

**Augé, Marc. *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*, (2/e).
Trans. by John Howe. Verso, 2008. Pp. 122. \$17.95 (paper).
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First a comment on the title and some terms. It is unfortunate that John Howe's English title elides the term "anthropologie." This small work, in three dense chapters, a prologue and matching epilogue, and a new (2008) introduction, constitutes not only a primer on the contemporary conditions under which radical and transformative action occurs, but also a view on recent anthropology debates over method, object, and its future. The conclusions about supermodernity are drawn within Augé's position on the disciplinary debates.

Howe brings "surmodernité" into English as "supermodernity." I have also seen "hypermodernity" used to label the global culture to which this refers. In any case, the reader is to understand this term only in relation to pre-modernity, modernity, and post-modernity. Though they are contemporaneous in reference, supermodernity differs from post-modernity. Post-modernity is the "sensibility" of contemporary despair over the felt meaninglessness, the end of belief in progress (though this suspicion is not universal), and the loss of pre-modern notions of a hierarchically ordered cosmos (21). Post-modernity as dispositional sets up the observation point for seeing contemporary material conditions as "supermodernity" (30), the new human and global condition of "excess" or "overabundance" (24-5, 33, 88) of time or events (20-25), of space (25-29), and of identity or the "individualization of reference" (29, 30-32). Take the salient features of modern material reality, exaggerate them beyond the wildest dreams of the Futurists, and you have supermodernity. Post-modernity thus provides a perspective for undertaking an anthropology of contemporaneity.

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