

# Casal de' Pazzi

Bridging Gaps in a Disjointed Neighborhood

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#### Course Description

CRP 4160: Rome Workshop Cornell University Rome Program College of Architecture, Art, and Planning Spring 2019

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May 24, 2019

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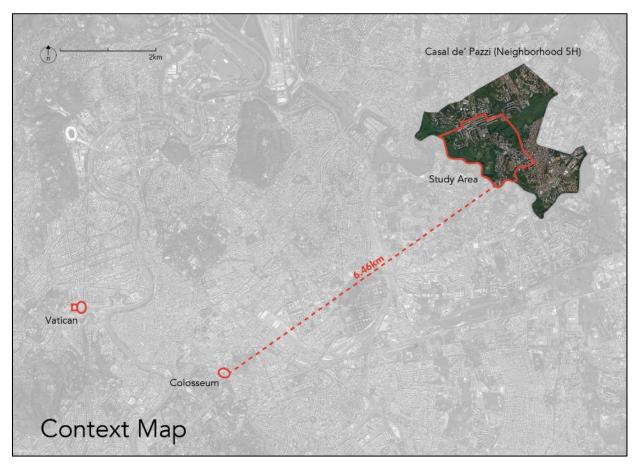
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#### PART ONE: NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

#### **Overview**

Casal de' Pazzi is a primarily residential neighborhood, built in the 1970s and 80s, located approximately six kilometers from the city center of Rome. It occupies the area on the boundary between Quartiere XXI, Pietralata, and Quartiere XXIX, Ponte Mammolo, in Municipio IV. These quartiere designations are only the official place-names, though, and do not align with the citizens' perception of their quartiere, which they call Casal de' Pazzi. Throughout this study, we use the term "neighborhood" to describe Casal de' Pazzi. Neighborhood is a complex term, though, and can mean a number of things. We may define a neighborhood in Kevin Lynch's terms, as being a district. Lynch describes a district as a section of a city that one "mentally enters 'inside of," which usually has a "common, identifying character." We immediately noticed that Casal de' Pazzi lacks this kind of unifying character, which led us to refrain from calling it a district. In



Map 1: Casal de' Pazzi study area within the context of metropolitan Rome.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Lynch, Kevin, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1982), 41.

Rome, citizens typically call the area in which they live their "quartiere," even if it does not align with the official quartiere boundaries. This idea more closely aligns with our use of the term neighborhood. Ultimately, in this study, we are concerned with citizen perception. For us, one's neighborhood is one's perception of the identity of the area in which they live, and the name that they call it.

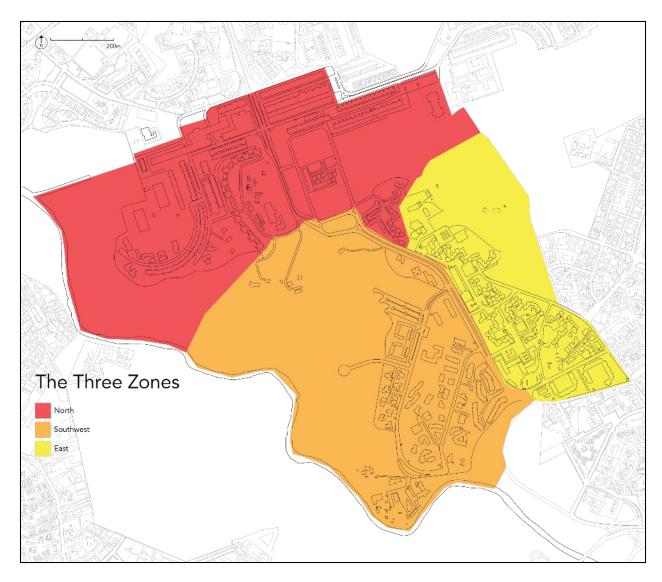
When we began our study on this neighborhood, the working name was Aguzzano, based on name of one of the parks that it borders, Parco Aguzzano. On our first day in the field, though, we interviewed a woman who instead identified the neighborhood as Monte Sacro Alto. After speaking to more people, we learned that Monte Sacro Alto is actually another neighborhood, further north than our study area. With each interview, we received different answers for the name and the boundaries of the neighborhood, until we finally reached a consensus among a number of our informants: the neighborhood is named Casal de' Pazzi, and its boundaries are-- more or less-- the boundaries of our study area. This overall lack of consensus, though, revealed the fact that this neighborhood does not have a strong sense of identity. Throughout our study, this theme of disjointedness was constantly reinforced as something that characterizes this neighborhood.

With the exception of a small number of houses that were built earlier in the twentieth century, this neighborhood was primarily born out of the 1962 Italian Law 167, which mandated the construction of affordable and public housing. Municipalities were required to designate specific areas, called Piani di Edilizia Economica e Popolare (PEEPs), where they would build public housing and allow other types of affordable housing, such as cooperatives. Casal de Pazzi is one of these PEEPs, and was built up in the twenty years following this law. The only two portions of our study area that are not included in this PEEP are a small section in the southwest region of the neighborhood, which houses a gated community, and a small section of the eastern region, which is made up of low and mid-rise developer-built housing. This kind of pattern is typical of a PEEP; there are pockets of land left out of the PEEP, where higher-income housing is typically built, in order to facilitate mixed-income neighborhoods.

The built environment in Casal de' Pazzi can conceptually be broken up into three parts: the built area to the north, the southern region to the west of Via Egidio Galbani, and the region to the east of this same street. The northern area is primarily made up of high-rise worker cooperatives that were built in the 1970s and 80s. These cooperatives were founded by workers in Assitalia, an insurance group, ATAC, the transportation agency for the municipality of Rome, and ACLI, the Christian Workers Association of Italy. Many of these people still live there, although many have since purchased their unit from the cooperative. Now, the cooperatives are mostly managed as condominiums. The southwestern region of Casal de' Pazzi is made up of a mix of gated communities and mixed-use affordable housing. Lastly, the eastern region of the neighborhood hosts a combination of public housing, affordable housing, and the developer-built housing that is not included in the PEEP.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Di Somma, Andrea, *Lo sviluppo del tessuto urbano del Comune di Roma dal dopoguerra a oggi*, Atti 15a Conferenza Nazionale ASISTA, Reggia di Colorno, 15-18 Novembre 2011, 943.



Map 2: The three conceptual zones of the Casal de' Pazzi study area.

These three distinct areas are separated by the metropolitan arterial Viale Kant-Via Egidio Galbani, a mostly 4-lane divided roadway not easily crossed on foot. This creates problems with local pedestrian connectivity, and a resulting very disjointed feel in the neighborhood.

There is also no obvious node where the citizens of Casal de' Pazzi gather. There is a market near the center of our study area which has the potential to function as the social hub of the neighborhood, but it has not yet been fully embraced as such. There are a number of other public spaces and community centers within the study area, too, including a library, three schools, a senior center, two Catholic churches, and one Jehovah's Witness church. There is also a community center, Alba 2, which occupies a building in one of the nearby parks, Parco Urbano di Aguzzano. Each of these spaces is within walking distance from the market, which furthers the market's potential to be the social center of Casal de' Pazzi.

Another key facet of public space in Casal de' Pazzi is the fact that it borders two large parks, Riserva Naturale della Valle dell'Aniene and Parco Urbano di Aguzzano, as well as a third, smaller

park, Parco Petroselli. Also important is the fact that there are three urban gardens within the two larger parks, Riserva dell'Aniene and Parco Aguzzano.

The Riserva dell'Aniene is a regional park on land that belongs to the city of Rome. This park was born out of the 1997 Law 29, which set rules for parks in the Lazio region. Prior to this law, the park was separated into three sections that operated independently. In 1999 these were consolidated into one park, supervised by Romanatura, a regional agency that was created by Law 29. The park is relatively well maintained, which is largely thanks to the presence of agriculture on the land. Casal de' Pazzi is situated in the central part of the Riserva dell'Aniene. In this central portion, and within the boundaries of our study area, are two urban gardens: CSA La Torre and Insieme per l'Aniene. CSA La Torre is a squatted<sup>3</sup> cultural center that hosts a number of community engagement activities, including a small urban garden. Insieme per l'Aniene is an environmental non-profit organization, and has a much stronger emphasis on urban gardening. It operates a network of three urban gardens on its property, that were founded in 2011, 2014 and 2016. There is also a fair amount of informal activity in the Riserva dell'Aniene; there are informal gardens and dwellings throughout the park, signaling weak control over the land.

The Parco Aguzzano is a regional park on land belonging to the city of Rome, but it is not designated as a reserve. It, too, is a product of the 1997 Law 29, and is jointly managed by Romanatura, the city of Rome, and other associations, such as the one that is squatting Casa Alba 2. It is not quite as well-maintained as the Riserva dell'Aniene, but, because of this management network, it is more strongly controlled; there is no informal activity in this park, as in Riserva dell' Aniene. This park hosts the third urban garden, which is a function of the neighborhood public library, Biblioteca Fabrizio Giovenale.

The last of these three parks, Parco Petroselli, is north of and adjacent to our study area. This park is a true city park-- the facility is owned and maintained by the city. Parco Petroselli is also the best maintained and managed of the three parks.

While this neighborhood borders three major parks, the built environment and the parks feel very isolated from one another. This separation is not unlike that of the different regions of the built environment, which reinforces our initial impression of Casal de' Pazzi as a disjointed neighborhood without a strong sense of identity. While we see the market, urban gardens, and parks as opportunities to create a social core in the neighborhood, these spaces have not been empowered to reach their full potential as assets to the community.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> An empty building or area of land occupied without the permission of the owner.

#### **Methods**

#### Study Area

We determined the boundaries of our study area through a combination of census tracts and physical boundaries. In short, our study area is made up of the built environment that surrounds the joining ends of the Riserva Naturale della Valle dell'Aniene and Parco Urbano di Aguzzano. The area includes 22 census tracts and is comprised of three distinct parts that are connected by Viale Kant-Via Egidio Galbani. We solidified these boundaries after speaking to a number of residents, who confirmed that these are, more or less, the boundaries of Casal de' Pazzi.



Map 3: Census tracts in the Casal de' Pazzi study area.

#### **Statistical Analysis**

To conduct a statistical analysis of the demographics in our neighborhood, we used 2011 National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) data for the 22 census tracts in our study area. We compared the census tracts within the study area to each other, and also compared the neighborhood as a whole to the city of Rome. We looked for differences in age and gender distribution, family size, education level, employment status, immigrant population, and other socio-economic parameters. All data analysis and charts were made in Microsoft Excel, and all statistical maps were made using a combination of AutoCad and Adobe Illustrator.

#### **Building Survey**

We conducted a survey of the built environment in order to gain a better understanding of the use, type, and condition of the physical structures in our study area. We divided the study area into 4 quadrants and numbered the individual buildings within each quadrant. We then walked through the neighborhood in groups of two, recording the use, design typology, and level of maintenance of each building. For the typologies, we defined a low rise building as being 1-2 stories, a mid-rise as being 3-5 stories, and high rise being more than 5 stories. Within each of these categories, we defined further subsections that more specifically defined each building type. Once this data was collected, we used a combination of AutoCad and Adobe Illustrator to map our findings.

#### **Street Survey**

Because the lack of pedestrian activity and connectivity in our study area was something that we noticed on our first trip into the field, we conducted a street survey to better understand the conditions that are contributing to this issue. We used Google Maps Street View to assess each street, recording whether it was a primary, secondary or tertiary street, in addition to the presence of sidewalks, sidewalk quality, presence of trees and shrubbery, and presence of street parking. These were all factors that we considered important to gaining an understanding of the quality of the street as a whole. We then used a combination of AutoCad and Adobe Illustrator to map our finding

#### **Interviews**

We conducted 8 interviews with residents in Casal de' Pazzi, most of which were spontaneous and informal. We conducted all of our field research on Thursdays between 9 and 3, and during that time, we intercepted citizens who were willing to collaborate with our research. One Thursday, we collected Lynch maps from 3 different groups: Giorgio Baldassarre-- a frequent shopper at the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi, two university students at the library, and a group of elderly women at Bar Mimosa. In each case, we gave the informant a sheet of paper and a pen and asked them to draw a map of their neighborhood from their memory, a technique that was created by Kevin Lynch. We also conducted one formal interview with Lucio Zaccarelli, the Secretary of the Associazione Insieme per l'Aniene. We prepared questions for him beforehand, with the goal of gaining a better understanding of the history, structure, and membership of the Insieme per l'Aniene urban gardens. We also collected a Lynch map from Zaccarelli, as he lives in the gated community within our study area. We were interested to see if he identified as living in Casal de' Pazzi, or if he would more strongly identify with another neighborhood and name.

#### **Buildings and Streets**

#### **Urban Fabric**

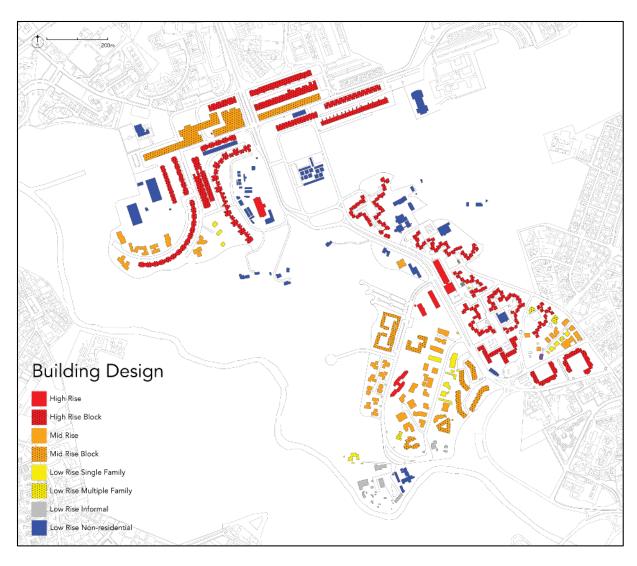


Map 4: Aerial view of the Casal de' Pazzi study area.

Casal de' Pazzi consists of an eclectic mix of urban patterns and architectural styles. The three zones of our study area (North, East, and Southwest) also represent three distinct built environments, each with their own structural identities and typologies.

The three zones sit anchored to the surrounding urban fabric at their northern and southeastern ends. These two points are tied together by Viale Kant and Via Egidio Galbani, which function as a north-south axis through the neighborhood. Spreading from this axis are various developments to the east and the west that surround Riserva Naturale della Valle dell' Aniene and Parco Urbano di Aguzzano.

The separation caused by the east-west parkland and north-south vehicular thoroughfare-- two axes that pose significant barriers for pedestrians attempting to cross between different zones-- is both physically and socially noticeable. Each zone is primarily residential, with a few small commercial spaces that are almost entirely frequented by residents of the zone in which it is located.



Map 5: Map of different building designs in the Casal de' Pazzi neighborhood.

#### **Building Design**

We primarily defined the design typologies of the buildings in our study area according to height, then further subdivided each height category as necessary.





Photo: Nathan Revor, February 28th, 2019

#### Figures 2 and 3: High Rise Blocks

The high rise blocks are also greater than 5 stories tall, and are characterized by their elongated form. The High Rise Blocks come in two varieties: linear or curvilinear blocks (Figure 2) and irregular blocks (Figure 3). Both are typically between 7 and 10 stories tall, and, with the exception of one building in the north, they are all strictly residential. The style of the high rise blocks differs from building to building, as some are developer-built and others are public housing, but their elongated form and sheer mass makes them easily distinguishable from the other building types. We differentiated High Rise Blocks from other high rises because they completely enclose piazzalike spaces or occupy an entire field of vision, thus defining a user's experience of space in a much more significant way than other high rises do.

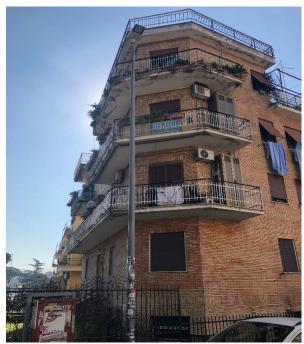


Photo: Nathan Revor, February 21st, 2019

Figure 4: Mid Rise

The mid rises are stand-alone structures that are 3-5 stories tall. They are residential buildings with multiple units, and typically have balconies on each floor.



Photo: Nathan Revor, February 21st, 2019

#### Figure 5: Mid Rise Block

The mid-rise blocks are like high rise blocks in their elongated form, but are only 3-5 stories tall. With the exception of an office building in the north, mid-rise blocks are usually mixed-use buildings, with commercial activity on the ground floor and residential units on the upper floors.



Photo: Nathan Revor, February 21st, 2019

#### Figure 6: Low Rise Single Family

The few low rise single family houses are 1-2 stories, with only one unit. They tend to have some greenery around them and do not occupy much space.



Photo: Nathan Revor, February 21st, 2019

#### Figure 7: Low Rise Multiple Family

The low rise multiple family houses are 1-2 stories and have multiple units. They are very similar in character to the mid-rise buildings, but with fewer stories. Sometimes, they are mixed use buildings with commercial activity on the first floor, but they are most often purely residential.



Photo: Nathan Revor, February 21st, 2019

#### **Figure 8: Low Rise Informal**

The low rise informal structures are 1-2 stories and are used either for commercial activity or as storage facilities. They have minimal windows and are self-built, usually consisting of a unique structural and aesthetic identity derived from their eclectic materiality and gradual growth.



Photo: Nathan Revor, February 21st, 2019

#### Figure 9: Low Rise Non-Residential

The low rise non-residential buildings are 1-2 stories tall. They are architecturally distinct from a residential mid-rise building for a few reasons, the most important being their multiple points of entry, larger parking infrastructure, visual complexity, and lack of privacy features like gates or fences. The community centers, churches, schools, and commercial strip shown in Figure 9 all fall into this category.

Casal de' Pazzi mostly consists of mid to high rise residential structures and low rise non-residential structures, with a few exceptions. There are relatively few informal settlements compared to other neighborhoods. The few that do exist sit in the southernmost tip of the Southwest Zone. All but one of these are non-residential, and most appear to be spaces for material storage. There is one informal residence in the East Zone. Other than these few exceptions, the majority of the structures in Casal de' Pazzi were built by developers in the 1970s and 80s

The high rise structures are mostly linear or curvilinear high rise blocks in the North Zone and irregular high rise blocks in the East Zone. Except for one hotel and one office building, there are no high rise structures in the Southwest Zone. The irregular high rise blocks are most often made up of a series of adjoined tower-like structures, with the whole structure surrounding a parking lot. The linear and curvilinear high rise blocks are long, straight or arcing structures that sit close to one another along streets that match their shapes. While the irregular blocks recede from the streets and surround parking lots that are vaguely similar to piazzas, the linear and curvilinear blocks do not create those sorts of enclosed areas and feel much closer to vehicular traffic.

The mid-rise blocks possess the same characteristics as the high rise blocks, but have fewer stories. The non-block mid rises are mostly residential. Many of them are in the Southwest Zone, with a handful in the other two zones as well. These buildings are often well maintained and house multiple families. One of the gated communities consists almost entirely of mid rises. The low rise structures are a lot more varied. There are a few low rises that are single family houses scattered about the neighborhood, but they are exceptional, as virtually all of the housing units are in multifamily buildings. The most common type of low-rise structures are community centers, including

three churches, three schools, a senior center, a library, and a museum. There are also three commercial low rise structures: two in the center of the neighborhood, along Viale Kant, and one in the southernmost part of the neighborhood.

The built environment in Casal de' Pazzi is well-constructed and very diverse. Each of the three zones has a different architectural character; their buildings relate to the street and their users in ways that make each zone feel like a completely different neighborhood. This variance leads to issues of community cohesion, especially when compounded with the fact that its different parts are poorly connected, and that the whole area lacks a strong central hub that could unify these parts.

#### **Building Use**

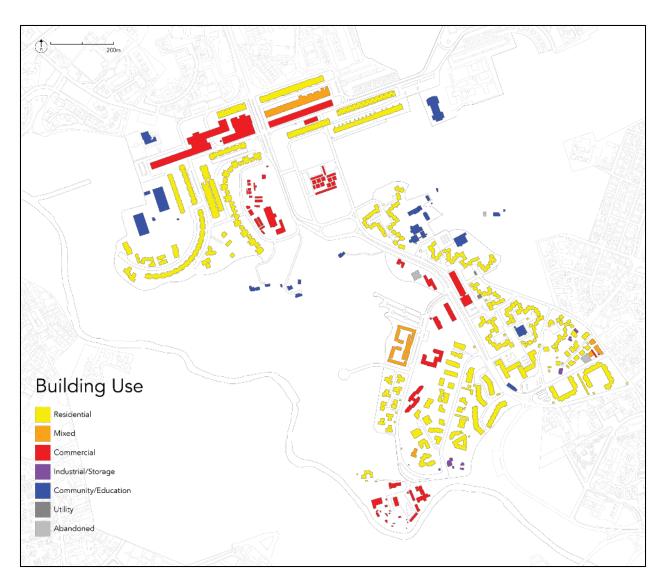
Casal de' Pazzi is a primarily residential neighborhood. The typical pattern of land use is to have a large swatch of residential buildings surround smaller scatterings of community centers and commercial areas. There is no significant industrial zone in our study area. (Map 6, next page)

There are two major commercial corridors that include offices in addition to small shops. The first is in the North Zone and cuts perpendicularly across the north-south axis of Viale Kant. These buildings have shops on the lower floors and partially-occupied offices on the upper floors. An entire building block was once occupied by a bank, but has since moved out. This former occupancy suggests the presence of local employment opportunities at the time that the PEEP was designed and constructed. The goal of a PEEP was to make a self-sufficient neighborhood, including local jobs-- a need that this bank must have contributed to filling.

The second commercial corridor is in the Southwest Zone and consists of standalone offices that are set back from the street, surrounded by large parking lots. The corridor starts with the Terna Group office building off of Viale Kant and runs south along the eastern side of Via Attilio Benigni. This spatial configuration is an outlier for the neighborhood, as all other commercial activity can be found in buildings that sit directly facing the street.



Figure 10: Low Rise Office building on Via Atillio Benigni.

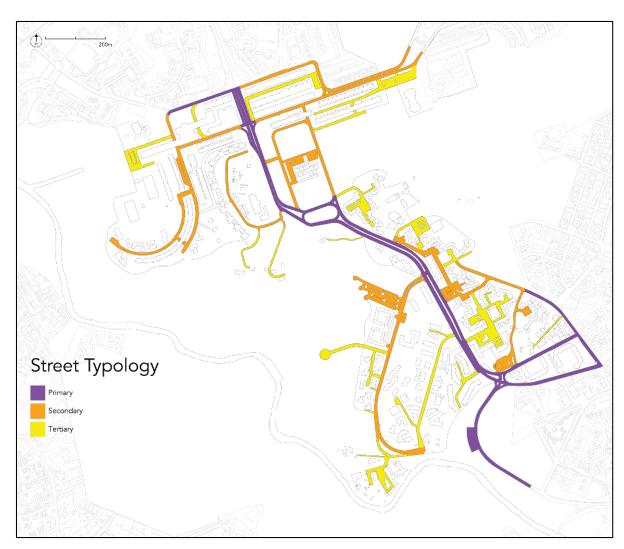


Map 6: Building use in the Casal de' Pazzi study area.

#### **Street Typology**

For the purposes of this study, we divided the streets into three categories (primary, secondary, and tertiary) based on the size of the road, its traffic level, and where the road leads—to residential, commercial, or larger roads. The City of Rome traffic plan, Regolamento Viario e Classifica Funzionale Delle Strade Urbane di Roma Capitale, defines a variety of street types, some of which will be referenced in our analysis.

The most important street cutting through our neighborhood is the already-mentioned primary north-south axis of Viale Kant and Via Egidio Galbani. This four-lane road is categorized as a primary street and has relatively heavy and fast traffic. It functions as the spine of development in the neighborhood, and also extends beyond Casal de' Pazzi, connecting various eastern neighborhoods. Within Casal de' Pazzi, this metropolitan arterial poses a problem of poor



Map 7: Street typology in the Casal de' Pazzi study area

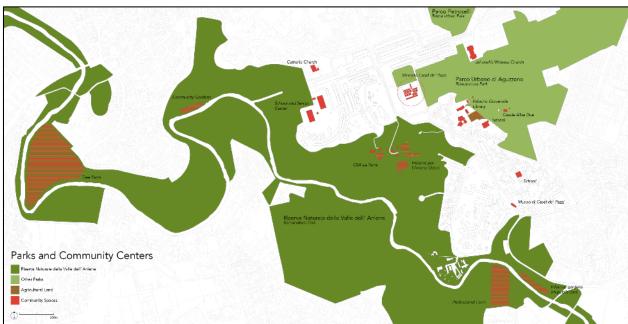
pedestrian connectivity between sections of the neighborhood and between residential spaces and the parks, since it has inconsistent sidewalks and fast, loud traffic. The City traffic plan refers to these two streets as "strade urbane interquartiere" or inter-neighborhood roads, which are considered somewhere between "strade urbane di scorrimento," or fast urban roads, and

neighborhood streets<sup>4</sup>. The other primary streets peel off of this primary axis at the northern and southern ends of the neighborhood.

The secondary streets are mostly along the block housing and commercial segments of the neighborhood, likely to facilitate the increased levels of vehicular traffic necessary to support both higher density and mixed use. The tertiary streets are quiet and small, and exist almost solely in the residential sectors of the neighborhood. They are often non-arterial dead-end or cul-de-sac streets that are only used by the few residents who live off of them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Regolamento Viario e Classifica Funzionale delle Strade Urbane di Roma Capitale, Roma Capitale, Assessorato Trasporti e Mobilità, (2015), 15.

## Parks, Community Centers, and Urban Agricultural Space



Map 8: Parks and community centers in the Casal de' Pazzi neighborhood.

As has been mentioned previously, this neighborhood adjoins the Riserva Naturale della Valle dell' Aniene and Parco Urbano de Aguzzano. It also borders a smaller park to the north, Parco Petroselli. The Riserva Naturale della Valle dell' Aniene is a large park that sits along both sides of the Aniene River, between the Circonvallazione Orientale expressway around Rome, to the east and its merging with the Tiber to the west. The park hosts a large variety of urban agricultural spaces, ranging in formality and scale from small informal gardens to professional farms. In our walks through the park, we have seen an enormous variety of produce and even a herd of sheep.

In our neighborhood, there are three primary urban gardens of interest: the CSA La Torre, the Insieme per l'Aniene Onlus, and the Fabrizio Giovenale Library Gardens. All three are non-professional<sup>5</sup>, and plots are open to the public for ownership. The first two sit in the Riserva Naturale della Valle dell' Aniene, and the library garden is on the western end of the Parco Urbano di Aguzzano. All three are within 400 meters of the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi, which is the main market in our study area.

In addition, there are several important community centers within a walking distance from the market and the gardens, including three schools, a senior center, two Catholic churches, and one Jehovah's Witness church. While the main north-south axis of Viale Kant and Via Egidio Galbani seems to cut community centers on its eastern and western sides off from each other, their relative proximity indicates that there is still much potential for a growth of community cohesion and integration through these public spaces, community centers, and gardens.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Non-professional in the Italian context in that garden members are not full-time "professional" farmers.

#### **Statistical Analysis**

#### **Population Statistics**

Casal de' Pazzi has a population of 8,498 people. In terms of composition this population is largely consistent with the demographics of the city of Rome as a whole. 53% of the population is female in both our study area and the city of Rome. The average family size in Casal de' Pazzi is 2.3 persons, compared to 2.2 persons in Rome. The age of the residents in this neighborhood is slightly higher than the city as a whole, though. As the population pyramid illustrates, the population in Casal de' Pazzi is an aging one. 25% of its residents are older than 65, while only 10% of the population is less than 15 years old. These statistics are consistent with the narrative that many of Casal de' Pazzi's residents came to the neighborhood in the 1970s and 80s as members of worker cooperatives, and have stayed in their buildings ever since. While Rome also has an older population, its age distribution is more spread out. 13% of the city's residents are less than 15 years old, which is slightly higher than that in our study area, and 22% of its residents are more than 65 years old, which is slightly lower. This difference further demonstrates that Casal de' Pazzi has a distinctly older population.

Although the age distribution in our study area differs slightly from that of the city of Rome, both result in the same dependency ratio of 54%. The dependency ratio is the ratio of citizens that are younger than 15 and older than 65 to the number of citizens that are 15-65 years old. This ratio serves as a measure of the pressure on the working population. A 54% dependency

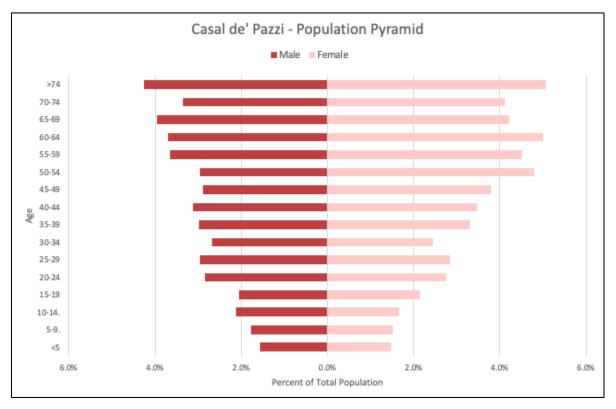
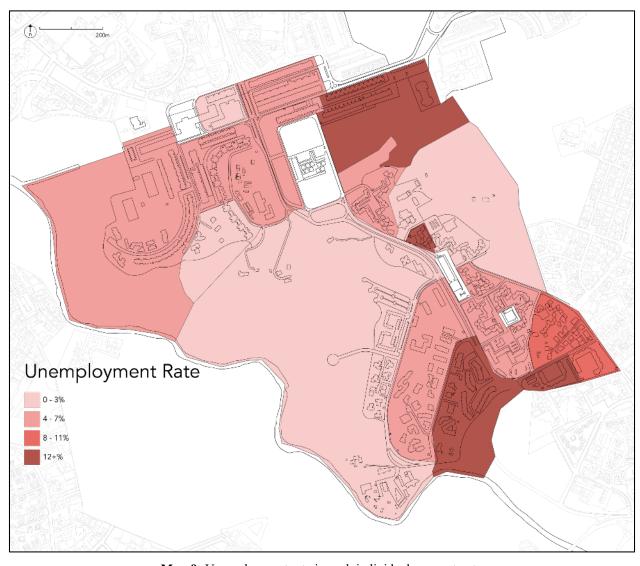


Figure 11: Population pyramid for the 22 census tracts in our study area.

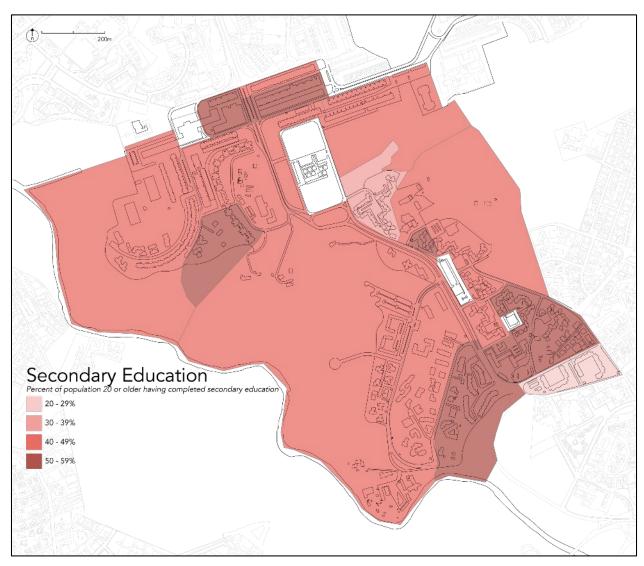
ratio illustrates the fact that, in both our study area and in the city of Rome, the dependent, non-working population is larger than that of the workforce.

With respect to labor and education statistics, we found differences not only between Casal de' Pazzi and the city of Rome, but also between the different census tracts that make up our study area. The workforce participation rate is 39.5% in Casal de' Pazzi, which is slightly lower than the 42% participation rate in the city of Rome. This is due to the large number of retirees in Casal de' Pazzi. The unemployment rate is roughly the same though, at 6.7% in Casal de' Pazzi and 6.5% across the city. We found that the bigger disparity among labor statistics was within the study area itself. The unemployment rates for each census tract range from 0% to 14%, which is a large diversion from the mean on both ends. These rates were consistent with our understanding of the neighborhood. The lowest unemployment rates were in the worker cooperatives and the gated community that is not included in the PEEP, and the highest rates were in the public housing in the southeast corner of the study area.

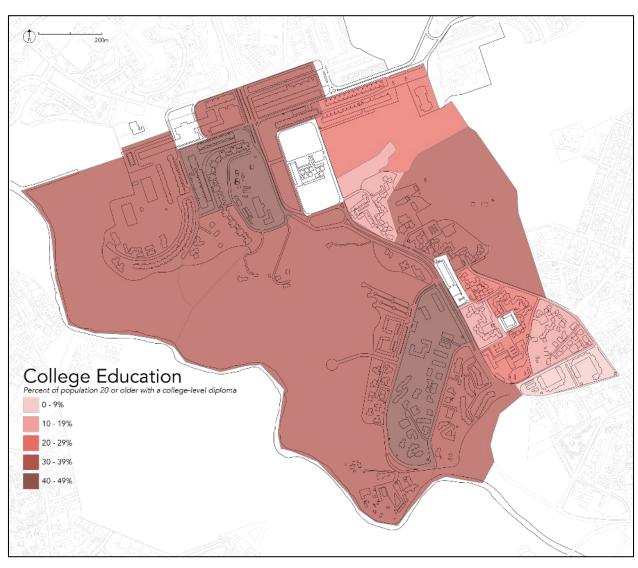


Map 9: Unemployment rate in each individual census tract.

We found a similar pattern in the education statistics, as well. First, the level of education in Casal de' Pazzi is notably higher than that in the city of Rome as a whole. 37% of the population in our study area has completed secondary education, compared to 34% in the city as a whole. Similarly, 22.6% of the population in Casal de' Pazzi that has completed university-level education, whereas only 19% of the city's population has. Because there is no income data available, we can estimate, based on the fact that the level of education in Casal de' Pazzi is slightly higher than the city average, that this neighborhood is a middle or slightly upper-middle class neighborhood. Within the neighborhood, however, we saw a similar trend in level of education that we did in unemployment rates. The percentage of each census tract's population that has completed secondary school ranges from 25% to 56%, and the percent than has completed university-level education ranges from 4% to 41%. Once again, the lowest education rates were found in the census tracts composed of public housing, and the highest in the gated communities and worker cooperatives.



Map 10: Percent of population 20 years and older, in each census tract, that has completed secondary education.



**Map 11:** Percent of population 20 years and older, in each census tract, that has completed university-level education.

Another important statistic that differs between Casal de' Pazzi and the city of Rome is the immigrant population. In Rome, the immigrant population makes up 8.6% of the total population. In Casal de' Pazzi, only 2.5% of the population are immigrants, which is likely due to the presence of established public housing, worker cooperatives and reasonably high-income gated communities in the neighborhood. This shows us that our study area is an extremely homogeneous neighborhood, in an already-homogeneous city.

#### **Housing Statistics**

In our study area, 72% of the housing stock is owned by its residents. This number is slightly lower than the city of Rome as a whole, where 77% of units are owned. The percent of the housing stock that is rented is about the same though, with 22% rented in Casal de' Pazzi and 23% in Rome. The difference is the 6% of the housing stock in Casal de' Pazzi that is "neither rented nor owned," which is presumably a result of the high presence of public housing in the neighborhood.



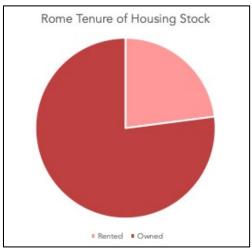


Figure 12: Tenure of housing stock in the study area.

**Figure 13:** Tenure of housing stock in the city of Rome.

One of the biggest differences between our study area and the city of Rome is the age of its buildings. 83% of the structures in Casal de' Pazzi were built between 1971 and 1990, and the rest were built from 1919 until then. Looking at a map of the area from 1945, one can see that, at that time, there were only scattered farm buildings and minor country roads, including Via Zanardini. The age of the building stock in Rome is much more evenly dispersed across time. This pattern is a direct result of the 1962 Law 167 and the creation of PEEPs. Casal de' Pazzi was designated as a PEEP in the wake of this law, and was, thus, developed in the twenty years following its designation.

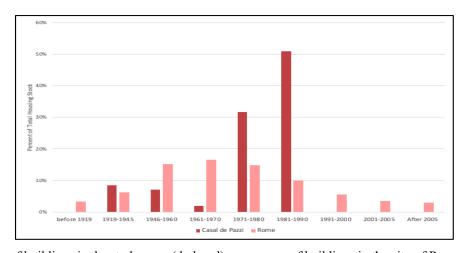


Figure 14: Age of buildings in the study area, (dark red), versus age of buildings in the city of Rome as a whole.

#### **Interviews**

A crucial methodological approach in our study of Casal de' Pazzi was talking to members of each of the three zones of the study area. As a neighborhood with quite a diverse population, with respect to age, education level, occupation, and income, interviewing people from each of the three zones was essential to understanding the neighborhood as a whole.

#### Methods

Our interviews ranged from simple, two to three question intercept interviews to extensive meetings with important community actors. In these interviews, we attempted to situate ourselves within the neighborhood.

Along with these interviews, we collected Lynch maps from residents. The Lynch map is a common and effective tool used to understand a neighborhood by its residents' own terms. Kevin Lynch, in his book "The Image of the City," categorized a neighborhood as having five characteristics: paths, edges, nodes, districts, and landmarks. In order to gather this information in our interviews, we asked a few basic questions: at what markets did they shop, did they walk through parks, on which roads did they drive, what were the most defining aspects of the neighborhood, and where did the neighborhood begin and end? Gathering Lynch maps was essential to understanding what is present—and lacking—in Casal de' Pazzi. We discovered a lack of a social hub in the built environment, and we found no centralized landmark of neighborhood identity.

Four principal questions guided these interviews:

- What is the name of this neighborhood?
- How long have you lived/ worked in this neighborhood?
- What do you think most resembles the public hub of the neighborhood?
- How much time, if any, do you spend in the parks surrounding the neighborhood?

We interviewed 8 people in Casal de' Pazzi: an elderly woman gardening in the Southwest zone, a woman outside her apartment in the East zone, a group of elderly women at a bar in the North zone, Stefania Di Francesco, the president of the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi in the North zone, Giorgio Baldassarre, a frequent shopper of the market in the North zone, two university students studying at the neighborhood library in the East zone, and Lucio Zaccarelli, the Secretary of the Insieme per l'Aniene Onlus Association in the Southwest zone.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Lynch, 48-49.

#### Findings: Name and Identity

Our understanding of the neighborhood's name and identity changed drastically over the course of our study period. Initially, we believed that the name of the neighborhood was Aguzzano, taking after the park in the neighborhood, Parco Urbano di Aguzzano. Yet, in our first interview, we discovered that this is not the case. We interviewed a resident gardening in the Riserva Naturale della Valle dell'Aniene, who told us that she knew the neighborhood as Monte Sacro Alto. In reality, Monte Sacro Alto is a neighborhood to the north of our study area. The next person we interviewed, a woman taking out her trash outside her apartment, gave us the correct name of the neighborhood: Casal de' Pazzi. In the following interviews, we reached a consensus among a number of our informants, who confirmed that Casal de' Pazzi is, in fact, the name of this neighborhood.

#### Findings: Neighborhood Boundaries

Nearly every person we interviewed defined the boundaries of Casal De' Pazzi differently. Most understood their neighborhood as starting at Via Nomentana and identified Viale Kant as a major throughway into the neighborhood. The western and eastern borders, as most people agreed, are the edge of Parco Aguzzano and the Aniene river. However, the southern boundary varied among the residents that we interviewed. While some thought of boundary as Via Tiburtina, others understood it as the Ponte Mammolo. Importantly, there was an evident separation between the zones of the neighborhood. The residents knew their own zone better than the others, and explicitly detailed a divide in the neighborhood at the commercial hub along Viale Kant.

#### **Findings: Connection to parks**

Another question that we asked our interviewees was whether they used their local parks - Parco Aguzzano and Riserva dell'Aniene. Save for Lucio, who works in the Riserva dell'Aniene, almost everyone we interviewed said that they rarely went into the parks. Perhaps this is because both parks lack easily accessible entrance points, as well as developed recreational infrastructure, such as playgrounds or pavilions. Nevertheless, we learned that the two immense public spaces that mark the borders of this neighborhood are not frequented by residents of Casal de' Pazzi.

#### **Findings: Community Hub**

In our initial analysis, it was difficult to determine a centralizing landmark or a unifying node in the neighborhood. The lack of a landmark in the neighborhood was confirmed by our interviews with residents; however, the residents did identify several nodes in the neighborhood.

We interviewed a group of three elderly women twice, each time in a local bar, Bar Mimosa, which is frequented by many of the residents in the Northern zone. The most vocal of these women

arrived in the neighborhood in 1975. We met and talked to these women twice. They all agreed that the market was the principal hub of the neighborhood.

We interviewed the president of the local market, Stefania di Francesco, as well as Giorgio Baldassarre, a market regular. Stefania told us that her market, founded in 1993, was part of a larger network of 30 urban markets, called Mercati d'Autori. Stefania told us only three are active, though: the one in Casal de' Pazzi, and two others in Trieste and Alessandria. She informed us that her market holds community events throughout the year, including concerts and dance classes. Stefania remarked that she wished that there was a way to include the schools and senior center in the neighborhood with the urban gardens and her market as a way to boost engagement in the practice of local and healthy food production.

After speaking to Stefania, it was clear that, while the market is a node of cultural and economic life in the neighborhood, it is not easily accessible for the entire neighborhood. Most residents use automobiles to travel to and from the market, even though the market is situated in the center of the neighborhood and along a large street. Like many of the residents we interviewed, Stefania recognized the inaccessibility of the market as a crucial problem, yet remarked that a tactical urbanism approach, such as improving pedestrian access, would prove unrealistic. Stefania explained that the only infrastructure projects that are completed in Rome are large-scale, expensive projects; low-cost projects are not attractive for the government to pursue.

The large community locus in the East zone seemed to be the Fabrizio Giovenale Library. As a regular study spot for university students, the library is almost entirely comprised of students and young men and women. There, we interviewed two university students who study at the library regularly, but do not live in the neighborhood—they drive from their neighborhood, Monte Sacro Alto and, thus, did not know any of the landmarks of Casal de' Pazzi, except for the library.

Finally, we interviewed Lucio Zaccarelli, who spoke confidently about the Insieme per l'Aniene Onlus association's being a community hub of the Casal de' Pazzi, and specifically, in the Southwest Zone. The association celebrated its 20th birthday on April 9th, 2019. The association supervises not only gardens, but also 10 hectares of the Riserva dell'Aniene. This land includes grazing grounds for local herds of sheep, cricket and soccer fields for public use, and playgrounds for children. Lucio claimed that the cricket field is the only public field in all of the Lazio region, and perhaps all of Italy—it brings many people from outside Casal de' Pazzi into the neighborhood and into the park. Lucio told us that the primary mission of the association is environmental education; they offer classes on gardening, mushrooms, wild herb foraging, and botany. These classes are free when the association has enough grant money to cover the costs; however, when we interviewed Lucio, they did not have extra funds, and had to charge roughly 40 euros per attendee, depending on the class.

There are two distinct garden projects that Lucio supervises: the first is two gardens that the organization started in 2011 and 2014 on land that they received from the city of Rome, and the second is one garden, built in 2016-2017, that is sponsored by the city of Rome. Both are non-professional gardens, and the plots are open for public ownership. The city supplied the funds for the second project as part of a larger European initiative to stimulate urban agriculture. Their funds were used to erect fencing, create irrigation networks, and implement other infrastructure needed to create a garden. Apart from their origins, another essential difference between these garden

projects is how plots are assigned; the former is on a first come first serve basis, the latter is decided with a rubric weighted by age, proximity, and employment. Lucio informed us that plot sizes are 10, 30, and 60 square meters, costing 60€, 120€, and 180€ per year. One constant practice across these gardens is purposefully-limited access to water; Lucio and his team only included one access point for water per garden, in order to stimulate social interaction among the gardeners and create a sense of community.

#### **Cognitive Maps and Discussion**

We collected 4 Lynch Maps: one from a group of elderly women in the North zone, one from Giorgio Baldassarre in the North zone, one from Lucio Zaccarelli in the Southwest zone, and one from two university students in the East zone.

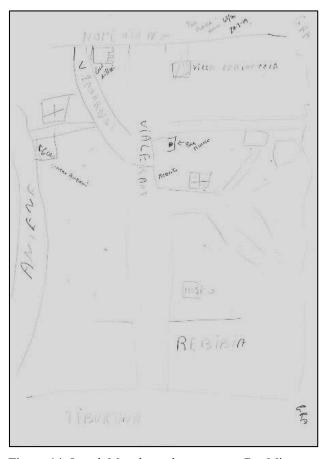


Figure 14: Lynch Map drawn by women at Bar Mimosa.

#### Women at the Bar Mimosa

Figure 14 is the Lynch map made by the women in the Bar Mimosa on March 28, 2019. They started the map with Via Nomentana and Viale Kant. When these women first arrived in 1975, they said that the only large road was Via Zanardini. The women defined the southern bound as Via Tiburtina, the western bound as the Aniene River and the eastern bound as the Grande Raccordo Anulare. The important nodes they noted were the two churches, the Museo di Casal de' Pazzi, and the Market. They also indicated Villa Farinacci and the old Pazzi family residence, Casal de' Pazzi, as landmarks in the neighborhood. The women did not mark either Parco Aguzzano or the Riserva dell'Aniene as very important nodes of the neighborhood. They described Bar Lo Zio d'America as an important node; however, this bar is located in a different neighborhood, Talenti.

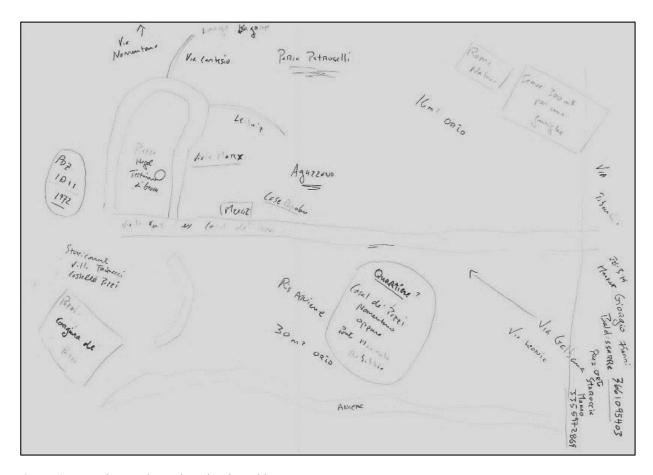
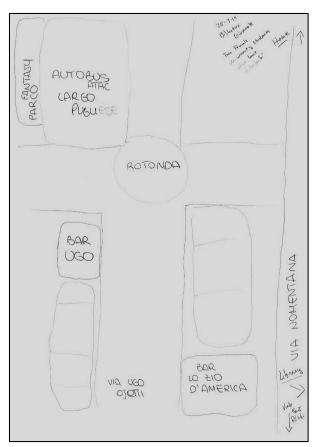
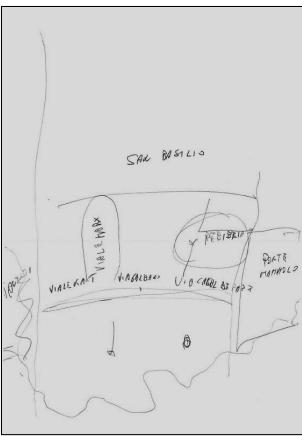


Figure 15: Lynch Map drawn by Giorgio Baldassarre.

#### Giorgio Baldassarre

This Lynch map was made on March 28, 2019 in the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi. Giorgio first drew Via Tiburtina and Viale Kant as the bounds of the neighborhood. He knew the Aniene river served as the western bound, and Via Nomentana and San Basilio as the northern and eastern bounds. The important streets in his mind were Piazza Hegel, where he lives, and Viale Marx; he vaguely knew where other important streets were located, but could not draw them on his map. In his mind, the important areas of the neighborhood were the Parco Pertroselli, the Aguzzano Park, the Aniene Nature Reserve, and the Market.





**Figures 16, 17:** (left) Lynch Map drawn by two university students studying at the Fabrizio Giovenale Library; (right) Lynch Map drawn by Lucio Zaccarelli.

#### **Two University Students**

This map was made on March 28, 2019 in the Fabrizio Giovenale Library. Two young women had come from another neighborhood to work at the library and were studying in the courtyard. The students' map is not of Casal de' Pazzi, but is instead a map of their neighborhood, Talenti, which borders Casal de' Pazzi on Via Nomentana. They listed the Rotonda as a central node, with Bar Ugo and Bar Lo Zio d'America as central hangout spots.

#### Lucio Zaccarelli

This map was made on April 4, 2019 in the park house for the Association per'Insieme l'Aniene Onlus. The first thing Lucio drew was the Aniene river, as the Western border of Casal de' Pazzi. In his mind, the neighborhood ends at the Ponte Mammolo in the south and San Basilio in the east. He did not, however, have a clear understanding of the northern bound of the neighborhood. In his mind, the major road is Viale Kant, which becomes Via Galbani, which finally becomes Via Casal de'Pazzi. He also indicated that the major offshoot road of the neighborhood is Viale Marx. The landmarks in his map include the Aniene park and the prison Rebbibia.

#### **Conclusion**

Casal de' Pazzi is a residential neighborhood with a diverse and well-constructed built environment. It neighbors three public parks, two of which are home to urban gardens, and has a number of other public and community spaces, including a large market in its center. These public spaces present a number of opportunities for a social core of the neighborhood, but none of them have been empowered to reach their full potential as such. There is a physical divide between the three zones of the neighborhood, created by the parks and the metropolitan arterial Viale Kant, and no strong social hub to unite them. Casal de' Pazzi is a neighborhood in need of both physical and social connections between its parts, in order to create a unifying social hub and instill a stronger sense of neighborhood identity.



#### PART TWO: RECOMMENDATIONS

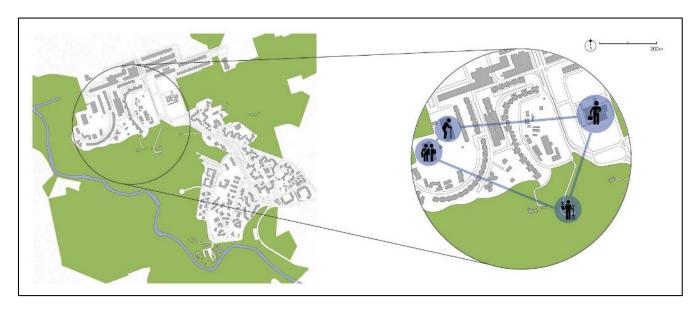
#### Introduction

Casal de' Pazzi exists is in three distinct zones, separated by inaccessible parks, fences and gates, and a busy metropolitan arterial. This influences not only the way in which the residents interact with other residents, but also the way they use the surrounding public lands. The neighborhood lacks cohesion among its parts; however, the infrastructure needed to bridge these missed opportunities already exists. In the Parco Urbano di Aguzzano, next to the Biblioteca Fabrizio Giovenale, there is an urban garden. In the Riserva Naturale della Valle dell'Aniene, there are two organizations that supervise and manage urban gardens, sports fields, and educational classes. The Mercato Casal de' Pazzi hosts community events apart from its everyday business-- it puts on concerts, offers dance classes, and provides space for other community events. The lack of neighborhood cohesion can be easily addressed, in a two-pronged approach: by bridging both the social and physical divides which impair the development of neighborhood identity. Our recommendation for Casal de' Pazzi comes from the notion that neither an architectural project nor a social program can solve this sort of problem alone. To that end, we propose both.

The first recommended project is a Social Bridge. The Insieme per l'Aniene Onlus gardens would designate one of their larger plots for the children of the local school and members of the nearby senior center to use together. The organization would teach this group of people how to garden in a sustainable, economical, and healthy way in order to create a space where the neighborhood can use the park and connect with the land in a meaningful and educational way. This partnership could extend further to the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi, where, by connecting it to the parks, schools and senior center, this already-established neighborhood hub could be bolstered to reach its full potential as the social core of Casal de' Pazzi.

The second recommendation is a physical project designed to make the parks in the neighborhood more accessible and to connect Parco Urbano Aguzzano and Riserva Naturale della Valle dell'Aniene. We propose making more entrances into the Riserva dell'Aniene along Viale Kant, and to the Parco Aguzzano by the market. In addition of that, a pedestrian bridge that would connect the Parco Aguzzano, the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi, and the Naturale dell'Aniene together should be constructed. We believe these infrastructural projects would rectify neighborhood connectivity issues and encourage more people to utilize the parks.

#### School, Retirement Home, Garden, Market: A Bridge across Identity



Map 1: Map showing the locations of the local school, senior center, market, and the Insieme per l'Aniene gardens.

In our interview, Stefania Di Francesco, the President of the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi, expressed a desire to create a program that connects the local schools and senior center to the market and the gardens just across the road. Lucio Zaccarelli, the Secretary of the Insieme per l'Aniene Onlus Association, was enthusiastic about a partnership of that kind.

Our proposal is to create a connection between the gardens and the market by implementing a program that brings the local senior center and schools together through gardening. This group would take ownership of a plot in the Insieme per l'Aniene together, learning how to garden in a sustainable way, while building community between generations. This partnership could be extended to the market, too, where they could host social events with the food that they have grown together, such as a cooking class.

Gardening is a powerful practice. For children, gardens restore neighborhood cohesion and instill community morals in participants. By providing the space, tools, and ability for local children and seniors to connect to the parks that border Casal de' Pazzi, this collaboration has the potential to foster a novel and beneficial character to the neighborhood. The children would not be the only beneficiaries; a study done by Susan Rodiek shows that, for older people, "cortisol was significantly lower in the garden environment compared with the indoor settings, indicating greater reduction in stress level." Oliver Sacks went so far as to say, "I have seen in my patients the restorative and healing powers of nature and gardens, even for those who are deeply disabled neurologically. In many cases, gardens and nature are more powerful than any medication."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hung, "East New York Farms: Youth Participation in Community Development and Urban Agriculture." 59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Rodiek, "Influence of an Outdoor Garden on Mood and Stress in Older Persons."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Sacks, "Oliver Sacks: The Healing Power of Gardens."

Gardening has proven to be beneficial for people of all ages, as they provide an opportunity for participants to have important responsibilities, be treated as valued members of a community, and develop knowledge and skills connected to food production.

Another benefit of this program is that it integrates the younger and older populations in Casal de' Pazzi: two groups that likely do not have much contact at present. Multigenerational integration is proven to have a positive impact on all generations involved. A randomized, controlled trial done by Elza Maria de Souza and Emily Marjetta Dorothea Grundy in Brazil found that "structured intergenerational activities had positive effects on social capital for both adolescents and elderly people." Integrating the younger and older generations could have an especially positive impact in Casal de'Pazzi, since it is a diverse neighborhood that lacks physical and social connections among its parts.

While the garden would connect the neighborhood schools and senior center together and with the parks, the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi would act as the hub for this project and the integration into the larger network of residents of Casal de' Pazzi. Markets are important and useful locations for the sharing and creation of common morals, interests, and values. Studies show that markets are "places of social interaction that foster a community of diverse people." A principal measure of the success of a market is the role of importance it holds in any given neighborhood. When a market is more than merely a place to buy food, but also a way to engage with vendors, farmers, and fellow shoppers, the value of the space is heightened. By connecting this garden project with the market, another layer of neighborhood connectivity would be created. As Mark Francis and Lucas Griffith remark in their "The Meaning and Design of Farmers' Markets as Public Space," "social programs in addition to the market function will further enhance the social life of the space and enliven the space with additional layers of social life." With more points of contact between the neighborhood and its residents, the market could reach its full potential as the social, economic, and cultural hub of the neighborhood.

The institutional infrastructure needed for this project already exists. As Insieme per l'Aniene Onlus is an environmental education organization, and already offers a selection of classes, the association could expand its focus to offering after-school classes or activities at the local school to build interest, while offering similar programs at the retirement home. The Mercato Casal de' Pazzi is already attempting to promote more social programs at the market, so they could expand their programming to include events for this school-senior center collaboration, and anyone else that is interested.

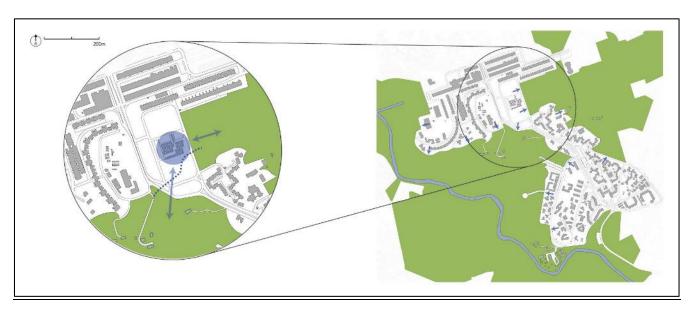
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> van Vliet, "Intergenerational Cities: A Framework for Policies and Programs," 350.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Francis, Mark, and Lucas Griffith. "The Meaning and Design of Farmers' Markets as Public Space An Issue-Based Case Study." 263.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid. 276.

#### **Physical Bridges**



Map 2: Map showing the proposed site for a pedestrian bridge, and the spaces that it would connect.

There is a need for an increase in the number of pedestrian-friendly, physical connections between different parts of the neighborhood. We recommend the addition of more access points to the Aniene and Aguzzano parks, and as a pedestrian bridge that connects these two parks and the market.

The Riserva dell' Aniene and Parco Aguzzano are currently under-utilized by the residents of Casal de' Pazzi. One of the things contributing to this underutilization is the lack of clear, accessible entrances to the parks. When we visited the neighborhood to the northwest of Casal de' Pazzi, Monte Sacro Alto, we saw that their entrance to the Riserva dell' Aniene is much more celebrated; there is a large, medieval bridge, Ponte Nomentano, over the Aniene River, with two clearly-marked entrances to the park on either side. This bridge celebrates the park, and makes the entrance to it a landmark of the neighborhood. Nothing of this scale exists in Casal de' Pazzi. Not only are the entrances to the park few in number, but they are also often inaccessible and hard to find. The best example of an entrance into the park is one found off of Via Vincenzo Lodigiani into the Riserva dell'Aniene; there is a small wooden stairway that leads down into a park, with a sign at the bottom that shows a map of the park, along with its name. This kind of entrance to the park is unusual in Casal de'Pazzi, though. Most of the time, when we entered or exited the park, we climbed up un-cleared hills, through informal garbage dumps, or— in one instance— through a hole in a chain-link fence.



Photo: Oliver Goldberg-Lewis, March 14, 2019 Figure 1: Ponte Nomentano in Monte Sacro Alto.



Figure 2: Entrance into Riserva dell'Aniene from Via Vincenzo Lodigiani.



Photo: Nathan Revor, February 7, 2019

Figure 3: Sign at the bottom of the entrance into Riserva dell'Aniene from Via Vincenzo Lodigiani.



Photo: Nathan Revor, February 28, 2019

Figure 3: Informal exit, through a hole in a fence, from the Riserva dell'Aniene to Via Bartolomeo Maranta.

With the exception of the one entrance with the wooden arch, the majority of park entrances are both unattractive and hard to find, which leaves residents unmotivated to visit. We The City and Romanatura should work together to add more entrances to the parks, and create entryways and signage that make them visible and accessible. With the addition of these entrances, more residents will use the parks and view them as assets to their neighborhood.

Our second recommendation to increase physical connectivity in Casal de'Pazzi is to construct a pedestrian bridge over Viale Kant that connects the two parks and the market. There are currently not many pedestrian crossings between the east and west sides of Viale Kant and Via Galbani and no existing way to easily get from one park to the other. In order to cross this street, we often had to go out of our way to find a crosswalk, which is essential to crossing an arterial as busy as this one. There are also any obvious pathways from either park to the market. Because each of these parks has urban gardens within them, it is especially relevant to connect them to the market. A pedestrian bridge could not only would connect these major public spaces to each other in a pedestrian-friendly way, but would also help empower the market as the social hub of the neighborhood.

We recommend that this pedestrian bridge is built over the rotary where Viale Kant becomes Via Egidio Galbani. This area is hostile for pedestrians, and is arguably the least pedestrian-friendly area in the neighborhood. A bridge crossing this area would connect the Riserva dell'Aniene to the Parco Aguzzano, serving as not only as a way to cross between the parks, but also as a monumental entrance to the parks themselves. This bridge could function like the Ponte Nomentana does in Monte Sacro Alto, celebrating the entrances to these parks and making them landmarks in the neighborhood.

This pedestrian bridge would also connect these parks to the market, another problematic area for pedestrians as it is exclusively built for car access. A pedestrian bridge would both physically and symbolically empower the pedestrian in this space. Our hope is that, with its construction, people will be more inclined to walk to the market, and more pedestrian-friendly street infrastructure will follow.

It is essential that citizens are able to participate in the design and implementation processes of these projects. Citizens should be able to help decide where the additional access points to the parks are constructed, to ensure that the added access points are consistent with their needs. The citizens should also be included in the design process for the pedestrian bridge; first, to assure that the bridge is, in fact, an improvement to their community, both aesthetically and functionally.

The addition of more entrances to the park and a pedestrian bridge over Viale Kant will begin to make Casal de' Pazzi a more connected and unified neighborhood. With these physical interventions, we hope to build connections between the three zones of the neighborhood, and in doing so, also empower the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi as the unifying hub that all of these parts share in common.

#### **Conclusion**

The overarching goal of these recommendations is to connect the residents of Casal de' Pazzi with each other and with their environment. Our first recommendation, the Social Bridge, would bring together the diverse communities that exist in this neighborhood. Throughout the zones of the neighborhood, there is a palpable desire for connectivity. This recommendation is not designed to forcibly create community; rather, create a program that would allow the many communities of the neighborhood to have a mutual activity—a place to spend their time and share their values with each other. Our second recommendation, the "Physical Bridge," addresses the issue that while Casal de' Pazzi is geographically defined by its parks, few residents use them. Creating more entry points to the parks in the neighborhood, and connecting the parks with the Mercato Casal de' Pazzi in a purposeful and monumental way, will increase residents' use of the parks. Moreover, these two recommendations work together to improve the overall neighborhood. Increased use of the parks generated by improved pedestrian access would promote more use of the parks and more interest in the community gardens. Involving more residents in activities of the gardens and the market would provide incentives to use these public spaces, and the greater accessibility of the parks is essential for making these projects feasible.



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