Contemporary Urbanism and Medieval Citizenship

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The contemporary moment of globalization is characterized by a distinctive economic and political order often understood as neoliberalism. This ideology and practice of free markets is vividly manifested at the urban scale., from the entrepreneurial remaking of cityscapes to the vicious management of poverty. More generally, it is marked by the withdrawal of the state from the agendas of social responsibility. In various parts of the world, non-state actors have taken the place of the state, providing resources to compensate for austerity policies. For example, in Latin America, international drug bosses provide urban services to the favelas of Rio; in the Middle East and South Asia, religious fundamentalist groups, be they Hindu or Islamist, perform similar patronage functions in the informal settlements of Cairo, Beirut, and Mumbai. These spaces can be thought of as medieval enclaves regulated through the democracy of modern consumption. However, they are not simply the domain of the poor. With the deepening of socio-economic polarization, the urban elite now enjoy fortified isolation in gated communities. In cities like Sao Paulo, the elite can even avoid the streets of the city, taking to helicopters to occupy a wholly different realm of circulation. These practices have been labeled postmodern, interpreted as a vision of the dystopian urban future portrayed in films like *Blade Runner*.

In this paper, we argue that these seemingly new urban practices are better understood by employing the "medieval" as an analytical device. The term medieval operates here not as historical category but rather as a trope that can shed light on structures of contemporary urbanism that have congruence with historic processes.

Three points of congruence are particularly important. First, if modern citizenship is constituted through a set of abstract individual rights embedded in the concept of the nation-state then now there is the emergence of forms of citizenship that are located in urban enclaves. As in medieval times, this citizenship is linked to either patronage (as in the feudal lord) or to associational membership (as in the guild) and in both cases is fundamentally about protection. Second, such forms of citizenship substitute for or are even hostile to the state. From the private homeowners associations to the neighborhood-level Islamic republics being declared by religious fundamentalist groups, these are private systems of governance that operate as medieval fiefdoms, imposing truths and norms that are contrary to national law. Third, this logic of rule has territorial manifestations. The city comes to be articulated in what some scholars have termed a "honeycomb of jurisdictions," a "medieval body" of heterogeneous and increasingly private memberships. These forms of urbanism present a challenge to the ideals of planning - to liberal democracy, public space, progressive civil society, and the role of the state. They also challenge planning scholars to take serious account of history. If planning is a future-oriented enterprise, then our conceptualization of contemporary cities as governed by medieval practices disrupts this teleology. By examining cases from Latin America, the Middle East, and South Asia, we historicize the discussion of everyday urbanism, showing how specific modalities within history can be used as analytical tools rather than simply as historical periods. In doing so, we draw attention to processes that are considered deviant or anomalous but that are in fact fundamental components of today's urban landscape.

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The contemporary moment of globalization is characterized by a distinctive economic and political order often understood as neoliberalism. This ideology and practice of free markets is vividly manifested at the urban scale, from the entrepreneurial remaking of cityscapes (Harvey 1989; 2000) to the criminalization of poverty (Smith 1996). In this paper, we analyze the urban geographies of neoliberalism by highlighting three distinctive spatial formations; the walled compound, the squatter settlement and the refugee camp. We argue that together these spatial types constitute a landscape of "splintering urbanism" (Graham and Marvin 2001) that is the hallmark of the present moment. We further argue that these contemporary urbanisms can be usefully understood via the trope of a contemporary "medieval" citizenship.

We employ the term "medieval" not as a direct engagement with this volatile and long period with all its complex and unresolved historical circumstances but rather as an analytical category that allows us to engage history in an attempt to understand the present. Such an endeavor yields at least the following results. First, it historicizes seemingly new urban practices, thereby showing that these are not simply deviant or anomalous forms but rather quite normal and fundamental components of urban landscapes. Second, if planning is a future-oriented enterprise, then the conceptualization of contemporary cities as governed by medieval-like practices disrupts the teleology of progress. Accordingly this conception forces us to take account of history, not as a linear periodization but instead as a reservoir of concepts, the mining of which makes possible the articulation of theory. Such uses of history are particularly interesting in relation to the medieval trope. As a historian of the Middle Ages, Le Goff argues that the medieval period provides a healthy balance between the judicious use of evidence and an innovative but grounded imagination – unlike antiquity whose silences leave too much for conjecture or modernity with its heap of documentary material (Le Goff 1980, 27). Hence the practices of medievalism as reflected in the complex history of the Middle Ages offers much for reflection on other time periods.

The emphasis of this paper is on the connection between cities and citizenship. Today, as there is much talk about forms of citizenship that transcend the nation-state (Cheah and Robbins 1998), so there is discussion of cities as sites of citizenship. Quite a bit of this discourse is optimistic, envisioning cities as arenas of livability, livelihood, and social transformation (Friedmann and Douglass 1998; Evans 2002). In everyday politics, such notions have created the sense that urban regimes of governance can counter the chauvinisms of national regimes. Thus, in post 9-11 North America, as patriotism is enacted through a formidable apparatus of security and surveillance, so there is an argument being made that cities can adopt a different politics. In the recent San Francisco's mayoral race, one of the unsuccessful candidates, put forth a vision of an urban regime of citizenship that directly challenges national and state laws: from the issuing of ID cards to undocumented workers, to creating municipal banks for community development loans, to exploring tidal energy as an alternative energy source. This language is uncannily reminiscent of a long-standing discourse where cities become a key explanatory device for analyzing the transition from European feudalism to European capitalism. In the work of Henri Pirenne, cities are islands of freedom amidst countrysides of unfreedom. Quite simply, the concept of cities as sites of citizenship is embedded in the medieval trope.

In this paper, we return to the medieval roots of urban citizenship but greatly complicate Pirenne's narrative of "freedom." We pay attention to how urban citizenship at various moments of medievalism involved exclusionary and oligarchic forms of governance, ethnic division and separation, and processes of gradual transformation of the urban landscape. This history is immensely useful for paying attention to the spatial formations of neoliberalism. In various parts of the world, with the withdrawal of the state from the agendas of social responsibility, non-state actors have taken the place of the state, providing resources to compensate for austerity policies. This is sharply evident in the spatial formation of squatter

settlements. For example, in Latin America, international drug bosses provide urban services to the favelas of Rio; in the Middle East and South Asia, religious fundamentalist groups, be they Hindu or Islamist, perform similar patronage functions in the informal settlements of Cairo, Beirut, and Mumbai. These spaces can be thought of as medieval enclaves regulated through the democracy of modern consumption. However, they are not simply the domain of the poor. With the deepening of socio-economic polarization, the urban elite now enjoy fortified isolation in gated communities, creating a landscape of "secessionary" spaces (Graham and Marvin 2001) with their own forms of infrastructure, planning codes, and political associations. The spatial formation of the walled compound is a manifestation of such processes.

These seemingly new urban practices can be understood by employing the concept of "medieval" as an analytical category. We want to highlight three points of congruence. First, if modern citizenship was constituted through a set of abstract individual rights embedded in the concept of the nation-state then now there is the emergence of forms of citizenship that are located in urban enclaves. As in medieval times, this citizenship is linked to either patronage (as in the feudal lord) or to associational membership (as in the guild) and in both cases is fundamentally about protection. Second, such forms of citizenship substitute for or are even hostile to the state. From the private homeowners associations to the neighborhood-level Islamic republics being declared by religious fundamentalist groups, these are private systems of governance that operate as medieval fiefdoms, imposing truths and norms that are often contrary to national law. Third, this logic of rule, as described above, has territorial manifestations. The city comes to be articulated in what Holston and Appadurai have termed a "honeycomb of jurisdictions," a "medieval body" of heterogeneous and increasingly private memberships.

Medievalism is however not a single moment or unified geography. The temporal and spatial diversity of the medieval city provides important insights into the contemporary moment. As today there are different urban logics in different world-regions, so in medieval times there were different logics of transformation in European or Middle Eastern medieval cities. The periodization of the Middle Ages also draws attention to the issue of historical transition. What are the ways in which the decline of the Roman Empire sets the stage for the proliferation of medieval forms and practices? How should we interpret the current moment of Empire in light of this history? Such issues become particularly crucial in thinking about the third spatial formation of contemporary urbanism: the refugee camp. The camp can be seen as a space that is at the cusp of neoliberalism and Empire, where the circulation of global capital intensifies at the stage of imperial interventions. At such a moment, the camp is the hyper-ghetto, where ethnic segregation and separation becomes the norm, as was the case in the construction of ethnic quarters in medieval cities. And yet, a difficult question remains: can the camp be a city? In recent debates, scholars have asserted that a refugee camp can exhibit the qualities of a city – in the relational sense of the urbs and the political sense of the polis (Agier 2002). Does the transformation of the camp into a city echo another cusp: that between feudalism and capitalism when cities that were islands of freedom in feudal countrysides became the sites of trade and commerce? While these issues of transition are impossible to resolve in definitive historical terms they raise the provocative question of how medievalism was itself a constantly contested and incomplete process, coming undone through urban practices and transformations. In this sense, our use of the term "medieval" implies less a form of regression or backwardness and more a sense of the dynamism of the city.

I WALLED CITIES AND CHARTERED GATED COMMUNITIES

In cities from Los Angeles to Manila, the most common paradigm of spatial organization is today the gated community or enclave, one that is maintained through elaborate techniques of surveillance, policing, and architectural design. Not only are these residential spaces walled and gated but they are also linked to other spaces of exclusion such as urban mega-projects and leisure developments. It is this bundling of urban spaces of seduction and safety that Graham and Marvin designate as splintering urbanism: secessionary network spaces held together through premium networked infrastructure. Such forms of segregation are now manifested both horizontally and vertically. From elevated quasi-private toll roads and skyways to fortressed high-rise structures there is a three-dimensional landscape of exclusion and polarization (Graham and Marvin 2001, 284).

These trends appear with great starkness in Brazil where the elite have retreated to gated communities, seeking to sever connections with the urban poor, though of course as Caldeira's work points out, the poor are still needed to clean the swimming pools and tend the lawns. Today Sao Paulo has the world's largest fleet of private helicopters because its urban elite has abandoned city streets for the inaccessible skies. The best-selling helicopter in Brazil is the Robinson R44 which can comfortably seat four people. It costs about $380,000 or roughly 90 times the average annual income of a Sao Paulo resident. Why settle for an armored BMW when one can afford a helicopter? In this Blade-Runneresque segregation, as the few hundred members of the urban elite roam the skies in their helicopters, so 3.7 million residents struggle with the city's precarious bus system each day. Eyal Weizman conceptualizes this carving up of the city into separate spheres of circulation as a politics of verticality. Working as an architect in the context of Israel/Palestine, he notes how the Jewish settlements strategically located in the West Bank occupy the places on the hill, suburban enclaves separated from the much poorer Palestinian neighbors but also enjoying a vertical sovereignty of surveillance and infrastructure networks provided to them by the military apparatus of the Israeli state.

Such landscapes of walling and gating indicate a distinctive territorialization of citizenship, or what Low (2003, 390) calls a new spatial governmentality. The key characteristic of these spatial regimes is the formation of walled compounds that are governed by private bodies. Common Interest Developments (CIDs) epitomize this trend. A CID describes a community in which the residents own or control common areas or shared amenities and that carries with it reciprocal rights and obligations enforced by a private governing body. Codified as specialized covenants, contracts, and deed restrictions (CC&Rs), this governance structure creates new types of private government in the form of "homeowner associations" (Low 2003, 390). As McKenzie (in Graham and Marvin 2001, 249) notes, in these "privatopias" contract law is the supreme authority; property values are the foundation of community life; and exclusion is the foundation of social organization.

Today's walled compounds are often gated communities based on the rules of CIDs. It may be useful to integrate through a comparison with the walled medieval cities, particularly the chartered towns. But first we must spend some time looking back at the chartered towns in the Middle Ages and how their forms came about. When the chartered towns were created it was the prosperous merchants and sometimes master craftsmen who profited substantially from these charters and often came through them to control the town's government, "ruling as town oligarchies over the town's less exalted inhabitants" (Hollister 1964, 149). In some European cities in the Middle Ages and in response to the collective action of the burgers, the lords often issued town charters that guaranteed "personal freedom from surf-like status, freedom of movement, freedom from inordinate tolls, the right to own property, etc…" The charters in

effect created semi autonomous political and legal entities, each with its own government, its own internal legal systems, and its own customs (Hollister 1964, 149).

An almost similar situation occurs in the high middle ages where a "burgher" class drawn mainly from "vagabonds, runaway serfs, avaricious minor noblemen and the surplus of a mushrooming (rural) population" emerged as a new urban class concerned with protecting itself against the "confiscatory tolls and other exactions" levied by the governing state or authorities represented by a hostile landed aristocracy (Hollister 1964, 148). The formal and institutionalized parts of the Medieval city are far from being unguided. Indeed the Late Medieval city was a highly controlled environment with aesthetic unity. We have ample knowledge of the existence of vigorously enforced building codes and regulations that were intended to ensure the integrity of public spaces. For example, Siena went to great length to show a determination to complete and polish the more informal physical arrangement of its early history and to codify their effects (Kostof 1991, 70). There the city council passed a law requiring that "any edifices being made anew proceed only in line with the consistent buildings … and shall be disposed and arranged equally so as to be of greatest beauty to the city" (Kostof 1991, 70).

In Siena of the 15th-16th century, as well as in many other cities like it at the time, they controlled even the facades and heights of the different floors – in relation to the aesthetics of the Siena campo. In Bruges for example the merchants represented by the associational guilds played a major role in the process that governed the formation of public spaces, and in Florence of the late Middle Ages, the young republic codified its control over the city streets (Kostof 1985, 359 and 371). This was an aesthetic unity, which subsumed or subjected individual action to a larger collective ideal. The Covenants, Codes and Regulations (CC&Rs) of American homeowners associations and the New Urbanists codes and pattern books achieve a similar effect. In a sense the walled compound today is equivalent to the entire institutionlized part of the late Medieval city in Europe.

We do recognize the limitations of this comparison when it comes to the scale variable and this analogy may not be valid for all aspects of the compared entities. However, we note how the regulatory mechanisms applied to preserve the identity and character of each of these entities were fundamentally similar despite major differences in the nature of public space and its governance based on guilds and associations. Today, property today matters in the way occupations mattered in the Middle Ages. Thus, we should see homeowners' associations as the contemporary equivalent to the Medieval guild in the management of an increasing regulated and privatized urban space.

II SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS AND ORGANIC FORMS

Throughout history, squatting has always been a major mechanism of settling the land. Today, squatter settlements often referred to as Informal housing constitute a considerable portion of the built environments in the cities of the third world. This explains the great policy interest of governments and international bodies in dealing with them. There are many reasons for the emergence of squatter settlements and the processes by which they come into existence, grow, develop, consolidate and acquire an urban form. By and large, they are settlements, which seem to have reversed the traditional planning process. They are first acts of land invasion, occupation or illegal purchase followed by a host of random and irregular building activity. As they get consolidated, many of these settlements however manage to create their own infrastructures and in some cases acquire services from the state before they get formalized and

possibly legalized. Their social and economic modes of life however remain informal even after they get official status, a process of a never-ending informalization (AlSayyad 2004). Indeed, the public housing projects build by governments in many third world nations seem to encounter a similar fate with much illegal constructions and unauthorized appropriation of public space. There are two themes here which allow us to make the comparison between the contemporary third world city and the medieval city, the first relates to the forms of governance of such settlements and the second relates to the governance of their forms as will be discussed below.

Urban informality, however, is not a new phenomenon. It is well established that modern states, be they democratic or authoritarian, produce and manage informality as a way of underwriting capitalist accumulation and securing political legitimacy (Castells 1983). However, what seems to be new in the context of neoliberalism is the emergence of non-state actors as the de facto state in informal settlements in various parts of the world (Roy and AlSayyad 2004). Most striking is the convergence between informal geographies and the territorialization of religious fundamentalisms. With the withdrawal of the state from social spending programs, religious fundamentalist groups have become the main provider of urban services in informal settlements.

One of the key sites at which such processes first became sharply evident, and revealing of the first theme mentioned above relating to the forms of governance, is the neighborhood of Imbaba in Cairo. In 1992, the Egyptian army stormed Imbaba ending the rule of an Islamicist group, al Jamaa al Islamiya, which had declared Imbaba to be a "state within a state." How did an Islamicist group establish this zone of sovereignty? Egypt's quite strict adherence to the rules of structural adjustment has boded ill for the urban poor of cities like Cairo. In neighborhoods like Imbaba there has been a sharp increase in poverty and informal employment. At the same time, networks of what Asef Bayat calls "social Islam" have taken the place of the state. Comprised of dilapidated public housing projects and squatter settlements, in the late 1970s, Imbaba was the site of bread riots triggered by IMF austerity policies. By the late 1980s, Imbaba had been taken over by the al Jamaa al Islamiya, a group linked to the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, and it came to be the de facto state. On the one hand it provided almost all social services – from health care to education. On the other hand, it divided Imbaba into ten sections, each ruled by an "emir" governing according to fundamentalist interpretations of Islam (Ismail).

Imbaba is not an exception. In southern Lebanon, the Hezbollah, a group high on the US's post 9-11 list of terrorist organizations, is the de facto state. Its development programs include the provision of housing through its Jihad for Construction, education, medical services, water, sewage systems, and electricity (Bayat 2002; New York Times 2001). In Pakistan, the Lashkar-e-Taiba, another banned terrorist organization, is an important provider of education and health, standing in for a state that spends much of its budget on international debt repayment. Pakistan spends about 2% of its GNP on education and about 40% on servicing its staggering foreign debt. In India, Hindu fundamentalist groups like the Shiva Sena mobilize women by providing child-care, training programs, and other services. A key aspect of their local success has been its call to reclaim space in Mumbai's absurdly tight housing and land markets. This reclamation of course comes, as Appadurai notes, through the violent erasure of the Muslim body.

There are a few key aspects to these forms of contemporary urbanization that are relevant to our analysis. First, it is obvious that in the context of neoliberalism, informal settlements have become the territory of competing sovereignties. Second, the governance of these settlements is increasingly based on absolutist notions of association, such as through religious fundamentalism. Third, these regimes of rule have carved the city up into medieval fiefdoms,

each with a different order of citizenship. In some cases, the logic of citizenship is tied to religion as in the division of civil war Beirut into various zones each governed by a religious militia, which was not only a war machine but also an apparatus of service provision and development. In other cases, the logic is more nuanced as in the kin and village-based Islamic associations that constitute the self-help infrastructure of what Bayat (2002) calls "social Islam" in urban Egypt.

In talking about new trends in urban informality it might seem paradoxical to make reference to medieval manifestations of squatting. However, this historical reference is useful in allowing us to understand the second theme relating to the governance of the forms generated by informal urban processes like squatting. The topic of squatting is a rather important piece of the discourse on medieval cities. Kostof has argued that most medieval cities, whether in Europe or the Middle East, were a product of what he calls "synoecism": the organic process which occurs when several smaller – often rural – agglomerations are adjoined in the process of urban growth (Kostof 1991, 34). Or in later work, Kostof equates "medievalizing" with the incremental informality of squatting. Analyzing Rome during the collpase of the Roman Empire, he shows how the municipal offices of the Praefectura Urbana cease to function, how citizens begin to leave the dense landscape of the residential tenements – insulae – and to squat inside and outside much of the unattended structures of the old city. This gradual process, one that Kostof calls "medievalizing Rome" took a thousand years and changed the geometric urban fabric of the city gently and casually to a point of totally camouflaging the original on which it was built (Kostof 1992, 279-290). However, there is quite a bit more to these processes than simply a change in physical form and urban morphology. What is crucially at stake is the distinctive politics of space.

First, it can be argued that the medieval city was governed by an uneasy but lasting alliance between merchants, represented in the guilds; religious authorities, represented by the church; and burgers, represented by the townhall. These competing sovereignties created a territorialized logic of association and patronage – be they the rural fiefdoms of the early Middle Ages or the urban guilds of the High Middle Ages. Lapidus makes the argument that the medieval cities of the Middle East, unlike their European counterparts, lacked these territorialized forms of association. Instead, he suggests that in the Middle East, there were "ungoverned" political communities, but ones that were nevertheless held together by social relations such as Muslim religious associations (Lapidus 1984, XV).

Second, as in contemporary times, squatting in the Middle Ages was a highly regulated practice. What at first glance seemed to be a landscape of disorder was in fact produced through intricate webs of norms and regulations. In the medieval cities of the Middle East, the muhtasib, a figure equivalent to the European podesta, acted as policeman of buildings and markets. The muhtasib did not eradicate informality but rather formalized informal practices by first allowing them to happen, then accepting them as precedent, and finally finding legal Islamic rulings to validate their acceptance (AlSayyad 1991). An example can be given of a shop owner who occupies a particular part of the street to spread his wares. There is no code that prevents him from doing so; yet his doing so interferes with the function of circulation and movement within the city. Either as a result of a complaint or an inspection by the office of the muhtasib the shopkeeper is told either to withdraw his goods from the public space or is allowed to occupy only a certain part of it. Other shopkeepers observe the incident and eventually adopt the convention. There thus emerges a mode of appropriation of urban public space for private commercial use. That mode of urban life is then accepted and normalized by the city administration and the residents equally (AlSayyad 1991). Another example involves the resident of a house expanding by adding a second floor. In doing so, the expansion does two things. First, structural elements have to be built into public space of the street, possibly building over it

and second, it also allows the addition to overlook the private space of other houses. Such violations of social norms would not be tolerated by the office of the muhtasib so the person engaging in the expansion negotiates both with his neighbors for the exact location of the windows hence resolving the issue of violating their privacy, as well as with the city administration about the extent of intrusion into public space; hence minimizing the infraction while still occupying part of the airspace of a street without interfering with its function of circulation and transportation. Such examples in fact exist in both the east and the west, such as the Sabbats of Tunis and the Sotto-Portici of Venice. Through such delicate negotiations the urban fabric of the city, a constellation of irregular forms, becomes legitimized.

III REFUGEE CAMPS AND ETHNIC QUARTERS

The contemporary moment can be understood as a moment of transition where Empire looms large on the horizon. In the last few years, there has been the growing sense that neoliberal globalization is transmuting into imperial globalization. One of the most debated accounts of Empire is that provided by Hardt and Negri. In their influential analysis, they argue that today's Empire is a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule (Hardt and Negri 2000, xii). However, they also emphasize that this "smooth space" of global sovereignty requires a new management of social space (Hardt and Negri 2000, 337), specifically fractal modalities of administration.

> The segmentation of the multitude has in fact been the condition of political administration throughout history. The difference today lies in the fact that, whereas in modern regimes of national sovereignty, administration worked toward a linear integration of conflicts and toward a coherent apparatus that could repress them … in the imperial framework administration becomes fractal and aims to integrate conflicts not by imposing a coherent social apparatus but by controlling differences (Hardt and Negri, 2000, 339).

They compare the local regimes of Empire to medieval political systems, particularly the administrative relationship between feudal territorial organizations and monarchic power structures. Such forms of fractal administration are amply evident today. Post-war Afghanistan is a stark example where the so-called central government, answering to American imperial administrators, has control mainly over Kabul and where the rest of the country is constituted of zones of sovereignty ruled by warlords.

If the neoliberal city is characterized by associations of secession – walled compounds and squatter settlements – then with the (re)emergence of Empire there is also the formation of another spatial type: the refugee camp. Following Giorgio Agamben (as cited in Mbembe 2003), the refugee camp can be understood as a space where the state of emergency, and thus the state of exception, becomes the rule, a permanent spatial arrangement. If Empire is understood as an endless frontier of war and violence in the name of justice (Hardt and Negri 2000), then the camp is precisely the space in which violence is constantly deployed in the name of peace and order. It is also the paradoxical space that is opened up by war but managed through humanitarian intervention (Agier 2002).

Here it is worth detailing some of the ongoing debates regarding the refugee camp. Recently Agier has posited the possibility of the city-camp. He argues that while the refugee camp is a crippled form of the urban, as were apartheid townships, it is possible to witness some key dimensions of the city in the camp: in the relational sense of the *urbs* and in the political sense of the *polis*. In particular, he is interested in the ways in which a specific ethnic chessboard is set up in the camps (Agier 2002, 332). His language, that in the camp the

nationalities become ethnicities, echoes not only medieval historians like Pirenne but also the Chicago School of urban sociology: the sense of the city as a mosaic of ethno-nationalities. Arguing against Agier, Malkki asserts that the issue of urban citizenship cannot be so easily broached in relation to the refugee camp. Following Agamben, she sees the camp as the space of naked life, an absolute biopolitical space, the site of what Mbembe has so provocatively titled "necropolitics."

The traditional Islamic city of the Middle Ages was one which was based on designating specific quarters to each of the ethnic or religious groups that inhabited it and sustained its functioning. Often these ethnic or religious populations were assigned or managed to take hold of a given urban function or trade and were sequestered to their specific neighborhoods (Hourani 1970). Their movement was sometimes curbed under oppressive regimes or in times of hardship. This is a "state of exception" with a very flexible time frame. The Jewish quarters for example in many of the Medieval cities of the Middle East seem to have emerged as a response to the desire to exclude Jews from some aspects of urban life and economic exchange while at the same time allowing them some degree of economic flexibility which resulted in their becoming productive members of the community (Gottriech 2003). It was a physical and possibly social ghettoization that had no economic and political attributes that resulted however in the emergence of second-class ethnic citizens. However, one may see the emergence of the ethnic quarter as a mechanism of control and not as a mode of life. The camp today is the ethnic quarter of the medieval city

But lurking in this debate are two issues that extend well beyond the spatial type of the camp. First, the notion of a camp that metamorphoses into a city raises the issue of transition. Kostof presents us with the idea of the medievalizing of Rome, an accretion of spatial practices that flourish at the end of Empire. Should the fractal administration described by Hardt and Negri be seen as the modality of the height of Empire or as the end of Empire? By the same token, Agier presents us with the idea of the modernizing of the feudal order of the camp, an emergence of political, economic, and social transactions that create new relationalities in an old space. His conceptualization echoes Pirenne's (1925) interpretation of medieval cities as urban islands of freedom. This city air, that made a man free, existed at the cusp of feudalism and capitalism, triggering the vibrant trade and commerce that was to lead to the European Renaissance. Should medievalism then be understood not so much as a stable historical period but instead as a moment of transition, mediating the rise and fall of various regimes of order? Second, what is the role of the city in such moments of transition? What are the particular kinds of citizenship, of civitas, evident in both the ideal-type and ideal of the city? Through the posing of such questions, the analytical category of medievalism becomes a provocation to rethink the basic notions of city and citizenship. It is entirely appropriate to invoke the medieval trope in this neoliberal age as it allows us to understand how the refugee camp becomes normalized into the modern ethnic quarter.

CONCLUDING NOTE

There is a seemingly inviolable relationship between modernity and cities. Modernization and urbanization are often understood as two interlocked teleologies, a marching ahead to the future in step. Cities are seen to be the arena of modernist visions as well as the contested and paradoxical experiences of modernity (Berman 1982). Our deliberate use of the medieval trope signals other ways of being in the world. It demarcates a complexity of city life that far exceeds the normative teleology of modernization. This is an urbanism comprised of chartered

communities to organic forms to refugee camps. Such spatial formations and modes of regulation present important challenges for planning. We have argued that the "medieval" is a useful analytical category for decoding these practices. In addition to providing this purchase on urbanity, the medieval trope also complicates the notion of modernity. The examples of medieval citizenship that we have discussed are not opposed to modern identities and practices. Indeed, they operate through circuits of modern consumption, technologies, and symbolisms. In this sense, it is possible to talk about a medieval modernity. This oxymoronic phrasing reveals the complexity of the modern indicating its inherent paradoxes in a way that related terms like alternative or multiple modernities cannot capture.

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