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Special Section

Explorations of Everyday Life

Guest Editor:
Eric Bou

Representing Everyday Life

Enric Bou is Professor of Iberian Studies at the University Ca' Foscari Venezia. He has taught in universities in France, Spain and the USA. His research interests cover a broad range of twentieth century Spanish Peninsular and Catalan literature including poetry, autobiography, the relationships between art and literature, city and literature, and film. He has edited the complete works of Pedro Salinas (Cátedra, 2007). His latest book is Invention of Space. City, Travel and Literature (Vervuert-Iberoamericana, 2013) / La invenció de l'espai. Ciutat i viatge (Universitat de València, 2013).

In December 2012 at the UCF I organized a *Giornata di Studio* (one-day workshop) on “Explorations of Everyday Life.” A selection of the papers delivered at that meeting is the core of this special section in *AJHCS*. “Explorations of Everyday Life” puts together a group of scholars that are interested in addressing everyday life from different perspectives. How is the everyday experienced within a Catalan/Spanish context? Are there particular experiences that achieve a specific and unique representation or theoretical response in art, film or literature? Other research questions included: how and to what extent issues of identity, space, historical memory and immigration, have affected everyday life in Spain, and how have been represented in literature and film. The focus was on Spanish/Catalan culture, but the long-range goal was that our findings would be applicable to other European countries. The main reason to organize such a meeting was the fact that there have been very few examinations of this kind in an Iberian setting. Rafael Abella’s *La vida cotidiana bajo el régimen de Franco* (Everyday life in Spain under the Franco regime) (1985), or Sánchez Vidal’s *Sol y sombra. De cómo los españoles se apearon de las mayúsculas de la historia dotándose de vida cotidiana* (Sun and shadow. How Spaniards got out of history with capital h and endowed themselves with daily life) (1990) are two of the few examples available, though none of them makes a consistent approach to define from a theoretical perspective what everyday life is. Both books tackle the issue in a very different way. The latter tries to solve the riddle of several coincidences such as the simultaneous arrival in Spain of The Beatles’ *Sergeant Pepper’s* record and the use of credit cards. Sánchez Vidal is willing to emphasize the consequences brought about by these and other minor events, always giving them preference over the

great historical event, the most seemingly nondescript fact, with the aim of reaching a convincing interpretive synthesis of the past.

Interestingly enough there have been many more studies devoted to the study of the everyday in Modern ages (Medina Arjona). "Post Scriptum: A Digital Archive of Ordinary Writings" is a project that aims to collect and publish Portuguese and Spanish private letters written during the Modern Ages. These are epistolary unpublished documents, written by authors from different social backgrounds. These documents survived by chance because the Inquisition and the civil courts used them as criminal evidence. These textual resources treat everyday issues related to past centuries. Everyday life has also been addressed from a philosophical point of view (Agís Villaverde). Historians have paid attention to the renewal in everyday life after Franco's dictatorship (Díaz Barrado). This last author's point is that culture and daily life have been radically altered in the last quarter of the twentieth century by the combined effect of technological change and the impact of mass media. Díaz Barrado pays attention to what has been razed and the new habits that set the course into the twenty-first century.

Critical examination of everyday life began approximately between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was during the twentieth century that this attention became more focused on the social sciences, first by Lefebvre, and then followed by de Certeau—previous findings by Benjamin and Simmel are included in their conceptualizations. The social sciences reflect an interest developed in philosophical approaches (from Kant on), or literary products (Poe and his invention of the

detective novel and Baudelaire and his street poems or innovative prose poems), or artistic avant-garde (Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, Surrealism) and include the advent of psychoanalysis, particularly Freud's investigations. By the end of the nineteenth century many thinkers in psychological studies began to question the idea of society as an organic whole, and governed by general, shared principles. Nowadays social scientists tend to focus on ways in which human beings develop their intuitive knowledge of particular social processes and how they use this knowledge in order to act in a creative way. This includes symbolic and intersubjective meanings that are used by human beings in a conscious way to communicate among themselves and make sense of the world in which they live.

The study of everyday life implies a two-fold strategy, taking into account contextual aspects of everyday life along with the subjective experience of each social actor. As explained in social psychology, the everyday consists of what emerges as recurrent and very close (intimate) in a human being's life. Much research has been done in the social sciences about transformations of this nature in the family environment, but very little research has been identified as specifically relating to the impact that migrants have had in this area of culture. During the last few decades, growing lines of inquiry from cultural studies, feminism, and media studies have developed an increasing interest in the sphere of everyday life. This interest draws from a surge in critical consideration of everyday life, what Henri Lefebvre called the "connective tissue" of all conceivable human thoughts and activities. To date there have been several studies on daily life, Highmore's work being of particular interest as he follows the steps of Freud (1901), Lefebvre (1971), Vaneigem (1967), de Certeau (1980), Bargh

(1997), the Situationist International, Gardiner (2000), and Sheringham (2006). Vaneigem, for example, equates modern city life with some of the social troubles that plague our societies: isolation, humiliation, and miscommunication, troubles, which he relates to the embarrassment of being but a "thing." Barch points out to the fact that

much of everyday life—thinking, feeling, and doing—is automatic in that it is driven by current features of the environment (i.e., people, objects, behaviors of others, settings, roles, norms, etc.). (2)

This is mediated by automatic cognitive processing of those features, without any mediation by conscious choice or reflection.

Everyday life can be represented as something utterly routinized, static and unresponsive, but at the same time provides pungent insight, startling dynamism and ceaseless creativity. Everyday life integrates a form of 'depth' reflexivity, which is related to the ability of human beings to adapt to new situations and surviving life challenges. At the same time, daily life implies mammoth cross-cultural and historical situations of unpredictability. As observed by sociological approaches, which pay particularly attention to ethnographic, empiricist aspects, everyday life is construed as a perpetual and distinctive feature of the social world, and as such it remains an essentially non-problematic component of social existence (Gouldner). By contrast, other theorists much closer to a humanities approach ponder whether everyday life does have a history intimately related to the dynamics of modernity. It is plagued by abundant contradictions and marked by a considerable degree of internal complexity (Crook). The everyday is "poly-dimensional" (Maffesoli): fluid, ambivalent and labile.

One of the chief goals of our workshop was to start a scrutiny of everyday life, to expose its contradictions and tease out its hidden potentialities, and to advance the study of the prosaic to the level of critical knowledge.

The aim is to reveal underlying trends within the common, almost ignored realities. As Hegel (quoted by Lefebvre) once wrote: "The familiar is not necessarily the known" (132). In 1973 Perce coined the term *l'infra-ordinaire* (the infra-ordinary) for those minimal aspects of reality which he hoped to zero in on:

What happens everyday, the banal, the quotidian, the evident, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual; how can one account for it, how can one question it, how can one describe it? (11)

Perce's comment stressed the fact that we are trained to look around us in search of unusual objects, situations, thus paying more attention to the exceptional, and forgetting about the anonymous *endotic*, a term coined by Perce in opposition to *exotic*. He suggested that we should investigate the *infra-ordinary*, asking apparently trivial and futile questions in order to provoke the necessary discontinuity between signs and habits of observations. As noted by Perce, defamiliarization is a technique of inquiry, which requires both perseverance and inventiveness and which must also resist systematization. By doing this, Perce was recalling an old Walter Benjamin idea about the interpretation of history: the historian not as a genealogist, but as a collector looking for traces of lost systems. It was Walter Benjamin in "Sur-realism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," who described the process by which, beyond the aid of dreams or hashish,

an individual perceives the most ordinary, overlooked objects of everyday reality—from obsolete train stations to out of place arcades—as uncanny, supernatural, and irrational. Benjamin would call it a “profane illumination.” As he put:

This profane illumination did not always find the Surrealists equal to it, or to themselves, and the very writings that proclaim it most powerfully, Aragon’s incomparable *Paysan de Paris* and Breton’s *Nadja*, show very disturbing symptoms of deficiency. (209)

Everyday life is a difficult subject to approach. Take, for example, how an excellent radio broadcast that handles many aspects of it, has a difficult time trying to define what they do:

We think of the show as journalism.... [W]hat we’re doing is applying the tools of journalism to everyday lives, personal lives. Which is true. It’s also true that the journalism we do tends to use a lot of the techniques of fiction: scenes and characters and narrative threads. (*This American Life*)

According to Benjamin, Surrealism’s ability to disorient and estrange through profane illumination made it a potentially explosive catalyst for social revolution. There is a rather amazing fact in modern life: it is organized around a series of generational milestones. We measure our collective identities in accordance with the shared experience of public events, including successful films and popular songs. *Boyhood* (2014), a film by Richard Linklater, portrays in painful detail the most obvious details of anybody’s life growing up in the U.S. It’s a

film about people who are struggling with everyday problems. *Boyhood* can be related to the impulses that originated with Italian Neorealism, when scenes were shot on location, with no professional extras and with a largely non-professional cast. The stories focused on everyday people with an emphasis on the unexceptional routines of everyday life in rural settings or working-class neighborhoods. Neorealism asserted that recording everyday life was the biggest show one could capture on film. Whether we like it or not, generational milestones become part of the architecture of our being and a kind of private currency trading with our partners.

There has been a few critics from a strictly literary or cultural studies perspective that have set the agenda when studying the everyday. In 2000, Michael Gardiner wrote *Critiques of Everyday Life: An Introduction* about theories of everyday life,

the crucial medium through which we enter into a transformative praxis with nature, learn about comradeship and love, acquire and develop communicative competence, formulate and realize pragmatically normative conceptions, feel myriad desires, pains and exaltations, and eventually expire. (2)

He dialogues with a significant number of theorists and approaches, including: the Surrealists and Henri Lefebvre, the Situationist International and Michel de Certeau; Agnes Heller and the relationship between the everyday, rationality and ethics; the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, particularly Carnival, and intersubjectivity; Dorothy E. Smith’s feminist perspective on everyday life. He tries to tease out some of the common threads that link each of the thinkers and traditions.

In *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction* (2001) Ben Highmore detected a range of theories of everyday life that are linked to developments and experiences of late nineteenth and twentieth century. He focused in authors such as Georg Simmel, the Surrealists, Walter Benjamin, Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, who have considered the everyday to be an important subject of cultural, social and philosophical analysis. This essay was complemented the following year with a wide-range anthology of critical texts that draw the tradition of everydayness, *The Everyday Life Reader*. In the introduction Highmore declares:

It is to the everyday that we consign that which no longer holds our attention. Things become 'everyday' by becoming invisible, unnoticed, part of the furniture. And if familiarity does not always breed contempt, it does encourage neglect. (21)

A book by Michael Sheringham, *Everyday Life. Theories and Practices From Surrealism to the Present* (2006), summarizes approaches to studying the everyday by adding to these authors the work of philosophers and writers including Maurice Blanchot, Martin Heidegger, Georges Perec, and Roland Barthes. The everyday is what we never see for a first time, but only see again (Blanchot 14). Besides its difficulty to be grasped, the everyday is ubiquitous. Michael Sheringham has summarized the problem in the following terms:

The everyday is a zone of opposition, intersection, or interconnection—of the accidental and the permanent, imagination and affect, the personal and the social. It is constituted by sequences of individual actions

(dressing, eating, shopping, walking), but within a context of relations and interactions where the individual is actor as well as agent. The *quotidien* involves continuity but also change, repetition but also variation and evolution. It is made up of routines, but major events (often long anticipated or long remembered) are also part of its fabric, as are festive moments, 'mini-fêtes.' It is universal (through its link to the human condition in general) but also variable, inflected by climate, class, and gender. It is both independent of and marked by history. (300)

A recent book by Ben Highmore, *Ordinary Lives: Studies in the Everyday* (2011) puts together aesthetics and the everyday by creating a genealogy from the Enlightenment of Baumgarten, Shaftesbury and Hume, through James and Dewey, to Jacques Rancière. According to Highmore art is part of a "world of feelings" that must take its place together with "shoes, gardens, rivers, houses, faces, plants and so on" (xi). In the book he includes examples such as chairs, popular music, curries, and housework. He examines our relationship to familiar objects (a chair), repetitive work (housework, typing), media (distracted television viewing and radio listening), and food (increasingly varied in multicultural Britain). If previous approaches dealt with "what does everyday life mean," his book provides a vital starting point, examining the meanings of everyday life in a developed society by showing:

how the confusions, routines, intricacies and surprises of daily life, that are felt so 'personally,' are always connecting us to a realm of communal (and differentiated) life. (vi)

Ordinary life is collective even when it is experienced as isolated and desolate. Highmore is interested in giving presence to:

the pulsings of affect: the risings and fallings of hope, love, hatred and irritation; the minor and major disturbances of life set against and within a world of day-to-day habits, routines and collective sentiments. (xii)

The book covers "Everyday aesthetics," where he develops philosophical and theoretical inquiries to develop an aesthetics of ordinary life. "Familiar Things" is a chapter that poses a dialogue with Michel Serres' suggestion that rather than dividing the world into subjects and objects we treat many different kinds of object as "quasi objects" and many kinds of subject as "quasi subjects." In "Doing Time: Work Life" Highmore looks into the world of work and how it shapes notions of time, temporality and temporal experience, including boredom, waiting, anticipating and routine. "Absentminded media" is dedicated to the roles of media in everyday life, particularly the concept of "distraction." He sees distraction as crucial for attending to everyday media. Chapter six ("Senses of the ordinary") analyzes the question of habit and routine in the domestic realm. The final chapter ("Towards a political aesthetics of everyday life") presents everyday life as a consistent theme of state politics: it is used in a number of forms, "but is primarily used as a vehicle of protection against all kinds of real-and-fantastical threats" (20). This is the most comprehensive study of the everyday. Even though there have been considerable interest in recent years in the study of the everyday one must acknowledge that literature and the arts remain largely unexploited areas in contemporary explorations of the everyday.

Finally it is worth mentioning the work of French philosopher Bruce Bégout for whom:

La vie est... par essence—c'est-à-dire par nécessité—quotidienne non pas ontiquement, sur le mode dégradé (et forcément dégradant) de l'esquive et de la médiocrité, de la déchéance et du nivellement, mais ontologiquement, en tant que traduction immédiate du conflit, au sein de l'exister, entre l'extase et la stance. (465)

[life is... in essence—that is to say, by necessity—not daily ontically, based on the degraded mode (and inevitably degrading) of dodging and mediocrity of revocation and leveling, but ontologically, as an immediate translation of the conflict within the existing, between ecstasy and stance.]

This passage stresses Bégout's approach to the everyday in terms of degradation, mediocrity, based on its ignorance, our naive adherence to the lies of the everyday. Ecstasy refers to human consciousness as it is always "consciousness of." The human being is a being of experience, always "out of it." The stance means the very need to live, to survive, to be "for himself."

Everyday life thus assumes the form of all traditional and usual actions and of the accounts that support a social group or community. The everyday is the stage where we develop our multiple abilities, as individuals or members of a collectivity, thus becoming integrated in society and capable of interacting humanly with one another.

The essays in this special section, "Explorations of Everyday Life," seek to explore representations of everyday life in a variety of texts and situations. Mostly from the twentieth century to the present. It is

an attempt to update current discussions in cultural and literary studies about and overlooked aspect of our daily environment. It is also a call of attention about a rarely studied aspect of Contemporary Spanish and Iberian Cultural Studies. It also strives to stimulate further research on related topics.

Elide Pittarello's article "Si las cosas ya no están a mano: imágenes del *Lazarillo* y el *Quijote*" explores how in the habitat created by the technique, everyday life objects play, along with a pragmatic function, an emotional and political role. She analyses how they contribute to reveal the subjects' identity as Heidegger, Sartre, and Arendt emphasized. Key questions include: when does it start to be ethically and politically important what happens inside a house? When does the everyday, which has been considered unimportant for centuries, becomes crucial for culture? Focusing on two major works she pays attention to the realism of the images and what is lacking, that has a more symbolic than mimetic meaning both in literature and in painting. Its semiotic value changed during the *Siglo de Oro* (Golden Age). In the case of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the lack of furniture and the difficulty of getting food emphasizes the assumed reputation of a Spanish *hombre de bien* in a society where appearance and property are requirements of being. One of the characters in the novel, who is a minor landowner, has honour threatened because of his miserable house and hunger. The mischievous *Lazarillo* gives literary existence to humble objects and plain food, that decades later, Sanchez Cotán, Velázquez, and Murillo painted with pious intentions. Due to baroque hybridity, these issues are also addressed in the construction of *Don Quixote*. In that novel scenes of everyday poverty can be read as the power of the negative as theorized by Didi-Huberman, following

Benjamin's ideas on the dialectical image. Her reading stresses the many instances of ambiguity in that novel pointing to a paradoxical pairing of opposites. It is also a very original approach to *Siglo de Oro* scholarship that goes beyond all world philology.

"The Guide for Guides: Soldevila's *L'art d'ensenyar Barcelona* (1929) and the City of the Everyday" by Robert Davidson focuses on a well-known book, a unique "guide for guides" that finds its place in a growing collection of travel books aimed at visitors to the Catalan capital at the time of the 1929 World Fair. It is a book addressed to a mixed reading public, including tourists, business travelers and pilgrims, but also speaking to the specific needs of those residents who receive foreign visitors. Davidson situates the book *vis-à-vis* its genre and, subsequently, the socio-historical horizon of its publication. Thus we understand that Soldevila's contribution is a welcomed addition to travel literature at the time. It can be read as an evolution of the guide-book genre and a new form of "how-to" volume—one that seeks to key the gaze of the local guide in a novel manner: by appropriating the tourist's ways of looking and combining them with an explicit desire to capitalize on the aesthetic possibilities of hosting in an urban setting. *L'art d'ensenyar Barcelona* can be considered an innovative approach to tourism, one that understands the city-as-destination as a malleable space with multiple trajectories instead of a fixed, codified itinerary or set of itineraries. Soldevila explicitly connects Barcelona and its inhabitants to a constellation of European metropolises; the Catalan capital is thus part of a larger network beyond its current situation of cultural stasis under Primo de Rivera in Spain. As a result, the text speaks to an awareness of the changing way that cities are experienced and a cognizance of a

growing cosmopolitan ethos brought about by the evolution of tourism and an everyday increasingly inflected by the visual codes of photography and mass spectacles like large-scale revues and cinema. Soldevila offers new ways of considering the city through the interactions of locals and guests reminding us of the riches to be found in so-called "minor" works by established authors, and that the roots of tourism, now such an integral part of the West's everyday.

Josep Pla is an author in Catalan literature completely devoted to the exploration of the everyday. Xavier Pla's piece, "Producción de presencia y representaciones de la vida cotidiana en la novela *La calle Estrecha* de Josep Pla," analyzes how this author understands that everyday life is a level of reality and that it has an internal movement that the writer has to learn to see, capture and convey to his/her readers. He starts with an overview of authors who have reflected on the everyday. Drawing from Blanchot and Bégout, he states that daily life is a dimension of existence so present in our lives that it becomes ungraspable and ambiguous, superficial and unfathomable, at once strange and familiar, perhaps insignificant but profound. It is, concludes Xavier Pla, a disturbing paradox. *El carrer Estret* is the first novel by Josep Pla. He considered himself rather a journalist, a chronicler, as Pla's book demonstrates the inexhaustible power of his prose to interest and immerse the reader in a succession of images and anecdotes supposedly drawn from reality. Set in an almost abstract time that avoids any historical anecdote, it focuses constant and perennial aspects of the human condition, what critic Joan Ferraté considered life itself: the grotesque gestures of everyday mediocrity. Pla presents a discourse on reality because he has various methods of creation reality effects. These

are essentially a series of formal procedures of writing, linguistic tricks and strategies, whose function is to give an illusion of reality. This author focuses particularly in the notion of detail. The dependability of detail is a medium that helps to create the illusion of reality, to produce an effect of presence. In the conclusion Pla's novel is connected to Gumbrecht's concept, "production of presence," giving to detail an aesthetic function, as one of the elements in the mimetic effect.

Andrés Soria Olmedo's "Vida cotidiana y memoria histórica: el caso Lorca," focuses on an eminent case of memory manipulation, the execution of Federico García Lorca by the rebels in August 1936, at the start of the Spanish Civil War, along with three other men, Dióscoro Galindo, Francisco Galadí and Joaquín Arcollas. These are some of the best-known cases among thousand forgotten victims that are buried in an unmarked site near Granada. Lorca's body was never recovered, nor those of the other victims. Soria Olmedo's scrutinizes the official decisions taken about how to commemorate these victims, especially when combining an intervention onto a physical space, e.g. building a park (1986) and a theatre of sorts (2002). In doing this he questions different approaches to celebrate historical memory. What has changed between 1976 and 2015 is the shifting emphasis from a collective, public, and political point of view to an individual and private perspective, thus promoting the exhumation of single corpses instead of keeping a space of symbolic value. The article chronicles how historical memory intertwines with the everyday in contemporary Spain claiming that all graves from the past should not be treated as special exceptional, but instead should be consolidated as *a lieu de mémoire*, fusing historical memory and daily life.

Jaume Subirana's contribution "Bárbaros en casa: domesticidad y poesía catalana" takes as a starting point excerpts from the Old and New Testament to point out to the importance and mystery surrounding childhood. His point is that beauty and fear sometimes lie together, and they are waiting for us at home, closer than what we may think. Paying attention to several instances of domesticity where the presence of children is crucial, this article proposes a short journey through contemporary Catalan poems by well-known authors such as Jacint Verdaguer, Joan Maragall or Joan Salvat-Papasseit, and also by more recent authors such as Margarita Ballester or Quim Español. In two instances by Verdaguer the child (like the bird) knows more than the adult, or perhaps it is obvious that he knows something that the adult has forgotten. Children are (or can be, or contain) somehow an angel, and the more angelical they are, the farther they are from "us," becoming a barbarian. Children, as some sort of barbarians, are a metaphor that illuminates us and shows us a distinct sense of the ordinary, mysteries or truths of life that have moved away from adults. Children are those barbarians that we welcome in our homes, sit at our table and look at us in the eye in a different way, distant, making us realize who we are.

The originality of Patrizio Rigobon's article "Pools, automobiles, and maids: life in Barcelona during the '60s in Joan Capri's monologues," lies, among other reasons, in the fact that he is the first to approach from a scholarly perspective this fundamental actor/author from the 1960s Barcelona scene. Scant attention has been devoted to Joan Capri (Joan Camprubí i Alemany, Barcelona 1917-2000) one of the most popular Catalan theatre actor in Barcelona during the dictatorship. Rigobon analyzes some of

Capri's monologues from an "everyday life" standpoint. Following Highmore, Heller, and Lefebvre, he discusses the impossibility of giving a scientific or at least an epistemologically credible definition of "everyday life," although we know exactly what we are referring to from a practical point of view. Everyday life is closely linked to modernity and it is sometimes a criticism of a rural past. In the case of Capri's monologues there is no criticism of a rural past, rather a nostalgic view of old ways of living. There is though sarcasm against the dictatorship and its representatives at the local level, as is noticeable in the satirical perception of empty local political speeches in the monologue *Vivendes Protegides*. Many of the monologues denounce the anxieties and contradictions of an emerging new class in Barcelona in the 1960s. This article is a first attempt at organizing material by and about Capri and recognizes the restrictions of such an enterprise.

Enric Bou's article analyzes three poetical examples based on the list concept and loosely interconnected as all of them elaborate lists of people that can be found in, or are related to a specific place. The texts examined are Jacques Prévert's "Tentative de description d'un dîner de têtes à Paris-France" (1931), Bob Dylan's "Desolation Row" (1965), and Jaume Sisà's "Qualsevol nit pot sortir el sol" (1975). In these three poems we can recognize a mixture of Eco's distinction between the "poetics of everything included," and the "poetics of the etcetera." Similar to Proust's use of the enumeration, they establish relationships and divisions, and this has a therapeutic function. The three poems oppose the mainstream thinking of the day, based on enumeration chaotically cataloguing, and with perceptual attention to the everyday: class differences

and the monotony and beauty of working (Prévert); claiming a place where to live (Dylan); enjoying friendship, celebration and happiness as post-hippie values based on a magical childlike world (Sisa). Everyday life is filled with the unorganized accumulation of objects and beings and the unbearable inclination to make sense of it all. These are long catalogic poems that sing the everyday, signaling alternatives to the world, helping us reassess it. They pay attention to the everyday: class differences and the monotony and beauty of working (Prévert); claiming a place where to live (Dylan); enjoying friendship, celebration and happiness as post-hippie values based on a magical childlike world (Sisa). Prévert and Dylan write poems that are extremely provocative and denounce a political and moral status quo at a time of harsh political realities: the rise of communism and fascism, the Vietnam War. "Tentative de description" opposes the Elysée fake power and regally to that of the lay people. "Desolation Row" shows a back alley, almost a hidden place, filled with celebrities, performing an unusual task that serves as refuge for outcasts. "Qualsevol nit" legitimizes the party, a special night, mixing a huge collection of comic books, and adolescent novels characters.

Even though these contributions offer a variety of approaches there is a common ground: they are a window into possibilities of this kind of inquiry that need to improve and further scrutinize this almost neglected area in Iberian studies.

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