Is There Such a Thing as Privacy for the Poor? A Comparative Study of Sebastiano Serlio's Models of Domestic Architecture and the Fuggerei in Augsburg

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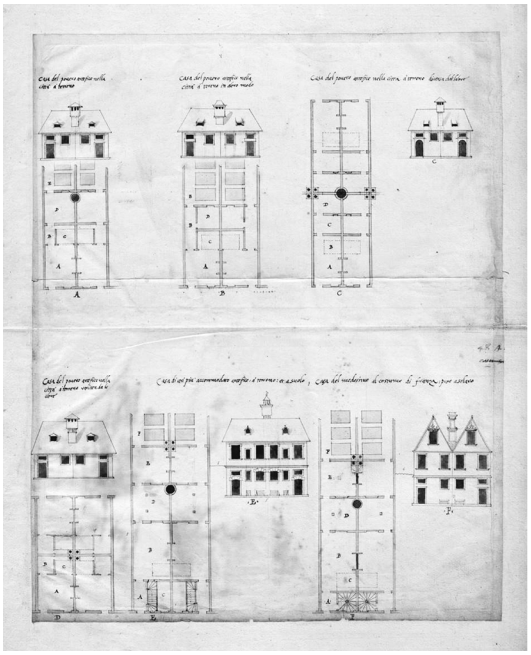




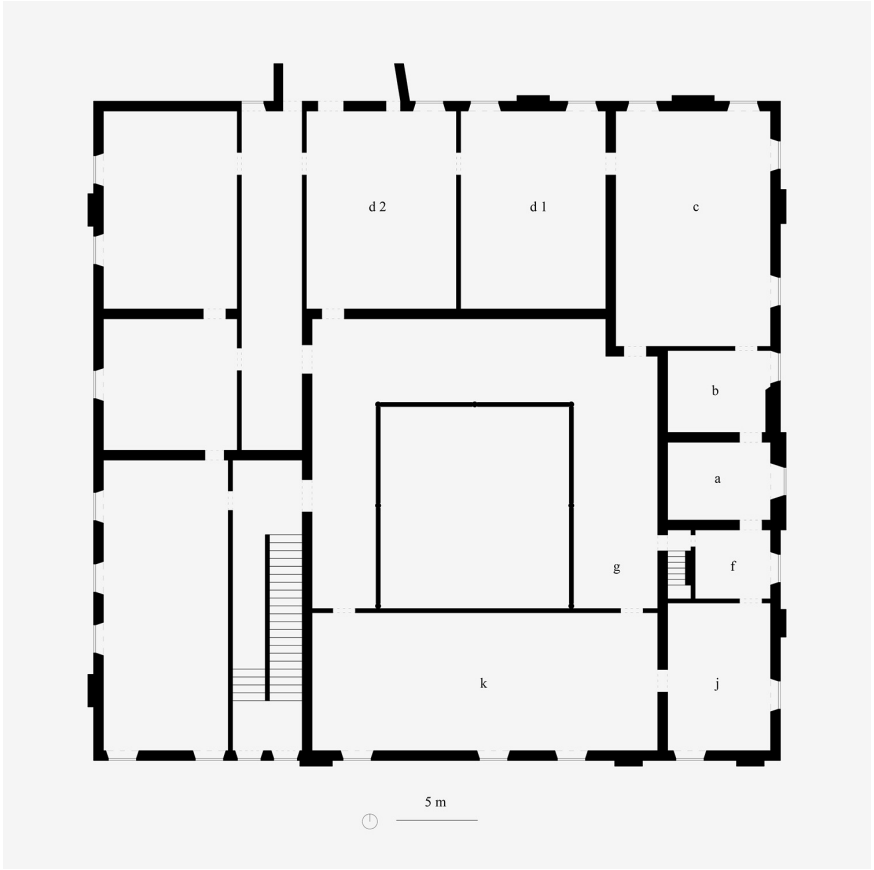
Left: Sebastiano Serlio, *Book VI,* Plate 48, ca. 1550. Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York.
Right: View of the back gardens of the Fuggerei housing complex.Photograph by John William Reps. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. https://jstor.org/stable/community.1504004.

In *The Italian Renaissance Interior*, historian Peter Thornton argued that "the story of architecture during the Renaissance period could be said to center round the increasing proliferation of rooms in the houses of those who could afford [it]."[1] This phenomenon of multiplication was also observed by Philippe Ariès, Georges Duby, and Roger Chartier, who noted that ever since the fifteenth century, among the main changes taking place in the organization of domestic architecture were a general reduction of room sizes and, most notably, the appearance of smaller annexed rooms—*studioli*, *salette,* or alcoves—which began to be used for specific purposes.[2] Driven by an inclination towards a more private life, these changes took place in the houses of the upper classes, as, in the words of Chartier, "private life began when a lad found himself with money in his pocket."[3] In this sense, the Italian palazzi of Florence, Rome, and Venice exemplify this shift best. In an attempt to tame the promiscuity of medieval domestic life, where household members constantly intermingled, this process of multiplication generated spatial sequences that allowed access to the most intimate rooms of the house to be filtered in a consequential manner. However, it was only in eighteenth-century Victorian England that the domestic notion of privacy became fully articulated with the emergence

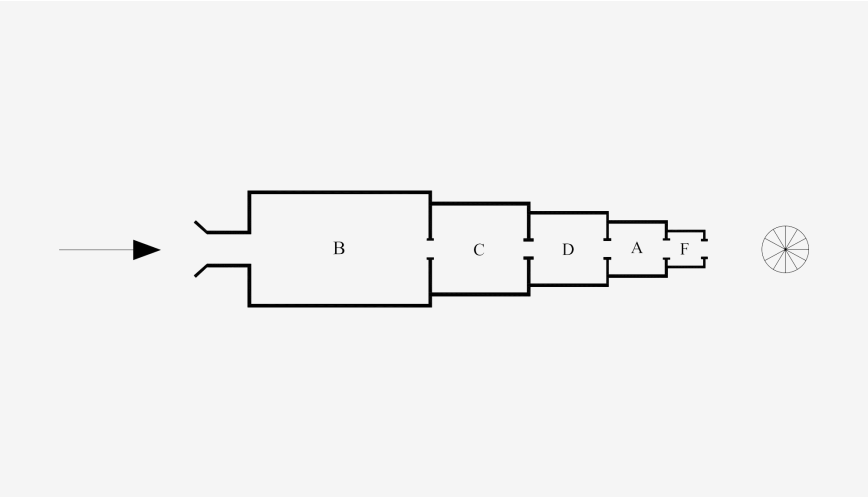
1 Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior, 1400–1600* (Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 290.
2 Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby, eds, *A History of Private Life, Vol. III*, Passions of the Renaissance, ed. Roger Chartier, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Harvard University Press, 1989), 6–7.
3 Ariès and Duby, *A History of Private Life*, Passions of the Renaissance, 406.



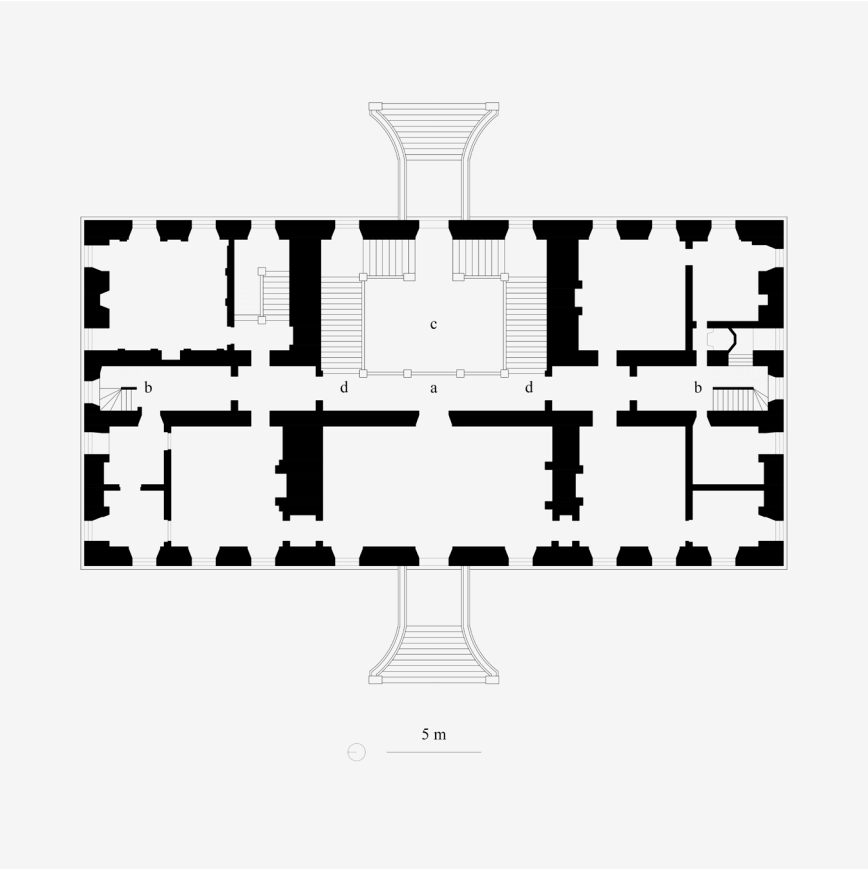
View of the *anticamera* of St. Augustine, accessible from his bedroom, with his small *studio* on the left. Carpaccio, *St. Augustine in His Study,* 1502, Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice.



Increasing degrees of privacy in the spatial sequence of the first Villa Imperiale, Pesaro; piano nobile, 1469–72.
(a) Owner's bedchamber? (b) Antechamber? (c) Sala. (d1, d2) Possibly once a single large room? (f) Owner's closet? (g) Back stairs. (j) Salottum, probably private dining room. (k) Originally a loggia facing south?
From Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior, 1400–1600* (Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 303. Adapted by Theodora Giovanazzi.



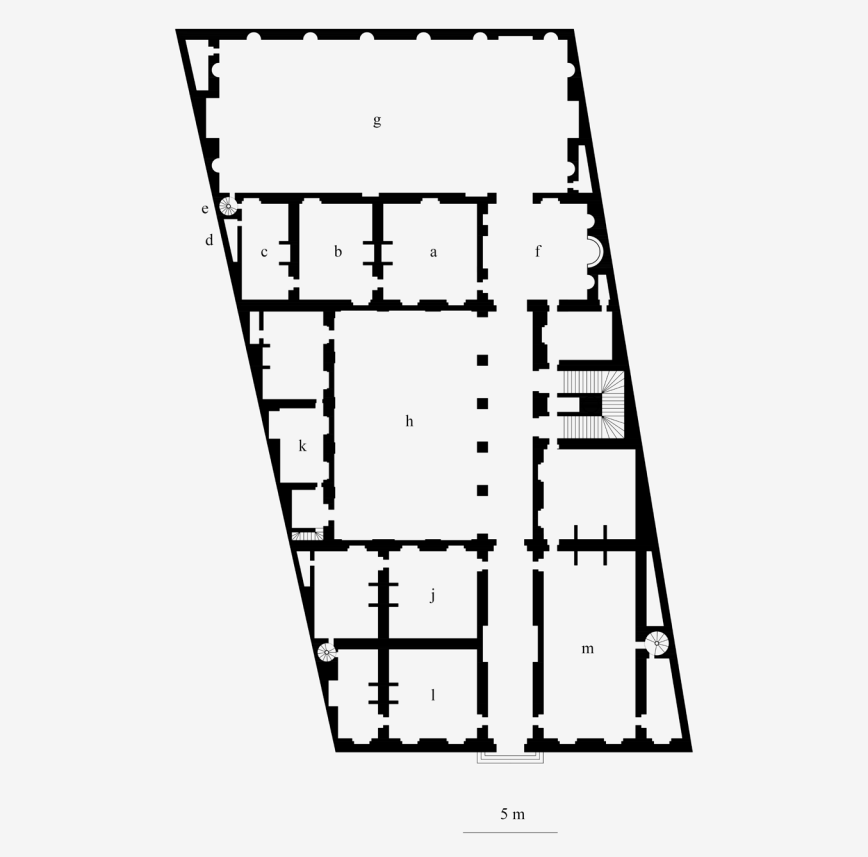
The apartment as described through the sequence of rooms in Leon Battista Alberti's De re aedificatoria, ca. 1485. (B) Main Hall. (C) Private dining hall. (D) Antechamber. (A) Bedchamber. (F) Closet (Studio). From Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior, 1400–1600* (Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 302.
Adapted by Constantinos Marcou.



Corridor with separate staircases for servants in Coleshill House's *piano nobile,* Berkshire, England. (a) Corridor. (b) Service corridor and staircase. (c) Hall. (d) Main staircase. From Robin Evans, 'Figures, Doors, Passageways,' in *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays,* AA Documents 2 (MIT Press, 1997), 72.
Adapted by Theodora Giovanazzi.

of the corridor as a way of providing access to a series of one-door rooms.[4] As Robin Evans pointed out, the thoroughfare corridor was not an innocent typological addition but rather a spatial device used to separate classes that coexisted within the same household: while the wealthy homeowners and their acquaintances could retire to their now-private rooms, their servants could be hidden away in the corridor.[5]

Yet, if this trend toward 'privacy' originated in wealthy households, it gradually came to influence the domestic arrangements of middle-class and poor families, in which the aspiration toward it became paramount, although driven by different concerns.[6]



A townhouse on an irregular site after Serlio's *Book VII*, showing an increasing concern for privacy as manifested by the enfilade of rooms. (a) Camera. (b) Dietro camera. (c) Camerino. (d) Space for close stool. (e) Back stairs. (f) Private courtyard. (g) Garden. (h) Main courtyard. (k-l) Subsidiary apartments. (m) Saletta or dining parlor.
From Sebastiano Serlio, *Settimo libro di architettura (1542),* KHM, Vienna, Plate 335.
Adapted by Theodora Giovanazzi.

In other words, if privacy, as a domestic attribute, was born as a privilege of the upper classes with the ideological goal of withdrawal and class separation, the aspiration towards privacy trickled down to the houses of the poor as a pedagogical instrument to promulgate middle-class customs and ways of living. The introduction of privacy into the habitation of the poor had a different purpose than it did for elite households. Within these habitations, privacy was not meant to preserve the solitude of one or more members of the household but to reinforce the isolation of the family and to sharpen the separation of public and private, which governments

4 Robin Evans, "Figures, Doors, Passageways," in *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays*, AA Documents 2 (MIT Press, 1997); Pier Vittorio Aureli and Martino Tattara, *The Room of One's Own* (Black Square, 2017), 24.
5 Evans, "Figures, Doors, Passageways," 84.
6 Aureli and Tattara, *The Room of One's Own*, 18.

deemed as one of the most effective ways to govern people.[7] In other words, privacy was less individualistic and more related to the social and economic 'sealing' of the household from other social relationships. At the same time, this idea of privacy was meant to distinguish and patronize certain types of poverty that were deemed deserving of being supported. Here we can see how privacy, rather than merely serving a way to counter social promiscuity, was also a value that created class differentiation.

It is important to say that the privatization of the household for the poor was achieved only in the late nineteenth century, when the housing question became a widespread problem for the modern state. Yet, as the notes that follow will attempt to suggest, the introduction of privacy in the houses of the poor has earlier origins. The hypothesis I would like to put forward is that those ambitions—that will later materialize themselves in the aspiration towards private home ownership, in the emphasis on the nuclear family, and in the separation between paid production (outside the house) and free reproduction (inside the house)—had started to be set in motion in the early modern period alongside the emergence of mercantile capitalism. The following notes thus discuss two sixteenth-century case studies that can be situated within this early prehistory: Sebastiano Serlio's designs for the poor peasant, as described in his *Book VI: On Domestic Architecture,* and the Fuggerei affordable housing complex in Augsburg, in contemporary Germany.

Serlio's treatise was among the first to treat the houses of the 'deserving poor' as an architectural subject, situating them within the same typological lineage as those of the nascent middle class. In the treatise, as the wealth of the inhabitants grew, houses acquired rooms with more clearly defined uses, suggesting that access to a more private life depended on material resources. While Serlio's *Book VI* only theorized the possibility of individual dwellings for the 'deserving' poor, the Fuggerei—the first large-scale affordable housing complex built in European history— institutionalized that logic for the specific category of the *Hausarmen*. The Fuggerei can be read as an early example in which the emerging yet still inchoate separation of living and working became a powerful tool for educating its inhabitants in the work ethic of wage labor and homeownership.

At the heart of this paper lies a wager that will be posed in the form of a question: Is it really possible to speak of the privacy *of* the poor?

SEBASTIANO SERLIO'S BOOK VI

Born in Bologna in 1475 and initially trained as a painter, Sebastiano Serlio was a Renaissance architect and author. Despite a limited number of realized projects, Serlio's impact on architecture was considerable, as he compiled one of the earliest modern European architectural treatises published in a vernacular language and in an illustrated format.[8] Before Serlio's oeuvre, others had authored treatises on architecture, such as Antonio Averlino 'Filarete' in 1460–64, Francesco di Giorgio Martini in 1480–1501, and Leon Battista Alberti (c. 1450).[9] However, Serlio's treatise diverged from these in several important aspects. First, unlike Alberti's *De Architectura*, Serlio's *Treatise in Seven Books* was written in vernacular Italian rather than Latin and relied predominantly on illustrations rather than extended textual expositions.[10] Secondly, it was conceived to be used by architects rather than patrons, functioning as a didactic tool

7 Aureli and Tattara, *The Room of One's Own*, 5.

8 Sebastiano Serlio, *Sebastiano Serlio on Domestic Architecture*, ed. Mira Nan Rosenfeld, with Adolf K. Placzek and James S. Ackerman (The Architectural History Foundation, 1978), 1.

9 Sebastiano Serlio et al., *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture: Books I–V of 'Tutte l'opere d'architettura et Prospetiva'* (Yale University Press, 1996), 1:xvii.

10 This is why Myra Nan Rosenfeld has noted that Book VI should be referred to as an "illustrated architectural manual" rather than a treatise. Serlio, *Sebastiano Serlio on Domestic Architecture*, 7.

through which Vitruvian knowledge could be acquired independently of traditional apprenticeship structures.[11]

Despite never reaching the press, Serlio's sixth installment on domestic architecture had a profound influence on the sixteenth-century architectural milieu and beyond, as multiple copies of the manuscript were likely disseminated among engaged readers.[12] One of the most innovative features of the treatise arguably lies in the subject matter of *Book VI*. Composed between 1541 and 1550, ca., *Book VI* addresses domestic dwellings in the countryside and the city, organized in a hierarchical structure that assigns dwellings according to the inhabitant's affluence and social standing, ranging from the impoverished peasant to the merchants to the affluent king. The sheer variety of house models presented in *Book VI* attests to the progressive division of society into distinct classes, a political and social conjecture that began to affirm itself between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Serlio was among the first to register this shift: although Alberti, in *Book V* of *On the Art of Building in Ten Books,* mentions the rich and poor as distinct subjects with different requirements, Serlio's book evokes a more clearly defined class composition that comprises multiple distinct groups, which was a novel development for that time.[13] In his inclusion of designs for the poor, Serlio extended the same architectural principles previously reserved for exceptional buildings to the design of dwellings intended for peasants and craftsmen.[14]

HOUSES FOR THE POOR IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The first designs included in *Book VI* are houses for the poor peasants in the countryside. Serlio outlines the plan of a single-family detached house with a pitched roof: a simple room with a direct entry and a fireplace is intended for the residents to sleep in. As the wealth of the inhabitants increases, more rooms could be added, for instance, a stable with a small window facing the fireplace, and a portico in front of the house. If the peasant were even wealthier, he could further add an oven and a *cantina*—an outhouse or cellar used for storage purposes or to make wine and olive oil. "Thus," Serlio states, "this house will serve for four degrees of limited means."[15] In *Book VI*, as the inhabitants' wealth grows, the projects grow larger, with more internal divisions and specialized rooms serving more precise functions—suggesting that privacy appears as a spatial privilege that intensifies with economic rank.

In the later Munich version, Serlio states that he "omit[ted] the humble hut of the poor beggar" and designed the first house for "the poor man living off his own labours with his small households, who has a little land and who needs at least one room to sleep in and in which to have a fire."[16] In this latter version, Serlio introduces two characteristics that condition access to designed domestic space in *Book VI*: the poor inhabitant must be engaged in productive labor and must belong to a family unit in order to be recognized as a member of the social body. These characteristics not only reflect the emerging differentiation of poverty into distinct and hierarchically ordered categories that occurred throughout early modern Europe, but also the consciousness that some categories were more or less deserving than others.

11 Serlio et al., *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture: Books I–V of 'Tutte l'opere d'architettura et Prospetiva'*, 1:xviii.

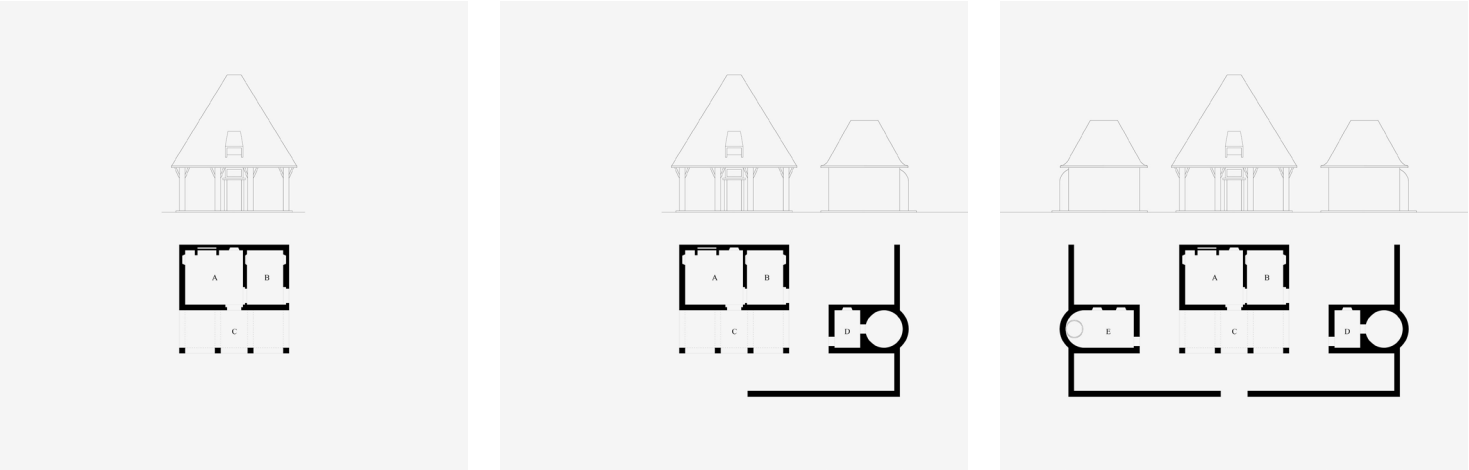
12 Serlio, *Sebastiano Serlio on Domestic Architecture*, 68.

13 See especially Alberti's *Book V*, Section 14, on private buildings: Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert et al. (1988; MIT Press, 1999), 140.

14 Mario Carpo, "The Architectural Principles of Temperate Classicism: Merchant Dwellings in Sebastiano Serlio's Sixth Book," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 22 (September 1992): 138, https://doi.org/10.1086/RESv22n1ms20166858.

15 Sebastiano Serlio et al., *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture: Books VI–VII of 'Tutte l'opere d'architettura et Prospetiva'* (Yale University Press, 2001), 2:1v.

16 Serlio et al., *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture*, 2:1v.



House for the poor peasant. Left: First and second degrees of poverty. Center: Third degree of poverty. Right: Fourth degree of poverty. (A) Room with a fireplace. (B) Stable. (C) Portico. (D) Oven. (E) Outhouse. From Serlio, Sebastiano, *Sesto libro d'architettura. Delle habitationi fuori e dentro delle città,* BSB Cod.icon. 189, 2r. Drawing by Theodora Giovanazzi.

Indeed, in early modern Europe, the poor, and especially the 'able-bodied' beggars, were increasingly perceived as sources of social discontent and as risks to moral and civic order.[17] Therefore, rather than seeking to resolve the structural problems of the early modern social order, Serlio's treatise adopts a pragmatic approach, proposing domestic solutions that accommodate and thereby accept the existing social order. The dwellings for the poor proposed in *Book VI* reflect the beginning of the understanding that, to prevent the productive poor from falling into vagrancy, they had to be housed in appropriate dwellings, which became the means by which they could continue to work.[18]

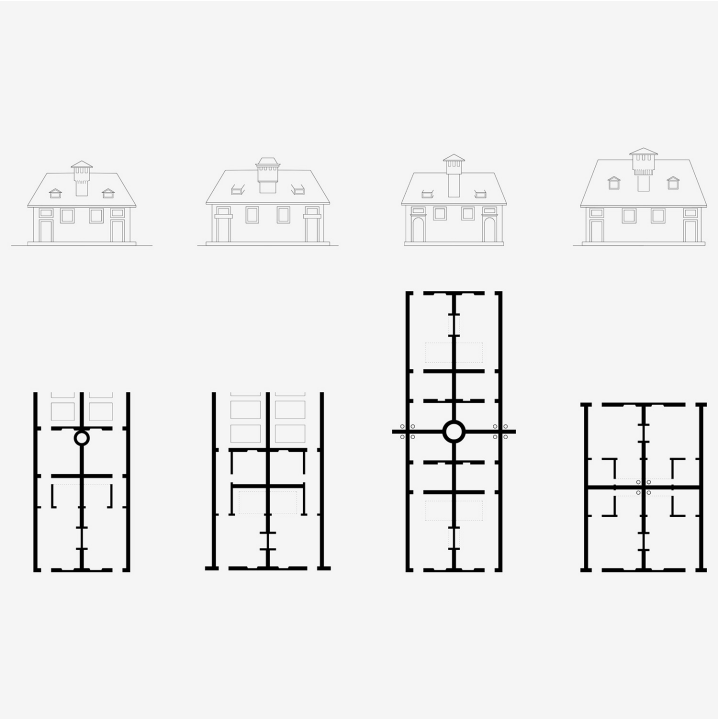
HOUSES FOR THE POOR IN THE CITY

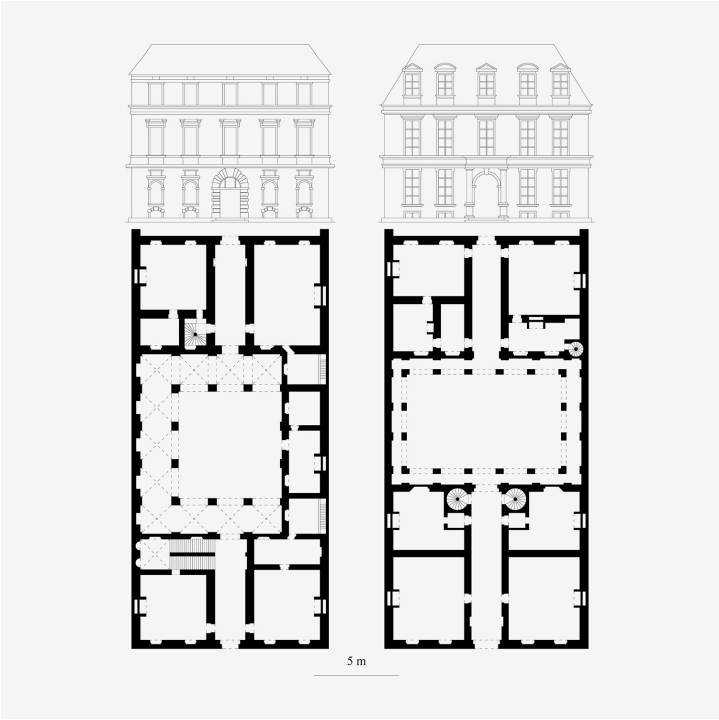
In the urban context, the first dwellings addressed by Serlio are those for the poorest craftsmen, described as individuals "who work in various lowly trades."[19] For this group, he proposes four projects and a fifth for a higher-ranking craftsman, for whom he provides both Italian and French options. As observed by historian Mario Carpo, the boundary between the lower and middle ranks is blurred: Serlio's gradual variations on the typologies for peasants, craftsmen, tradesmen, and merchants suggest a continuum, whereas the designs for the nobility seem to constitute a categorical break with those of the mercantile middle class.[20]

The first design for a poor craftsman is a narrow, elongated, single-story row house with two units separated by a party wall. The first room incorporates a bed alcove that creates a narrow passageway leading to an exterior courtyard at the back of the house, followed by a small vegetable garden and a privy. The interior layout is organized around a continuous party wall separating two mirrored dwellings, suggesting that each unit could be replicated as many times as permitted by the site, forming a uniform row. Functional elements are optimized efficiently: paired dwellings share essential services such as the well and the chimney. The second design is similar to the first one but slightly wider and differently

17 Robert Jütte, *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 143.
18 Pier Vittorio Aureli, "Il ritorno della fabbrica: Appunti su territorio, architettura, operai e capitale," *OperaViva Magazine*, 2016, https://operavivamagazine.org/il-ritorno-della-fabbrica/.
19 Serlio et al., *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture*, 2:44v.
20 Carpo, "The Architectural Principles of Temperate Classicism," 139.

articulated in plan: the elongated passageway leads to an additional kitchen room before reaching the vegetable garden. The third design resolves not only the serial repetition of the unit along the street frontage but also its extension towards the rear, resulting in a configuration forming four back-to-back dwellings. A fourth design option replicates the previous four-dwelling layouts but without the courtyard. The plan is more compact to allow street-front lighting throughout the interiors, while internal partitions carve out a small private room adjacent to the bed alcove, which hosts the privy. What all these designs share is the possibility of being reproduced and serialized in a tightening urban environment. Serialization, repeatability, and the drawing of precise boundaries thus become defining architectural characteristics of the dwellings of the poor.





Left: City houses for a poor artisan. From Sebastiano Serlio, *Sesto libro d'architettura. Delle habitationi fuori e dentro delle città* (c. 1550), Avery Library, Columbia University, US. Plate 48 recto. Drawing by Theodora Giovanazzi.
Right: City houses for a rich citizen or good merchant. From Sebastiano Serlio, *Sesto libro d'architettura. Delle habitationi fuori e dentro le città* (c. 1550), Avery Library, Columbia University, US. Plate 51 recto. Drawing by Theodora Giovanazzi.

THE FUGGEREI IN AUGSBURG

The Fuggerei was built in Jakobervorstadt, a newly incorporated suburban district located on the eastern side of the historical city of Augsburg near the river Lech, between 1517 and 1523. Commissioned by the famous merchant Jakob Fugger, it consisted of 53 dwellings organized into ten housing rows, divided by seven internal streets. In contrast to the medieval city, whose streets followed irregular paths and often widened to welcome a square, the remarkably straight streets of the Fuggerei admitted no such interruptions. Even the Fuggerei's Church, the Markuskapelle, a building that in a medieval city or town would have been a civic focal point, was subsumed by the rigid and orderly geometry of the housing row.

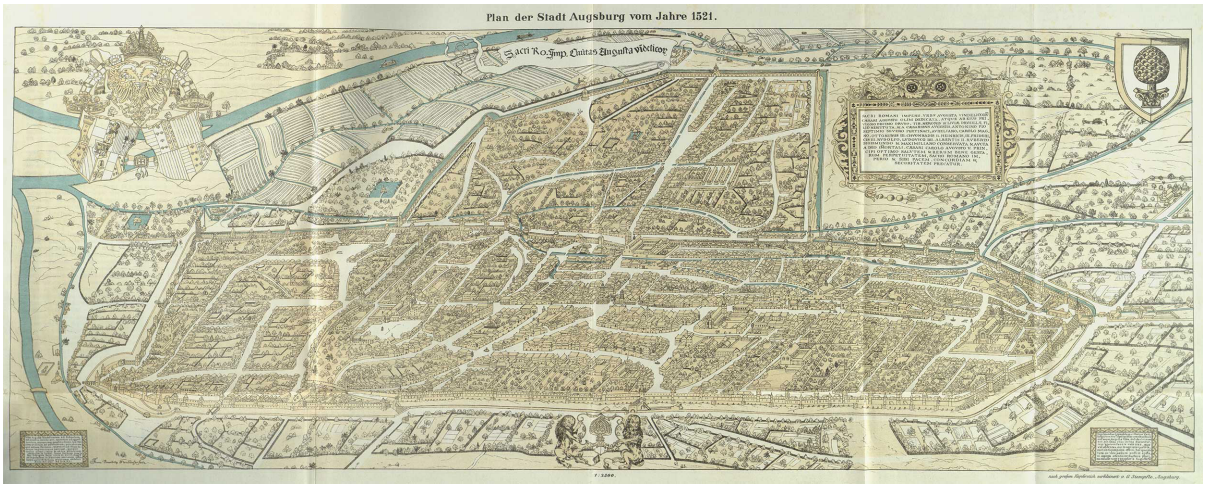


The remarkably straight streets of the Fuggerei in antithesis to the medieval city of Augsburg. Drawing by Julie Bron, Célestine Delemazure, Julie Landert, Gustav Lucas, and Laura Pax, for the 2026 Superstudio course *Monsters: An Illustrated History of Social Housing* at EPFL.

As the first project of its kind, the Fuggerei was meant to house the *Hausarmen*, or 'shamefaced' poor. This category referred to the industrious yet innocently impoverished individual who, lacking ownership of a house and workshop, was deprived of the means to regain prosperity through their craft. In Augsburg, after all, the status of master craftsman was tied to home ownership, itself a marker and prerequisite for citizenship.[21] This demonstrates the importance of domestic space in the political and economic sphere of sixteenth-century Augsburg. The Fuggerei's tenants had to pay a rent of one Rhenish florin per year and were selected according to strict criteria defined by the House Charter: no single people, only married couples, families, or, exceptionally, widows living in Augsburg. As described in the inscription above the entrance gate, the tenants of the Fuggerei had to be "fellow citizens, respectable but burdened by poverty."[22]

21 Marion Tietz-Strödel, *Die Fuggerei in Augsburg: Studien Zur Entwicklung Des Sozialen Stiftungsbaus Im 15. Und 16. Jahrhundert* (J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1982), 15.

22 "Municipibus suis frugi sed pauperie laborantibus." Inscription on a plaque above the entrance gate of the Fuggerei in Augsburg. Translation from the Latin by the author.



The Free Imperial City of Augsburg in the sixteenth century. Map of Augsburg, 1521 by Georg Seld (c. 1441–1526/27). From Fritz, Steinhäusser, *Augsburg in kunstgeschichtlicher, baulicher und hygienischer Beziehung* (Augsburg 1902).



Jakob Fugger the Rich (1459–1525) and his bookkeeper Matthäus Schwarz, from the *Schwarz Costume Book,* Herzog, Anton Ulrich-Museum, HS 27 N. 67, Braunschweig, Germany.

Privacy in the Fuggerei manifested in the aspiration towards home ownership and in the gradual tension between living and working within the domestic sphere, brought about by mercantile capitalism. In the sixteenth century, the emergence of different types of industries, such as weaving and publishing, resulted in the development of a wage-dependent craftsmen's proletariat, as the sale of goods previously undertaken by self-employed craftsmen was transferred to merchants or publishers, upon whom the craftsmen became dependent. The Fuggerei was mainly inhabited by weavers, followed by gatekeepers, day laborers, carpenters, and gardeners: all service trades whose work was directly dependent on clients or on manufacturing activities based on the division of labor.[23] As histori-

23 Tietz-Strödel, *Die Fuggerei in Augsburg: Studien Zur Entwicklung Des Sozialen Stiftungsbaus Im 15. Und 16. Jahrhundert*, 38.

an Marion Tietz-Strödel demonstrated, it is impossible to determine how many people were engaged in productive labor within the Fuggerei houses. However, we know that many inhabitants were wage-dependent craftsmen reliant on the 'cottage industry' system, a form of dispersed domestic labor in which a merchant subcontracted workers to produce goods that the merchant would then collect and sell independently.



The Hausarmen or 'shamefaced poor.' From Cesare Vecellio, *De gli habiti antichi et moderni di diverse parti del mondo* (Damian Zenaro, 1590).



Late medieval market activity on Augsburg's Perlach Square.
Heinrich Vogtherr the Younger, *Idealisierte Darstellung des spätmittelalterlichen Marktgeschehen auf dem Augsburger Perlachplatz*, ca. 1540.
Kunstsammlungen und Museen Augsburg, Augsburg, Germany.

The Fuggerei dwellings thus provided the Hausarmen with a secure domestic space where some work could be performed. Yet the limited size of the dwellings constrained such activities, thereby preventing the accumulation of resources or the space needed to establish a fully independent workshop. At the core of the project was the growing tension between living and working: residents could perform certain types of work while enjoying the security of a house, yet the architectural framework of the Fuggerei and the rules imposed by the house charter simultaneously discouraged their transition to master craftsmen—a status that would have forced them to move out of the settlement.

A HOUSE FOR EACH

In the housing rows, each vertical module included two stories, with one apartment on each, accessible through separate ground-floor entrances. Although the inhabitants of the Fuggerei remained tenants, the provision of independent access encouraged them to regard their dwellings as their own. With 52 houses and 104 dwellings in total, the Fuggerei was characterized by a remarkable repetition of the same house type (Type 1) throughout its entire blueprint, with only five exceptions (houses nrs. 14b, 17, 19-20a, 23, 25) that show minor typological variations most likely occurring due to the peculiar site condition of their location. The ground-floor dwelling of Type 1 included three rooms (F-H) and a kitchen (D), all accessible through a central corridor (C) that also linked the entrance (A) to the small back garden (I). Apart from a single case (Type 4, House nr. 23), the kitchen is always located at the back of the house, while the street-facing fronts are reserved for the living space, highlighting that the orientation of individual rooms within dwellings was never guided by climatic considerations such as sunlight or exposure, or by aesthetic concerns, but rather by a precise, systematic standardization logic that governed the layout of the entire complex. A typical stove, the Beilegerofen (E), was present in each dwelling. It could be fired up from the kitchen and therefore radiate heat to the next-door living room[24]. Moreover, a small window allowed women to supervise their children in the living room from the kitchen. The other two rooms were used as sleeping spaces. To a certain extent, these architectural moves informed the use and function of rooms so that the dwellers' lives could be regulated and kept in check, also within the most private of spaces.

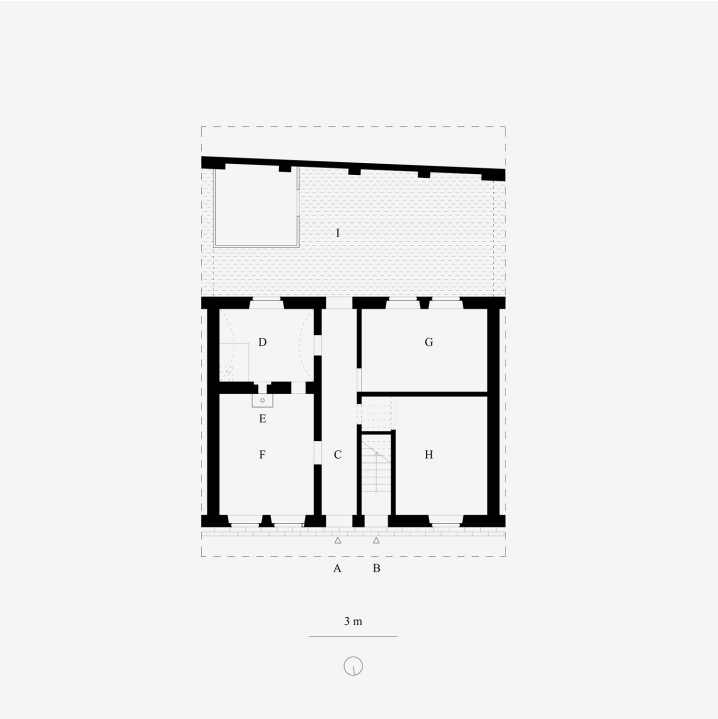
In this sense, the Fuggerei's dwellings indicate a shift from the typical medieval houses of peasants and lower-income households. Historically, these were closer to Serlio's designs for the deserving poor: rectangular enclosures in which internal subdivision was minimal and in which working and living activities were conducted side by side, either indoors or in the adjacent productive garden.[25] Unlike the medieval type, the Fuggerei's dwellings adopted a square floor plan and were subdivided into rooms. These rooms were complemented by either a small garden at the rear in the case of the ground-floor house or an attic on the upper-floor dwelling.

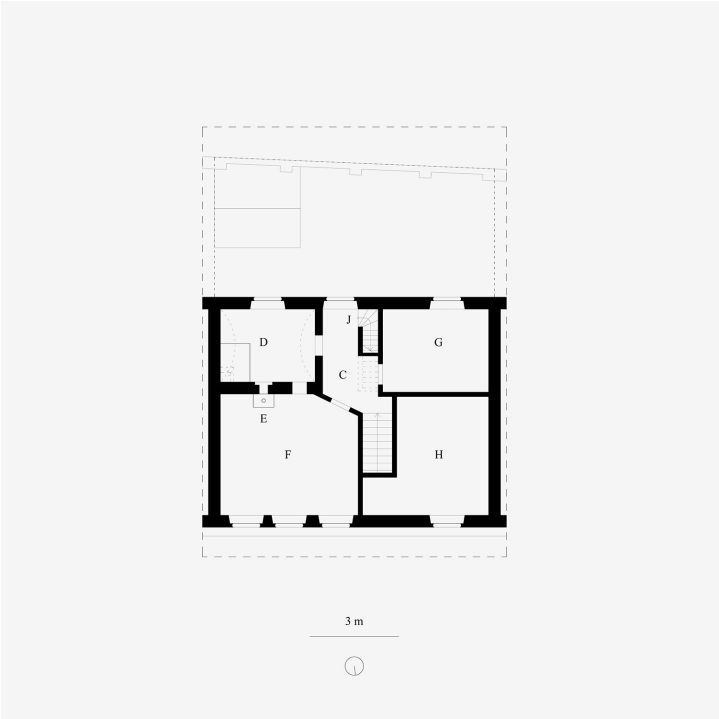
Crucial to ensuring the privacy of each household in the Fuggerei were the gardens. These were not conceived as spaces of leisure and sociability, but rather as places to keep small animals or to host small workshops and tool sheds. In many cases, however, the gardens were so small that Tietz-Strödel aptly described them as a kind of "garden utopia,"[26] insuf-

24 The stove type used for the Fuggerei dwellings was the Beilegerofen, a type of tiled masonry stove that is fired from an adjacent room and that can therefore radiate heat at its back. Joseph Weidenbacher, Die Fuggerei in Augsburg: Die Erste Deutsche Kleinhaus-Stiftung. Ein Beitrag Zur Geschichte Des Deutschen Kleinhauses (Im Selbstverlag, 1926), 45.

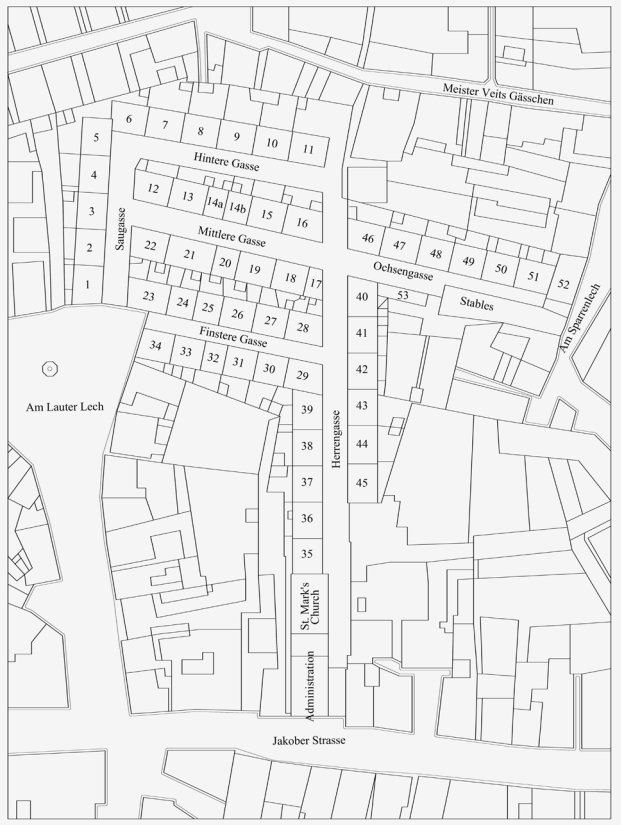
25 Pier Vittorio Aureli and Martino Tattara, *Living and Working* (The MIT Press, 2022), 20.

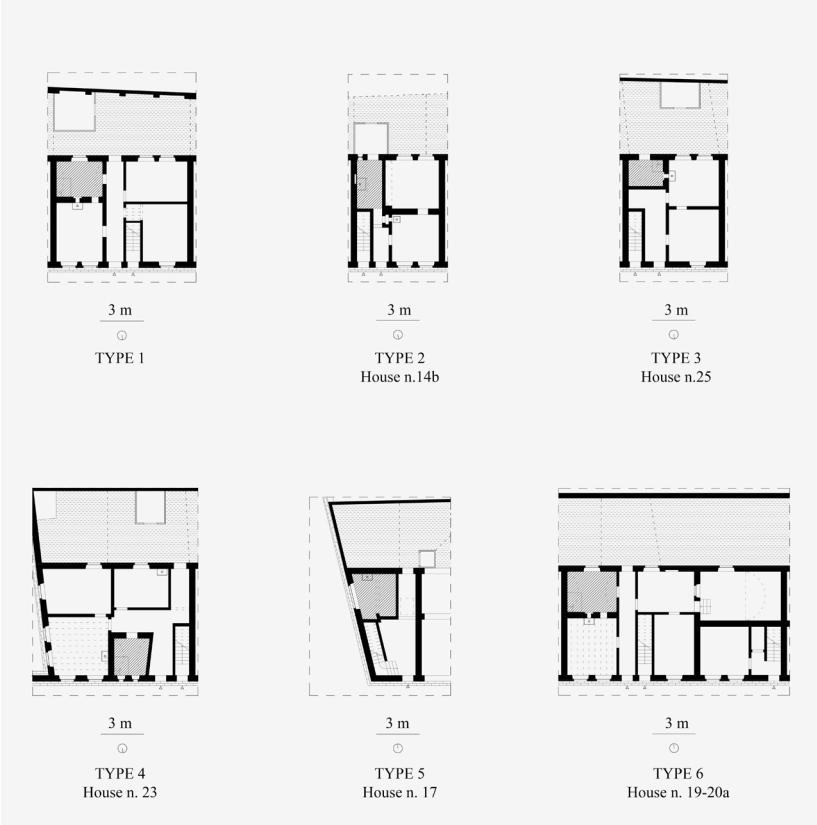
26 Tietz-Strödel, *Die Fuggerei in Augsburg: Studien Zur Entwicklung Des Sozialen Stiftungsbaus Im 15. Und 16. Jahrhundert*, 81.





Left: Type 1 (House nr. 47), ground floor plan.
(A) Entrance to ground-floor dwelling. (B) A) Entrance to first-floor dwelling. (C) Corridor.
(D) Kitchen. (E) Beilegerofen. (F) Room 1. (G) Room 2. (H) Room 3. (I) Garden with a shed.
Drawing by Theodora Giovanazzi.
Right: Type 1 (House nr. 47), first floor plan. (C) Corridor. (D) Kitchen. (E) Beilegerofen.
(F) Room 1. (G) Room 2. (H) Room 3. (J) Staircase to the attic.
Drawing by Theodora Giovanazzi.





Left: The Fuggerei in 1523. From Joseph Weidenbacher, *Die Fuggerei in Augsburg: Die Erste Deutsche Kleinhaus-Stiftung* (Im Selbstverlag, 1926).
Adapted by Theodora Giovanazzi.
Right: Fuggerei house types with a focus on the location of the kitchens.
Drawing by Theodora Giovanazzi.

ficient for convivial use. Moreover, their reduced size prevented their use for subsistence farming. The garden thus functioned as an open-air extension of the private household, strictly demarcated from neighboring plots and reinforcing the separation between families. As Scheller notes, the architecture of the back gardens embodied the very work ethic that defined the category of the *Hausarmen*. On the one hand, the subdivided gardens encouraged dwellers to maintain their status as the working poor through daily labor performed outside of the settlement; on the other hand, their placement at the rear of the dwelling, which kept them busy and out of public view, extinguished the possibility of idleness in the streets.[27]

PRIVACY OF OR FOR THE POOR?

As Myra Nan Rosenfeld observed, Serlio advanced a systematic approach to organizing domestic space in which privacy became a central planning principle, driven by the division of the extended family into separate nuclear families, typical of the later fifteenth century.[28] The focus on the nuclear family was also reflected in the Fuggerei's house charter, which explicitly prohibited single people or extended families from becoming tenants. While Serlio's house designs were intended to fit the medieval city and its long and thin rectangular lots, the Fuggerei's dwellings are subsumed by the logic of the row, which subordinates the individuality of the dweller to the collective identity of the settlement. In this sense, the Fuggerei's standardized architecture was more focused on articulating the distinction between living and working by making the house a place of reproduction and excluding waged activities. Room subdivision and planning are more sophisticated in the Fuggerei: while Serlio's dwellings include a bed alcove, the Fuggerei includes a bed chamber. While Serlio's city dwellings include a garden whose boundary is not defined, in the case of the Fuggerei the garden is so reduced that it cannot be used for productive purposes other than to host small storage sheds. Separate entrances encouraged the aspiration towards homeownership among the Fuggerei's inhabitants, who nevertheless remained tenants. Ultimately, the Fuggerei constitutes an important case study for understanding the origins of the separation between living and working and between domestic artisanal production and factory-based industrial capitalism. Although in its very nascent status, in the architecture of the Fuggerei we can see the idea of the house as a private refuge ideologically opposed to, but technically complementary to, the world of wage labor, which was meant to take place away from both the house and the settlement.

Returning to our initial wager, it remains a matter of debate whether we can ultimately speak of the privacy of the poor. What emerges from these cases points less towards a privacy *of* the poor than towards a privacy *for* the poor: an aspiration inherited by the upper classes' desire for withdrawal and separation, which trickled down to the poor no longer as the possibility of personal solitude but as a pedagogical and almost paternalistic instrument, educating laborers to a precise way of living in line with the emerging capitalist organization of society.

27 Benjamin Scheller, *Memoria an der Zeitenwende: die Stiftungen Jakob Fuggers des Reichen vor und während der Reformation (ca. 1505–1555)* (Akademie Verlag, 2004), 150.

28 Serlio, *Sebastiano Serlio on Domestic Architecture*, 50.

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AUTHOR

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