Cultures of Anyone
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Published by Liverpool University Press

Moreno-Caballud, Luis.
Cultures of Anyone: Studies on Cultural Democratization in the Spanish Neoliberal Crisis.
Liverpool University Press, 2015.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/72668.

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PART I

Cultural Authority and Neoliberal ‘Modernization’
C H A P T E R  1

Cultural Aspects of the Neoliberal Crisis:
Genealogies of a Fractured Legitimacy

‘... guiada verás de la pura ley
la mano del que sabe’

1.1. Crisis of a Hierarchical, Individualistic Cultural Model

1.1.1. Circuit of voices about crisis
At first, the ‘crisis’ was just one more news story, one more piece of
information, one more topic of conversation in a world of news, information,
and topics of conversation. Couched in the language of economists, the crisis
appeared in the spring of 2007 as nothing more than an ‘expectation of a
slowdown in economic growth.’ It was noted, however, that ‘the level of
individual debt was very high due to mortgage rates’ and that ‘the real estate
market had cooled.’ The following year, surveys and newspapers confirmed
the bad news: ‘63% of Spaniards will have to limit their vacations to only one
or two weeks, if that,’ ‘Spaniards Will Spend 15% Less on Seasonal Sales Due
to the Economic Slowdown,’ ‘The Crisis Is Pushing Users Towards Buying
Cheaper Drugs.’ Because, of course, at the beginning the crisis was already
a threat to the fulfillment of individual desires in a world of individuals
who seek to fulfill their desires.

From that implicit perspective on life, the media created stories that
highlighted the crisis, adding information and showing its effects. They
offered the life stories of young men and women who were affected by the
crisis. The national newspaper El País quoted a number of them in their 2012
report ‘#Nimileuristas’ (‘not 1,000 euros’) on twenty-somethings and

2 See http://www.que.es/actualidad/sociedad/vacaciones-light-para-tiempos-de-