

L'ECLISSE BEYOND THE RING OF ROME

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L' ECLISSE

BEYOND THE RING OF ROME

ON THE SOIL OF ROME

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Disintegrated communities

THE FORGOTTEN SPACE



L'Eclisse:
Beyond the Ring of Rome

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ON THE SOIL OF ROME

With over 2700 years of wars, shifts of empires, and settlements, Rome has always been a stage of power struggles and political games. On this piece of glorious soil, generations after generations had lived and left their marks. Every piece of them added a layer to the complexity of how Rome has become today: a point on the map where all roads lead to; a center with deep historic richness; a city that is ever expanding.



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Where is the periphery?

In this research, we are aiming at understanding the new suburban development of Rome. Letting out the historic center of Rome, a metaphor of an eclipse is implemented as a tool to focus our attentions on the periphery. However, the question is yet remaining: where is the periphery of Rome?



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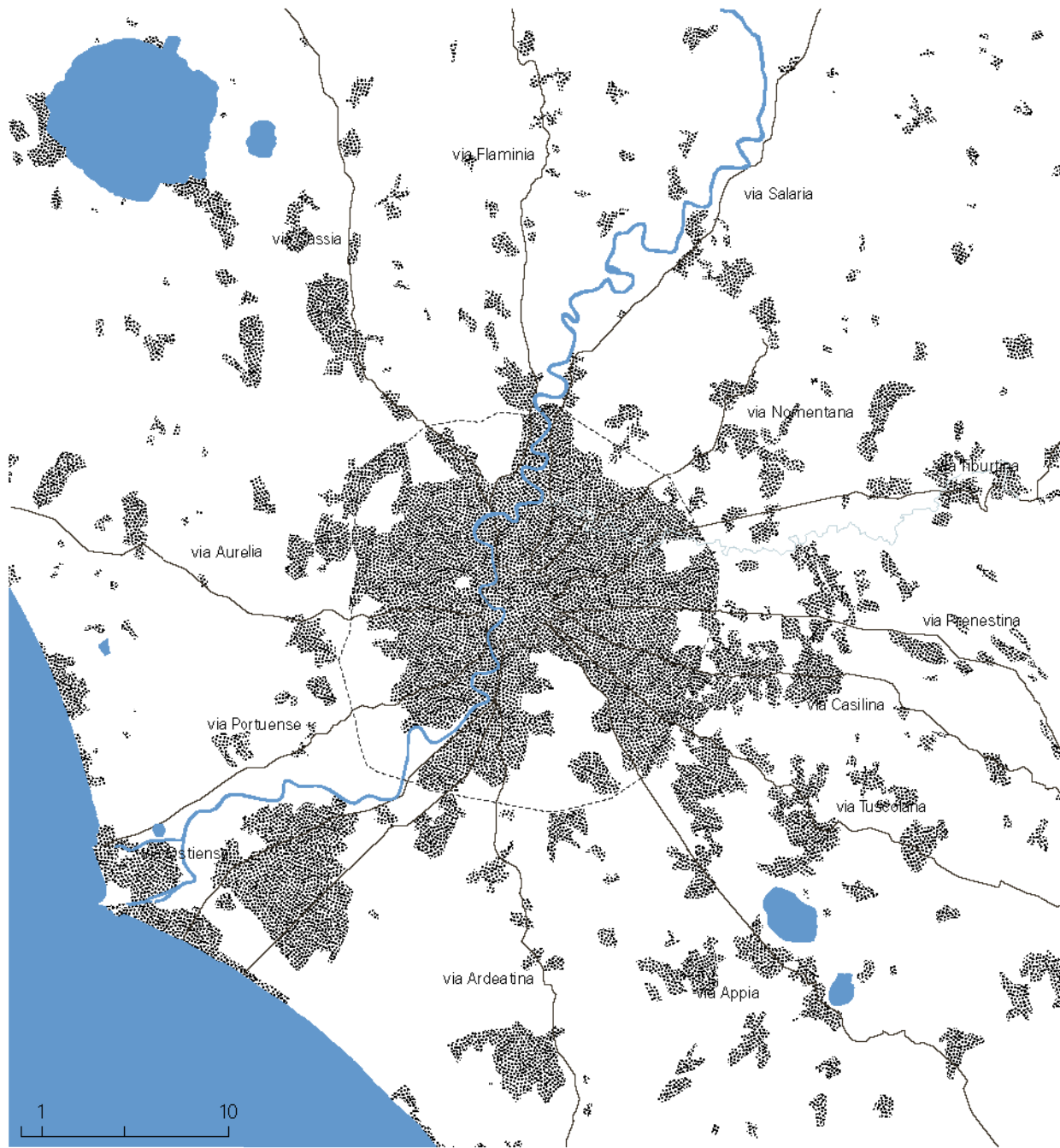


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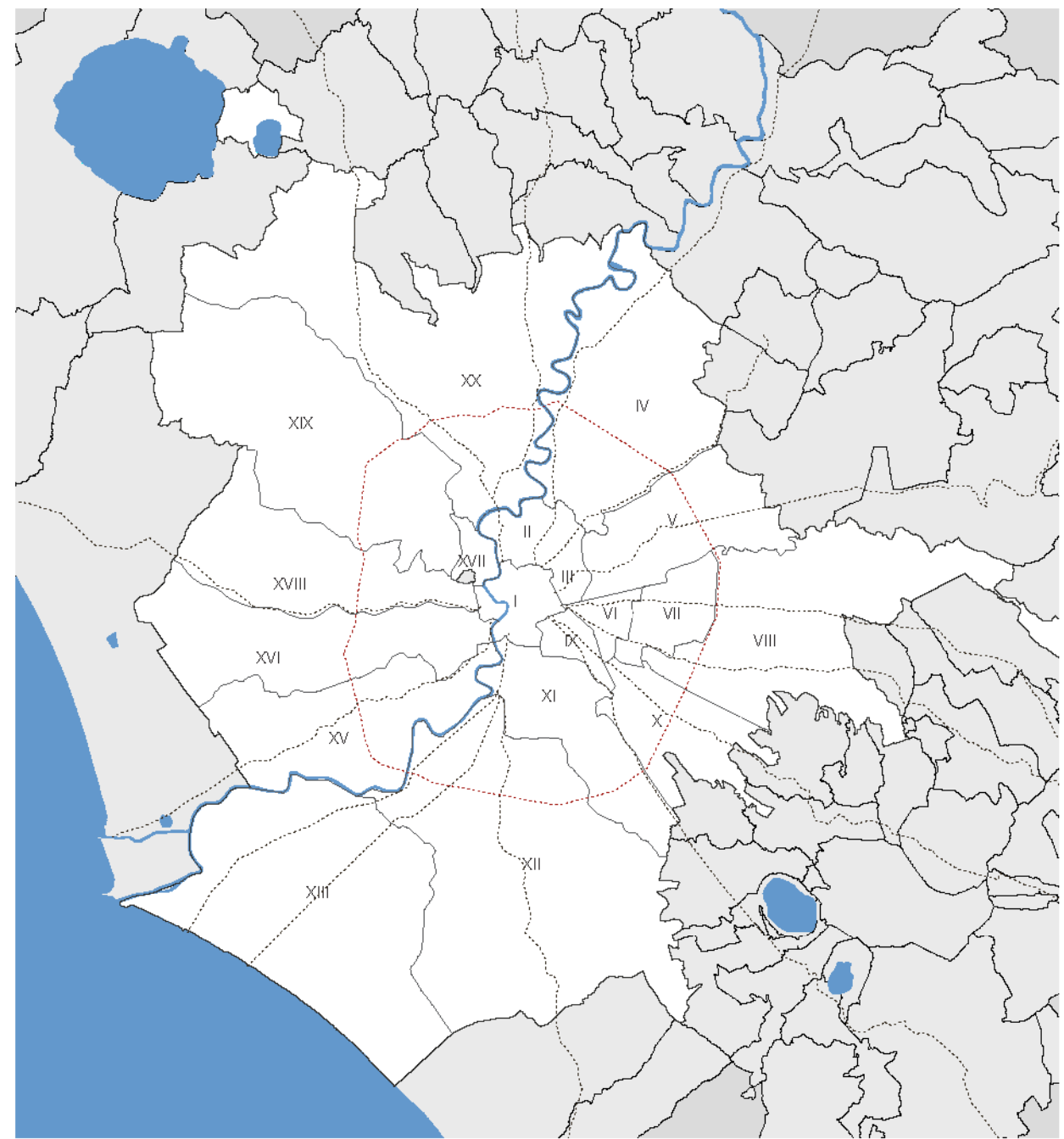
- 1 Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Mamma Roma*, 1962
- 2 Daniele Luchetti, *La nostra vita*, 2010
- 3 Michelangelo Antonioni, *L'Eclisse*, 1964



- Consular road
- - - GRA
- █ Built area

Consular roads as primary infrastructures

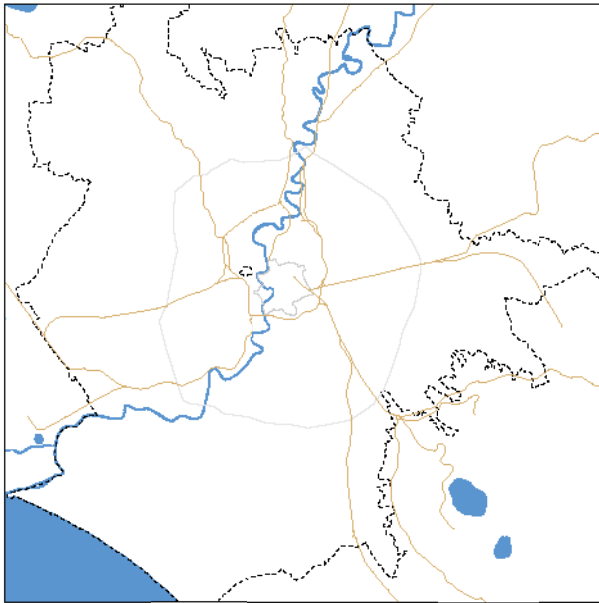
Every consular road leads to Rome. They are the backbones where settlements started. They are the references to how the city is structured.



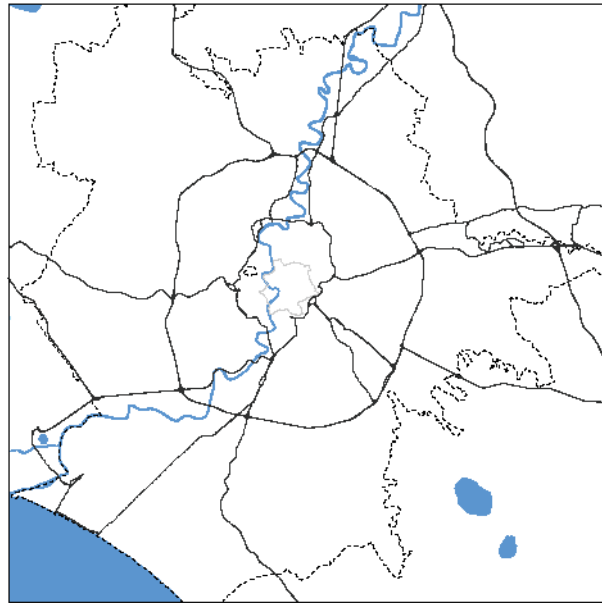
- Municipality of Rome
- Province of Rome
- Lazio Region
- Consular Roads
- - - GRA

Administrative divisions of Rome

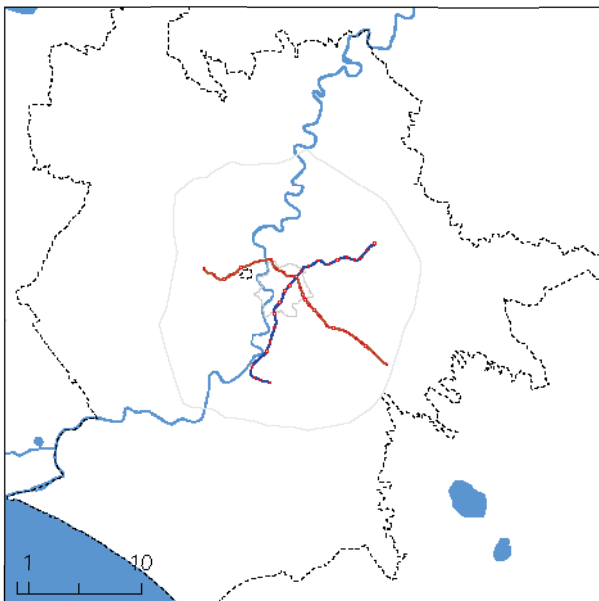
The municipality of Rome, being the largest in Italy, is divided into 20 districts. The first district being the historic center within the Aurelian walls, all other districts were divided according to the rays of the consular roads.



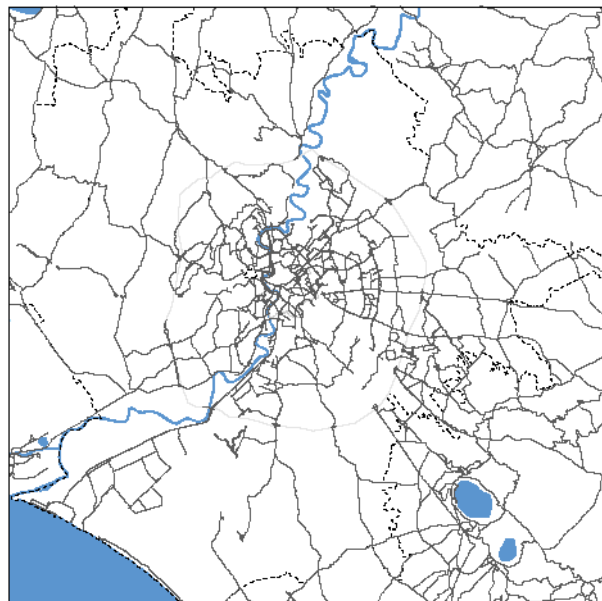
Railway



Highways



Subway



Major Roads

Mobility infrastructures

All infrastructure networks in Rome are developed in close relation to the consular roads and the center. The GRA was designed to be about 10 kms away from the center at all parts and intersect with every consular road. All highways, major roads, and railways follow the ray-like pattern. The two existing metro lines intersect at the center and stretch to the boundary of GRA.



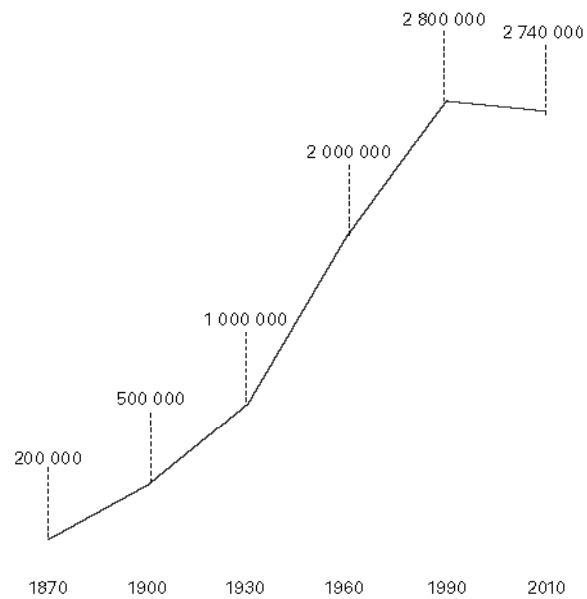
Streets under construction

Streets are under construction around the periphery of Rome at new residential areas. They are mostly synchronized in step with the construction of the buildings.



Metro C under construction

A new metro line is under construction to connect the historic center with the east part of the city, where most informal settlements from the 60s and 70s took place. This metro line is one of the nine new lines proposed from the Master Plan of Rome 2003-2008.



1870 is the year before Rome became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy. The city, at the time, was mainly concentrated on the west side within the Aurelian walls.

1900 After being the capital for almost 30 years, the footprint of Rome had almost doubled in size, with a prevailing east-ward expansion. New districts were created along the consular roads. The first "periphery" of Rome appeared in this era.

1930 The city had expanded in all directions. The mid-high classes expressed a stronger interest in settling in the north-east part of the city with villas and garden cities, whereas the lower classes tended to move to the south east in the "borgate".

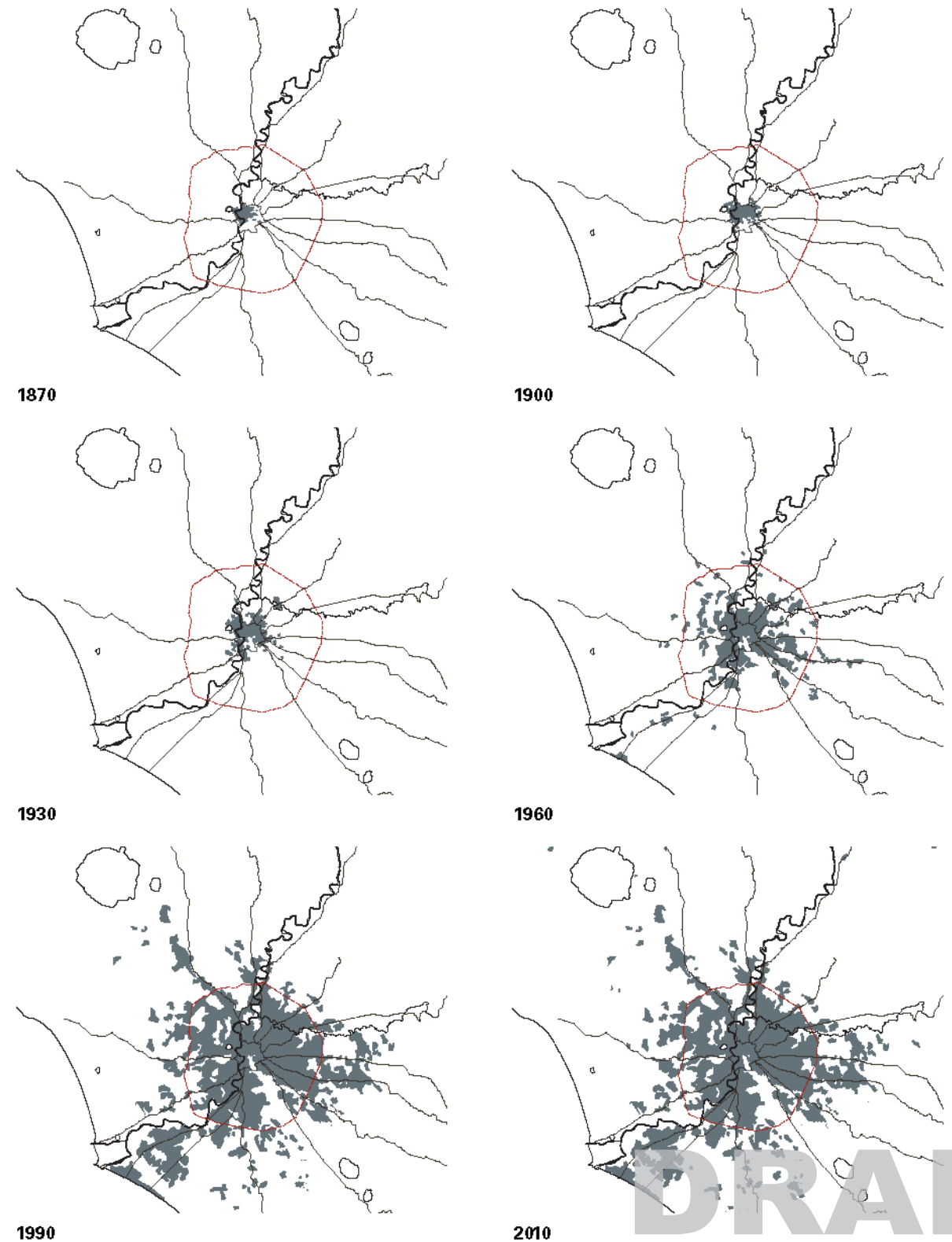
An "oil spot" growth

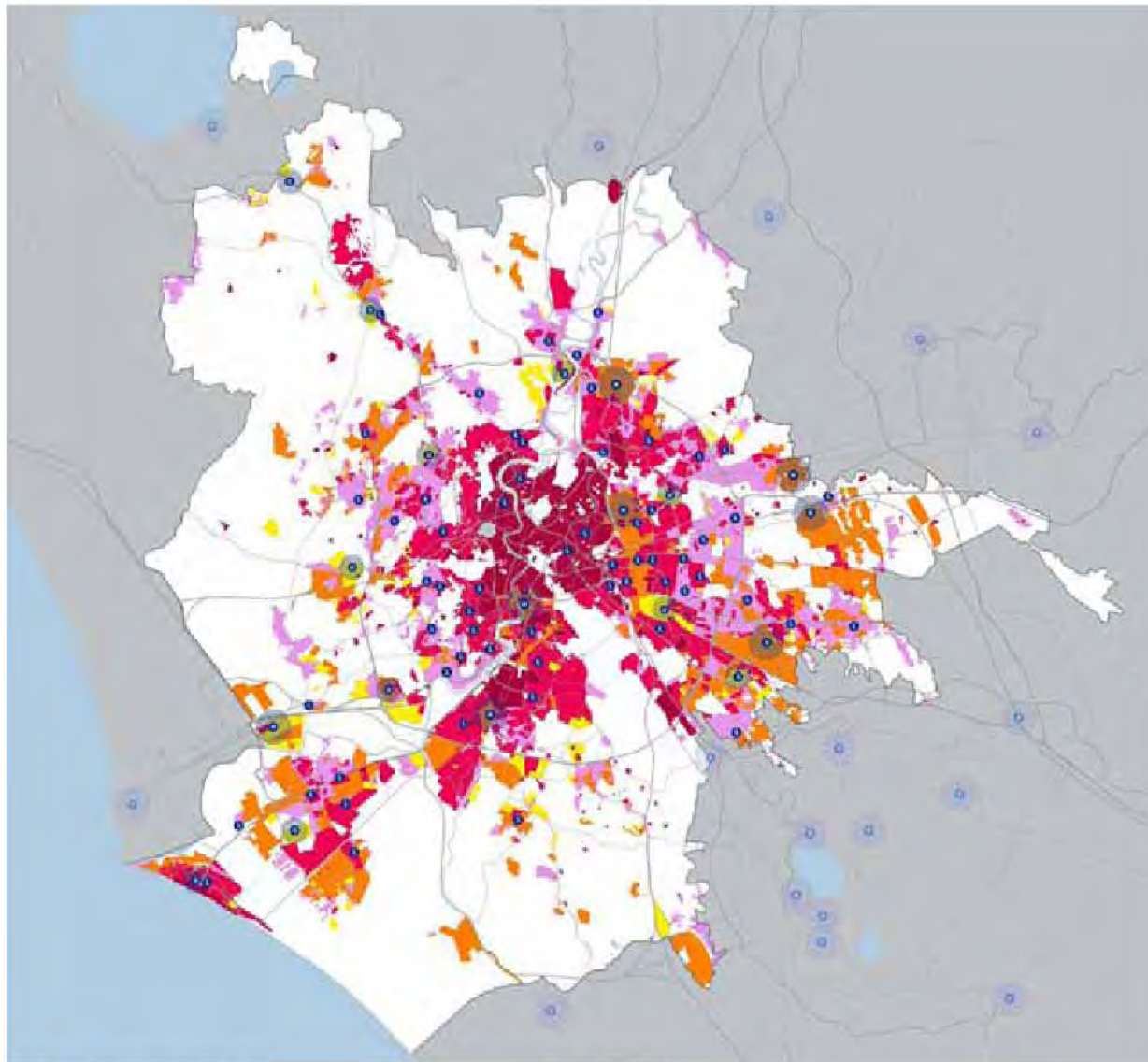
After the fall of the Roman Empire, the city has shrunk to a small village in the medieval time. It was not until the Unification of Italy in 1870, when Rome experienced its first population boom. With big waves of immigration from the rest of Italy, pouring into the capital, several rapid urban growths took place. A number of master plans were conducted in attempt to encounter with these population booms, however, each one of them failed to generate an effective solution. Out of desperation for a place to live, many people sought for alternative ways to settle. The uncontrolled growth had resulted in pieces of peripheries been taken randomly and converted into housing sites privately. This resulted in a discontinuity of urban fabric, with pieces of lands left unoccupied in between.

Another more influential party held responsible for such phenomenon is the building construction sector, whom always played a crucial role in affecting how the master plans were carried out.

1960 fifteen years after the WWII, the second booming of population in Rome occurred. Expansions were observed in all directions, with an emphasis toward the south. Majority of the new settlements were created informally by the immigrants, at the same time, numerous social housing projects were constructed by the municipality in the continuously growing periphery.

1990 after a constant population growth of 100 years, it finally peaked in the 1970s. However, the stabilization of population did not affect the expansion of the city. The same types of settlements continued. In addition, the government legalized most of the informally built houses. The periphery of Rome dramatically expanded.

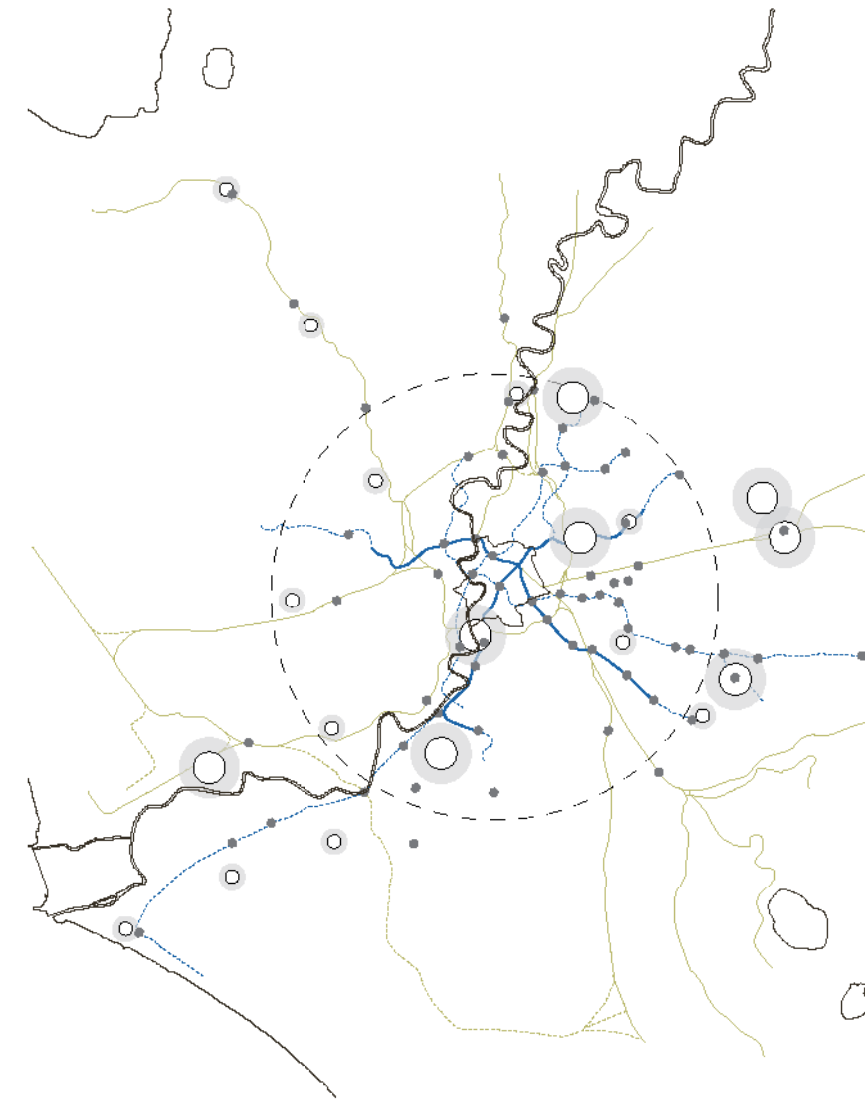




- Zones with defined plans
- Zones without defined plans
- Zones of reserve
- City of regeneration
- Established city
- Historic city
- Metropolitan centralities
- Urban centralities
- External centralities
- Local centralities

The Masterplan 2003-2008

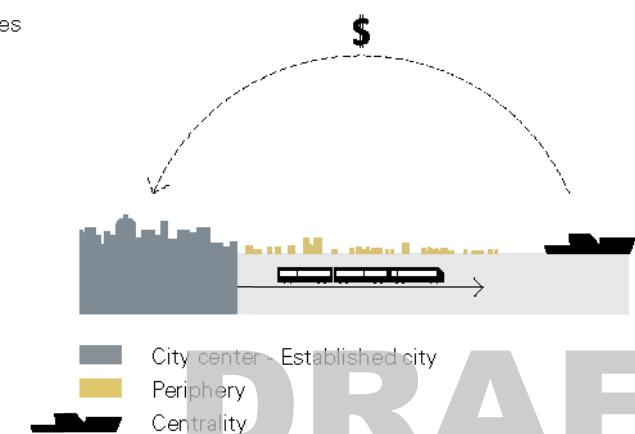
A new master plan of Rome was introduced in 2003. It is the first official master plan been published since 1963. The new master plan proposed a decentralization strategy by introducing numerous new centers around the city. The aim is to create new nucleations at these areas so that the need for commuting to the monocentric center is decreased. With this great ambition of urban growth, there will eventually be a new city in the periphery of Rome that is larger than Napoli.

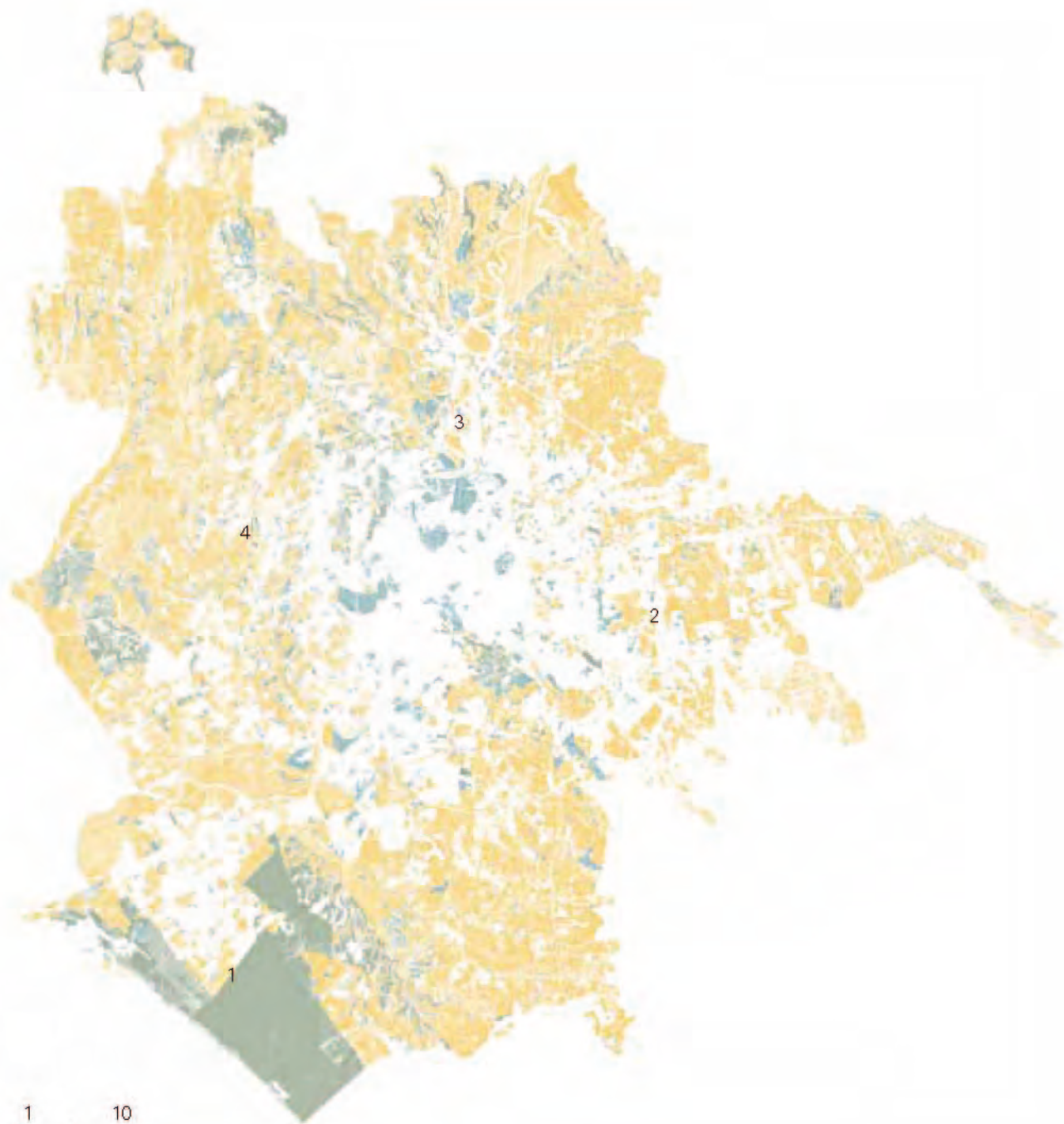


- Already existig railway
- Planned railway
- Already existig subway
- Planned subway
- Main transportation nodes
- Metropolitan centralities
- Urban centralities

Centralities as initiators for infrastructure expansion

Along with the proposal for centralities, new transportation infrastructures were also introduced as part of the urban expansion scheme. Nine new metro lines in total are proposed (two existing). The centralities are used as tools to initiate the process of infrastructure expansions. Ideally, the revenues generated for the city from such centralities would be contributed to the constructions.





1 10

Agriculture

Forest

Planted Green

The erosion of Agro Romano

As the urban spaces expand, lands previously used as agriculture and parks are taken away. In Rome, the edges between green and urban spaces have taken on an erosion-like form, due to the oil-spot typology of urban growth mentioned earlier.

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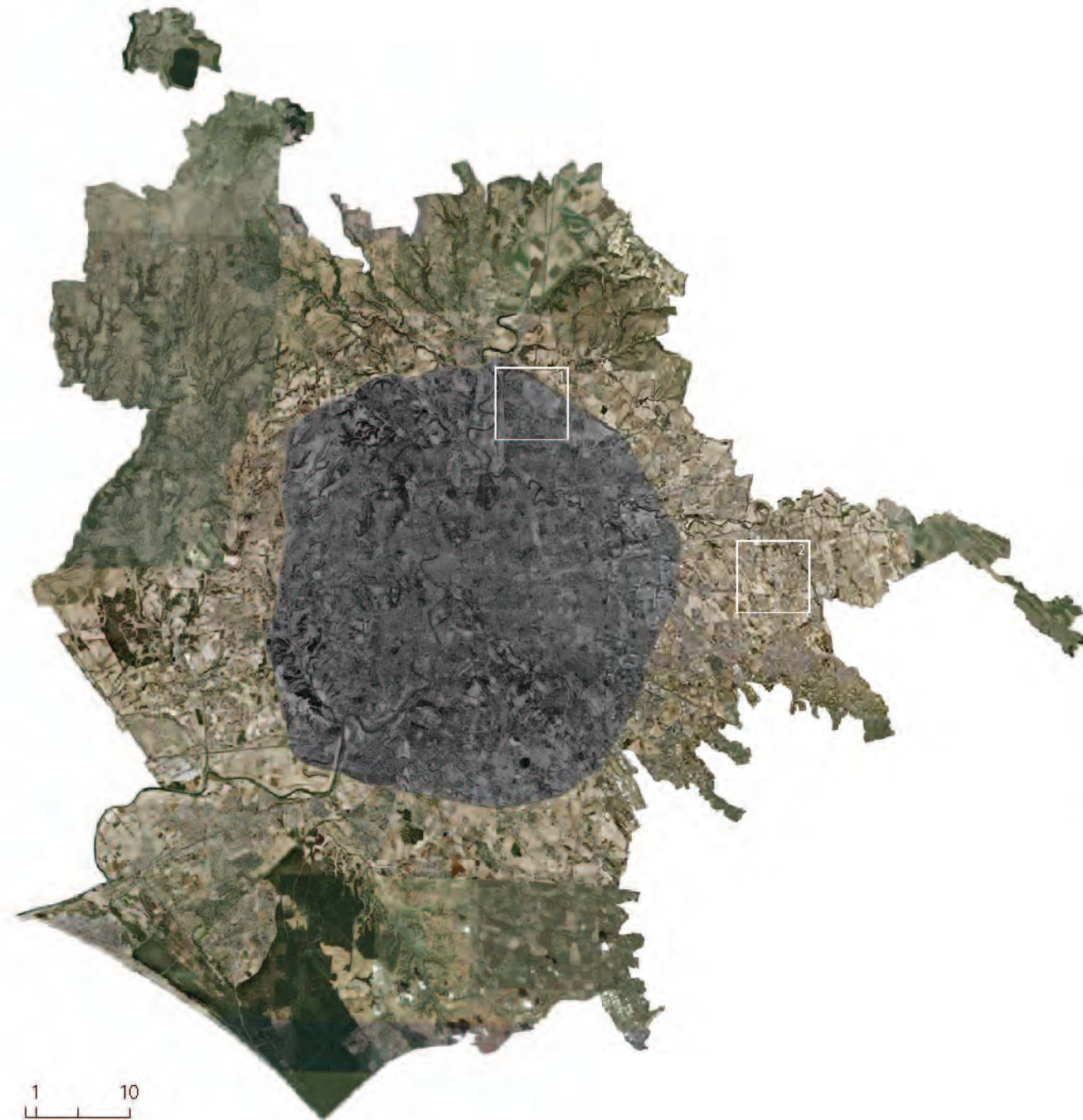
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At the edge of greenness

Different types of edge conditions are observed between urban and green spaces. At the boundary of preserved parks, a clean cut of urban space resulted, whereas in less strict areas, green spaces and urban areas are intertwined amorously by each other.

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1. 3.5 x 3.5 km² at the GRA, Via Salaria, and Tiber river junction



2. 3.5 x 3.5 km² at the Prenestina, Lunghezza junction



Two fragments of periphery

With the goal to understand the suburban development of Rome, and to limit our research to a feasible scale, we have selected two fragments around the periphery to focus our study on. Both sites contain a new centrality proposed by the master plan. The first site on the north is adjacent to the ring road (GRA), Via Salaria, and Tiber River junction. The second site on the east is farther out from GRA, which has a name "the last periphery of Rome". It is situated in district 8, where the highest population growth is projected in the next 20 years.

A SUBURBAN “MOSAIC”

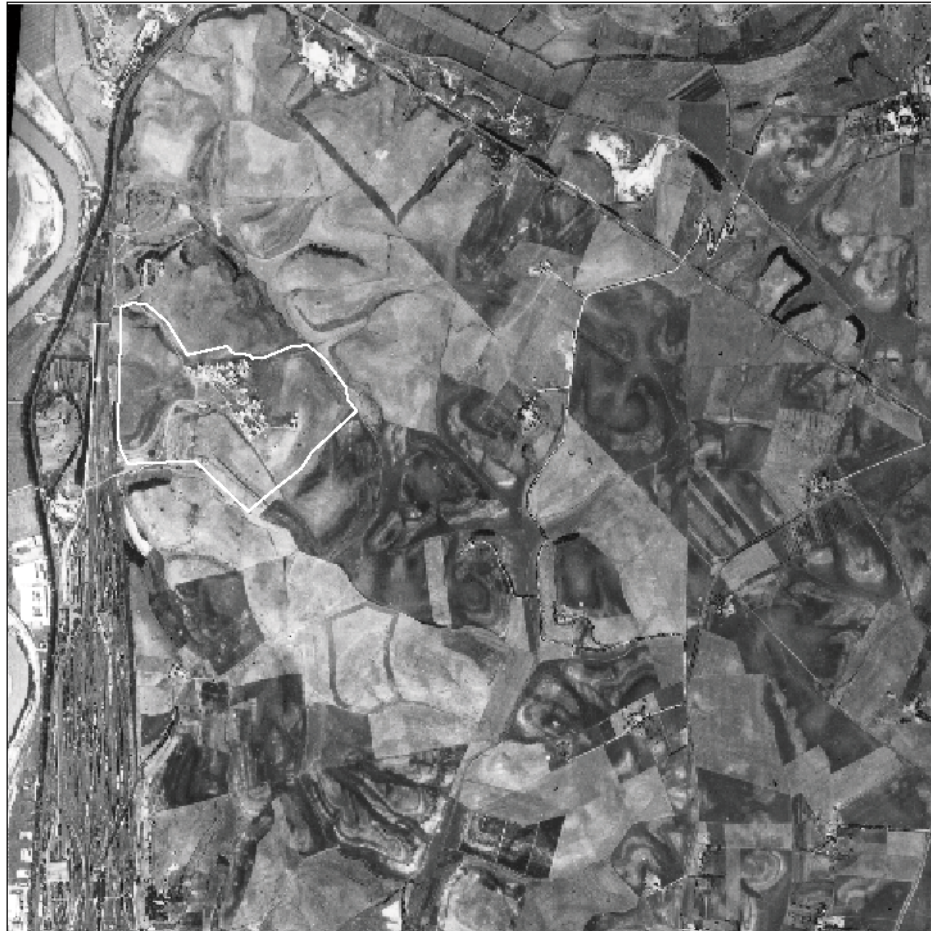
The north site of our research is footed in the Via Salaria, GRA, and Tiber River junction. A new centrality called Porta di Roma is being constructed in this area. The site samples from all the types of housing settlements that had happened in the suburb of Rome, including informal housing, high density apartments, social housing from the 60s and the 80s. Each settlement represents a milestone of the Roman suburban growth. Looking at the site, we observed a well defined boundary for each settlement and distinctive typological characters.



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1954

Borgata Fidene

is one of the well established formerly illegal settlements in Rome. The active years of construction was around the 1950s to the 1960s, mostly driven by families or small enterprises that built their houses on illegally parcelled lots.

Development of urban structure

In this section, we will explore the settlements already existing on the site, investigate the mechanisms behind, how they were developed, and how they function today. By doing so, we aim at understanding the stage where the new development is setting foot in and how its birth will impact on the pre-existing urban fabric.



A busy old town

After legalization, streets were gentrified, services were introduced, and public transportation were established, although much of the area still needs regeneration.



Illegal settlements

Illegal settlements started as early back as the 1920s in Rome, however, it only became a trend after the Second World War, around 1950s, when a large population immigrated to Rome. With a short of social housing and a lack of control, people started purchasing lands illegally parcelled by farmers and build their own houses. A consequence is the absence of services and infrastructures.



1979

Nuovo Salario

The area was completely constructed at the late 1970s as shown in the above aerial photo. Most of these dense housing projects consist of large courtyard-type buildings with 8 or more floors.

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The last part of the consolidated city

Being at the tip of the consolidated city, the typology of buildings at Nuovo Salario is easily identified from the rest of the site. It has a well established community with sufficient public services and green spaces.



An intensive low quality apartments

There has always been a mental obsession of the Romans for the ownership of housing. Instead of renting, most people preferred building or purchasing their own houses. When there was a severe lack of housing in the 50s and 60s, many real estate company took the advantage and constructed many low quality, high density apartments for sale. Some people chose to build illegal houses as mentioned above, some chose to purchase such apartments.

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1984

Serpentara and Val Melaina

This social housing project started construction in the year 1970 and completed in the early 1980s. The architecture of Serpentara follows closely with all other social houses built at the time of having out of scale geometries, industrial concrete constructions, and concentrated public spaces.



A slow regeneration process

Many attempts have been taken by the municipality to gentrify the old social housing areas. Some new projects are approved with the requirement of part of the project involving the regeneration of such areas.



Castles in the deserts

During the 1960s to the 1970s, the left wing government constructed a large number of social housing projects in the city to aid the severe lack of housing. Most of these social houses were constructed at the periphery of the city in the hope to use these projects as tools to pull infrastructures toward them. However, in reality, little of the infrastructures planned were carried out due to lack of funding. Most of these projects were left in the empty periphery without public services or ways of transportation. They became ghettos with names associated with social problems and violence.



2000

Castel Giubileo

Although Castel Giubileo was proposed in the 60s along with Serpentara, it wasn't until the early 80s when it started construction.



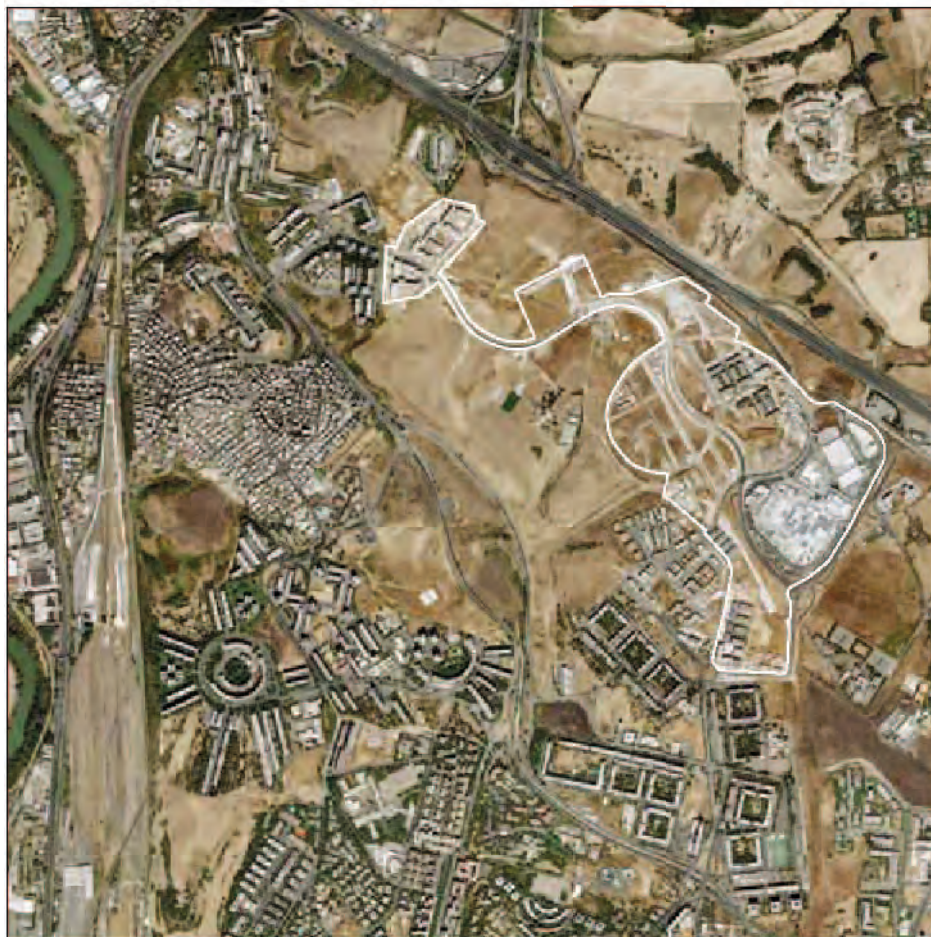
Potential for a rebirth

In the present days, Porta di Roma is constructed right beside the border of Castle Giubileo. Streets are yet to be connected between the two neighborhoods. The creation of the new centrality might bring a new life to this area.



Laterz

The architectures in Castel Giubileo is very heterogeneous. Some towers are 15 floors or higher whereas other building remained half of the height or as podiums. Contrasted from Serpentara, we observed a more subtle approach to the architecture of this project. The treatments to form making is more natural.



2008

Bufalotta centrality - Porta di Roma

A new centrality with mixed use programs was proposed to situate near the GRA, Via Salaria, and Tiber River junction. It is one of the eight metropolitan centralities projected to host 10,000 residents when it completes.

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A mix of housing and commerce

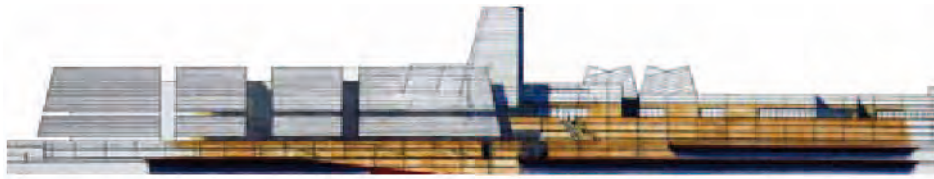
The shopping center is sitting in the middle of a large group of residential buildings in hoping to use the mall as a public space provider for the surrounding inhabitants.



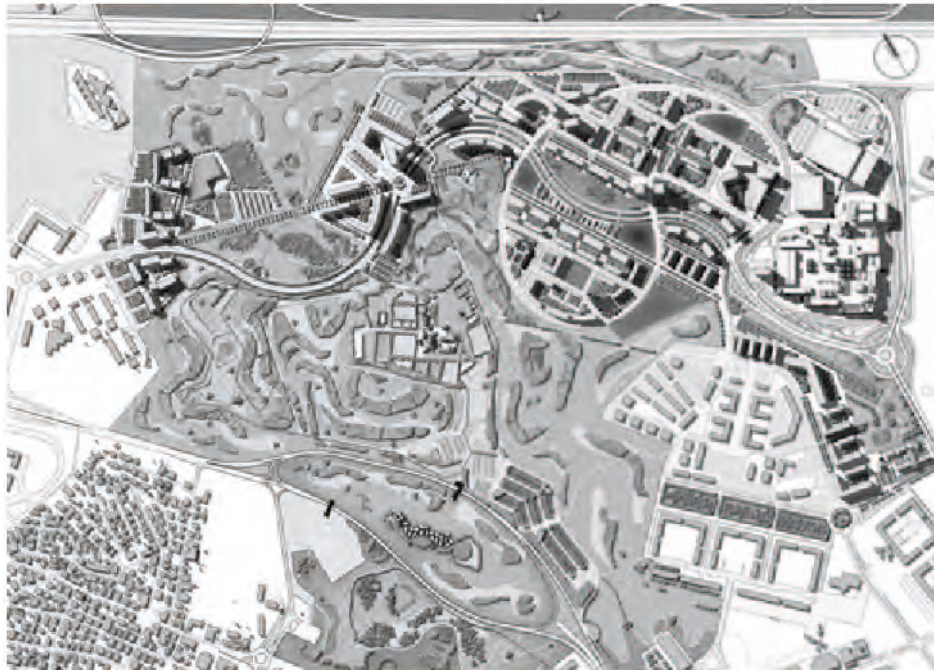
A mix of housing and commerce

95% of the entire area is owned by two big land ownership companies: Parsitalia and Lamaro Appalti. The project started construction in 2003 and is still under construction. There are several contractors working on the residential part of the project, and each cooperate with a real estate company to sell their apartments.

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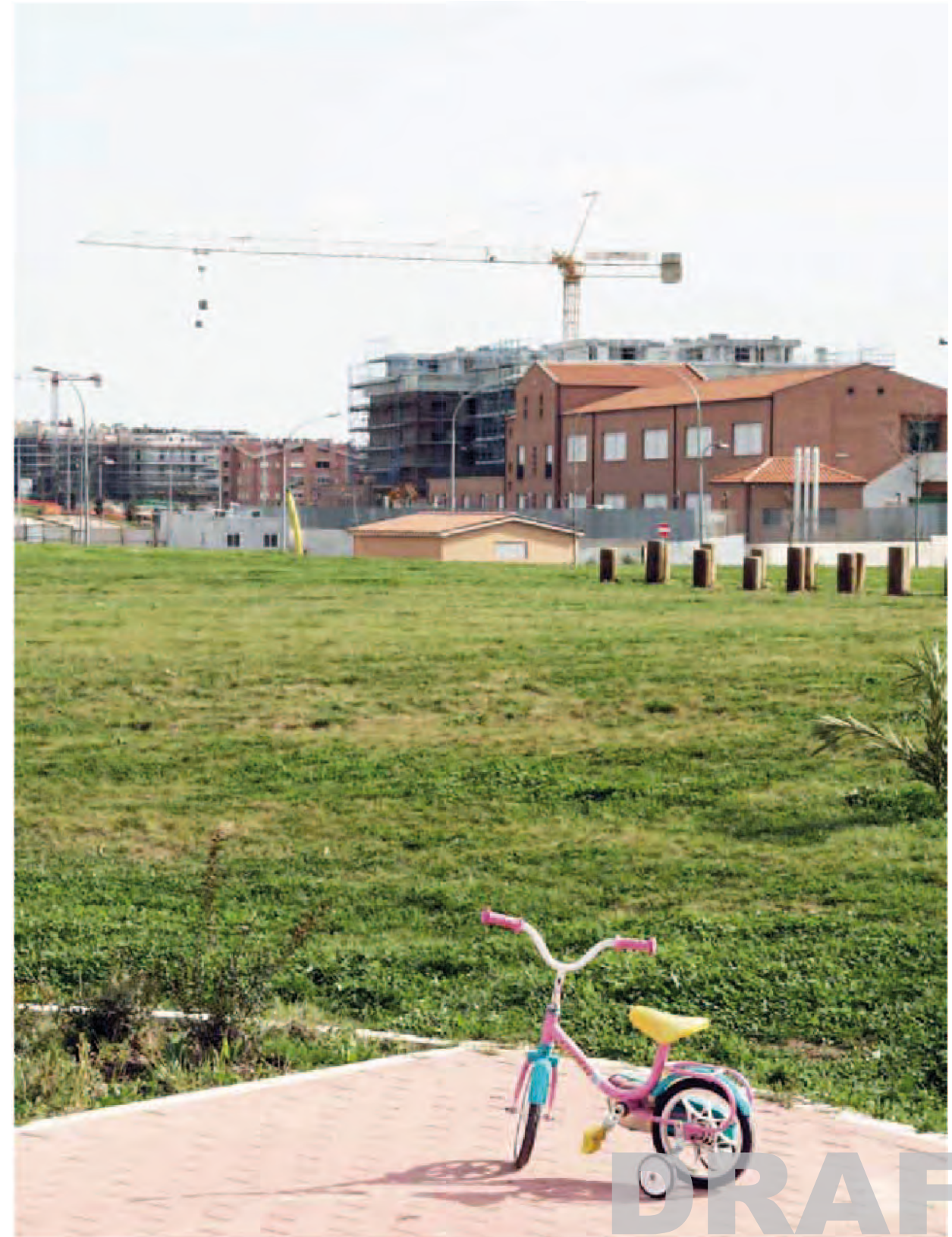
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Porta di Roma - A new City?

Porta di Roma is one of the most well known new centralities in Rome, not only because of the well advertised commercial center, but also because of the famous architect, Gino Valle, who designed the proposal (1). The plan of Porta di Roma (2) was drawn in the years 1991 to 1997, 6 years before the publication of the new master plan. According to the proposal, this centrality will be composed of a shopping center, offices, residential, public services, and a large green space, which together will make Porta di Roma an autonomous center away from the historic one. In this section, we will examine closely how the centrality has been realized; how it affects on the surrounding settlements; and how the centrality was negotiated to gradually lose its poly-centric effect.





- New road networks
- Public services already built
- Public services to be built

Public amenities

Similar to most public-private partnership projects, the city is responsible for constructing all public amenities such as streets, water, electricity, sewage, and public services.



Community without public service

2 out of the 7 areas designated to public services have finished construction. Both of these facilities are schools. However, none of them is opened. The other 5 facilities have no plan and no further information on when they will be constructed.

Giulia, 32

"It's already 2 years that the school has been built, but they are still closed. I have to drive my kids to school at another place..."



Streets: to connect or to disconnect?

Almost all of the planned streets have been constructed up to date, although many dead-end conditions are present, making these streets unusable. At the same time, some major streets cut through the community bluntly, creating gaps impossible for users to get across.



■ Shopping mall

Porta di Roma: the driving engine of the new centrality

The shopping mall was the first part of the project been realized. It is used as a catchment area to attract visitors and potential home owners from other areas of Rome. After the shopping mall was completed in 2008, it was the biggest in Europe.



Recognition as a new center

During the weekends, families from everywhere of Rome travelled to Porta di Roma as an excursion to spend some quality times together. Many children were seen to use the open grounds as play fields.



Informal commercial activities

Right at the front gate of the Porta di Roma shopping center, informal street venter activities have been spotted. Products such as cheap sunglasses, souvenirs, small toys, and forged luxurious handbags were sold. The presence of these informal business signified the recognition of the shopping mall as a center of high population flux.



Inaccessibility of the shopping mall to local communities

Although the shopping mall is acting as an economic driving engine of the area, the local people are not benefiting much from its presence. The commercial center is only easily accessible by inhabitants residing inside the major roads.



- Community bus routes
- The only stop in the Bufalotta centrality
- Bus stops

Lack of local transportation

As seen from the map above, only one bus stop is available around the Porta di Roma neighborhood. One of the reasons is because the area is considered as a construction site, and public transit cannot drive through this area. However, this has caused a great inconvenience for the residents who need to commute everyday.



Paolo, Erica, Alex, high school students

"We take the bus to come to the shopping center from the city. We usually get off at the last bus stop and walk to the mall from there. We are walking here to cross the highway to the parking lot because it is shorter. Otherwise, we will have to go to the major street, where it is the only connection to the shopping mall entrance. But it takes too long."



The discrepancy between transportation and urban planning

From the only bus stop available, a poor planning decision was observed. When people get off from the bus stop, they were provided with no pedestrian walks to the other side of the street where the shopping center is.



- Built apartments
- Apartments to be built
- Designated office areas, changed into residential
- Designated commercial areas, changes undefined

A priority given to residential

One of the major programs of this mixed-use centrality is residential. It is also the most profitable investment for the real estate investors. As a consequence, office spaces originally planned in the proposal had been changed completely into residential by negotiation with the municipality. The commercial areas that were attached to office buildings in the plan now have an unknown fate.



Annamaria, 40

"They said it was going to be full of public facilities, they said there would be also a lot of offices with job possibilities, the subway..The only thing they did is the highway-connection but only because of Ikea..."



Living in a construction site

More than half of the centrality is still being realized at the moment, therefore the area is constantly under construction. Despite this situation, apartments were sold as they were finished. The residents are thus living in a construction site condition where majority of the area is yet to be built.



The new courtyard living condition

Most of the new residential buildings in Porta di Roma are around 5 to 6 floors apartment buildings. They are clustered in a group of 3 to 4 with a common private courtyard. Inside of these courtyards are various kinds of common spaces such as small gardens, swimming pools and etc. However, most of them are too small to be enjoyed.

Mario, 52

"The green is just for looking at it, you can't really use it. Anyway I think the apartments are too small for a whole family."



54 sqm



81 sqm



108 sqm



126 sqm

A small-sized living

The housing price in the Bufalotta centrality is around €7900 per sqm, which means a small one bedroom apartment of 54 sqm could cost €426,600. For young families or single person families, spending almost half a million euros for an apartment means tens of years in debts.

Enrica, 30

"I'm paying monthly 1500€ of mortgage for the next 30 years... I live alone because my boyfriend can't afford to live here. This makes us a long-distance relationship. And we won't have any children because the apartment isn't big enough..."



- Park with playgrounds
- Planned park
- Other public green spaces

Public green space

A park with more than 150 hectares in area was indicated in the design of Porta di Roma. The park stretches from the Parco delle Sabine from north of the GRA, through Porta di Roma, to the south and merges with the existing park at the edge of Serpentara. The plan has promised "145 sqm of grass and plants per resident in Porta di Roma".

www.abitarearoma.net, 25.07.07, Fabiola Rizzo

"The area of the park is three times larger the Villa Borghese. It will be full of trees, bike paths, sporting facilities and a lake for fishing."



4



2



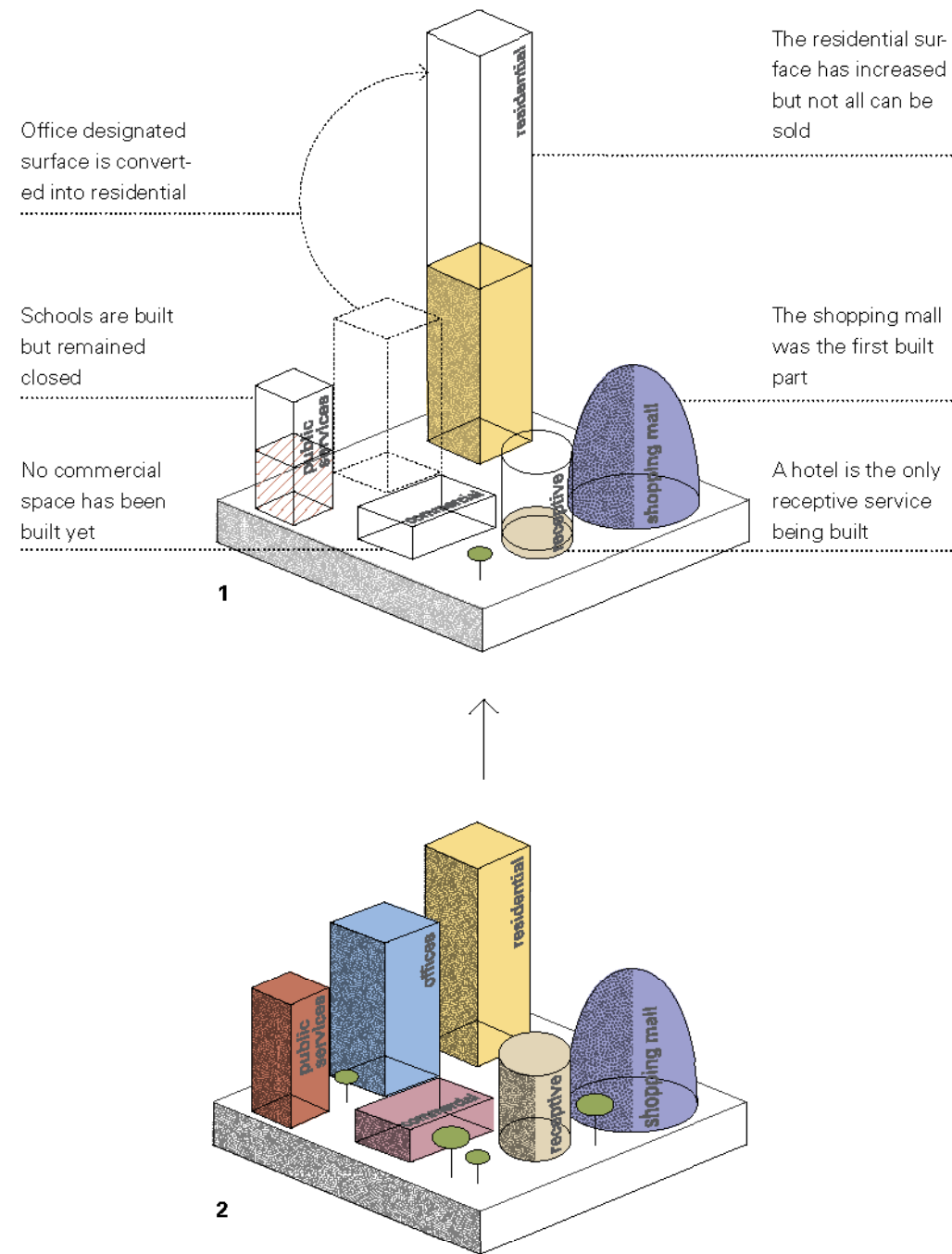
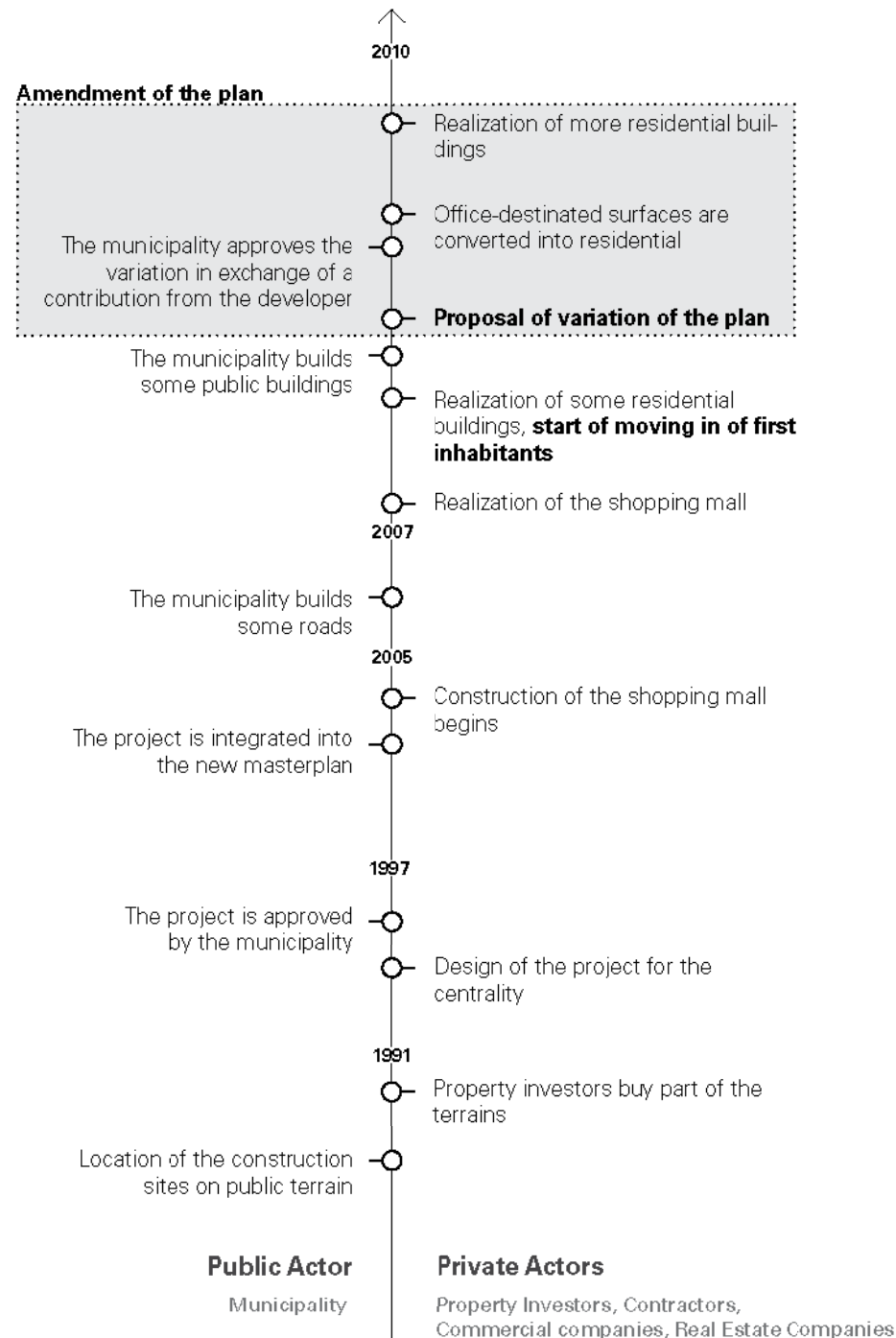
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When the new reaches out to the old

Some parts of the new centralities are used as tools to regenerate the existing settlements. One example is the park in between. By extending the new park (2) to the existing ones (3, 4), the hope is to recreate better quality green spaces (1) for the people of the surrounding areas.

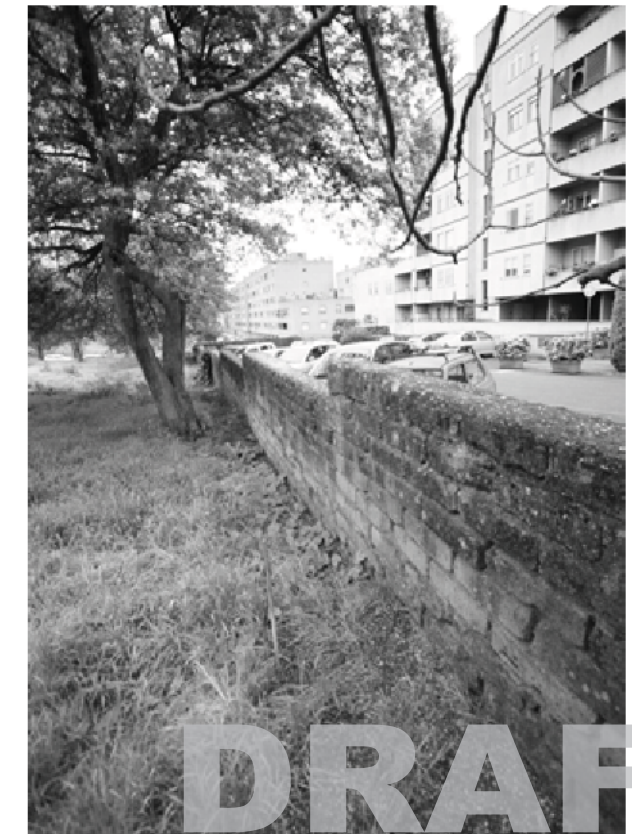


Planning through amendments

For the new master plan, a "strategic planning" mechanism was introduced. It indicates a public-private partnership in which plans are constantly negotiated by forces from each party. What is planned is thus very different from what has been and will be realized.

Deformation of a Centrality

As a result of such planning through amendment process, many changes were made to the centralities that were completely different from what had been proposed to drive the idea of decentralization. The centrality is on the move of becoming an island with only a shopping center surrounded by residential buildings.



Disintegrated Communities

A clear separation of land and neighborhoods have been observed in this area. Although the plan aimed at reconnecting all areas with several regeneration tools such as the green park, a strong disintegration nonetheless is present.

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Roma east: Ponte di nona



Roma east: Torvergata



Roma south: Leonardo



Roma south: Euroma 2

A centrality for everyone

There are 8 new metropolitan centralities proposed by the new master plan. In this chapter, we have studied thoroughly one of them. Here we present panoramas of four other centralities at the east and south parts of Rome to provide an overview of the on-going developments of these new centers.

A LESS CONTROLLED GROWTH

In this chapter we will look at the suburban growth of the east side of Rome. This site has a very different character from that of the north we previously analyzed. Always referred to as the “last periphery of Rome”, the settlements in the east part of the suburbia is less defined and controlled. Similar types of settlements occurred simultaneously at different areas, connected by amorphously shaped agricultural lands. Most of the settlements were informal. Dense apartment and social housing typologies such as the Nuovo Salario and Serpentara that we have seen above are not clearly observed in this part of the periphery. At the turn of the century, massive amount of new constructions started in this area, with a wild spread of new residential areas. In the next 20 years, this piece of suburban land will encounter the largest population growth in Rome.



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Ponte di nona - Lunghezza

Different from the north site, in the east part of Rome, we observed numerous types of new establishments, varying in style, mechanism, and scale.



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2



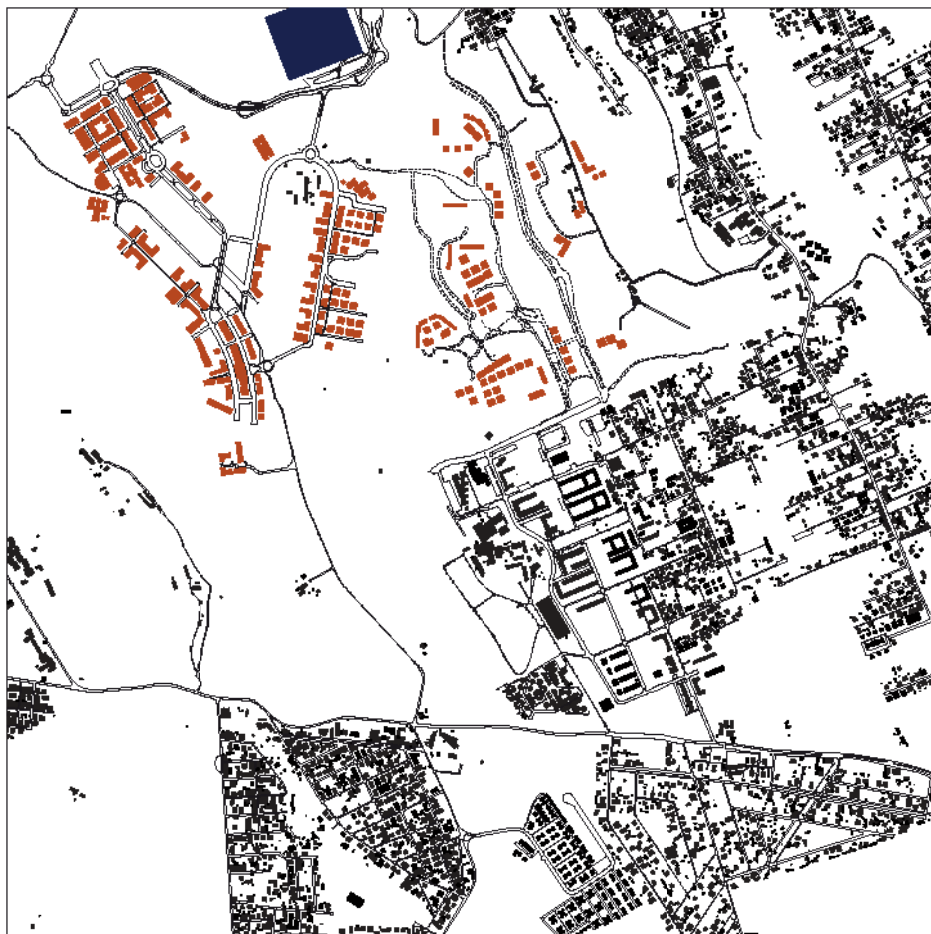
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4

Various types of settlements

1. Ponte di nona: large housing project next to the centrality
2. Casa dell'Ater: a new social housing
3. Nuovo prato fiorito: a cluster of villas
4. A family sized construction of housing



- Roma est shopping center
- Ponte di nona residential area

A shopping mall and a large housing complex: Roma Est - Nuova Ponte di Nona

Similar to Porta di Roma, Roma Est is a commercial driven centrality with the center being the shopping mall. What's different from what we have seen previously is that the centrality is composed solely of the shopping mall with a cluster of public services. Residential and offices were not part of the centrality proposal. Instead, a massive area of residential area is being built and attached to the centrality.



Who is responsible for the community?

As we have seen in the Porta di Roma example, the shopping center was the first part been realized in the centrality project. However, several years after the center was built, no sign of the public service sector was observed. The entire community at the south of the centrality are living in an areas with absolutely no public services.

Mr. Sterpi, LaRepubblica, 4.3.2008

"Prices were very attractive compared to the rest of Rome, but once arrived, I realized to be a prisoner living in the neighborhood. Inside, the streets are wide, parking is abundant, but you can not get out."



■ ATER Social houses

New social housing

Social housing has always been a topic extensively discussed in metropolitan cities such as Rome, due to their common characteristics such as large flow of immigrants, social group segregations, and needs for emergency housing. Conventionally, social housing has always been involved with topics of social problems, poverty, and sometimes violence. In our research, we have observed a new trend of social housing in Rome that is drastically different from the previous decades in quantity and quality. This colorful complex of apartments, composed of 440 units, is an example of the new social houses being built around the periphery of Rome today. The project had a total investment of €35,436,800 sponsored solely by the Region of Lazio, and was managed by ATER (Azienda territoriale per l'edilizia residenziale del comune di Roma).



Facts about the rainbow social house

- Number of Units: 440
- Size of apartments: 43-94 m²
- Inhabitants: 70% immigrants
- Available facilities: Parking lots, court yard gardens
- Lacked facilities: Telephone, maintenance, transportation, public services



Is the new social housing living condition any different?

The new social houses seem to take on a very different architectural approach from the old ones constructed in the 60s and 70s to deviate away from the conventional social housing ghetto cliché. However, we have observed that they might not be so fundamentally different after all. The tightly spaced court yards, the oddly organized public spots, the poor quality of construction, and the lack of public services remained the same.





A fight for a house

Numerous reports have focused on the issues involved with this colorful social houses even before the apartments were handed to the people. Rooms were illegally squatted, scandals were discovered, degradation was observed, and services were reported lacking. Although it has been only 3 years after the building has been constructed, it has always been involved with concerns.

Nov 17 2009, Corriere della sera

"In the city with the highest housing emergency in Italy, there are almost 400 empty social housing apartments. These apartments has been finished in 2007 and assigned in 2008 to families from the waiting list."

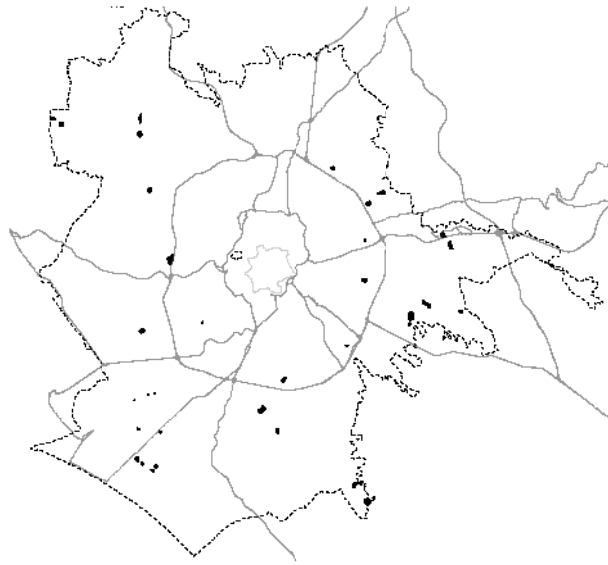
Oct 14 2008, Corriere romano

"Maria, an Ethiopian-Italian women living in Italy for already 20 years is really happy when she enters her new apartment in Ponte di Nona. She had been waiting for 10 years."

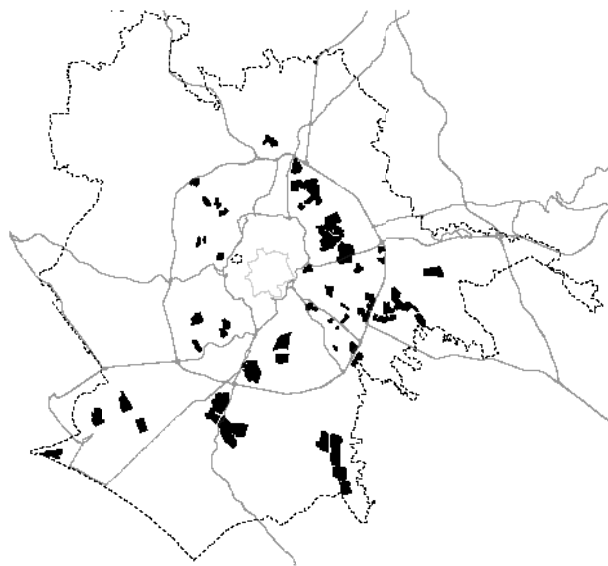
Mar 6 2008, Corriere romano

"We are tired, we have to sleep here in order to avoid that our apartments don't get squatted."

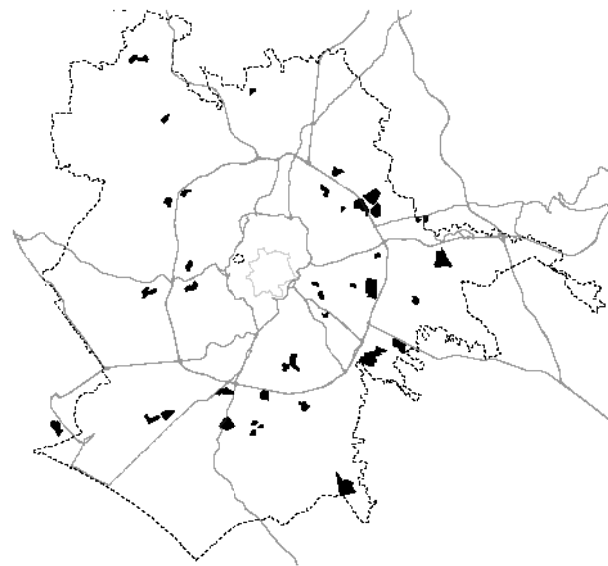




2007



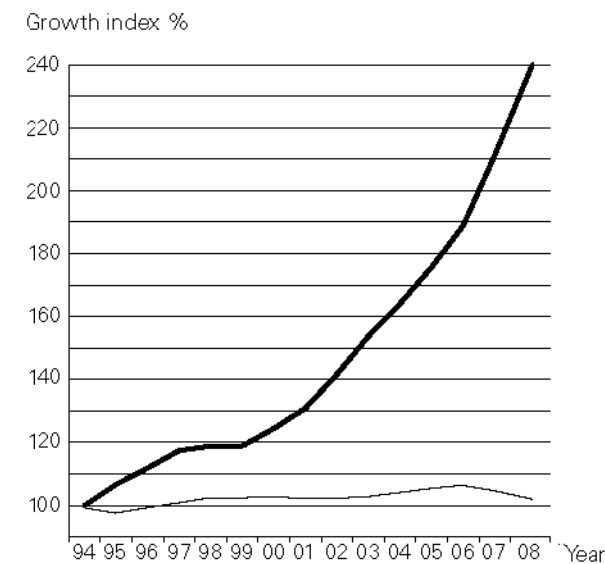
1964



1984

The disappearance of social houses

In the 1960s to 70s, social housing had been one of the most significant urban growth strategy in Rome. The left wing government used social housing as a tool to bring facilities to areas needed regeneration. In the 1980s, social housing projects had gradually stopped due to political shifts. Most funding for social housing were truncated. In 2002, the organization responsible for social housing projects was privatized (ATER). With a tremendous debt stimulated from before, the company was only able to carry out very few social housing projects in the last decade.



An unbalanced growth of housing prices v.s. household income in Italy

With almost 250% of housing price increase in the past fifteen years, Rome has become the most expensive city to live in Italy. At the same time, a stable income level was observed. This disparity between the growth of real estate market and household income has resulted in hardships for many young families and couples in purchasing their first homes. This phenomenon has generated needs for more diverse types of affordable houses, which are categorized into three groups: 1. conventional (convenzionata), which covers the sole price but cheaper than free market houses; 2. assisted (agevolata), which is suitable for first time buyers whom are exempted from urbanization costs; and 3. subsidized (sovvenzionata), which is the conventional social houses for people with high financial assistants whose tenants are selected from the waiting list.

ATER with huge debt and inefficient funding for social housing

According to statistics from ATER, by January 2006, the company had a debt of €206,806,368. By December 2009, the company has paid back €156,549,602. Although it was more than half of the total debt been paid within a span of three years, this amount of funding transformed into social housing could have provided 8,496 new apartments for people in need of housing. In Rome, 30,000 families are on the waiting list for social houses. The number is increasing drastically due to the fly up of free market housing prices. Some people had to wait ten to twenty years for their turn.



How cheerful is the new social house?

There has been a drastic change in the architecture of social housing in Rome. From the cold, concrete, and industrial look of the 70s, social housing projects in the recent years tend to take on a more cheerful approach. The architecture has translated literally the "cheerfulness" with a colorful facade approach.



■ New villa clusters

New villa clusters

Numerous blocks of villas were observed in this part of Roman periphery. Each cluster has its own style and size. The individual houses are generally small with a front or back yard and stand separated from other houses by fences and walls. There is a great sense of privatization and a lack of community observed among these houses.





A "luxurious" villa style

Cost around €300,000 to €500,000 these villas are marketed as prestigious single family homes. With around 120 sqm of living area, having a garage for each house becomes impossible. The quality of construction was poorly done. Degradation was frequently observed.



Smaller scale townhouse/villas

Other than the villa style houses, town house and semi detached styles are also popular choices among the new smaller scaled housing types. Common trends of all such houses include: small living space, limited garden area, high cost, fast but poor construction, a conjunction of parking spaces, and a lack of community.



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■ New family sized houses

A slow infiltration of urban fabric

Personalized housing construction has been a long tradition in the urban growth history of Rome, as previously discussed for the informal settlements. The trend of personalized housing is still commonly observed today in this part of the periphery. Instead of a large amount of agriculture land being transformed collectively into family houses, the new ones take on a role of urban infiltration in the already existing fabric.

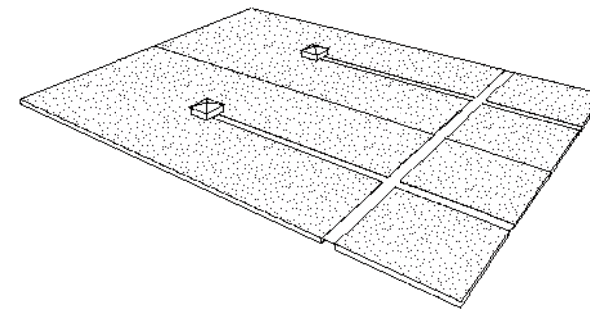


Family sized construction business

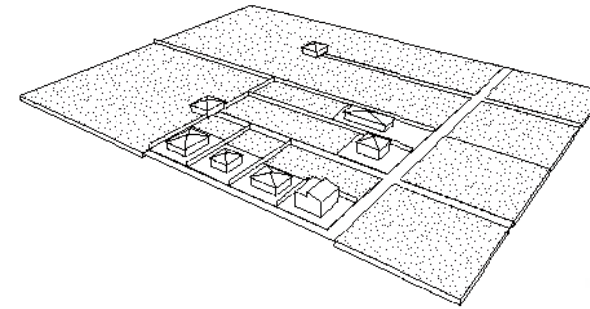
Most of the construction factories are supported by family sized businesses. These small sized productions are especially popular because of their localization into communities to supply for the family built houses.



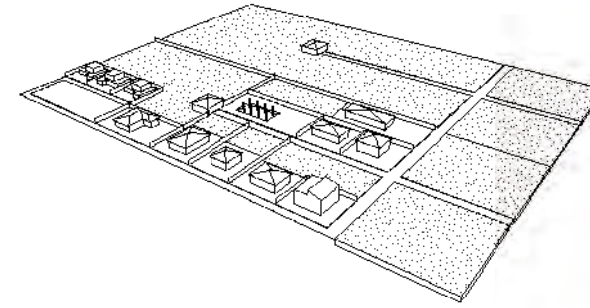
1954



1984



2008



— New alleys

An evolving business strategy - From farms to real estate lots

Since the first wave of informal houses had taken place in the periphery of Rome, many farm land owners realized the economic opportunities of land selling.

A spontaneous lotting process

Without obtaining permission from the municipality, many land owners divided up their lots and sold to families wishing to build their homes. Although later legalized by the city, an unsystematic urban structure is obvious as a legacy. A mosaic of building morphologies is observed in these communities.



Giuseppe, 75

"It is already 50 years that I lived here. I came from Puglia with my wife. I built this house by myself, piece by piece. Last month my wife died and my son moved out already some years ago. My grand-daughter is attending university. I'm proud of her. But I feel quite lonely now. There has been a lot of constructions going on in this area."



An autonomous construction

The family constructed houses reveal a diverse collective imaginations of the ideal homes of the Romans. Everyone has the freedom to create a piece of architecture of their own in the periphery of Rome, which together makes a colorful canvas of the imagery of the suburbia.

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Disintegrated communities

A similar segregation between communities is again observed in the eastern periphery of Rome. In addition to natural separations caused by the abandoned lands in between, many human artifacts were installed between the communities to reinforce the separation. There was hardly any interactions observed between the settlements.



THE FORGOTTEN SPACE

As a by-product of the oil spot growth, a discontinuous occupation of lands in the periphery have left many gaps in the urban fabric. These pieces of lands are left uncontrolled. Without having a direct manipulation from the rushed urban expansion outside, this space experienced a formation process hardly monitored by anyone. Some of them, with pieces of the ancient ruins sitting quietly on them had reached a harmony between the artifacts and the nature. Others, with a nostalgia to the rural lives, remained stubbornly on the lands to persist the farm lives long forgotten. Some aged peacefully and gracefully while others turned into wild beasts. Through them we see a glimpse of the past. Through them, we look forward to the future.



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