

Ghetto

It is a paradox that, while the social sciences have made extensive use of the 'ghetto' as a *descriptive term*, they have failed to forge a robust *analytical concept* of the same. In the historiography of the Jewish diaspora in early modern Europe and under Nazism, the sociology of the black American experience in the twentieth-century metropolis, and the anthropology of ethnic outcasts in Africa and East Asia, its three traditional domains of application, the term 'ghetto' variously denotes a bounded urban ward, a web of group-specific institutions, and a cultural and cognitive constellation (values, mindset, or mentality) entailing the sociomoral isolation of a stigmatized category as well as the systematic truncation of the life space and life chances of its members. But none of these strands of research has taken the trouble to specify what makes a ghetto *qua* social form, which of its features are constitutive and which derivative, as they have, at each epoch, taken for granted and adopted the *folk concept* extant in the society under examination—which explains that the notion, appearing self-evident, does not figure in most dictionaries of social science, including previous publications of this encyclopedia.

1. A Woolly and Shifting Notion

Thus the semantic range of the 'ghetto' in American society and social science, which has dominated inquiry into the topic both quantitatively and thematically, has successively expanded and contracted in keeping with how political and intellectual elites have viewed the vexed nexus of ethnicity and poverty in the city (Ward 1989). At first, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the term designated residential concentrations of European Jews in the Atlantic seaports and was clearly distinguished from the 'slum' as an area of housing blight and social pathology. It dilated during the Progressive era to encompass all inner-city districts wherein exotic newcomers gathered, namely lower-class immigrants from the Southeastern regions of Europe and African Americans fleeing the Jim Crow regime of caste subjugation in the US South. Expressing ruling-class worries over whether these groups could or should assimilate into the predominant Anglo-Saxon pattern of the country, the term then referred to the intersection between the ethnic neighborhood and the slum, where segregation combined with physical disrepair and overcrowding to exacerbate urban ills such as criminality, family breakdown, and pauperism, and thwart participation in national life. This conception was given scientific authority by the ecological paradigm of the Chicago school of sociology. In his classic book *The Ghetto*, Louis Wirth (1928, p. 6) assimilates to the Jewish ghetto of

medieval Europe the 'Little Sicilies, Little Polands, Chinatowns, and Black Belts in our large cities,' along with the 'vice areas' hosting deviant types such as hobos, bohemians, and prostitutes—all of which are said to be 'natural areas' born of the universal desire of different groups to 'preserve their peculiar cultural forms' and each fulfilling a specialized 'function' in the broader urban organism.

The notion contracted after World War II under the press of the Civil Rights movement to signify mainly the compact and congested enclaves to which African Americans were forcibly relegated as they migrated into the industrial centers of the North. The growth of a 'Black Metropolis in the womb of the white,' wherein Negroes evolved distinct and parallel institutions to compensate for and shield themselves from unflinching exclusion by whites (Drake and Cayton 1945), contrasted sharply with the smooth residential dispersal of European Americans of foreign stock. Writing at the acme of the black uprisings of the 1960s, Kenneth Clark (1965, p. 11) made this relationship of ethnoracial subordination epicentral to his dissection of the *Dark Ghetto* and its woes: 'America has contributed to the concept of the ghetto the restriction of persons to a special area and the limiting of their freedom of choice on the basis of skin color. The dark ghetto's invisible walls have been erected by the white society, by those who have power.' This diagnosis was confirmed by the Kerner Commission (1968, p. 2), a bipartisan taskforce appointed by President Johnson whose official report on the 'civil disorders' that rocked the American metropolis famously warned that, due to white racial intransigence, America was 'moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal.' But over the ensuing two decades, the dark ghetto collapsed and devolved into a barren territory of dread and dissolution due to deindustrialization and state policies of welfare reduction and urban retrenchment. And, as racial domination grew more diffuse and diffracted through a class prism, the category was displaced by the duet formed by the geographic euphemism of 'inner city' and the neologism of 'underclass,' defined as the substratum of ghetto residents plagued by antisocial behaviors, acute joblessness, and social isolation (Wilson 1987). By the 1990s, the neutralization of the 'ghetto' in policy-oriented research culminated in the expurgation of all mention of race and power to redefine it as any tract of extreme poverty, irrespective of population and institutional makeup, in effect dissolving the ghetto back into the slum.

The extension of the term to the study of the distinctive sociocultural patterns elaborated by homosexuals in the cities of advanced societies 'in response to both stigma and gay liberation' after the Stonewall riots (Levine 1979, p. 31) and its recent resurgence in Western Europe in heated scientific and political debates over the links between postcolonial

immigration, postindustrial economic restructuring, and urban dualization (Mingione 1996) would seem only to further muddle its meaning. Yet one can extract out of these varied literatures common threads and recurrent properties to *construct a relational concept* of the ghetto as an *instrument of closure and control* that clears up most of the confusion surrounding it and makes it a powerful tool for the social analysis of ethnoracial domination and urban inequality. For this it suffices to return to the historical inception of the word and of the phenomenon it depicted in Renaissance Venice.

2. *A Janus-faced Institution of Ethnic Closure and Control*

Coined by derivation from the Italian *giudecca*, *borghetto* or *gietto* (or from the German *gitter* or the Talmudic Hebrew *get*: the etymology is disputed), the word 'ghetto' initially refers to the forced consignment of Jews to special districts by the city's political and religious authorities. In medieval Europe, Jews were commonly allotted quarters wherein they resided, administered their own affairs, and followed their customs. Such quarters were granted or sold as a privilege to attract them into the towns and principalities for which they fulfilled key roles as money-lenders, tax collectors, and long-distance tradesmen. But, between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century, in the wake of the upheavals caused by the Crusades, favor gradually turned into compulsion (Stow 1992). In 1516, the Senate of Venice ordered all Jews rounded up into the *ghetto nuovo*, an abandoned foundry on an isolated island enclosed by two high walls whose outer windows and doors were sealed while watchmen stood guard on its two bridges and patrolled the adjacent canals by boat. Jews were henceforth allowed out to pursue their occupations by day, but they had to wear a distinctive garb and return inside the gates before sunset on pain of serious punishment. These measures were designed as an alternative to expulsion to enable the city-state to reap the economic benefits brought by the presence of Jews (including rents, special taxes, and forced levies) while protecting their Christian residents from contaminating contact with bodies perceived as unclean and dangerously sensual, carriers of syphilis and vectors of heresy, in addition to bearing the taint of money-making through usury, which the Catholic Church equated with prostitution (Sennett 1994, p. 224).

As this Venetian model spread in cities throughout Europe and around the Mediterranean rim (Johnson 1987, pp. 235–245), territorial fixation and seclusion led, on the one hand, to overcrowding, housing deterioration, and impoverishment as well as excess morbidity and mortality, and, on the other, to institutional flowering and cultural consolidation as

urban Jews responded to multiplying civic and occupational restrictions by knitting a dense web of group-specific organizations that served as so many instruments of collective succor and solidarity, from markets and business associations, to charity and mutual aid societies, to places of religious worship and scholarship. The *Judenstadt* of Prague, Europe's largest ghetto in the eighteenth century, even had its own city hall, the *Rathaus*, an emblem of the relative autonomy and communal strength of its residents, and its synagogues were entrusted not only with the spiritual stewardship but also with the administrative and judicial oversight of its population. Social life in the Jewish ghetto was turned inward and verged 'on overorganization' (Wirth 1928, p. 62), so that it reinforced both integration within and isolation from without.

One can detect in this inaugural moment the four constituent elements of the ghetto, viz., *stigma*, *constraint*, *spatial confinement*, and *institutional encasement*. The ghetto is a social-organizational device that employs space to reconcile two antinomic purposes: to maximize the material profits extracted out of a group deemed defiled and defiling and to minimize intimate contact with its members so as to avert the threat of symbolic corrosion and contagion they carry. This same dual rationale of *economic exploitation cum social ostracization* governed the genesis, structure, and functioning of the African-American ghetto in the Fordist metropolis during most of the twentieth century. Blacks were recruited into northern US cities after World War I because their unskilled labor was indispensable to the industries that formed the backbone of the expanding factory economy. But there was no question of them mixing and consorting with whites, who regarded them as inherently vile, congenitally inferior, and shorn of ethnic honor owing to the stain of slavery. As blacks moved in from the South in millions, white hostility increased and patterns of discrimination and segregation that had hitherto been informal and inconsistent hardened in housing, schooling, and public accommodations and were extended to the economy and polity (Spear 1968, Osofsky 1971). African Americans had no choice but to seek refuge inside the bounded perimeter of the Black Belt and to endeavor to develop in it a network of separate institutions to procure the basic needs of the castaway community. Thus arose a parallel city anchored by black churches and newspapers, black block clubs and lodges, black schools and businesses, and black political and civic associations, nested at the core of the white metropolis yet sealed from it by an impassable fence built of custom, legal suasion, economic discrimination (by realtors, banks, and the state), and by violence manifested in the beatings, fire-bombings, and riots that checked those who dared stray across the color line.

This forced institutional parallelism predicated on enveloping and inflexible spatial seclusion—not extreme poverty, housing blight, cultural difference, or mere residential separation—is what has distinguished African Americans from every other group in US history, as noted by leading students of the black urban experience from W.E.B. Du Bois and E. Franklin Frazier to Drake and Cayton to Kenneth Clark and Oliver Cox (Wacquant 1998). It also characterizes the trajectory of the Burakumin in the Japanese city after the close of the Tokugawa era (Hane 1982). As the descendants of the *eta*, the lowest of the four castes forming the estate order of feudal Japan, the Burakumin were untouchables in the eyes of the Buddhist and Shinto religions, and they were legally confined from sundown to sunup in out-of-the-way hamlets (*buraku*), obliged to wear a yellow collar and to walk barefoot, expected to drop on their hands and knees when addressing commoners, and restricted to marrying solely among themselves. Though they were officially emancipated in 1871, as they moved into cities they were funneled against their will into notorious neighborhoods near garbage dumps, crematoria, jails, and slaughterhouses, widely viewed as nests of criminality and immorality. There, they were barred from industrial employment and locked in low-paying and dirty jobs, sent to separate schools, and compelled to remain endogamous by the indelible taint of their blood as traced through ‘family registration records’ (DeVos and Wagatsuma 1966). In the late 1970s, according to the Burakumin Defense League, they were estimated to number 3 million, trapped in 6,000 ghettos in some thousand cities across the main island.

Spread over three continents and five centuries, the Jewish, African-American, and Burakumin cases demonstrate that the ghetto is not, *pace* Wirth (1928, pp. 284–285), a ‘natural area’ arising via environmental adaptation governed by a biotic logic ‘akin to the competitive cooperation that underlies the plant community.’ The error of the early Chicago school here consisted in falsely ‘converting history into natural history’ and passing ghettoization as ‘a manifestation of human nature’ virtually coterminous with ‘the history of migration’ (Wirth 1928, p. 285) when it is a highly peculiar form of urbanization warped by asymmetric relations of power between ethnoracial groupings: a special form of *collective violence concretized in urban space*. That ghettoization is *not* an ‘uncontrolled and undesigned’ process, as Robert E. Park asserted in his preface to *The Ghetto* (Wirth 1928, p. viii), was especially visible after World War II when the black American ghetto was reconstructed from the top down through state policies of public housing, urban renewal, and suburban economic development intended to bolster the rigid separation of blacks from whites (Hirsch 1983). It is even more glaring in the instance of the ‘caste cities’ built by colonial powers to inscribe in

space the hierarchical ethnic organization of their overseas possessions, such as Rabat under French rule over Morocco and Cape Town after the passage of the Group Areas Acts under the apartheid regime of South Africa (Abu-Lughod 1980, Western 1981).

Recognizing that it is a product and instrument of group power makes it possible to appreciate that, in its full-fledged form, the ghetto is a *Janus-faced institution* as it serves opposite functions for the two collectives that it binds in a relation of asymmetric dependency. For the dominant category, its rationale is to *confine and control*, which translates into what Max Weber calls the ‘exclusionary closure’ of the dominated category. For the latter, however, it is an *integrative and protective device* insofar as it relieves its members from constant contact with the dominant and fosters consociation and community building within the constricted sphere of intercourse that it creates. Enforced isolation from the outside leads to the intensification of social exchange and cultural sharing inside. Ghettos are the product of a mobile and tensionful dialectic of external hostility and internal affinity that expresses itself as ambivalence at the level of collective consciousness. Thus, although European Jews consistently protested relegation within their outcast districts, they were also deeply attached to them and appreciative of the relative security they afforded and the special forms of collective life they supported: Frankfurt’s ghetto in the eighteenth century was ‘not just the scene of confinement and persecution but a place where Jews were entirely, supremely, at home’ (Gay 1992, p. 67). Similarly, black Americans took pride in having ‘erected a community in their own image,’ even as they resented the fact that they had done so under duress, as a result of unyielding white exclusion aimed at warding off the specter of ‘social equality,’ that is, sexual mixing (Drake and Cayton 1945, p. 115).

3. *Disentangling Poverty, Segregation, and Ethnic Clustering*

Articulating the concept of ghetto makes it possible to disentangle the relationship between ghettoization, urban poverty, and segregation, and thence to clarify the structural and functional differences between ghettos and ethnic neighborhoods. It also enables us to spotlight on the role of the ghetto as a symbolic incubator and matrix for the production of a spoiled identity.

1. *Poverty is a frequent but derivative and variable characteristic of ghettos*: the fact that most ghettos have historically been places of endemic and often acute misery owing to the paucity of space, the density of settlement, and the economic exploitation and generalized maltreatment of their residents does not imply that a ghetto is necessarily a place of

destitution, nor that it is uniformly deprived. The *Judengasse* of Frankfurt, instituted in 1490 and abolished in 1811, went through periods of prosperity no less than penury and it contained patches of extraordinary opulence as court Jews helped the city become a vibrant center of trade and finance—part of its glamor to this day comes from it being the ancestral home of the Rothschild dynasty (Wirth 1928, Chap. 4). James Weldon Johnson (1930, p. 4) insisted that the Harlem of the 1930s was ‘not a slum or a fringe’ but the ‘cultural capital’ of black America, where ‘the Negro’s advantages and opportunities are greater than in any other place in the country.’ Likewise, Chicago’s ‘Bronzeville’ was far more prosperous at mid-century than southern black communities and harbored the largest and most affluent African-American bourgeoisie of its era (Drake and Cayton 1945). Whether a ghetto is poor or not depends on extraneous factors such as demography, ecology, state policies, and the shape of the surrounding economy.

Conversely, not all dispossessed and dilapidated urban districts are ghettos. Declining white neighborhoods in the deindustrializing cities of the US Midwest and British Midlands, depressed rural towns of the former East Germany and southern Italy, and the disreputable *villas miserias* of the greater Buenos Aires at the close of the twentieth century are territories of working-class demotion and decomposition, not ethnic containers dedicated to maintaining an outcast group in a relationship of seclusive subordination. They are not ghettos other than in a metaphorical sense, no matter how impoverished—if extreme rates of poverty sufficed to make a ghetto, then large chunks of the former Soviet Union and most third-world cities would be gargantuan ghettos. The *favelas* of the Brazilian metropolis often portrayed as segregated dens of dereliction and disorganization turn out to be working-class wards with finely stratified webs of ties to industry and to the wealthy districts for which they supply household service labor. As in the *ranchos* of Venezuela and the *poblaciones* of Chile, the families that dwell in these squatter settlements span the color continuum and have extensive genealogical bonds to higher-income households; they are ‘not socially and culturally marginal, but stigmatized and excluded from a closed class system’ (Perlman 1976, p. 195; also Quijano 1968). Given that not all ghettos are poor and not all poor areas are ghettos, one cannot collapse and confound the analysis of ghettoization with the study of slums and lower-class districts in the city.

2. Similarly, *all ghettos are segregated but not all segregated areas are ghettos*. The select boroughs of the West of Paris, the exclusive upper-class suburbs of Boston or Berlin, and the ‘gated communities’ that have mushroomed in global cities such as São Paulo, Toronto, and Miami are monotonous in terms of wealth, income, occupation, and often ethnicity, but

they are not for all that ghettos. Segregation in them is entirely voluntary and elective, and for that reason it is neither all-inclusive nor perpetual. Fortified enclaves of luxury package ‘security, seclusion, social homogeneity, amenities, and services’ to enable bourgeois families to escape what they perceive as ‘the chaos, dirt, and danger of the city’ (Caldeira 2000, pp. 264–265). These islands of privilege serve to enhance, not curtail, the life chances and protect the lifestyles of their residents, and they radiate a positive aura of distinction, not a sense of infamy and dread.

This suggests that residential segregation is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for ghettoization. For a ghetto to emerge spatial confinement must, first, be imposed and all-encompassing and, second, it must be overlaid with a distinct and duplicative set of institutions enabling the group thus cloistered to reproduce itself within its assigned perimeter. If blacks are the only ethnic group to be ‘hypersegregated’ in American society (Massey and Denton 1992), it is because they are the only community to have combined involuntary segregation with organizational parallelism entrapping them in a separate and inferior social cosmos of their own, which in turn bolstered their residential isolation. That even involuntary segregation at the bottom of the urban order does not *eo ipso* produce ghettos is demonstrated by the fate of the declining French *banlieues* after the 1980s. Although they have been widely disparaged as ‘ghettos’ in public discourse and their inhabitants share a vivid feeling of being cast out in a ‘penalized space’ suffused with boredom, anguish, and despair (Pétonnet 1982), relegation in these depressed concentrations of public housing at the urban periphery is based on class, not ethnicity; as a result they are culturally heterogeneous, typically harboring native French families along with immigrants from two dozen nationalities; and their inhabitants suffer not from institutional duplication but, on the contrary, from the lack of an ingrown organizational structure capable of sustaining them in the absence of gainful employment and adequate public services. Like the British or Dutch inner cities and the immigrant clusters of urban Germany or Italy, the French *banlieues* are, sociologically speaking, *anti-ghettos* (Wacquant to be published).

3. *Ghettos and ethnic neighborhoods have divergent structures and opposite functions*: moving beyond a gradational perspective to scrutinize the peculiar patterning of social relations within the ghetto as well as between it and the surrounding city throws into sharp relief the differences between the ghetto and the ethnic clusters or immigrant neighborhoods such as newcomers to the metropolis have formed in countless countries. The foreign ‘colonies’ of interwar Chicago that Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Louis Wirth—and after them the liberal tradition of assimilationist sociology and historiography—mistook for so many white ‘ghettos’ were scattered and

mobile constellations born of cultural affinity and occupational concentration. Segregation in them was partial and porous, a product of immigrant solidarity and ethnic attraction instead of being imposed by outgroup hostility. Consequently, residential separation was neither uniformly nor rigidly visited upon these groups: in 1930, when the all-black Bronzeville harbored 92% of the city's Afro-American population, Chicago's Little Ireland was 'an ethnic hodge-podge' of 25 nationalities composed of only one-third Irish persons and containing a paltry 3% of the city's denizens of Irish ancestry (Philpott 1978, pp. 141–145).

What is more, the distinctive institutions of European immigrant enclaves were turned outward: they operated to facilitate adjustment to the novel environment of the US metropolis. They neither replicated the organizations of the country of origin nor perpetuated social isolation and cultural distinctiveness, and so they typically waned within two generations as their users gained access to their American counterparts and climbed up the class order and the corresponding ladder of places (Nelli 1970; a similar process of spatial diffusion via class incorporation of Belgian, Italian, Polish, and Iberian immigrants in the French industrial city is reported by Noiriel 1988), all of which is in sharp contrast with the immutable racial exclusivity and enduring institutional alterity of the Black Belt. This Chicago illustration dramatizes the fact that immigrant neighborhood and ghetto serve diametrically opposed functions: one is a springboard for *assimilation* via cultural learning and social-cum-spatial mobility, and the other a material and symbolic isolation ward geared toward *dissimilation*. The former is best figured by a bridge, and the latter by a wall.

4. *A Tainted Identity Machine*

The ghetto is not only the concrete means and materialization of ethnoracial domination through the spatial segmentation of the city but also a potent *collective identity machine* in its own right, for it helps incrustate and elaborate the very division of which it is the expression in two complementary and mutually reinforcing ways. First, the ghetto sharpens the boundary between the outcast category and the surrounding population by deepening the socio-cultural chasm between them: it renders its residents objectively and subjectively more dissimilar from other urban dwellers by submitting them to unique conditionings, so that the patterns of cognition and conduct they fashion have every chance of being perceived by outsiders as singular, exotic, even aberrant (Sennett 1994, p. 244; Wilson 1987, pp. 7–8), which feeds prejudicial beliefs about them. Second, the ghetto is a cultural combustion engine that melts divisions among the confined group and

fuels its collective pride even as it entrenches the stigma that hovers over it. Spatial and institutional entrapment deflect class differences and corrode cultural distinctions within the relegated ethnoracial category. Thus Christian ostracism welded Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews under an overarching Jewish identity such that they evolved a common 'social type' and 'state of mind' across the ghettos of Europe (Wirth 1928, pp. 71–88, 1964). America's dark ghetto similarly accelerated the sociosymbolic amalgamation of mulattos and Negroes into a single 'race' and turned racial consciousness into a mass phenomenon fueling community mobilization against continued caste exclusion (Drake and Cayton 1945, p. 390).

Yet this unified identity cannot but be stamped with ambivalence as it remains tainted by the very fact that ghettoization proclaims what Weber calls the 'negative evaluation of honor' assigned to the group confined. It is therefore wont to foster among its members sentiments of self-doubt and self-hatred, dissimulation of one's origin through 'passing,' the pernicious derogation of one's kind, and even fantastical identification with the dominant (Clark 1965, pp. 63–67). And, because ghettoization is typically bound up tightly with ethnicity, segregation, and poverty, it is difficult to discern empirically which of the properties exhibited by ghetto dwellers are 'ghetto-specific cultural traits' as opposed to properties expressive of class, community, or masculinity (Hannerz 1969, p. 79). Also, cultural forms forged in the ghetto seep across its boundaries and circulate through the surrounding society where they often become outward signs of cultural rebelliousness and social eccentricity—as indicated by the fascination of bourgeois teenagers around the world for black American 'gangster rap.' This makes it difficult to distinguish between cultural forms effectively in currency among ghetto residents and the public imagery of them diffused in the broader society (including via scholarly writings).

It is fruitful to think of ghetto and ethnic cluster as *two ideal typical configurations situated at opposite ends* of a continuum along which different groups can be located or travel over time depending on the intensity with which the forces of stigma, constraint, spatial confinement, and institutional duplication and completeness coalesce with each other and impinge upon them. Ghettoization can then be turned into a *multilevel variable* for comparative analysis and empirical specification. It can become attenuated to the point where, through gradual erosion of its spatial, social, and mental boundaries, the ghetto devolves into an elective ethnic concentration operating as a springboard for structural integration and/or cultural assimilation into the broader social formation. This describes well the trajectory of the Chinatowns of the United States from the early to the late twentieth century (Zhou 1992) and the status of the

Cuban immigrant enclave of Miami that fostered integration through biculturalism after the Mariel exodus of 1980 (Portes and Stepick 1993). It also characterizes the 'Kimchee Towns' in which Koreans have converged in the metropolitan areas of Japan, which sport a blend of features making them a hybrid between ghetto and ethnic cluster (DeVos and Chung 1981): they are places of infamy that first arose through enmity and constraint, but over the years their population has become ethnically mixed and they have enabled Koreans to socialize and intermarry with Japanese neighbors as well as obtain Japanese citizenship through naturalization. This schema also fits the so-called 'gay ghetto,' which is more aptly characterized as a 'quasi-ethnic community' since 'most gay persons can "pass" and need not be confined to interacting with their "own kind"' and none are forced to reside in the areas of visible concentration of gay institutions (Murray 1979, p. 169).

The double-sidedness of the ghetto as a weapon and shield implies that, to the degree that its institutional completeness and autonomy are abridged, its protective role for the subordinate group is diminished and risks being swamped by its exclusionary modality. In cases where its residents cease to be of economic value to the dominant group, ethnoracial encapsulation can escalate to the point where the ghetto serves as an apparatus merely to warehouse the spoiled group or to prepare it for the ultimate form of ostracization, i.e., physical annihilation. The first scenario fits the evolution of the black American 'hyperghetto' in the post-Civil Rights era: having lost its function of reservoir of unskilled labor power, it has become symbolically linked to the hypertrophied carceral system of the United States by a triple relationship of structural homology, functional surrogacy, and cultural fusion (Wacquant 2004). The second scenario is that implemented by Nazi Germany, which revived the *Judenghetto* between 1939 and 1944, first, to impoverish and concentrate Jews with a view toward relocation and later, when mass deportation turned out to be impractical, to funnel them toward extermination camps (Friedman 1980, Browning 1986).

The unchecked intensification of its exclusionary thrust suggests that the ghetto might be most profitably studied not by analogy with urban slums, lower-class neighborhoods, and immigrant enclaves but alongside the reservation, the refugee camp, and the prison, as belonging to a broader class of institutions for the forced confinement of dispossessed and dishonored groups. It is not by happenstance that the Bridewell of London (1555), the *Zuchthaus* of Amsterdam (1654), and the *Hospital général* of Paris (1656), designed to instill the discipline of wage work to able-bodied vagrants, beggars, and criminals via incarceration, were invented around the same time as the Jewish ghetto.

And that today's sprawling refugee camps in Rwanda, Sri Lanka, and in the occupied territories of Palestine look ever more like a cross between the ghettos of late medieval Europe and gigantic gulags.

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Loïc Wacquant

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