



## Dubai, the City as Corporation

By Ahmed Kanna

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Somewhere in the course of the late twentieth century, Dubai became more than itself. The city was, suddenly, a postmodern urban spectacle rising from the desert—precisely the glittering global consumer utopia imagined by Dubai’s rulers and merchant elite. In *Dubai, the City as Corporation*, Ahmed Kanna looks behind this seductive vision to reveal the role of cultural and political forces in shaping both the image and the reality of Dubai.

Exposing local struggles over power and meaning in the making and representation of Dubai, Kanna examines the core questions of what gets built and for whom. His work, unique in its view of the interconnectedness of cultural identity, the built environment, and politics, offers an instructive picture of how different factions—from local and non-Arab residents and expatriate South Asians to the cultural and economic elites of the city—have all participated in the creation and marketing of Dubai. The result is an unparalleled account of the ways in which the built environment shapes and is shaped by the experience of globalization and neoliberalism in a diverse, multinational city.

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Review

"*Dubai, the City as Corporation* is a thoughtful, in-depth treatment on Dubai and its recent explosive economic growth, grounded in the urban studies/spatial theory of Henri Lefebvre. Engaging and persuasive, it knits together anthropology and urban design, giving a balanced assessment of Dubai's reinvention as a city, a global commerce center, and an experiment in urban planning." —Timothy Luke, Virginia Tech

About the Author

Ahmed Kanna is assistant professor of anthropology and international studies at the University of the Pacific.

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