good because it deals with the neighborhood's history. La Talpa is also against the theater's privatization.

Bar Conte - Giuseppe, older man from Quarticciolo

March 28th, 2013. 10:30am.

- The Piazza work is unnecessary, since it was not in a bad shape. That whole area was restructured in the early 1990s, while the current work started a year ago. They are also still working on the intersection. The piazza was the focal point of the neighborhood, the point of encounter. Shops around the plaza closed prior to construction because of the neighboring shopping malls; there used to be a famous baker there which also was closed down.

- Giuseppe is from Puglia, displaced by the 1943 San Lorenzo bombing. He was 8 years old when he moved here. His family was housed in school house for 10 years before moving into a home in Quarticciolo.
- Quarticciolo borgata is "neither fish nor meat": it is neither rural nor urban, under classic isolation (the fascist regime kept these people at a distance).
- Part of Alessandrino was a shanty town, torn down in 1956-1957 before the 1960 Olympics.
- There was a case of a woman being beaten in 2008 in the church, but safety was a much bigger issue in the past than now. The police station was here up until 1975.
- The squat is not very active in the community nor in neighborhood activities.
- Drugs and drug addiction are currently not as bad a problem here as before, and also are not bad relative to other peripheral neighborhoods. In the old days there were syringes everywhere, and lots of heroin addicts, while now only a handful of drug addicts present, with less heroin and more cocaine. Nowadays people make more of an effort to keep their kids straight.
- There are community medicine services here.
- Aging population: kids are moving out of Quarticciolo; Quarticciolo is now more a retirement community. Kids are moving away but only to nearby areas with better shops, services, transport, and green spaces.
- Shopping malls killed the shops and the fruit and vegetable market that once served the area.
- Church services are used by fewer elderly people and mostly by the extremely poor (often immigrants) who don't live in the neighborhood.
- Alessandrino, the nearby neighborhood, is better organized than Quarticciolo.
- There are famous pop singers from Quarticciolo.
- There is actually a law prohibiting the passing of a home from father to son, but everyone does it anyway.
- You're better off renting public housing for €100 a month.
- Fornetti (little oven) is like a cemetery: one of the tougher parts of the neighborhood, and is where they put the most marginal tenants.

- The nicest parts of the neighborhood are around the library and Togliatti. The privatization of the theatre is detrimental to the neighborhood.
- There is a middle school around the area but no high school.
- Young kids go to the shopping malls instead of hangout in Quarticciolo now. The piazza is therefore superfluous; maybe if they fix it up they'll hang out there, but he doesn't want the wrong types of kids to hang out there.
- They don't often see people from the housing authority here; they have to go down to the central offices.
- Apartments here are about 40m² -100m² in size. Many people modify apartments illegally to make rooms for more kids. Bathrooms used to be just one toilet and a washbasin, and people would bathe once a week with a big bucket. Residents often modify bathrooms and kitchens to make them more modern.
- Extreme poverty: people would walk around in their underwear (stamped with church brand) and no shoes.
- American was very supportive of the church (anti-communism)
- In the past, there was only one bus to the Rome center, and people used to hang off the sides. The trams came in in the 1960s to 1970s.
- Via Prenestina used to be a one lane road.
- PCI HQ used to be in the piazza; Giuseppe was a member of the PCI because they used to be closer to the people.
- During the 1976, the left wins local elections and did good things for the city. Last mayor, Veltroni, tried to do good things but did not succeed so much. The current mayor (right-wing) destroyed gypsy communities, but simply scattered them instead of addressing them; it didn't help anyone.
- Corvial is horrendous.
- The piazza used to have a monument for the fallen of WWII.
- The other side of Togliatti has a public housing that belongs to the city, which was built in the 1950s. Self built housing from the 1950s are in the lower part of Togliatti.
- There are too many immigrants in the center of Rome, but not here though.
- Giuseppe does not like the short walls around the neighborhood, which he feels is a way of keeping the neighborhood as a place of stigmatism.
- Comitato: it is not even in Quarticciolo, but in Centocelle; they are professionals who come here and get public funding. He is not aware of their work.
- He doesn't feel like there are any problems in Quarticciolo, thus does not see the point in going to meetings.
- He says nobody remembers the Gobbo.
- Supports social tourism, services by Banca del Tempo.
- Feels no negative reputation of Quarticciolo; that is a thing of the past (Gobbo, etc), which is more positive than negative now.
- Giuseppe Albano (the gobbo) is from Puglia, same as where he is from.
- Out to the east, where own by Romanians, has the gypsies, shootings, and other bad things.
- Quarticciolo is much better than the other peripheral areas. He likes to live out in the country because it is more peaceful that way.
- But he is a real Roman: purtroppo.
- Pigneto used to have a bad reputation; now it is hip.
- In Quarticciolo there are patrilineal kinship relation.

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Grazie mille!



(Photo: Cindy Yu)