

# The Dangers of Myth: Lessons from Derrida on Responsibility and the Extreme Right in Spain

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On August 18th, 2017, an unmarked van plowed through Las Ramblas, a typically busy tourist site in the heart of Barcelona. The incident, which left over a dozen victims dead, caught worldwide attention since Spain is generally not very high on the list in conversations about terrorism and minor attacks like this one has been more common.<sup>1</sup> This incident comes just one day after Spanish authorities rescued 593 North African migrants from the Mediterranean, which sparked a different conversation about immigration to Europe.<sup>2</sup> While the two occurrences are directly unrelated, they are both part of a larger discourse throughout Europe and North America concerning immigration, terrorism and political radicalism, particularly of the Extreme Right.<sup>3</sup>

For the most part, Spain has been seen by the international community as somewhat of a political anomaly. In fact, to many outsiders and to a certain extent those inside its borders as well, Spain represents a case so particular that the phrase

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1. See “What We Know about the Attacks in Spain” by Russel Goldman.

2. See “Spain Rescues Nearly 600 People at Sea as Migration Pattern Change” by James Doubek.

3. See “Barcelona Attacks Add to Tension Between Catalonia and Spain” by Raphael Minder.

“The Spanish Exception” was coined.<sup>4</sup> But what exactly is this Spanish Exception, and to what extent is it, indeed, exceptional? In an op piece written earlier this year for *Le Monde*, titled “L’Espagne, ce pays où l’extrême droite n’existe pas,” Isabelle Piquer described a Spain in which, were it to be any other country, under the same difficult circumstances, would have already fallen, in a stellar manner, towards fascism and extreme conservatism. Of course, if one were to read the entirety of Piquer’s article, it would be evident that she did not mean that the Extreme Right in Spain is non-existent, but rather affirms that, in relation to its European neighbors and the United States, what one finds in Spain is astoundingly insignificant.

It is necessary to point out, however, that Piquer was not the only one to have brought up this discourse on the singularity of the Spanish situation, as one can see with Omar G. Encarnación’s article, which was published in *Foreign Affairs* just a few months later, apply titled, “The Spanish Exception.”<sup>5</sup> In this article, by going further than Piquer in some respects, Encarnación also attempts to draw out a line of rationale that would explain the peculiarity of what has transpired in Spain; while basing his argument mostly on the desire to work against the history of the Franco regime and Spanish multiculturalism. In both accounts, what makes itself clear is an underlying desire to make the so called Spanish Exception intelligible, not only for mere knowledge sake (conocimiento), or to make it the known familiar, but also

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4. See “The Spanish Exception: Why Spain Has Resisted Right-Wing Populism” by Omar G. Encarnación.

5. While I will only address two examples in this essay, there are many examples of articles on popular news sources addressing this question. For another example see “Why right-wing populist parties have failed to flourish in Spain” by Aamna Mohdin.

with the hopes of reproducing its determinate conditions, as though it were a question of social responsibility.

My goal, here, is neither to prove that the Spanish Right does, indeed, exist or not, nor is it to give a survey of the current political landscape in Spain and to theorize about populism, as such. Not only would I be ill-suited, but it is also known, as a practical matter, that political movements can change quicker than the time it would take an intervention like this to be published.<sup>6</sup> So, in considering the unforeseeable, what I offer instead, then, is an engagement with this notion of “responsibility,” in the context thinking about contemporary politics in Spain. A responsibility, not only in its broader sense, but also in its particular sense, as expressed by Derrida in regard to fascism. Here, I will argue that in order to arrive at a clearer understanding of the Extreme Right in Spain, it is not only crucial to trace out a working definition of responsibility, which we can take as to “responding” to something or someone, but also to define how this responsibly is linked up, precisely, to the question of social practice and political vigilance.<sup>7</sup> On the way, I will touch on three points:

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6. To see more empirical studies of Right-wing movements in Spain, see “The Extreme Right, Violence and Other Action Repertoires: An Empirical Study on Two European Countries” by Manuela Caiani and Rossella Borri and “The Spanish Extreme Right and the Internet” by Manuela Caiani and Linda Parenti.

7. In the introduction to *Acts of Literature*, Derek Attridge summarizes Derrida’s idea of responding in relation to reading a text by stating, “Its response is tied to responsibility, it is an answer that recognizes that it must always be answerable—both to the laws of the text and to the text as irreducibly other. Because of its uniqueness and its responsiveness to a particular situation, because of its call for another response, such a reading does not claim exhaustiveness or definitiveness, nor does it offer any kind of key to the work.” In taking the Spanish Exception as a myth that produces itself in both spoken and written narration, we can then

beginning with the myth of the Spanish Exception, followed by the figure or ghost of Franco, and finally the question of unity. Only then, I suggest, would the arguments pertaining to the “what” and “how” of the Spanish Exception, reveal themselves as both a desired impossibility and a dangerous myth.

### **The Myth of the “Spanish Exception”**

In presenting her case on the “Spanish Exception,” Piquer opens her article by positing, “Malgré la crise, le rejet des partis traditionnels et l’afflux de migrants, aucune formation populiste et xénophobe ne fait recette. Pourquoi?” (N.P.). For Piquer, this “malgré” stands as an irregularity to what was supposed to be a predetermined phenomenon. This is to say, for the stated reasons and despite their passing, that which ought to have transpired, seemingly, did not. Her point of interrogation with the “Pourquoi?” not only begs to be responded with a “why,” but also hints, necessarily, at a “how”. That is, how could such political tolerance be replicated?<sup>8</sup> What we are seeing, then, are two assertions that are implicit in the articles, firstly that principles of cause and effects are somehow reliable, and when a certain predicted outcome is not achieved, utter confusion is what ensues. Secondly, it is also presumed that such confusion could necessarily be sorted out and present itself to us within a different, but equally valid, logic of cause and effects.

Similarly, we find a parallel statement from Omar G.

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understand how interjections into this myth is an act of responsibility that can continually elicit further responses. Pg. 20.

8. This tendency to ask “why” in terms of Spanish politics with the implicit intent of utilizing the lessons in other contexts can also be seen elsewhere. For another example, see “Spain Can Halt Europe’s Slide to the Populist Right” by Owen Jones.

Encarnación, who opened his more rigorous article with the following contextualization:

Although much of the West has been shaken by right-wing populist rebellions—from the stunning victory of President Donald Trump in the United States to the United Kingdom’s vote to leave the European Union—one country seems curiously immune from it all: Spain. No electorally viable movement in Spain espouses a nativist, xenophobic, or anti-globalization platform (N.P.).

What both openings provide is a clear underlying gesture that signals out Spain as the “one country,” which is immune to right-winged populism despite (*malgré*) other seemingly reasonable outcomes, as exemplified by other nations in the West.<sup>9</sup> Of course, neither writer is suggesting that the country is entirely free from any trace of right-wing populism, as Piquer has clearly pointed out with Santiago Abascal, an Extreme Right politician who only managed to get 0.2% of votes for the legislative elections in 2016 (N.P.). That said, in presenting the exceptionalism of Spain in the face of such deterministic outcomes, both writers have essentially relegated the impossibility of the result to mythic heights. This is to say, that both writers, while they knowingly acknowledge the impossibility of verifying their assertions, will still insist on providing a contextual origin for making the present conditions readable. The myth of the Spanish Exception, in this sense, is not concerned with whether if it is true, as a condition, but rather that, in its nature, provides for an attempt of inscribing a hypothetical genesis for the

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9. For a counter example, see “The ‘wave’ of right-wing populist sentiment is a myth” by Larry Bartels.

absence of the Extreme Right. To call it a myth, then, is not an oversight or an overdetermined characterization, but rather a categorical imprint towards the narrative gesture of the historization of contemporary Spanish politics.<sup>10</sup>

In addressing further this question of genesis, which is ought to not be reduced to simply a desire to know and provide for a narrative origin, the related question that also begs for an answer is one of intent and outcome, or the *vouloir-dire*.<sup>11</sup> Here, this last point should be understood in two ways. On the one hand, this could be interpreted as Derrida's more general conception of the impossibility to account for the entirety of the truth of a narrative, or the truth of the intent, since the act of historicizing this genesis is itself a narrativizing act. In other words, the myth that is produced by the writers like Piquer and Encarnación will continue to go on, despite our capacity to reach them and pose the question of their true meaning. Therefore, a verification of the true intentionality of what they have written, and let's continue to presume their absence, can only be accounted for by approximation.<sup>12</sup> Quite significantly, and in accordance to Derrida's understanding, this absence is crucial on a theoretical level since the presence of the authors themselves would make no truer a claim than what the texts, as texts, could produce in their absence.

On the other hand, the understanding of the *vouloir-dire* could also be extended to mean a certain wish, "to communicate, from the emission or production of a mark . . .

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10. By overdetermined, I mean to say that I am not precluding all the possibilities of what a myth could mean.

11. See Derrida's "Signature, Event, Context." Pg. 8. Or "Differance." Pg. 942.

12. While in a more traditional sense, for Derrida, the *vouloir-dire* tends to be about interpreting a text, here, I am using it to refer to the incompleteness that is inherent in both texts and myth.

or semantic transport of the desire to mean what one says” (*Signature* 181). Of course, this utterance would be presumed under the context of a wider socio-political context, and therefore, if we were to take this second understanding of the *vouloir-dire* further, the emphasis would steer us in the direction of communication, as such. This is to say, that while it is a desire to say something, this something is only in response to, or in conversation with, a particular condition. This leads us back, then, to the question of “why” the myth, or rather, why the impulse of its narrativization? Put differently, what is afforded, whether it be a truth claim or otherwise, by narrating events in a causal relationship? Furthermore, is the act of relating this narrative to the question of the Extreme Right not more telling of a certain form of moral imposition from Piquer and Encarnación to respond, or sense of responsibility, than any explanatory value of the content?

In a rather polemic conference, now known simply as the Heidelberg Conference that took place in Heidelberg between Jacques Derrida, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Phillippe Lacoue-Labarthe, the definition of responsibility was demanded by an attendee regarding teaching Heidegger even after the supposedly shocking publication by Víctor Farias.<sup>13</sup> This publication, which was meant to expose Heidegger definitively as having belonged to the Nazi party not only caused a frenzy in the public sphere, but also produce a certain urgency within the academy to promptly respond defending their position. The “why,” then, is understandably a questioning into the nature of intent, and it is in this context of being demanded a response that Derrida replied:

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13. See *Heidegger and Nazism* by Víctor Farias.

many of those who were not professional philosophers, or experts on Heidegger, if you will, and who suddenly discovered, notably with Farias's book, things they did not suspect, have accused those who have been interested in Heidegger either of being uninformed regarding Heidegger's Nazi engagement or, if they were informed, of not having exhibited in the public arena, of not having transformed into a common problem, what they were aware of as professional philosophers (Derrida, "*Heidegger*" 55).

What Derrida expresses, here, prior to entering into and answering the question of responsibility, again, addresses the very significant issue of having to produce a response. While this calling, by any other means, would appear as an encroachment on a certain right to silence, Derrida does indeed produce a response.<sup>14</sup> Yet, the response is not a direct answer insofar as it can be understood as a defense, but rather by describing the context by which a response would even be required.

The questioning as to why an absolute rejection of Heidegger was not deemed necessary, for Derrida and for Gadamer as well, and the accusatory nature of the demand, reinstates the very self-defeating tendencies of which the attendee is afraid. It is in this vein that Derrida tells us, "As Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe said to me: what do they want? that you have printed in big letters on the cover of your book, "Fascism shall not pass"? So what I would wish, not

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14. In his essay "Difference," Derrida reads into Heidegger's differentiation between presence and present as a way to speak of silence as something that is other than a non-response. In the context of teaching Heidegger, then, the lack, absence, or silence of a public denunciation of Heidegger, much like the ontological question being, is not necessarily the complete absence of a constant questioning. See Pg. 946-947.

only for this evening, but before and after, is that everyone remain vigilant in this regard” (Derrida, “*Heidegger*” 61). We are presented, thus, with regards to a calling to respond, is a delayed answer to definition of responsibility, for the very precise reason of disentangling what it means to speak for a non-presence. This is to say, Derrida cannot speak for Heidegger, rather, as an educator, he can only engage with what it left by the text and the necessary authorial absence.

Yet, it is also important note how the tendency to demand a response can also unravel and reveal to us the desire of a totalizing political reality, or an unconditional public denunciation of Heidegger, which at its core concretizes an a priori of responsibly. This tendency and urgency to respond, for Derrida, however, is incomplete as he later explains, “Political responsibility begins there—but does not end there” (Derrida, “*Heidegger*” 63). That is to say, a calling to produce a response to an event, does not in itself hold the resolution or absolution for what the event may have inspired. As it could be understood that, an event, is precisely defined by its simultaneous constitution and inexistence. Understandably, it is precisely this fear that led Derrida to give us another questioning into the nature of responsibly, in a different occasion where he was asked to respond, he writes:

If there is a university responsibility, it at least begins with the moment when a need to hear these questions, to take them upon oneself and respond, is imposed. This imperative for responding is the initial form and minimal requirement of responsibility. One can always not respond and refuse the summons, the call to responsibility. One can even do so without necessarily keeping silent. But the structure of this appeal to responsibility is such—so anterior to any possible response, so independent, so

dissymmetrical in its coming from the other within us—that even a nonresponse is charged a priori with responsibility (Derrida, “Mochlos” 1).<sup>15</sup>

Quite immediately, what Derrida reveals to us is that, for him, it is the structure of the appeal which elicits response, and while one may choose to remain silent to the call, if we can continue refer to is as such, even this non-response is itself a form of responsibility. So, what does this mean for the myth Spanish Exception?

In pulling back to the myth, it is essential to remember that while myths themselves aim to provide an explanatory genesis or contradictions therein, the origin of the narrative itself is not a fundamental quality of the story. As Derrida explained, in citing Lévi-Strauss, “There is no unity or absolute source of the myth. The focus or the source of the myth are always shadows and virtualities which are elusive, unactualizable, and nonexistent . . . In opposition to epistemic discourse, *mythological discourse*—must itself be *mythomorphic*. It must have the form of that which it speaks” (Derrida, “*Structure*” 921). To this end, it is not only necessary to ignore the origin of the myth as its necessary component, but also that the myth must also be told in the language of myth. We can say, then, that while the intent of Piquer and Encarnación could be considered, on a pure textual level, this intent has no more of a claim to truth than any affects that could be produced in the political sphere via its dissemination. Moreover, it would even be possible to argue that without the constraint of an immediate and dictatorial presence of intent, that any causal

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15. Although, here, the platform is different since Derrida is being asked to respond to the responsibility of the university to society, it remains relevant that the question of responsibility still lies at the nexus between individual action and the inescapable structure of appeal.

factors aroused by the myth would, and as a result of the mythic structure, read more as a narrative function than a concrete political agenda.<sup>16</sup>

The question, then, becomes; to what or whom does the myth respond, and what was the structure of appeal that gave way to its inscription? In thinking of this, it necessary to point out that while myths might be responding to a given desire, which may be conditioned by a structure of responsibility that calls it forth, there is no guarantee that the telling of this myth is done responsibly. Put differently, to tell a myth without an account of some implicit acknowledgement of a certain ethical prescriptivism that may condition its reception, is precisely, and dangerously a lapse of responsibility. To further this questioning into myth and responsibility, we must turn to common trope that is repeated in both Piquer and Encarnación's account, Francisco Franco.

### **The Ghost of Franco**

While Piquer makes a claim for several factors that might explain the current political climate, it is the case for Franco which seems to have been the most accepted by the wider public. In an almost poetic introduction to her argument about Franco titled "La dictature est encore récente," Piquer writes:

Pourquoi la récession, le rejet des partis traditionnels et l'afflux de migrants n'ont-ils pas provoqué, de l'autre côté des

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16. Here, by mythic structure, I do not mean that one ought to subscribe to one, or that such an underlying universal structure even exists. Rather, it is to say that given the formulistic understanding that allows us to approach myth as a narrative, truth and verifiability are seen secondary to a logic that is both self-contained and permitted within a cohesive narrative.

Pyrénées, les mêmes réponses qu'en France? L'explication qui vient spontanément à l'esprit des intellectuels est l'histoire: le franquisme, qui revendiquait une Espagne "unie, grande et libre", n'a pas encore disparu des mémoires (N.P.).

From there, Piquer then continues to provide further expert opinions on why Franco might have had a lasting impact on the formation of a viable Extreme Right. From the title of the section to its various points, Piquer singles out the "recent" Franco regime, which ended in 1975 as the enduring memory that prevents the past from repeating itself. This Franco explain, along with the manor of its deployment can similarly be seen in Encarnación's piece. In the section titled, "The Long Dictatorship," he writes:

So how is it that, in Spain, all the factors that have strengthened right-wing populist movements elsewhere have had little effect? As might be suspected, Spain's long history with fascism has a lot do with it; the regime of Generalissimo Francisco Franco was the only major fascist dictatorship to survive World War II [...] For one thing, Franco's penchant for demagoguery, hyper-nationalism, and xenophobia makes any Spanish politician who even gestures toward these themes unacceptable to most voters. (N.P.).

With hyperbolic statements aside, when we look at the two introductions, very quickly do the rhetorical maneuvers begin to make themselves apparent; such as the use of the opening question to ask why Spain has not become what they have projected. However, what is even more significant is how the facile reference to Franco already elicits, or configures a supposedly predetermined outcome. Put differently, when Piquer and Encarnación write about Franco, it can be taken as though the intended audience has already concluded that

what ought to happen, which was the formation of a stronger right-wing platform, did not indeed come to pass.

Interestingly, and perhaps the more significant aspect of this way of seeing the non-existence of the far right has to do with how both writers suggest a sort of ghostly presence, a *trace* if you will, of Franco's regime on contemporary Spanish politics.<sup>17</sup> If we can understand trace, here, as that a present non-presence that can be overtaken by something else, which in turn would remind us of its presence; then, one could say that perhaps it is indeed out of fear of repetition of history that Franco must consistently be evoked, since it is inherent within the ghostly trace of Franco that lies the very possibility of its own effacement.<sup>18</sup> However, effacement does not mean that it is guaranteed that what comes to replace the ghost figure of Franco will, in anyway, be familiar. Therefore, while simultaneously occupying both the figure of evil to which Spain ought not return, as well as the figure whose ghostly presence is necessary for Spain to move forward in dialectical fashion, the trace of Franco becomes, in its own way, a point of responsibility that informs the structure of response.

Continuing with Franco as this figure of evil within the

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17. In his essay "Difference," Derrida explains trace in saying, "The trace is not a presence that dislocates, displaces, and refers beyond itself. The trace has, properly speaking, no place, for effacement belongs to the very structure of the trace. Effacement must always be able to overtake the trace; otherwise it would not be a trace but an indestructible and monumental substance. In addition, and from the start, effacement constitutes it as a trace—effacement establishes the trace in a change of place and makes it disappear in its appearing, makes it issue forth from itself in its very position. See. Pg. 947.

18. Another significant note, here, is that while Derrida is speaking of the trace as a leftover of the holy "other," in an ontological sense, I am utilizing it both in terms of an ontological questions as well as an existential one.

context of our previously mentioned mythic structure, Encarnación goes even further by replicating and performing an even broader, mythic account of Spanish history. In his almost pathological explication of the Spaniards' desire to join the European Union, Encarnación refers back to 1492 when "The Kingdom of Spain" was formed as the originary basis for this impulse (N.P.). Given this tacit gesture of mythicizing Spanish history and attributing its current qualities for something as unpredictable and unverifiable as its past desires; it would not be too inconceivable to say that Encarnación, as well as those who think similarly to him, see the death of Franco as the starting basis of the Spanish narrative. This narrative, which places Spain as the protagonist and whose structure was predetermined by an a priori that was set out to end all evil, has always been seen, in a certain regard, as a response to responsibility.

So, if we are to follow this line of logic, which ties a condition of the past as a primary explicator of the present, then we ought to not only be concerned with acting out of responsibility vis-à-vis discursive practices, or otherwise, but also to make sure that it is carried-out responsibly. Returning to the Heidelberg Conference, and in considering what it means to perform a responsible reading with political consequences, Derrida explain, "I believe, and here I agree with Lacoue-Labarthe, that the reading of Heidegger can help us, not on its own, of course, and not a simply orthodox and philological reading, but a certain active reading of Heidegger can help us to approach a way to think through what we condemn" (*Heidegger* 94). For our purposes, the essential point, here, is not Heidegger, but more precisely how the undertaking of something like writing and reading articles about the Spanish right, ought to be a conscious act that thinks through its implicit objects of condemnation.

Put differently, in the process of posing the question of the Spanish Exception, how are we responsibly understanding the predeterminations and potentialities already implicit in the questions we ask? The answer, as Derrida would most likely agree, could only arise if we continued to propose questions and responses responsibly.

As I have alluded to prior, this questioning particularly significant since neither the act of designating Franco as the progenitor of current conditions, nor the act of responding to a certain political need necessarily sufficient in terms of what responsibility might require. In other words, by legitimizing the myth with causal agents like the ghost of Franco, we are, in effect, relegating a certain agency over to a more symbolic gesture of political action. What this produces, then, is the idea that what has been accounted for via some historical, and perhaps allegorical narrativization, could in somehow take the place of full responsibility. The danger here, thus, would be that it fractures responsibility into differentiating actions, whereby responses are hierarchized by the legibility and finitude of their explanatory function; as opposed to continuous action, which does not see the production of a cohesive narrative as being necessarily done with the responsibility to the future.

### **Immigrants and the Role of Unity**

In addition to the enduring ghostly presence of Franco, Piquer and Encarnación also raise the question of immigration and unity between the various regions of Spain to sustain their account of the Spanish Exception. Different from the United States and France where the issue of immigration is one of the most prevalent discourses on the national radar, from everyday conversation to entire platforms built on anti-immigration rhetoric, for Spaniards, immigration is among

some of the least significant obstacles the country faces. In citing the studies from the Centre d'enquêtes sociologiques or (CIS), Piquer informs us that on the list of top priorities, it is unemployment, which comes in at 18%, followed by corruption, that concern most Spaniards (N.P.).

Moving in a similar direction, Encarnación mirrors Piquer's observation on the seemingly liberal attitude and social inclusivity of Spain by attributing it to systemic multiculturalism, which comes as a direct result from counteracting Franco era conservatism. More important, however, is the idea that Spain, as a country, must deal simultaneously with the diversity of its "historic regions," all the while keeping its borders open to new immigrants (Encarnación N.P.). All this diversity can be understood as one of the main reason that it has been difficult to raise any nationalist sentiments against foreigners in Madrid that would not also, at the same time, create more barriers between itself and regions like Catalonia. Put differently, to run any political platform with the intent of foregrounding a *Spanishness* must necessarily consider a pluralistic, if not fractured construction of the Spanish identity. Therefore, maintaining a relationship of ethno-political difference is a balancing act that must recognize both the possibilities of a unified or divided Spain. In this sense, it is not that extremism has no place in Spanish politics, rather that the moderate stance has been the only viable position for many politicians up till this point.<sup>19</sup>

Of course, as I've mentioned earlier, Spanish politicians and the general public are all well-aware that all this political moderation could quickly change. Toward the end of his piece, Encarnación lists several possible factors such as a shift in immigration politics, or changing relations with European

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19. See "Spain: No Country for Old Fascists" by Diego Torres.

Union that would move Spain much more toward the right. The other warning, if we choose to see it that way, is the that “The memories of Franco are fading fast,” and the new generation would not have had any direct exposure to the dictatorship (Encarnación N.P.). Ultimately, what most commentators have agreed upon is that it has been the conservative Partido Popular (PP) that has kept extremism in Spain under control. However, according to some of these writers, given that the main factors that have kept Spain in its path of moderation are the same factors that will most drastically change, uncertainty seems like the only certain. If this is the case, how can we continue to talk about responsibility, in this uncertainty?

To address this question, we will return to the Heidelberg conference wherein Derrida offers another explication of responsibly, as it is related to uncertainty in the realm of politics. In responding to a question on what to do about Heidegger, he writes:

The definition of responsibility is not a theoretical act: responsibility is not something defined theoretically, it is something taken, slowly, at length, indefinitely, incessantly—I mean to say, constantly. And the fact that I do not have a response to give you in the form of a phrase or a philosophical concept on this subject, not only does that not mean that I am for the abdication of responsibility, or that I prefer irresponsibility, as some might hastily accuse me of doing, but on the contrary it means that I believe that the sharpest—I would not say the highest: that is precisely a word I distrust, particularly in Heidegger—, the most demanding of responsibilities imply that we must continue to do this work, for example to interrogate the history of responsibility, the history not only of speculative concepts but of the culture of responsibility (“Heidegger” 118–119).

If this says nothing else about how Derrida conceives of responsibility, it should still say something about how the manner of questioning what responsibility entails is inherently always part of the answer. Furthermore, even though it appears as if Derrida gave no affirmative or clear definition of responsibility, in eliding the question he is indeed performing that responsibility. This is so, since a part of what it means to act responsibly is to consider how the hastiness of actions that appear affirmative can give the illusion that one could ever escape the structure of responsibility.

Much like with the issue of xenophobia and the integration of immigrants in any country, one must also recognize that the question of Responsibility, is also a question of time, or lack thereof. We can say, then, that for most developed Western countries, the issue of immigrants is not entirely dependent upon the singular presence of the immigrants themselves, but perhaps more so with the rate and short period within which these groups arrive. What this time allows, presumably, is a certain comfort that the new immigrants will be integrated and that the country would be able to maintain its cultural singularity. However, given that Spanish politics post-Franco never could have afforded this singular and essentialist platform, for the sake of stability, immigration thus far has not been a problem, with the understanding that there would be sufficient time. That said, if we agree with Encarnación and others who attribute the currently centrist politics of Spain to the trauma of Franco, while at the same time warning that that time might be coming to an end, what message are we conveying about the urgency of interventions like Piquer's and Encarnación's? In other words, how do we see urgency, which calls for a quick action and response, as something that codes responsibility?

Perhaps that is why it so is relevant for us to consider how Derrida's concept of responsibility must necessarily be spoken about in relation to urgency. Moreover, it would also make clearer why Derrida continues to answer each question at the Heidelberg conference by inciting the structure of response. When he responds to his critics by saying how his non-affirmative, or prescriptive understanding of responsibility does not mean he prefers irresponsibility, or its abdication, his main critique is still that of their hastiness to critique ("Heidegger" 119). Whereas some of these critics see responsibility as acting out of haste, and thereby responding to an urgency, for Derrida such a maneuver could produce quite the opposite effect.

We ought to not take this as Derrida saying something akin to it being irresponsible to act with urgency to either something like the refugee crisis or the threat of fascism. Quite on the contrary, and as an important distinction, when we act out of responsibility to respond to a particular issue, we ought to not let the urgency that begs the response make us forget what responsibility really is. That is, something to be taken as constant and indefinite process. We can say, then, that articles like the ones written by Piquer and Encarnación are in themselves products of a particular understanding of responsibility. That said, to read them as a singular and definitive diagnosis of the right, as though the knowledge of it could somehow relieve us of a constant vigilance, would, in effect, be contrary to any ideals of what a Derridian responsibility entails. Therefore, perhaps we can finally say that the danger of the myth of the Spanish Exception has to do with how it can lead to a false sense of absolution from political responsibility, yet at the same time represents an entirely understandable, even if impossible desire.

## Conclusion

In these pages, my goal was to engage with the Derridian conception of responsibility as it is related to the myth of the Spanish Exception to argue that; unless we understand all its implications, mythologizing a country's political present by claiming a singular traceable past can prove to be quite dangerous. This is problematic not only in terms of verifiability, but also how this quick response moves away from a conception of responsibility as something that must be constantly undertaken. As with the first point, when we speak of Spanish history in mythic terms and attributing it with causal factors, as we would with any narrative account for the sake of a genesis—we are also potentially ignoring the concerns that originally structured, or called for such a response. To the second point, and as a result of ignoring this structure of response, it can lead to the designation of supposedly clear yet unverifiable causal elements such as the trace, or ghost of Franco. Lastly, when we continue to posit the current inclusive immigration policies of Spain as a plus without considering the structure that called upon its urgent response, we fail to understand what it means, in a Derridian sense, to act responsively—that is, continually and indefinitely.

As not to be exhaustive, while Piquer and Encarnación are only two articulations of the questions being posed on Spanish politics, they do indeed echo other articulations with the same curiosity. Therefore, if we must address something like the question of the Extreme Right in Spain, acting responsively would require not only paying careful attention to what we attribute as causal factors when we build myths, but also how these myths affect the ways we uphold vigilance as a tenant of responsibility.

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