UTOPIA OF NORMALITY

TACKLING HOUSING EMERGENCY THROUGH URBAN REGENERATION.
THE CASE OF PORTA DI ROMA.
the problem
50,000 families in waiting list for public housing
Comune di Roma, 2013

300,000 people struggling for housing
Sunia, 2012

90,000 non resident students
Adisu, 2011

2000 families are squatting
Unione Inquilini, 2013

7000 new eviction requests per year since 2009
Provincia di Roma, 2014

2500 families actually evicted in 2013
Provincia di Roma, 2014

100,000 empty apartments
Istat census, 2011

240,000 empty dwellings
Legambiente, 2013

600 public student dwellings
Adisu, 2011

HOUSING EMERGENCY
CASE SENZA GENTE
GENTE SENZA CASA
CUAD.LUTTA.LACASA.C.I.C.
Risk of poverty or social exclusion: 33.4%, 32.2%, 20.5%, 43.7%, 38.3%, 31.7%

Severe material deprivation: 14.7%, 13.3%, 8.6%, 19.8%, 16.6%, 16.3%

Very low work intensity: 15.4%, 13.3%, 15.5%, 9.9%, 21.7%, 16.9%

Public housing, limbo, market prices
Neither the State nor the market are able to provide enough affordable housing. The lack of housing policies and the deregulation of market forces have created a paradox in which thousands of vacant dwellings in anonymous middle class housing developments – such as Porta di Roma - are the only response to the great numbers of people demanding an affordable dwelling. There is an urgent need for new solutions for the housing emergency.
How to tackle the housing shortage in Rome by regenerating the vacant housing development of Porta di Roma through the social capital of the right to housing movements?
the research
ANALYSIS OF LOCATION

Porta di Roma
Bufalotta
III Municipio
cafè bakery cafè ice cream security systems osteria medical center vet beauty center bookmaker tobacconist real estate agency pizza al taglio cafe bakery cafe

neighbourhood activities map
public space
As things are right now, the best we can hope for Porta di Roma is to become a pleasant middle class residential area.

Mauro Baioni, 2014

I don't mind the lack of public transport. It is like that everywhere in Rome anyway, but here at least we have the ring road very close and that is very convenient.

Porta di Roma resident, 2014

There is no bench, no fountain... not even garbage bins in the streets! **There is no square...** in Porta di Roma you cannot even sit in the sun **unless you go to the shopping mall.**

Porta di Roma resident, 2015
People do not interact very much here, I don't even know my neighbours and we live on the same floor! People here like it because it's quiet...I like it too, but maybe a little less quiet would be better, no?

Safety is a big issue. There is no public lighting, no garbage collection in many places, **no maintenance** of the streets and of the park. When it is dark anybody can do what they like, and they steal cars and vandalize bus stops! We have had enough!

I like Porta di Roma because it is **spacious** and there is a lot of parking. I especially like the huge park, I go there with my dogs and kids in the weekend. But it is **unsafe because it is unfinished**. There is no control and there are a lot of accidents and car thefts. Also apartment thefts are more and more common... safety is definitely a problem here.
It is empty here, there is nothing to do and it is difficult even to find a beer and a snack at the aperitivo time... unless you go to the shopping mall. There is not even a supermarket or a grocery store, you are forced to take your car and go somewhere else, or to the huge supermarket in the mall, but that is always so crowded!

Parco delle Sabine is a great place, it is the real quality of this neighbourhood... if only there would be more maintenance... it is really neglected and that is a pity because it is so beautiful!

It takes me about one hour to commute to work by car, but I like living in this place. It is quiet, not messy and there is a lot of space between buildings, a lot of green space and also parking space! Not in the weekend though... the mall attracts so many cars that all our parking space disappears!

Porta di Roma resident 2014
ideological manifesto
Neo liberal production and use of space

Real estate speculation
Space to be consumed
Individual use of common spaces
Consumerism
Nonplace (Augè)

“Counter culture” use of space

Sharing economy
Space to be produced
Collective use of common spaces
Reuse
Anthropological place (Augè)
UTOPIA OF NORMALITY
urban regeneration

social housing
the policy
TACKLE VACANCY

progressive taxation on vacant property

tax benefits to turn vacant dwellings into social housing

expropriation if dwellings are kept vacant
“community branch”

mixed agents
- institutions (IACP, Municipality)
- right to housing movements
- community associations
- grantees
PROMOTE SOCIO-FUNCTIONAL MIX
EMPOWER COMMUNITY
ALLOW FOR BOTTOM UP APPROACH
the design
vacant apartments → social housing

vacant & blind plinths → activate ground floors

no activity → functional mix, diffused activities

generic spatial characteristics → specific & recognizable spatial characteristics
Car oriented neighbourhood: oversized transit and parking space, no public space

Pedestrian & bike friendly neighbourhood with cozy public space for staying and gathering

Car oriented mobility

Public transport oriented mobility

Dependent & subordinate to the shopping mall

Autonomous & independent urban element
unclear relations between elements

system of relations between elements

isolated urban units

increase accessibility
one social & income group

mix of social & income groups

individual use of space

collective use of space

anonimity, powerlessness

people in charge participation, appropriation, community

consumer economy

sharing economy
culture centre, library, square
commercial spaces
soft border
school
office buildings, also mixed use
workshops
the wall
workshops
practical education & training
activate ground floors & public space
start ups, coworking, young firms
urban gardens
social housing
commercial spaces
temporary and permanent use of the park
public transport hub
urban environment
cohousing
practical education & training
activate ground floors & public space
start ups, coworking, young firms
urban gardens
social housing
commercial spaces
temporary and permanent use of the park
public transport hub
urban environment
cohousing
Activation of public space through social, cultural and economical activities.

Some activities are managed by the "community branch" of ex-IACP.

Social rent of ground floor spaces.

Social rent of vacant dwellings.

Activation of public space through social, cultural and economical activities.
<30% social housing
parking lot at ground floor
independent living units
no common space

30%> <50% social and public housing
active ground floor
independent living units
common space in plinth

co-housing
active ground floor
private life can be collective
common space at every floor
**I do not like** the idea of social housing in Porta di Roma. I am afraid that people with a lower social condition can bring social problems to the neighbourhood. We already have safety issues, we do not need also poverty. I am afraid the quality of the neighbourhood and buildings will decrease...

**Urban planner and designer**

The social rent for ground floor spaces will increase the amount of activity on the street, making it safer. The social activities will help to build a sense of community, and education and cooperation will improve integration.

**Design** can help! Existing residents will have a "spatial bonus", in the form of extra storage space, an extra room or some extra balcony to help the integration of different income groups. With this physical changes and a more lively public space also the spatial quality of the neighbourhood will increase.

Social problems come from a high concentration of deprived households in a neglected urban environment. Porta di Roma is a quite good residential neighbourhood which won't have a very high concentration of social housing. Social housing will indeed make a good use of the vacant stock and the social management will increase the possibilities for integration.

**Porta di Roma resident 2015**

I am afraid that people with a lower social condition can bring social problems to the neighbourhood. We already have safety issues, we do not need also poverty. I am afraid the quality of the neighbourhood and buildings will decrease...
Porta di Roma residents

> 35,000 €/year
income to afford
a 40m² flat in Porta di Roma

Limbo people

20,345 €/year < > 30,000 €/year
between public housing
threshold and minimum income
to afford rent in Rome

Low income people

< 20,344,92 €/year
income threshold
for public housing in Rome
88 bonus system

- Material connection between facade and public space
- Extra space for social and commercial activities
- Transitional space
- Social housing
- Extra room for existing residents
- Extra balcony space for existing residents
- Extra storage space for existing residents
- Parking spot for existing residents

Extra space for social and commercial activities
Transitional space
Material connection between facade and public space
activation of public space through social, cultural and economical activities

some activities are managed by the “community branch” of ex-IACP

social rent of vacant dwellings

social rent of ground floor spaces

activation of public space through social, cultural and economical activities
Activation of public space through social, cultural and economical activities. Some activities are managed by the "community branch" of ex-IACP. Social rent of vacant dwellings and social rent of ground floor spaces. Activation of public space through social, cultural and economical activities.
the wall: secret garden, border with shopping mall

mixed use office buildings

social rent for start ups, coworking, young firms, handicraft companies

professional workshops for practical education
mixed use office buildings

the wall: secret garden, border with shopping mall

social rent for start ups, coworking, young firms, handicraft companies

professional workshops for practical education
stakeholders and scenarios
Everybody will have the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns during the participation process. It will mainly be social housing, so "limbo people" are the target group and their income is not so different after all, neither is their socio demographic profile. The "community management" will help the integration and the maintenance. Social housing should not be scary, let's break the stigma!

IACP "is the process of working collaboratively with individuals and groups to achieve specific goals" (Francis, 2003). "...can result in an engaged and informed society that feels better connected to its own environment" (Francis, 2003). "...can reduce the feeling of anonymity in culture and society" (Davidoff, 1965).


Existing residents are not really happy with the idea of social housing in Porta di Roma. How to convince them? How can participation help the process of integration between existing and future residents? How can participation help the process of integration between residential and other functions?
Porta di Roma residents

devengers

shopping mall

Municipality

urban planners, designers, facilitators

right to housing movements

ex-IACP

FIA

other companies and investors

limbo people

low income people
Stakeholder engagement vs. Stakeholder power

- Stakeholder power
  - + +
  - +
  - 0
  - -
  - --

- Stakeholder engagement
  - --
  - -
  - 0
  +
  + + +
Social housing

**Stakeholders' Choice**

- **Public Management:**
  - Cooperation of stakeholders
  - + Social integration
  - + Spatial improvements
  - Balanced income mix
  - **Utopia Scenario**

- **Private Management:**
  - Cooperation of stakeholders
  - 0 Social integration
  - 0 Spatial improvements
  - > Higher income
  - **Compromise Scenario**

- **Public Expropriation:**
  - Hostile takeover
  - No cooperation
  - - Social integration
  - - Spatial improvements
  - > Lower income
  - **Nightmare Scenario**
The Wall

key issue

stakeholders choice

yes, built bottom up in cooperation

yes, built top down by the shopping mall

no, unbuilt

cooperation of stakeholders

advantage of one stakeholder

advantage of one stakeholder

result

opportunity for empowerment of civil society

opportunity for commercial and economic activities

no opportunity

UTOPIA SCENARIO

COMPROMISE SCENARIO

NIGHTMARE SCENARIO
Nightmare 2040
inhabitants

H S

proximity to services and people

choice of activities

improved public transport

improved safety_eyes on the street

increased value of apartments

better usability of public space

opportunities for community life

'limbo' people

house

alleviate housing emergency with minimum expense

choice of activities

proximity to services and people

opportunities for community life

associations

house

more institutional power

chance to manage housing stock and services in a fairer way

chance of proving themselves and achieving concrete objectives

developers

house

?$! 

sure rent, even if lower

no need to manage, coops are in charge

increased value for other properties due to increased activities and urban life

chance to finish the development project

municipality

private

public

increased power and leverage in public private negotiation on urban development_achieve more equality

increased control over real estate speculation

achieve urban regeneration of a failed centrality project

nightmare

who wins?
utopia

inhabitants

'limbo' people

associations

developers

municipality

proportion to services and people

choice of activities

improved public transport

improved safety_eyes on the street

increased value of apartments

better usability of public space

opportunities for community life

alleviate housing emergency with minimum expense

choice of activities

proximity to services and people

increased value of apartments

opportunities for community life

opportunities for community life

choice of activities

choice of activities and achieving concrete objectives

increased value for other properties due to increased activities and urban life

alleviate housing emergency with minimum expense

more institutional power

no need to manage, coops are in charge

increased value of apartments

chance to finish the development project

utopia

everybody wins!
compromise

let's start playing!
Compromise 2040
Thank you