

**Globalizing the Ghetto in contemporary writing**  
**NEH Venice 2006**

1) CAMPIELLO DELLE SCUOLE – Qui sorgono le *Sinagoghe*, i templi degli israeliti.

Giulio Lorenzetti, *Venezia e il suo estuario*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1956 (1926) p. 410.

CAMPIELLO DELLE SCUOLE - here *stood* the Synagogues of the Jews.

Giulio Lorenzetti, *Venice and Its Lagoon*, transl. John Guthrie, Rome, 1961, p. 417 (my emphasis)

2) An old man sat alone and concentrated hard, as though determined to wrestle on for a few more years. In the distance two boys kicked a tennis ball back and forth. I watched them for a while, then walked across to a memorial plaque inscribed in three languages (French, English and Italian) and dedicated to the two groups of Venetian Jews taken in 1943 and 1944 to die in the concentration camps of the Holocaust.

One of the aspects of black America that I have never been able to comprehend fully, is the virulent anti-Semitism that seems to permeate much black thought....

Caryl Phillips, "In the Ghetto", *The European Tribe*, London, Faber and Faber, 1987, p. 52

3) I immediately saw an analogy between that island Venice and that island Manhattan. Venice in the sixteenth century was Manhattan in the early twentieth century: teeming with Jews driven out of Europe and the Middle East, destined to enrich the Christian world and to change it forever.

Erica Jong, *Fear of Fifty. A Midlife Memoir*, New York, HarperCollins, 1994, p. 225

4) An exhibit in the Hebrew Museum in Venice states that only about one hundred Jews returned after the war. But it is not clear that all the missing nineteen hundred were killed by the Nazis [...] But the precise numbers are not that important, at least not in this case, as an explanation of my experience of this surviving Jewish Community.

Eric Katz, "The authenticity of place in culture and nature: thoughts on the Holocaust in the Spanish synagogue of Venice", *Philosophy and Geography*, 5:2, 2002, p. 197.

5) Although I come from a Jewish family, my mother's atheism meant that I had little sense of either the faith or history of the Jewish people. Yet as soon as I entered the ghetto, I felt a strong sense of connection. It is a place whose stones seem to whisper its history and I defy any Jew not to feel a shiver down their spine as they read the bitter-sweet story of the Venetian Jews. To me, the area seemed to be full of untold stories. I did a series of interviews with several of the people living and working in the Jewish community and wrote an article that later appeared in the Jewish Quarterly, a Jewish arts magazine in London.

R.P., British Journalist and writer, personal communication, 2006

6) Poor Venice! Who knows if one day you will see some people in a cage in Piazza San Marco, with a sign saying, "Genuine Venetians." It could happen, then, that a tourist will pass over to the resident some leftovers from the sack lunch furnished with his admission pass to the living museum. (Oral testimony)

R. C. Davis & G. R. Marvin, *Venice, the Tourist Maze*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004, p. 299.