Dana E. Katz, *The Jewish Ghetto and the Visual Imagination of Early Modern Venice*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. xiii + 188.

*by Cristiana Facchini*

In some of his remarkable publications, the famed urban sociologist Richard Sennett explored the interconnection between religious notions and the construction of space. In both *The Conscience of the Eye* (1990) and *Flesh and Stones* (1994), Sennett confronted himself with the body in the city, or more generally he attempted at looking at the built urban environment as through the perspective of the "human condition."[1] Whereas the former constitutes the third part of a trilogy (*The fall of the public man* 1977 and the novel *Palais Royal* 1986),[2] the latter is in many respects indebted to his friendship with Michel Foucault. In *Flesh and Stones* Sennett explores how Christian theology and Christian notions of the body find expression in the urban environment, and he takes notice of the cathedral and the cloister as opposed to the bustling life that market, with its dangers and violence.[3] In detecting a structural ambivalence at the core of the Christian city, Sennett proceeds to explore its potential contradictions in reference to those who, in the city, where not Christians, and in doing so he certainly tries to criticize a certain scholarly tradition that had idealized the medieval city. "The medieval adage," – he writes – "*Stadt Luft macht frei* would leave a bitter taste in the Jew's mouth, for the right to do business in the city did not bring a more general freedom. The *Jew* who contracted as an equal lived as a segregated man."[4] The chapter Sennett devoted to the ghetto in this work (*Flesh and Stone*) may be regarded as a tribute to the sociological debate about the ghetto, developed at the beginning of the twentieth century, by members of the school of urban sociology of Chicago.[5] Notions about the "ghetto" played a significant role in American urban sociology. Louis Wirth published a short and provocative article in 1927, and a book in 1928,

[1] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, (Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958).
[2] Richard Sennett, *The Fall of the Public Man*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977); Id., *Palais Royal*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977).
[3] Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone. The Body and the City in Western Civilization*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994).
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities*, ed. Richard Sennett, (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969).

where historical analysis was blended with sociological theories revolving around the problem of immigration in the great American metropolis.[6] In doing so, Wirth offered a universalized history of the ghetto, using the Jewish experience to understand ethnic grouping and behavior in the American city, but he also attempted at writing a psychological and cultural portrait of a "urban minority." "The ghetto is not only a physical fact, it is a state of mind," he wrote.

> The forms of community life are likely to become more intelligible to us if we have before us the natural history of the Jewish ghetto. The ghetto maybe therefore regarded as typical of a number of other forms of community life that sociologists are attempting to explore.[7]

Although quite original in its scope, his endeavor is the result of a wider discourse on the ghetto, which had animated the intellectual debate both in America and Europe. In fact, Wirth's book has to be placed not exclusively within the cultural ambience of his sociology fellows, but also against the background of a wealth of discourses about the "ghetto," both negative and positive, which were triggered by two different social and political conditions: the first one, linked to the slow path of political emancipation that had crossed the nineteenth century, was composed of articles and books on the history of the Jews in many European cities, as portrayed mainly by members of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. By the second half of the nineteenth century few important publications would be devoted to the Jews of Rome, whose miserable condition symbolized the evil of the Catholic Church and its ghetto, whose walls would be officially destroyed only after the fall of Rome in 1870. At the same time, a number of publications appeared, reflecting upon the psychological consequences of social seclusion, in order to offer answers for a better and faster assimilation of Jews in their national context and to counter the rising tide of antisemitism.[8] A second one was inspired by the wave of migrants from Eastern and Central Europe to many European and American cities: in some cases, it romanticized the idea of the ghetto through the use of new media as novels and

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[6] Louis Wirth, "The Ghetto," *The American Journal of Sociology 33/1 (1927):* 57-71; Id., *The Ghetto*, (Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 1928). For a recent discussion see: M. Duneier, *Ghetto. The Invention of a Place, the History of an Idea*, (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2016).

[7] Wirth, *The Ghetto*, 6.

[8] See for example the controversial book of the Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso, *Antisemitismo*, (Turin: Bocca, 1894) or Theodor Herzl, *Das Neue Ghetto*, (1903).

theatre plays;[9] in other instances, it attempted to explore its meaning in order to find practical solutions to counter various form of hostility toward migrants.

Sennett's contribution belongs to this intellectual tradition and it deserves some discussion, especially in the wake of recent historiographical works on urban history and the Jews. According to Sennett, the dialectic between *communitas* and exclusion is at the core of the Christian city, which needs to implement different form of repressive strategies that are addressed to those ones who are at the margins of its sacred civic body. "Venetian Christians" – wrote Sennett – "sought to create a Christian community by segregating those who were different, drawing on the fear of touching alien, seductive bodies. Jewish identity became entangled in that same geography of repression."[10]

Although Sennett's interpretation of the ghetto of Venice has rarely been used by historians, as it may be historically inaccurate, it is useful to flesh out some of his arguments. The Venetian ghetto is interpreted through the lines of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, with a focus on Jewish bodies and the "fear of touching," that are the driving forces which lead Venetian authorities to implement a politic of segregation. As Venice political and economic might was shattered by military defeat, a rhetoric of purification and discipline emerged among religious leaders, because economic losses were caused by moral weakness. Jewish professional specializations, notably physicians and money lenders, made Jews visible as polluting elements of Christian society.[11] Often, in moral treatises of the time, they would be associated to prostitutes, and in similar ways, perceived as both needed and dangerous.

Sennett's emphasis is on surveillance and isolation, even when he describes the German compound, inhabited by wealthier merchants and built in the vicinity of the Rialto Bridge, embellished by the frescos of Giorgione. With the rise of Reformation, the German *fondaco* would become even more dangerous for the

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[9] See for example the famous writings of Israel Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto*, (1892) and *Dreamers of the Ghetto*, (1898), and in general his works on the "ghetto's" culture and his famous notion of the "melting pot" a notion used in his famous theatre play, *The Melting Pot* (staged in 1907).

[10] Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*.

[11] In other cities they were moved in areas where prostitutes would also be secluded. For Florence before a ghetto was established see: J. Walden, *Spatial Logics, Ritual Humiliation, and Jewish-Christian Relations in Early Modern Florence*, in *Global Reformations. Transforming Early Modern Religions, Societies, and Cultures*, ed. Nicolas Terpstra, (London-New York: Routledge, 2019)

city, as the presence of heresy would unquestionably increase. Nevertheless, the Venetian authorities decided to keep the merchants at the cost of an increased surveillance.

For Sennett, the Venetian ghetto exemplifies one of the most significant themes of urban society, by incorporating in the fabric of the city "impure" and yet necessary social groups. "Purity of the mass would be guaranteed by isolation of the minority." None would reclaim the Jews for the city, as "in this, the ghetto of Venice embodied a different ethos of isolation from the ethos practiced shortly afterward in Renaissance Rome [...]. The Roman ghetto was indeed meant to be a space to transform the Jews."[12] The social rationale of the Roman ghetto was to humiliate the Jews in order to convert them. The Venetian ghetto was meant to separate and isolate them from the civic body of the city.

In her recent book on the Venetian ghetto, published in the wake of its 500 years anniversary, Dana Katz pays tribute to Sennett's insights, and describes the rise of the ghetto, among other things, as rooted in the "fear of seeing," whereas for Sennett the ghetto was the outcome of a deeply ingrained "fear of touching."[13]

For Katz the Venetian ghetto is a "visual paradox" that challenges, from its margins, the Christian social body of a city that is, since its birth, a complicated engineered space both socially and ecologically. The book revolves around four material element of urban life: the city's margins, conceived as laboratories of "urban planning;" strategies of enclosure as a Catholic response to forbidden gazes ("enclosure as topographies of vision"); windows as site of disturbance; and a final chapter devoted to "walls as boundaries of the night."

The first example of Jewish urban segregation is placed in Frankfurt, as the city council in 1462 decided to move out of the center its Jewish settlement, to an area that was then labeled *Judengasse*,[14] to prove that locating Jews at the margin or outside the urban polity was a common strategy to deal with religious minorities. Informed by a strong theoretical approach, *The Jewish ghetto and the visual imagination* speaks of the ghetto from the perspective of Venetian authorities, therefore privileging the language of power and its capability to frame religious

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[12] Sennet, *Flesh and Stone.*

[13] For the use of the notion of purity/impurity as a spatial analysis of Jewish enclosed areas see *Rome, Pollution, and Propriety. Dirt, Disease and Hygiene in the Eternal City from Antiquity to Modernity*, eds. Mark Bradley, Kenneth Stow, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[14] Also used by Wirth as an exemplary model: Wirth, *The Ghetto*, 41-62.

diversity in the urban environment. Katz highlights that through seclusion the Republic secured its policy of religious toleration as a mere corollary of its economic interest: "The separation of foreigners into distinct ethnic enclaves became a physical expression of the republic's policy of tolerance." As Venetian authorities sealed their religious groups in order to reduce their visibility, often walling off windows and balconies that faced the Christian borders, the ghetto itself develops very quickly into a new form of urbanity, giving birth, with its multi-story buildings to a verticality that challenges the Christian gaze.

The first chapter is indeed focused on "spatial marginalization" as a strategy to hierarchically organized and manage ethnic and religious diversity in the city, which had been depicted ever since as an ideal Renaissance polity, whose beauty often paralleled the harmony of the political system (being that of the ancient republic). Marginality is conceived, in her words, as "a lived experience of social and geographical displacement marked by negotiation of position" (p.29). Venice was a city of lived religious diversity which inhabited the built environment. Jews were one of the many religious and ethnic groups that contributed to the welfare of a city that was simultaneously a capitol of a maritime empire with its colonies (which implies a hierarchical space), and the hub of a trading network composed of multiple groups, often labeled as *stranieri.*

The rise of the ghetto is placed against the backdrop of Venice's economic decline, which was hardly visible by observers of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. But Jews arrived in Venice relatively late, if compared to other settlements, and were very soon relocated in the area of the ghetto, the site of the old foundry. The decision seems to opt both for marginalization and inclusion, if compared to situation where viable options were forced conversion, expulsion, or even massacre. And yet, the corporate body of the Jews in the city, according to Katz, remains marginalized even when the ghetto is placed, after the promulgation of the *Cum nimis absurdum* (1555), at the very center of the city, where in some cases the market is located (Florence, Rome, Padua, Verona). Comparisons with other Italian cities seem to call for a different analysis that goes beyond the notion of urban marginality, as suggested by Katz. The religious motif that drives the Roman enclosure of the Jews and the subsequent establishment of the ghettos seem to be relatively different from the urban logic of the Venetian enclosure, which partly followed into the footstep of urban

zoning, even if with hierarchical logic.[15] But the question as to look at the rise of secluded Jewish areas as the consequence of different religious and theological traditions remain unanswered.

Katz is also attentive – as Sennett before her – to detect how marginalization produced a new form of "urbanity," conceived as "an alternative form of urban living" (p. 41), which is defined by its verticality. In this, the author compares modern urban verticality of the twentieth century, as embodied in the projects of megacities' tenements halls, and the unique Venetian one. The comparison is suggestive and yet it fails, to me, to detect the complexity of modern verticality as compared to the one of the early modern period. If it holds true that tenements halls (exemplified in this book by the case of Pruitt Igoe in Missouri) proved to be a total failure as spaces conceived to host marginal social groups, not all modern urban experiments meant to dignify the urban condition of less privileged social classes failed. At the same time urban verticality has also been deployed, both in the past and the present, to magnify the religion or culture of dominant groups. In this sense, the ghetto stands as an interesting case which functions very much in opposition to other architectural examples of vertical magnificence and reverses the gaze from the dominant ones to the ones who are dominated. However, it is unlikely that its verticality attracted foreign visitors who were more inclined to cross the ghetto's walls for other reasons, among which the most relevant are sheer curiosity, religious zeal and confrontational drives.

Chapter two explores the ghetto as compared to other forms of religious enclosure, of which the most relevant one for the time is female enclosure. In doing so the author departs from the interesting insights on nineteenth century notion of the city square (*piazza*) as an ideal enclosed space of urban *civitas*, as recorded in the work of Austrian architect Camillo Sitte or in the ground-

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[15] Some of these questions are described in Cristiana Facchini, "The City, the Ghetto and Two Books. Venice and Jewish Early Modernity," *Modernity and the Cities of the Jews, Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*, ed. Cristiana Facchini, 2 (2011): 11-44. For the Roman case see Kenneth Stow, *Theatre of Acculturation. The Roman Ghetto in the Sixteenth Century*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001); Serena Di Nepi, *Sopravvivere al ghetto. Per una storia sociale della comunità ebraica nella Roma del Cinquecento*, (Roma: Viella, 2013); for Florence see Stefanie Sigmund, *The Medici State and the Ghetto of Florence. The Construction of an Early Modern Jewish Community*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); for counter Reformation policies against the Jews see Renata Segre, *La controriforma. Espulsioni, conversioni, isolamento*, in *Gli ebrei in Italia*, vol. 1, ed. Corrado Vivanti, (Torino: Einaudi, 1996), 709-778.

breaking book, *The Stones of Venice* of John Ruskin (p.49-51). Katz defines enclosure as a "spatial condition predicated on the construction of boundaries to segment spaces." The *piazza* is punctuated by openings, whereas other forms of enclosures are based upon sealed gates, as in the case of the ghetto, whose visual access was also banned by decisions aimed to wall its windows.

Prohibitions to access windows were addressed to women, who were confined to the private space of domestic seclusion. The visibility of a woman through the window evoked prostitution, therefore laws kept them far from these types of apertures.

Similarly, the architecture of *clausura* confined monastic life inside, away from undesired gazes. This idealized conception of enclosure was strengthened by the norms of the Council of Trent and here a comparison should have been conducted on ideal forms of religious enclosure, in order to understand whether the process which led to the "confessionalization paradigm" would shed light on spatial religious policies more in general. Similarities and differences are interesting, as closure is ideally used for defining sacred and "polluted" spaces, that is spaces where ideal Christian life or the life of "infidels" would be constrained. "Both the sequestration of nuns and the ghettoization of Jews engender a relationship of power and discipline that expresses how a spatially confined subgroup articulates politics and ideology," Katz writes, focusing on the potential power of sight as capable of nurturing forbidden sexual encounters. As the nuns aimed to protect themselves from the world outside, the Jews were kept apart as dangerous and yet usable urban subjects.

Katz insists upon notions of segregation, surveillance and toleration, but in her narrative this complicated dynamic seems to repeatedly emphasize, in Foucauldian terms, the notion of surveillance, especially when hinting at the image of the panopticon that after all, in her own words, needs not to be evoked in order to understand the ghetto (p. 62-63).

Chapter three delves deeper in the complex visual relationship between the Serenissima and the Jews through the material aperture of the window. Not surprisingly, evoking the *Merchant of Venice*, Katz writes that "Jessica's abandonment of her father and conversion to Christianity is marked at the window" (p. 68). Windows are liminal spaces which connect the inside with the outside, and where many forms of interactions took place. They are also vital for the organization of labor as they allow light and air to circulate inside.

Using early modern London as a case of comparison, Katz introduces the theme of windows as spaces that are thoroughly regulated by civic rules, and from which it is possible to detect types of social interactions between the private and public domain; or, they can be understood as places where outburst of violence were enacted. In London windows are spaces where citizenship is performed. As for legal residents any form of obstruction of the window or misuse of it represent an attack to private décor, for religious refugees (Protestants from other countries), whose work was permitted, the windows must be obstructed in order to ban from sight their merchandise, making their profit more difficult to pursue (p. 73).

According to Katz, the decision to wall up windows and balconies in the ghetto shall be interpreted as a logical consequence of the Christian city to "prohibit ocular contact with Christians" (p. 74). Even when the ghetto expanded, due to the continuous flux of Levantine and Ponentine Jewish migrants, who were permitted residency in exchange of their commercial services, rules about the closing of windows or other apertures on the bordering lines with Christian neighbors were enhanced. In some cases, Jews tried to avoid rigid enclosures, especially if they threatened the health and hygiene of the ghetto. Windows were considered sites of danger during Christian processions: Jews were accused of screaming and cursing at the Eucharist from their windows; conversely, charged religious rituals could easily spark conflict and violence, as during the Eastertide, when Christian assaulted and destroyed Jewish windows.

The chapter attempts to provide a different explanation for the comparison between two types of confinement, which are rooted in religious rationale: the temporary one during Easter, when Jews were compelled to shut their windows and to stay inside their houses, and the permanent one of the ghetto, whose windows were walled up. Whereas the cyclical enclosure framed a seasonal construction of religious identity, the

> walling up of the ghetto windows symbolized a permanent mark of domestic exile, an architectonic march toward civic isolation, that built subjugation into the urban form. Ghettoization institutionalized a city of alienating environments that inscribed religious difference into the urban fabric and in it prescribed a larger social order. (p. 83)

As Daniel Jutte argued, windows were places of social interaction between Christians and Jews before and after the construction of the ghettos, and that is why city authorities attempted to regulate reciprocal gazes: not only Jews were forbidden to look at Christian rituals or onto Christian sacred space, such as monasteries and churches, but Christians as well were not allowed to look onto Jewish space.[16] Furthermore, while this chapter evokes the relevant theme of religious and civic rituals as occasion of civic and urban belonging, it does not dwell extensively on the problem that civic and religious rituals pose to religious grouping in the early modern city. One should therefore ask where all interactions between different religious groups were spatially placed, and what it really meant to manage religious diversity in the city of the early modern period.

The ghetto is read through the senses, primarily the optical one, but at times also through tactility. This is the case of chapter four which is devoted to walls and nocturnal life. Here the night is associated with the "fear of contact," which characterizes many types of relationship between Jews and Christians, and plausibly between different religious antagonists. Drawing on Simmel's definition of the wall, the focus is on movement, and interconnectedness. The wall, as a place that aims to separate, is explored though its porosity during the real time of enclosure, after dusk, when Jews are compelled to stay inside and when the gates are locked. It is at night, Katz argues, that the fear of the Jews reaches its peak, as the night is the moment of the day that reveals its ambivalence. Nocturnal religious and civic rituals were taking place after dusk in the city, and also among Jews, they featured prominently: from circumcision rituals to kabbalist devotion, the night even if secluded, was inhabited by different religious activities.

The walls of the ghetto, as other walls that were meant to keep other groups separated from the civic body of the city, are also tools that support the widespread fear of touching and ban sexual encounters. "The nighttime lockdown of Jews within ghetto walls acted to avert sexual forays entre Jew and Christian. Preventing carnal contact between Christians and Jews was hardly original to Cinquecento Venice. What was new was the use of architecture to prohibit it" (p. 107). In his chapter on the ghetto, Sennett argued that the separation between Christians and Jews was rooted in the fear of contagion, as

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[16] Daniel Jutte, "'They shall not keep their door or windows open.' Urban space and the dynamics of conflict and contact in pre-modern Jewish-Christian relations," *European History Quarterly* 46/2 (2016): 209-237.

the Jewish body (especially the male body) was conceived as a receptacle of dangerous illnesses (syphilis) or the Jews as a group as polluting agents, responsible for the plague or the poisoning of the wells. Yet, Jewish doctors were praised professionals, and permitted to walk more freely outside the walls of the ghetto, for the welfare of their Christian patients or the city (as in cases related to the plague or other urban disasters).

Katz's analysis of the Venetian ghetto offers an interesting reading of urban spatial relations between Christian and Jews, where two different forms of power, the civic and the religious, seem to forge and inscribe religious diversity within the urban fabric. At times the book seems to be redundant with recurring themes – as the one of sight and verticality – and theory seems to be structuring the interpretation of historical data. Moreover, the emphasis on power structures and city legislation highlights how urban seclusion became a structural condition of Renaissance statecraft and its urban organization. However, whilst this approach reveals the deep ties between the Christian city and its built environment, it adumbrates the complexity of city life, and it often silences the agency of individuals and groups that inhabit the city. Segregation fosters *communitas*, Sennett claimed. But what was the impact of seclusion on Jewish culture? What kind of urbanity did the Jews forge in reaction to this process of segregation? How did they perceive the deterioration of their urban condition? Was this model the only one that rendered religious toleration viable in the time of increasing religious strife?

Criticism of this cultural interpretations may shed light onto Jewish and other individual agency, and ultimately offer a more nuanced representation of power relations in unequal societies. Urban historians, for examples, have stressed that seclusion in many Italian cities followed two patterns. Most of the times ghettos were walled up in areas where there existed already a loose Jewish settlement, usually located in the city center in the proximity of the market; the area destined to enclosure was certainly of mediocre quality and therefore relatively inexpensive. Nevertheless, these areas were invested with infrastructures that aimed to improve the quality of the life of its inhabitants. This material approach to the study of enclosed areas of settlement, while acknowledging the undeniable power of the Counter Reformation Church, have shown that in some cases Jews attempted to voice their criticism, and even tried to postpone the construction of the enclosed area, as for example in Padua. Jews often negotiated with the

government for better living conditions and did their best to improve the quality of their urban spaces and their dwellings, shops, and stores.[17]

Jews were aware of their precarious place in the Christian city, as they often described the rise of the secluded zone of residence as a *ghet*, a Jewish word for "divorce," meaning that they had been divorced by means of separation by the rest of society.[18]

Moreover, the case of Venice clearly shows that the Jewish enclave even under surveillance fostered a rich and refined culture expressed in a number of different languages – Hebrew, Italian, Spanish and Latin – and taking advantage of the printing infrastructures of the city. In some other publication I showed how some texts composed by Jews in Venice could reach a wide dissemination because of the inter-faith encounters that the port city allowed despite its ideals of closure.[19]

The ghetto may also be interpreted as a liminal space where its borders were often porous: this liminality allows for encounters to take place, regardless of their ability to strengthen amicable relationships, where after all information and knowledge circulate, from within and without. The inhabitants of the Jewish ghetto composed a diversified society in terms of class, ethnicity, and even religion. Wealthy Iberian Jews for example, lived with their servants and slaves, some of whom came from Africa. This social diversity of the ghetto (which is replicated in many other cities) contributes to form an alternative type of spatiality, which is the one of the diasporic networks, made of family and business ties, of religious collaboration and expertise, and intellectual friendship. The Jews of the Venetian ghetto were situated at the center of a wide diaspora structure that linked cities of the Turkish empire, Italian port cities, and new settlements in Hamburg, Amsterdam, Livorno. They simultaneously lived a life of compulsory enclosure and the life of a port city. Indeed, Jews were aware that

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[17] Donatella Calabi, "Les quartiers juifs en Italie entre XVe et XVIIe siècle. Quelques hypothèses de travail," *Annales* 52/4 (1997): 777-797; *La città italiana e i luoghi degli stranieri*, eds. Donatella Calabi, Paola Lanaro, (Bari: Laterza, 1998).

[18] Isaac H.C. Cantarini, *Pahad Yitzhak*, (Padua, 1685); Cristiana Facchini, "Il Purim di Buda. rimembranza liturgica e narrazione storica," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 18/2 (2001): 507-532. See also Kenneth Stow, *The Consciousness of Closure*, in *Essential Papers on Jewish Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. David Ruderman, (New York: New York University, 1992).

[19] Cristiana Facchini, "Voci ebraiche sulla tolleranza religiosa. Pratiche e teorie nella Venezia barocca," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 2/30 (2013): 393-419.

the ghetto was one of the various options that Christian society offered, and they knew that elsewhere segregation was not implemented, as in the case of many port cities. The emphasis on surveillance fails also to analyze the power structure within the secluded area itself and very rarely it combines internal religious rules with the ones stemming from the host environment, failing therefore to detect multiple sources of disciplinary strategies, not to mention social differences that might have been quite remarkable in many cities.[20]

One would also be tempted to follow the suggestions Wirth himself developed almost a century ago and focus on forms of cultural production and sociability within the secluded areas, and even if there is a wealth of research on the Venetian case, we lack more general accounts that take into consideration a broader sample of cases and that would investigate forms of multiple cultural belonging, as ghetto dwellers were, at times, people that lived on the fringes of different cultural and religious realms.[21] Yet, one would still wonder about which types of urbanism early modern cities produced with regard to their different religious and ethnic groups, how different groups became increasingly interwoven to the city's civic life, not only to its economic wellbeing.

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[20] The case of Amsterdam has been analysed with some details, especially in reference to the lives of Baruch Spinoza or Uriel Acosta. See for example Steven Nadler, *Baruch Spinoza. A Life*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[21] Wirth, *The Ghetto*, 34-39.