

the possibilities of individual Latin American countries to foster the development of public spaces and incorporate the political innovations that participatory publics can propose and demand.

Democracy and the Public Space in Latin America is important for its well-developed critique of traditional democratic theory and its contribution to the literature of a model of democratization in Latin America based on participatory publics, grounded in the public space and both analytically and empirically defended. As new meanings and practices of democracy are constructed in the public spaces of Latin America, this book is a timely reminder that new models of democratic theory must account for the participation of civil society. Such models must also respond to geopolitical and global economic realities, local and regional tensions and hardships, and innovative and inspiring forms of resistance and struggle. Herein lays the book's weakness: its incompleteness and its failure to address a range of problems related to the design and implementation of mechanisms that would allow a model of participatory publics to function in Latin America today. Yet, there is much opportunity here. Students and scholars in related fields will find much value in this work and will hopefully build on Avritzer's model and further develop a truly significant and useful contribution to our understanding of democracy and democratization in Latin America.

In the Métro

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Marc Augé. *In the Métro*. Translated and with an Introduction and Afterword by Tom Conley. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). 125 pp. ISBN 0-8166-3436-X (hardcover), 0-8166-3437-8 (paper).

In the Métro is ethnologist Marc Augé's exploration of the Paris subway. The book consists of Augé's essay, complemented by an Introduction and a 40-page Afterword both written by Tom Conley. Through Augé's theorising and his personal descriptions of subway experiences, the reader can consider how the subway can be viewed as a microcosm of a city influenced by the forces of globalization. As an academic work, *In the Métro* contributes to the body of literature that explores local, urban, and physical manifestations of the forces of globalization. It is a timely read, given the current resurgence in interest in "urban narratives" and everyday practices in the city. Augé's reflections, united with Conley's deft and helpful contextual analysis, make this a book worth reading by urban researchers.

In the Métro describes specific rituals of subway travel through the time and space of everyday life. Augé observes how individuals negotiate their experiences and encounters on the subway in a manner that is context-driven, based on time and space, and with the aid of symbols and maps. Time and space are constructed as part of the quotidian ritual, a mundane routine of necessity where an individual must get from home to work – "métro, boulot, dodo" (subway, work, sleep) – but is locked in space that is mapped according to the grid of subterranean transportation. Augé's narrative is much like the narrative of anthropologies of "everyday life" where the relations between itineraries and maps, or reading and cartography, are drawn out; what Michel de Certeau calls "the relation between two symbolic and anthropological languages of space".²⁸⁴ Maps are imposed and reflect how individuals can move through space. Maps are documents that outline routes for discovery, whereby individuals can negotiate space, networks of routes, and the language of travel. Augé notes that individuals use these itineraries every day, the kind of "itineraries they have no choice but to follow."²⁸⁵ Transfers [North American] or "les correspondences" [French] or "coincidences" [Italian] document on slips of paper the possibilities for subway connections and junctions to be made through space, dependent on windows of time.

If the métro is indeed, as Augé would suggest, what the rider (and the reader of this book) brings to it over space and time, what then is it about the subway that makes it a

²⁸⁴ Michel de Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translated by Steven Rendall. (Berkeley: University of California, 1989), 119.

²⁸⁵ Marc Augé. *In the Métro*. Translated and with an Introduction and Afterword by Tom Conley. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 25.

microcosm of the global city? Augé does not provide a direct answer to this reader's question. Instead, an answer can be inferred when Augé describes the people "squeezed like sardines in the subway cars...men and women, old and young...European, Africans, Gypsies, Iranians, Asians, Americans – all these subterranean travelers so different from one another, whose almost regular movements...suggest nonetheless that they are animated, shaken, tossed together, and dispersed by the same force of attraction..."²⁸⁶ This "force of attraction", I would posit, is not just the subway itself but the dynamism of the city, heavily influenced and formed by the economic and cultural forces of globalisation. For example, the flows of economic globalisation pull workers from all over the world into cities (like Paris) for jobs; consequently, the subway becomes a means (an economical one) for these individuals to get to and from work. The diversity (i.e., along lines that are based on culture, gender and age) among the subway riders, as observed by Augé, is one of the characteristics of global flows into the city: a manifestation of international migration that brings together elements of the global into the local.

Beyond these inferences to the physical manifestations of the city's diversity, Augé offers the reader the "idea" of the subway as a mechanism for the administration of "otherness". Consequently, Augé draws out the concept of the "paradox of the Other", using an uppercase 'O' for "Other" that is representative of a conception of a monolithic cultural Other. He then contrasts this paradox with the "paradox of two others" (spelled with an 'o' in lower case). This duality forces the individual to make relative what could otherwise be construed to be an essential, normative, and absolute character of the cultural Other. This is but one example of a theoretical leg on Augé's subway journey; one of several short voyages through the author's meta-narrative.

Augé calls the métro "a collectivity without festival and solitude without isolation" (p.30). In turn, riding the métro is both an act of solitude and a social experience where space is shared and the "ordered character of subway traffic imposes in each and every person codes of conduct that cannot be transgressed without running the risk of sanction, either by authorities, or by the more or less effective disavowal of other users."²⁸⁷ This is not an exploration of the symptoms of modernity or of sociologist Émile Durkheim's concept of anomie; for Augé, the métro becomes an "anodyne place," relieving the pain of solitude by drawing individuals into oblivion, and blurring personal memory with imaginary connections to fellow passengers and/or possible destinations. While Augé touches on the subway as a spectacle of humanity – people rubbing shoulders with one another – he does not delve into the sensual aspects of the subway: the smells, sweat and grimy nature of the rides that reflect the sometimes repulsive element of city living. Instead Augé's reflections border on the nostalgic and cater to the seductive or romantic elements of subways, and for that matter, portrayals of Paris.

Clearly, the historical element and the exploration of the métro as an urban phenomenon, or as a location where "global meets local" in the city, are not addressed comprehensively within Augé's descriptions. For this, the reader must depend on Conley's Afterword, where he contextualises Augé's subway monograph within Augé's

²⁸⁶ Augé, *In the Métro*, 42.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

larger body of work. Conley reflects on subways as historical constructions of organised spaces located in the context of world cities. Conley's analysis, however, works very nicely with Augé's depiction of the subway as a contradictory space – a space in which individual riders are driven into solitude by a system of texts, symbols, codes, and rituals and yet, are drawn into social encounters with a localised version of a "global humanity".