**Of maiming and privilege:**

**Rethinking war disability through the case of Francoist Spain, 1936-1989**


## Abstract

This article attempts to reconfigure current historiographical debates on war disability, which have hitherto tended to rely on 'masculinity' as an analytical framework. Instead, the case of the Francoist war disabled of the Spanish Civil War underscores the need to consider war disability in relation to broader social hierarchies, and the socio-political topographies in which these operate. In doing so, it is possible to understand how the Francoist war disabled occupied a relatively privileged space in twentieth-century Spain, despite and even *because* of the impairments they sustained in the Civil War. At the same time, Francoist war disability benefits left much to be desired, and clear differences emerged between the experiences of 'military' and 'civilian' veterans. In this sense, the Francoist war disabled were both favoured and under-served by the regime's war disability policies. This research has broader relevance to scholars working on contexts beyond modern Spain, as it disrupts the traditional association of physical impairment with marginality, while highlighting the fluidity of perceptions and experiences of war disability according to socio-political context.



## Key words

Disability, privilege, Francoism, gender, veterans, Spain


In February 1994, readers of the Spanish Mutilated Gentlemen Association's (*Asociación de Caballeros Mutilados*) monthly magazine were privy to a curious poem. In it, an anonymous member of the association decried an 'unjust law' which relegated those who

had sacrificed their bodies for the Spanish homeland to the 'threshold of oblivion'.[1] One might mistake the author for one of the thousands of defeated Republican disabled veterans of the Spanish Civil War who had received no support from the military dictatorship of Francisco Franco during its nearly four decades in power, between 1939 and 1975. However, the Association in fact represented the Francoist war maimed — those given the title of 'Mutilated Gentlemen' and accorded preferential treatment under the Francoist regime. The 'unjust' law was that of 1989, which finally disbanded the 'Mutilated Gentlemen' corps, thus ending over 50 years of privilege at the heart of the Spanish establishment.

Privilege is not a concept frequently referenced in histories of war disability.[2] Yet, without it, it is difficult to make sense of the experiences of the Nationalist war disabled of the Spanish Civil War, who were both favoured and under-served by the Francoist regime. Privilege does not always manifest itself as conscious material advantage, but can be understood in relational terms, as an absence of discrimination or hardship experienced by more marginalised groups.[3] Though Francoist veterans did not necessarily feel privileged in an absolute sense, even the poorest Francoist *mutilados* enjoyed the relative privilege of being spared the often brutal physical and administrative repression imparted on their counterparts from the losing side in the Civil War. The concept of 'privilege' also allows us to identify differences within the 'Mutilated Gentleman' category, particularly

[1] '…Y fuimos declarados a extinguir, …no extintos', *Asociación Caballeros Mutilados por la Patria: Revista ACM*, i, 1 (Feb. 1994), 60.

[2] For an important exception, see Esme Cleall, 'Jane Groom and the Deaf Colonists: Empire, Emigration and the Agency of Disabled People in the late Nineteenth-Century British Empire', *History Workshop Journal*, lxxxi, 1 (2016), 39-61.

[3] Most up-to-date research on this topic can be found in discussions of 'white privilege'. See, for example, Kalwant Bhopal, *White Privilege: The Myth of a Post-Racial Society* (Bristol and Chicago, 2018), esp. 21-2; Reni Eddo-Lodge, *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race* (London, 2018), esp. 86-7; Peggy McIntosh, 'White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack', *Peace and Freedom* (1989), 10-12.

between those 'military' veterans who continued to serve in the armed forces (and enjoyed the benefits inherent therein), and *mutilados* who returned to civilian life after the conflict. Furthermore, irrespective of the actual lived experiences of veterans, numerous factors cemented public perceptions of Francoist *mutilados* as privileged citizens. This article will attempt to disentangle widespread perceptions of Francoist veteran privilege from the more complex question of experience, paying particular attention to the ways in which 'victor' privilege intersected with class and ability/disability hierarchies in the post-war and beyond.[4]

Most current studies of war disability in contexts beyond Spain have taken gender — or more specifically masculinity — as their main analytical framework.[5] In the mid-1990s, Seth Koven and Joanna Bourke each explored the experiences of the war disabled in post-First World War Britain, arguing that ex-servicemen were 'dismembered', not only physically but in a 'social, economic, political, and sexual' sense too.[6] In contrast to the virile, physically robust men presented in wartime propaganda, the image of the disabled veteran within such scholarship appeared as a marginalised shadow of his former self, a trend which also emerged in studies of the Soviet context.[7] More recently, war disability scholars have turned their attention to attempts at the macro and micro level to

[4] In this article, an intersectional approach allows us to consider Francoist disabled veterans as the beneficiaries of their wartime allegiances, whilst at the same time often struggling against the inadequacy of the regime's war disability policies. On intersectionality, see Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color', *Stanford Law Review*, xliii, 6 (1991), 1241-1299.

[5] Catherine J. Kudlick, 'Disability History: Why We Need Another "Other"', *American Historical Review*, cviii (2003), 785, fn. 74.

[6] Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, 1996); Seth Koven, 'Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers, and the Great War in Great Britain', *American Historical Review*, xcix, 4 (1994), 1169.

[7] On war disability in Soviet Russia, see Mark Edele, *Soviet Veterans of World War II: A Popular Movement in an Authoritarian Society, 1941-1991* (Oxford, 2008), 81-100; Biete Fieseler, '"La Protection Social Totale": Les Hospices pour Grands Mutilés de Guerre dans l'Union Soviétique des Années 1940', *Cahiers du Monde Russe*, xlix, 2/3 (2008), 419-440; Lilya Kaganovsky, *How the Soviet Man Was Unmade: Cultural Fantasy and Male Subjectivity under Stalin* (Pittsburgh, 2008).

'overcome' the emasculating and marginalising effects of maiming in war. Authors such as David Serlin have explored how prosthetics constituted 'embodied technology', which sought to mend not only bodies, but also social identities.[8] The emphasis of both of these historiographical trends on the disruption and reconstruction of masculine identity is only partially useful for understanding the history of the war disabled in Francoist Spain. Though they may have felt emasculated on a personal level, the Francoist 'Mutilated Gentlemen' were never marginalised figures, but rather occupied a central space within the national community of Francisco Franco's 'New Spain'.[9] Some veterans even attained positions of power; in the local elections of 1951, for example, 60 out of the 9005 (0.7 per cent) mayors appointed were 'Mutilated Gentlemen', a considerable figure if we consider that Mutilated Gentlemen made up only 50,000 (0.2 per cent) of Spain's approximately 27,976,755 population.[10] In this sense, narratives of emasculation or 'overcoming' war disability did not emerge in post-war Spain because, within the militaristic, triumphalist logic of Francoism, there was nothing to overcome. The case of

[8] David Serlin, *Replaceable You: Engineering the Body in Postwar America* (Chicago, 2004). See also Jeffrey Reznick, *Healing the Nation: Soldiers and the Culture of Caregiving in Britain during the Great War* (Manchester, 2011); Ana Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism, and the First World War* (Oxford, 2009) and *The Politics of Wounds: Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford, 2014); Wendy Jane Gagen, 'Remastering the Body, Renegotiating Gender: Physical Disability and Masculinity during the First World War, the Case of J.B. Middlebrook', *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'Histoire*, xiv, 4 (2007), 525-541; Maria Cristina Galmarini, 'Turning Defects to Advantages: The Discourse of Labour in the Autobiographies of Soviet Blinded Second World War Veterans', *European History Quarterly*, xliv, 4 (2014), 651-677; Julie Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain: 'Soul of a Nation'* (Manchester, 2011). For a more recent discussion of masculinity and disability, see Kathleen M. Brian and James W. Trent, *Phallacies: Historical Intersections of Disability and Masculinity* (New York, 2017).

[9] On the prominent position of Francoist veterans in post-war Spanish society, see Ángel Alcalde, *Los Excombatientes Franquistas: La Cultura de Guerra del Fascismo Español y la Delegación Nacional de Excombatientes (1936-1965)* (Zaragoza, 2014); and Miguel Ángel Del Arco Blanco, '"Hombres Nuevos". El Personal Político del Primer Franquismo en el Mundo Rural del Sureste Español (1936-1951)', *Ayer*, lxv (2007), 237-267.

[10] Antonio Cazorla Sánchez, *Fear and Progress: Ordinary Lives in Franco's Spain, 1939-1975* (Chichester, 2010), 54; Fondo documental del Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 'Población de España (Península e Islas adyacentes)', 1951 Yearbook.

the Francoist war disabled therefore underscores the 'fluidity' of disability as a concept throughout history, which must be historicised with reference to socio-political context.[11]

### i. Cultural and economic privilege during the Civil War and post-war

The Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939 erupted following a failed military coup against the democratically-elected Second Spanish Republic.[12] Over the next three years, Spaniards became embroiled in a fratricidal conflict, which divided the country between those who remained loyal to the Republic, and those 'Nationalist' rebels who, led by General Francisco Franco, fought to ensure its destruction. For the rebel authorities, the war constituted a 'Crusade' against the atheistic Republic, as well as an opportunity to lay down the foundations of the 'New Spain' that would emerge from the war.[13] Provisions for the war disabled formed part of this state-building process, and in January 1937 the Francoist authorities created the Directorate General for the War Mutilated. This legislation was followed in April 1938 by the creation of the 'Honourable Corps for the Mutilated in the War for the Fatherland' (*Benemérito Cuerpo de Mutilados de Guerra*

[11] On the cultural 'fluidity' of disability see Sharon Barnarrt (ed.), *Disability as a Fluid State* (Bingley, 2010), 9; Peter Horn and Bianca Frohe, 'On the Fluidity of "Disability" in Medieval and Early Modern Societies, Opportunities and Strategies in a New Field of Research' in Sebastian Barsch, Anne Klein and Pieter Verstraete (eds.), *The Imperfect Historian: Disability Histories in Europe* (Frankfurt am Main, 2013), 9, 17-39.

[12] For further context, the best concise history of the Spanish Civil War is Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2005).

[13] On the Civil War as 'Crusade' see Enrique Moradiellos, *1936: Los Mitos de la Guerra Civil* (Barcelona, 2004); Mary Vincent, 'The Martyrs and the Saints: Masculinity and the Construction of the Francoist Crusade', *History Workshop Journal*, 0, 47 (1999), 73-74. On Francoist state building during the Civil War see also Michael Richards, *A Time of Silence: Civil War and the Culture of Repression in Franco's Spain, 1936-1945* (Cambridge, 1998); Angela Cenarro, *La Sonrisa de Falange: Auxilio Social en la Guerra Civil y en la Posguerra* (Barcelona, 2006); Michael Seidman, *The Glorious Counterrevolution: The Nationalist Effort in the Spanish Civil War* (Madison, WI., 2011).

*por la Patria*, BCMGP), which would manage the case files of Francoist veterans for the next fifty years.[14]

The establishment of the BCMGP marked a new era of war disability legislation in Spain, which reflected the symbolic importance attributed to the reported 50,000 Francoist *mutilados* of the conflict.[15] Up until the Civil War, the war disabled had been managed within the 'Invalids' Corps' (*Cuerpo de Inválidos*), which had roots dating back to the eighteenth century.[16] The establishment of the BCMGP by the Francoist side in 1938 constituted an attempt to reframe understandings of the war disabled. In 1941, for example, military surgeon Manuel de Cárdenas recalled the formerly common sight of peg-legged veterans of Spain's early twentieth-century colonial wars loitering around churches in the hope of attracting charitable donations.[17] The BCMGP was meant to distance the war disabled from such pitiful figures, rebranding war 'invalids' as *Caballeros Mutilados* (Mutilated Gentleman), a new title granted to disabled veterans officially recognised by the state. The symbolic importance of this linguistic shift was reflected in the BCMGP's founding myth, in which Franco reportedly instructed General José Millán Astray (founder of the Spanish Foreign Legion and a *mutilado* to boot) to establish the new Corps:

[14] *BOE*, 540, 'Reglamento Provisional del Benemérito Cuerpo de Mutilados de Guerra por la Patria', 14 Apr. 1938.
[15] By 1941, the regime had recognised 50,000 'mutilated' veterans. Given the restrictive criteria used when recognising war mutilation — which excluded many with physical and psychiatric illnesses— the real number of veterans who sustained life-changing injuries during their Civil War service was certainly much higher. *ABC*, 23 Oct. 1941; 24 Oct. 1941.
[16] Fernando Puell de la Villa, *Historia de la Protección Social Militar (1265-1978): De la Ley de Partidas al ISFAS* (Madrid, 2008), 132; *BOE*, 261, 17 Sept. 1932, 2002-2001; *BOE*, 363, 28 Dec. 1932, 2177.
[17] Manuel de Cárdenas, 'La recuperación de los amputados de los miembros como consecuencia de las heridas de guerra', in *Recuperación Quirúrgico-Ortopédica de los Mutilados de Guerra: Primera Ponencia: Sanidad Militar* (Madrid, 1941), 223.

> Organise this new and glorious Corps, which will be called the Honourable Corps of the Mutilated of the War for the Fatherland, given that we, the Spanish soldiers, and you know this well, as amputated and broken as we may be, no one can ever call us invalids, as the enthusiasm and spirit of good soldiers can never be invalidated.[18]

In the 'New Spain', the word 'invalid' was an inappropriate way to refer to maimed veterans. The term implied an invalidation of the wounded veteran, the experiences that had led to his injury and, by extension, the Nationalist 'Crusade' itself. Instead, Francoist wounded veterans were to be admired, not pitied, and Millán Astray himself — whose womanising tendencies and determination to continue serving the *Patria* despite the severity of his mutilations were legendary in military circles — would stand as a testament to the virility of the battle scarred.[19]

The rhetoric of the Francoist regime must, of course, be regarded with caution, yet there is ample evidence to suggest that the BCMGP was indeed successful in fostering a degree of cultural prestige for the war disabled of the winning side. This was in part a product of the BCMGP's legislative structures. The corps organised the war maimed into four categories according to an individual's percentage rating of disability: 'absolute' (over 100 per cent), 'permanent' (91-100 per cent), 'useful' (11-90 per cent) and 'potential' (11-90 per cent, wounds still in a state of flux).[20] Only veterans in the

[18] Carlos de Silva, *General Millán Astray (El Legionario)* (Barcelona, 1956), 184. This story is reproduced verbatim in the semi-official history of the *mutilados*, Agustín Garcia Laforga, *Mutilados de Guerra por la Patria: Historia (Soldados Viejos y Estropeados) Siglos XVI al XX* (Zaragoza, 1971), 240.

[19] This mythologised portrait of Millán Astray is deconstructed in Paul Preston, *¡Comrades! Portraits from the Spanish Civil War* (London, 2000), 11-42. See also Felix Ortega, 'Militar y caballero: José Millán Astray', *El Figaro*, 1 Oct. 1995, 27-58. There have also been a number of pro-regime biographies of Millán Astray, which reflect his mythologisation within the armed forces. See De Silva, *General Millán Astray* and Luis Togores, *Millán Astray: Legionario* (Madrid, 2003).

[20] The percentages were calculated using a 'table of organic and functional lesions' published in the BCMGP's rules and regulations. This table was based on procedures developed in France

'absolute' and 'permanent' categories were eligible for pensions, while those classified as 'useful', which constituted the vast majority in the early post-war years, were expected to work.[21] This emphasis on 'usefulness' reflected shifting European perceptions of disability, which thanks to medical and technological advancements resulting from the First World War, no longer (necessarily) condemned individuals to a life of unemployment and dependence.[22] In Spain, the enormous 'useful' category betrayed the regime's budgetary constraints, and many so-called 'useful' *mutilados* had suffered severe injuries which did, in fact, prevent them from working.[23] Nonetheless, large numbers of veterans within the 'useful' category had only minor and often imperceptible wounds, and were thus able to continue in their pre-war occupations, or find new jobs with the help of legislation which favoured the employment of Civil War veterans.[24] The presence of such 'Mutilated Gentlemen' in the workplace disrupted former associations of war maiming with unemployment.

This phenomenon was reflected in the character of José in Juan de Orduña's 1941 film *Porque te vi llorar* (Because I saw you Cry), a 'Mutilated Gentleman' whose wounds were entirely invisible and certainly no impediment to his work as an electrician.[25]

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following the Great War. See *BOE*, 540, 14 Apr. 1938; J. Garnaud, *Application de la loi du 31 mars 1919: Guide de L'Expert aux Commissions de Réforme* (Paris, 1919).

[21] Antonio Vallejo Nájera, 'Reacciones Psicógenas en los Mutilados de Guerra', *Revista Española de Cirugía y Medicina*, v, 41 (1942), 2-3.

[22] Heather R. Perry, *Recycling the Disabled: Army, Medicine and Modernity in WWI Germany* (Manchester, 2014).

[23] In the early post-war years, the 'useful' category included veterans with a very broad range of injuries, from the loss of a middle finger (5-15 per cent) to the amputation of an entire arm (65-80 per cent) or leg (55-60 per cent); *BOE*, 540, 14 Apr. 1938.

[24] *BOE*, 540, 14 Apr. 1938, art. 30.

[25] *Porque te vi llorar* [film], directed by Juan de Orduña (Cifesa, 1941). Produced by Cifesa, one of the largest production companies of the Spanish post-war period, *Porque te vi llorar* formed part of a broader catalogue of films which sought to consolidate and promote the values of the nascent Francoist regime. See Peter Besas, *Behind the Spanish Lens: Spanish Cinema under Fascism and Democracy* (Denver, 1985), 25-28; Francisco Llinás, 'Redundancy and Passion: Juan de Orduña and CIFESA', in Jenaro Talens and Santos Zunzunegui (eds.), *Modes of Representation in Spanish Cinema* (Minneapolis, 1998), 104-112; Begoña Gutiérrez San Miguel, '*Porque te vi llorar* o los primeros bocetos de la educación sentimental de la España de la

Orduña's film emerged just a few years before *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) and *The Men* (1950) in the U.S.A., which directly addressed the emasculating effects of war disability and the difficulties of rehabilitating disabled veterans within society.[26] In contrast, in *Porque te vi llorar* José's injury evidenced his honourable character, but the wound itself was inconsequential to his ability to perform the role of breadwinner, husband, and father. Such representations hinted at Spanish society's discomfort with non-normative bodies, and the visual muting of impairment in pro-regime cultural productions reflected both the desire to distance veterans from the stigma of impairment, and an inability to articulate this in practice.[27] An example from the work of the renowned

postguerra', *Arenal*, xxiii, 2 (2016), 247-266. The film received positive reviews and remained in cinemas until at least November 1942. See *ABC*, 30 Dec. 1941; 6 Nov. 1942; *Blanco y Negro*, 8 March 1958.

[26] *The Best Years of Our Lives* [film], directed by William Wyler (The Samuel Goldwyn Company, 1946); *The Men* [film], directed by Fred Zinnemann (Stanley Kramer Productions, 1950); David A. Gerber, 'Heroes and Misfits: The Troubled Social Reintegration of Disabled Veterans in *The Best Years of Our Lives*', in David Gerber (ed.), *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor, 2000), 70-95.

[27] On stigma and physical impairment, see Erving Goffman's classic *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (Harmondsworth, 1990).

Figure 1: Lieutenant Ricardo Martínez Ojinaga and his fiancé, 1938. Source: José Demaría Vázquez "Campúa"

photojournalist José Demaría Vázquez "Campúa" can be seen in figure 1, in which a blinded lieutenant of the Francoist army appeared to 'look' into the eyes of his adoring fiancé.[28]

*Caballeros Mutilados* often struggled to reconcile Francoist rhetoric with their lived experience of physical impairment. Those few *mutilados* who published memoirs tended to discuss their wounds in terms of the circumstances in which they were sustained and their experiences in hospital, drawing on broader discourses of heroism and honour to frame their narratives. José Mira Rizo, an ex-legionnaire wounded four times over the course of the war, proudly signed the inscription to his 1995 memoir using the *Caballero Mutilado* title, but subsequently made no reference to his long-term impairment during the entirety of his 180-page narrative.[29] Instead, when describing his time in hospital, he emphasised his honourable conduct in battle:

> Mary's [Mira's girlfriend] best friends came to visit me [in hospital] too, and all because one of the shop assistants had a brother who had the misfortune of being

[28] Ricardo Martínez Ojinaga, blinded while clearing landmines during the Civil War and later director of 'Franco's School for the Blind' in Madrid, was the subject of numerous ceremonies and press features. Archivo General Militar de Ávila (henceforth AGMAV), F.195, 41, José Demaría Campúa, 'San Sebastián. Un teniente mutilado ciego recibe el título de ingeniero', 1938. The rights to Figure 1 belong to José Demaría Vázquez "Campúa" and his archive, 'Archivo José F. Demaría "Campúa" ®'. *ABC*, 31 Jan. 1940; Archivo General Miltiar de Segovia (henceforth AGMS), M-2008, Ricardo Martínez Ojinaga; AGMAV, C.20602, 2, Documentation relating to the Hogar Escuela Franco.

[29] José Mira Rizo, *La Muerte Espera: Me Hice Novio de la Muerte* (Barcelona, 1995). See also 'Testimonios', *ACIME: Soldados Viejos y Estropeados*, xxiii, 91 (2014), 45.

> wounded by the enemy right in front of me. I did no more or less than what was expected. He either left with me or both of us would fall. […] I began to throw them [hand grenades] and this formed an impenetrable barrier that allowed me to fetch him and take him to the first aid post in time. Afterwards, I carried on forwards as was my mission but he, upon being injured and seeing his family, told them so enthusiastically about my feat that he made me into an idol when I had been but a simple legionnaire.[30]

The rest of Mira Rizo's memoir recounted in detail his wartime adventures prior to wounding, drawing particular attention to his love affairs with women encountered along the way.

Indeed, the masculinity of Francoist *mutilados* was in part asserted with reference to their relationships with women.[31] In Franco's Spain, as elsewhere, the home was an important theatre in which men could fulfil their roles as breadwinning heads of the household, and the idea that the war wounded made ideal husbands was normalised in the society pages of the press.[32] One short feature in the *ABC* newspaper from May 1939 included a photo of a bride and Mutilated Gentleman groom, surrounded by representatives of the authorities and BCMGP.[33] Printed in the intervening weeks between the Francoist 'liberation' of Madrid and the victory parade on 19 May, the selection of this particular wedding for comment in the national press reflected the

[30] Mira Rizo, *Muerte Espera*, 145-146.
[31] On war disability and domesticity in other contexts, see Gerber, 'Heroes and Misfits'; Jessica Meyer, '"Not Septimus Now": Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain', *Women's History Review*, xiii, 1 (2004), 117-138.; Marina Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs: Living with the Scars of War* (Sydney, 2009).
[32] The 'Mutilated Gentlemen' title frequently preceded the husband's name in marriage announcements. See, for example, *ABC*, 24 Dec. 1939; 27 Nov. 1941. On conceptualisations of masculinity in Francoist Spain, see Nerea Aresti, 'Masculinidad y nación en la España de los años 1920 y 1930', *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, xlii, 2 (2012), 55-72; Mary Vincent, 'La reafirmación de la masculinidad en la cruzada franquista', *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, xxviii (2006), 135-151. On 'hegemonic masculinity' more generally, see R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Bodmin, 1995) and *The Men and the Boys* (Oxford, 2000); John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven, Conn. and London, 2007), 2.
[33] *ABC*, 3 May 1939.

regime's desire to celebrate the sacrifices of a war hero while signalling that 'victory' would imply a return to normality, and the resumption of traditional gender relations in which Mutilated Gentlemen were to be included. That the war maimed should be encouraged to marry reflected wider attempts by the Francoist regime to reposition the Spanish male firmly at the head of the household, and *Caballeros Mutilados* were helped to achieve masculine breadwinning ideals through privileged access to jobs and pensions.[34] Although some authors have suggested that men with physical disabilities were undesirable in post-war Spain, many veterans in all mutilation categories found wives post-injury.[35] Building on the wartime 'godmother' (*madrinas de guerra*) tradition, in which women in the rear-guard wrote to men at the front, some women even placed classified ads in the post-war era asking to correspond specifically with war *mutilados*.[36] This popularity reflected perceptions of Francoist *mutilados* as a privileged group, whose access to pensions and stable employment made them solid marriage prospects during the economic deprivation of the 1940s.

The Francoist regime's emphasis on 'usefulness', breadwinning, and family life mimicked war disability policies abroad, and reflected masculine norms which were (and

[34] The Second Spanish Republic's introduction of divorce and recognition of illegitimate children was demonised by the regime as an attack on the family. The regime sought to reverse such changes through the reinstatement of the 1889 Civil Code, and the introduction of the 1938 Labour Charter (Fuero del Trabajo) and 1945 Charter of Spaniards (Fuero de los Españoles). Such measures discouraged female employment and ensured that only male relatives could exercise certain civic rights, such as the opening of bank accounts. See Inmaculada Blasco Herranz, *Armas Femeninas para la Contrarrevolución: La Sección Femenina en Aragón (1936-1950)* (Malaga, 1999), 11-12; R. Ruiz Franco, 'La Situación Legal: Discriminación y Reforma' in Gloria Niefla Cristóbal (ed.), *Mujeres y Hombres en la España Franquista: Sociedad, Economía, Política, Cultura* (Madrid 2003), 123; *BOE*, 199, 'Fuero de los Españoles', 18 July 1945, 359.

[35] Cazorla, *Fear and Progress*, 146.

[36] *ABC*, 30 Aug. 1939; 31 May 1939; *Y*, 1 Sept. 1941; *La Vanguardia*, 22 June 1937. On the *madrinas de guerra*, see James Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors*: *Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Oxford, 2012), 119-123, 166-167.

remain) widespread in Europe and beyond.[37] However, the cultural prestige of the Francoist war disabled was also fostered by the regime's 'National Catholicism', which reversed the Republic's secularising initiatives, and recentered the Catholic Church within Spanish public life.[38] Historian Yvonne Werner identifies important departures between Catholic and Protestant expressions of manliness, arguing that the influence of regulated religious life within Catholic culture fostered 'classical Christian ideals such as humility, obedience, and self-sacrifice', compared to Protestantism's more family-centred gender ideology.[39] In Spain, Catholicism's emphasis on humility and self-sacrifice found expression through the concept of 'suffering' (*sufrimiento*), which, combined with commemorations of Republican anti-clerical violence, provided a powerful framing narrative for the *Caballeros Mutilados'*s collective identity.[40] In Malaga, a group of Mutilated Gentlemen formed a new religious guild called the Venerable Confraternity of the Most Holy Mutilated Christ (*Cofradía del Santísimo Cristo Mutilado*), inspired by the fate of a statue of Christ which had been partially destroyed by Republican forces during the Civil War.[41] Unlike most mutilated images, which were restored or destroyed, Pope Pius XII gave his permission for this statue of Christ to be kept in its maimed state. From then on, the Confraternity became a fixture of the Malagan Holy Week under the dictatorship. Though built from the bottom-up, the

[37] See, for example, George Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford, 1996).
[38] Alfonso Botti, *Cielo y Dinero: El Nacionalcatolicismo en España (1881-1975)* (Madrid, 1992).
[39] Yvonne Maria Werner, 'Studying Christian Masculinity: An Introduction' in Yvonne Maria Werner (ed,), *Christian Masculinity: Men and Religion in Northern Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Leuven, 2011), 17.
[40] On the relationship between identity and personal or collective narratives, see Monika Fludernik, 'Identity/Alterity' in David Herman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative* (Cambridge, 2007), 262; Patrick Schmidt, 'No Need for Assimilation? Narratives about Disabled Persons and their Social Integration in Eighteenth-Century Periodicals', in Barsh, Klein and Verstraete, *The Imperfect Historian*, 46.
[41] Marion Reder Gadow, 'Una Imagen Controvertida de la Semana Santa Malagueña: el Cristo de los Mutilados' *Los crucificados, religiosidad, cofradías y arte: Actas del Simposium*, 3-6 Sept. 2010, 214. On the desecration of churches during the Civil War, see José Francisco Guijarro, *Persecución religiosa y guerra civil: La iglesia en Madrid, 1936– 1939* (Madrid, 2006).

confraternity was fully endorsed by the Francoist regime; in 1956 and 1966 members of the confraternity were received by Franco at his El Pardo palace, and the Holy Week procession was featured in the regime's 'NO-DO' propaganda broadcasts in 1944 and 1946.[42] The mutilated Christ thus soon transcended its Andalusian origins, and became an icon for BCMGP delegations nationwide.[43]

By linking the fate of mutilated soldiers to the Passion of Christ during Holy Week, Civil War wounds were framed in terms of the resurrection and salvation of Spain.[44] The juxtaposition of Christ and the *mutilados* was a powerful one. The mutilation of the statue of Christ did not diminish its value or render it obsolete, but rather enhanced its value. Caroline Gray describes such conceptualisations as 'multicultural' narratives of disability, which present physical difference not as a limiting flaw but as a positive

[42] 'NO-DO', short for 'Noticiarios y Documentales' (News and Documentaries), was the Francoist regime's newsreel service. See Saturnino Rodríguez, *El NO-DO: Catecismo social de una época* (Madrid, 1999); Vicente Sánchez-Biosca and Rafael R. Tranche, *NO-DO: El Tiempo y la Memoria* (Madrid, 2006). Clips of the Venerable Confraternity of the Most Holy Mutilated Christ can be viewed on Spain's National Television archive: Filmoteca Española, NO-DO (NO-DO), 'NOT N 68 A', (17 April 1944), http://www.rtve.es/filmoteca/no-do/not-68/1468471/, [accessed 31 Jan 2019], 10"30; 'Semana Santa en España', (1 January 1946), http://www.rtve.es/alacarta/videos/documentales-b-n/semana-santa-espana/2847705/, [accessed 31 Jan 2019], 8"16; AGMAV, F.173,27, Ricardo Argibay Serrano and Santos Yubero, 'Audiencia a la Cofradía del Santísimo Cristo Mutilado de Málaga', (10 March 1966); *Archive of José Demaría Vázquez "Campúa"*, http://foto-campua.com/Las%20Audiencias/Las%20Audiencias%201.html [accessed 22 March 2016].

[43] Memorabilia from the Cofradia Nacional del Santísimo Cristo Mutilado hung, for example, in the local BCMGP delegations for Burgos, Logroño and Zamora. A portrait of the mutilated Christ was also displayed in the BCMGP's national headquarters in Madrid. Unidad Gestión de Mutilados (henceforth UGM), 'Diploma con medalla/papel, bronce concesión de la medalla de bronce de la Cofradía Nacional del Santísimo Cristo Mutilado a la Jefatura Provincial de Mutilados de Burgos, 16 Febrero de 1965'; 'Dirección de Mutilados: Inventarios de los objetos, Cuadros, Armas, Figuras, Guiones y Estandartes que procedente del Benemérito Cuerpo de Caballeros Mutilados de Guerra por la Patria, pudieran tener un valor para el Museo del Ejército por si [sic] significado histórico', 30 Dec. 1991.

[44] See, for example, Luis Fernández Ardavín's poem 'El Cristo Mutilado' in Luis Fernández Ardavín, *Madrid en Sangre: El Cristo Mutilado y Otros Poemas, 1936-1939* (Madrid, 1942), 18; Zira Box Varela, 'La Fundación de un Régimen. La Construcción Simbólica del Franquismo', PhD thesis, (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2008), 63; Mary Vincent, 'Expiation as Performative Rhetoric in National-Catholicism: The Politics of Gesture in Post-Civil War Spain', *Past and Present*, iv (2009), 244.

attribute, and reject the idea that disabled people need to be 'fixed' or assimilated.[45] Leg amputee Enrique López Sánchez seemed to embody such pride in his battle scars, signing his 1939 memoir with the *Caballero Mutilado* title, and boasting at length of his sacrifices for the homeland:

> There was [in the hospital] a desire to overcome the suffering, a type of fist fight to see who had sacrificed themselves the most. One man felt proud to have offered up a hand for the Fatherland; another boasted of having lost a leg; another had been left without both arms; another had had the lights definitively extinguished from his eyes; and everyone seemed happy and proud of their sacrifices…'[46]

In addition, López Sánchez was at pains to frame his physical suffering in terms of his ability to dominate it through sheer willpower.[47] On a trip to Toledo, for example, López described his frustration and disappointment at not being able to visit many of the city's sights:

> The difficulty takes hold of my spirit and turns into veritable disappointment [*disgusto*] when I realise that I cannot comfortably view the destroyed great augusta, given the impossibility of moving forward amongst the debris and jumping from stone to stone on crutches […] I cannot visit the remains of the 'Posada de la Sangre', where Cervantes lived, either. It is also impossible to walk around the city and see the main sights. In Toledo the streets are narrow alleys, tortuous with enormous hills, cobbled with small stones. It's all ups and downs... I have yet another disappointment: there is not one taxi available in the city. Despite everything I do not despair, and my will and my muscles have enough strength to make it to the cathedral.[48]

[45] Caroline Gray, 'Narratives of Disability and the Movement from Deficiency to Difference', *Cultural Sociology*, xxxii, 2 (2009), 327.
[46] Enrique López Sánchez, *Al Servicio de la Patria: Del Frente de Asturias al de Madrid Pasando por el Quirófano (Un diario de un combatiente)* (Lugo, 1939), 75.
[47] *Ibid.*, 86, 126.
[48] *Ibid.*, 125.

López's juxtaposition of his own pain with the destruction of the city of Toledo — symbolic of Nationalist sacrifices during the Civil War — strongly echoed the discourse of suffering adopted by the Confraternity of the Most Holy Mutilated Christ.[49] By reframing war wounding in terms of personal sacrifice for the homeland, 'Mutilated Gentlemen' not only rejected the stigmatising, emasculating label of 'victimhood', but positioned themselves as veritable models of masculinity. In their 2005 revision of the 'hegemonic masculinity' thesis, Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt acknowledge its contested nature, and the dyadic 'influence of subordinated masculinities on dominant forms'.[50] In Spain, the concept of *sufrimiento* not only helped the 'Mutilated Gentleman' to associate themselves with the broader masculine ideal of self-control, but also contributed to new understandings of 'hegemonic masculinity' by foregrounding humility as a desirable attribute in the 'New Spain'. The behavioural code of 'humility' constituted an important part of how the paternalistic regime functioned as it enabled men to showcase their patriotic achievements, while performing their deference to broader Francoist hierarchies. That the 'Mutilated Gentleman' had the self-control and determination to process with the mutilated Christ despite having suffered severe physical and mental pain, made an important statement about the *mutilados* as 'whole' men. At the same time, the performative subordination of the *mutilados'* individual suffering and pain to the national narrative of 'redemption' formed part of a broader trend, whereby individuals would go to great lengths to demonstrate their acceptance and conformity with the regime's social, political and military hierarchies.

[49] The siege of Toledo's Alcázar became one of the regime's most vaunted episodes of the Civil War, particularly given Colonel (later General) Moscardó's purported sacrifice of his own son to the Nationalist cause. See, for example, Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-39* (London, 1990), 63-66; Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (Aylesbury, 1977), 324-325.
[50] R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, 'Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept', *Gender and Society*, xix, 6 (2005), 829-859.

Examples of performative humility amongst *Caballeros Mutilados* abound. López Sánchez opened his memoir with the disclaimer that he was but a 'modest' writer who had almost abandoned his autobiographical endeavour as he knew he would 'have to speak too much about myself'.[51] Similarly, the semi-official history of the *Caballeros Mutilados* carried the apparently self-deprecating subheading, 'Old and broken soldiers' (*Soldados viejos y estropeados*).[52] The author of the history, Agustín García Laforga — himself an Infantry Major (*Comandante)* and 'permanent' Mutilated Gentleman — dedicated the self-professed 'lowly fruits' of his labours to the Caudillo.[53] In actual fact, the subheading of García Laforga's book (rather immodestly) referenced a passage from Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, in which the protagonist praises the honour of even the most wretched, poverty-stricken veterans.[54] Coincidentally, Cervantes — who lost the use of his left arm at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 — was considered by the BCMGP to be the 'most illustrious and glorious *mutilado*', and was commemorated with a bust in the Corps' headquarters.[55] Through their appropriation of Cervantes, the *mutilados* were able to perform their deference to the regime's hierarchies, while underlining their patriotism, their lineage and their moral superiority over those who had not known suffering for the homeland in battle.[56]

Yet the privilege of the Francoist war disabled cannot be fully understood in terms of their symbolism within the regime's broader war mythology, or their attempts to

[51] López Sánchez, *Al Servicio de la Patria*, 9.
[52] García, *Mutilados de Guerra*.
[53] *Ibid*., 5. See also Millán, *Franco*, 9, 108, 109.
[54] Puell, *Historia de la Protección Social*, 42; John Jay Allen (ed.), Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha* II (Madrid, 2008, 27th edn), 237-238.
[55] *BOE*, 540, 14 Apr. 1938, 'artículo de honor'.
[56] On the legitimising function of Francoist references to the Golden Age, see Tobias Locker, 'The Baroque in the Construction of a National Culture in Francoist Spain: An Introduction', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, xci, 5 (2014), 657-671; Paula Barreiro López, 'Reinterpreting the Past: The Baroque Phantom during Francoism', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, xci, 5 (2014), 715-734.

associate themselves with the illustrious personages of Christ and Cervantes. Privilege can be implicit or relational in nature, resulting less from the possession of quantifiable social power or economic advantage as from the absence of discrimination.[57] This understanding of privilege is vital to understanding the context of post-Civil War Spain, in which Francoist veterans were not only spared the racial discrimination experienced by Moroccan veterans of the conflict, but — more significantly on the Iberian peninsula — the political discrimination exacted upon their counterparts from the defeated Republican army.[58] After extinguishing the last embers of Republican resistance on Spain's eastern coast in 1939, the regime continued the physical and administrative repression of Republicans that had already characterised the rebel zone in the Civil War.[59] In February 1939, the regime passed the Law of Political Responsibilities, which charged all those who had not joined the military coup as guilty of military rebellion. Within this context, the Republican disabled of the conflict were, at best, ignored by the regime, or, at worst, victims of the New State's desire to 'cleanse' the Spanish population of undesirables.[60] In the post-war, an estimated 20,000 former supporters of Republican cause are thought to have been executed by the Francoist regime, and countless others

[57] Bhopal, *White Privilege*, 21; Eddo-Lodge, *About Race*, 86-7; McIntosh, 'White privilege', 10-12.

[58] The experiences of the Moroccan war disabled are beyond the scope of this article, but they are discussed at length in Stephanie Wright, 'Glorious brothers, unsuitable lovers: Moroccan veterans, Spanish women and the mechanisms of Francoist paternalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, lv, 1 (2020), 52-74.

[59] On repression during the Civil War and post-war period, see Richards, *Time of Silence*; Peter Anderson, *The Francoist Military Trials: Terror and Complicity, 1939-1945* (New York, 2010); Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain* (London, 2012); Javier Rodrigo, *Cautivos: Campos de Concentración en la España Franquista, 1936-1947* (Barcelona, 2005); Santos Juliá (ed.), *Víctimas de la Guerra Civil* (Madrid, 1999).

[60] To date, most work on the experiences of the Republican *mutilados* has been produced by organisations or individuals acting on their behalf for improved pension rights. See A.A. Bravo-Tellado, *Los Mutilados del Ejército de la República* (Madrid, 1976); Pedro Vega, *Historia de la Liga de Mutilados* (Madrid, 1981). On the experiences of the Republican disabled in relation to Spain's transition to democracy in the 1970s and 1980s, see Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy* (New York and Oxford, 2002).

were forced out of their jobs or deprived of their personal wealth and other belongings.[61] A 'joke' which emerged in the years following the Civil War commented with irony upon the coexistence of two cohorts of veterans in post-war Spain: while Francoist veterans were deemed 'Mutilated Gentlemen', Republicans were just 'damned cripples' (*jodidos cojos*).[62] The socio-political backdrop of repression against former supporters of the Republic thus goes some way to explaining the social and cultural privilege of the Francoist war disabled fostered by their close association with the winning side.

This relational understanding of privilege also helps us to make sense of the economic positioning of Francoist veterans in post-war Spain. As previously alluded to, the post-war regime faced considerable budgetary constraints, compounded by its own commitment to autarchy, which greatly impeded its ability to provide adequate assistance to Francoist veterans who sustained serious injuries during the conflict.[63] Those whose applications to join the BCMGP were approved were often underwhelmed by the benefits to which they were entitled. 'Useful' veterans with more severe wounds often found they were unable to find and hold down jobs, and even the regime was forced to recognise the inadequacy of its provisions for this category of *mutilado* in 1942, when it relaxed the criteria needed to attain the 'permanent' category.[64] When they were granted, pensions were graduated according to rank, which meant that incomes for the majority of the rank-and-file were limited. According to the 1938 legislation, a soldier received a pension of 6000 pesetas per year, which gradually increased to 12,000 pesetas over 12 years. Though

[61] Preston, *Spanish Holocaust*, xi. On the extensive purging of Republicans from the workplace, particularly in the public sector, see Josefina Cuesta (ed.), *La Depuración de Funcionarios Bajo la Dictadura Franquista, 1936-1975* (Madrid, 2009). On economic repression see Julio Prada Rodríguez, *The Plundering of the Vanquished: The Economic Repression during Early Francoism* (Berlin, 2019).
[62] Puell, *Historia de la Protección Social*, 203; *Diario de Burgos*, 7 Feb. 2016.
[63] Richards, *Time of Silence*, 91-109.
[64] *BOE*, 364, 30 December 1942.

arguably sufficient in the late 1930s, these rates became increasingly inadequate in subsequent years and decades, before pension quantities were revised in 1958.[65] Averaging out at between 16 and 33 pesetas per day, this pension quantity fell short of the estimated 50.44 pesetas per day needed to sustain a family of four per day in 1956.[66] Even those who could find work often found that one job was insufficient to provide for their families. Abrahán Gutiérrez, a *mutilado* of the Legion who sustained injuries to his leg and abdomen on the Madrid and Catalan fronts during the war, juggled two jobs to support his family.[67] Indeed, Francoist *mutilados* often complained in their letters to the BCMGP about the inadequacy of state provisions. One destitute infantry soldier, for example, begged the BCMGP to speed up the processing of his application.[68] The wife of another *Caballero Mutilado* described in passionate terms her family's economic hardship, explaining that the meagre state benefits were insufficient to feed their family.[69] Despite such private protestations, public displays of dissatisfaction were rare; privilege is precarious when granted by a paternalistic, dictatorial state, and most *mutilados* were clearly loathe to jeopardise their position.[70]

Furthermore, it is clear that despite its overtures to 'sacrifice' and 'usefulness', the regime's rhetoric failed to erase deeply entrenched ableist views on the capacities of the disabled body. Indeed, it is noteworthy that attempts to change perceptions of war

[65] *BOE,* 311, 29 December 1958, 11907.
[66] Cazorla Sánchez, *Fear and Progress*, 62.
[67] In the morning, Abrahán worked as a personnel manager (*Portero Mayor*) at the Supreme Court, and would skip lunch to begin work as a milkman in the afternoons. This second job, which involved carrying bottles of milk up flights of stairs to different apartments in the neighbourhood, was physically draining, and would have been challenging for *mutilados* with more severe injuries. Author's interview with Abrahán Gutiérrez and his son, Tomás, Madrid, 15 Dec. 2015.
[68] AGMS, 2194-18. The anonymity of the veterans discussed in this article has been preserved in accordance with Spanish data protection legislation.
[69] Archivo General Militar de Guadalajara (henceforth AGMG), 190-4154.
[70] For discussion of a similar phenomenon amongst the parents of children with intellectual disabilities in Latin America, see Gildas Brégain, 'An Entangled Perspective on Disability History: The Disability Protests in Argentina, Brazil and Spain, 1968-1982', in Barsh, Klein and Verstraete, *The Imperfect Historian*, 146.

disability in Spain did not lead to a reframing of disability as a social category more broadly, and the civilian disabled continued to face significant obstacles to social integration throughout the Francoist period.[71] In this sense, Francoist policy clearly aimed to disassociate veterans from the 'invalid' label, rather than changing perceptions and experiences of the label itself. The currently dominant 'social model' of disability contends that the experience of disability itself is the product of society's inability to accommodate non-normative bodies.[72] In Francoist Spain, disability largely continued to be viewed as an individual problem, and employers could be reluctant to adapt the workplace to veterans with physical impairments. A 1938 offer of employment to *mutilados* from the National Telephone Company, for example, specified that disabled men wishing to take up posts in the company would need the use of both their hands to operate the equipment's various cables.[73] Similarly, some veterans complained that *mutilados* could be passed over by their non-disabled colleagues for internal posts, even within the army itself. One sergeant protested in 1943 that he had not been offered one of 500 newly advertised administrative roles 'despite the fact that the requisite number of *Caballeros Mutilados* had not filled those positions reserved for them, while some non-mutilated NCOs with less experience than the undersigned have been appointed'.[74]

[71] See Gildas Brégain, '"Nous ne demandons pas la charité. Nous voulons du travail!" La Politique Franquiste D'Assistance aux Invalides', *Alter*, vii, 3 (2013), 206-221; José Martínez-Pérez and María Porras Gallo, 'Hacia una nueva percepción social de las personas con discapacidades: Legislación, medicina y los inválidos del trabajo en España (1900-1936)', *Dynamis*, xxvi (2006), 195–219; José Martínez-Pérez and Mercedes Del Cura, 'Bolstering the Greatness of the Homeland: Productivity, Disability and Medicine in Franco's Spain, 1938-1966', *Social History of Medicine*, xxviii, 4, 805-824.
[72] See, for example, Barbara M. Altman, 'Disability Definitions, Models, Classification Schemes, and Applications' in Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine D. Seelman and Michael Bury, (eds.), *The Handbook of Disability Studies* (Thousand Oaks, 2001), 104.
[73] AGMAV, C.2320,39,46, 'Compañia Telefónica Nacional de España. Escritos sobre su ofrecimiento para colocar en la misma a mutilados de Guerra', Valladolid, 5 May 1938.
[74] AGMS, F1765, 0, A.F.F.

Yet paradoxically, the economic hardship of the post-war period served to cast the Francoist war disabled as fortunate citizens. The economic downturn which followed the Civil War saw great swathes of the population die of hunger and related illnesses — approximately 200,000 according to recent estimates.[75] Within this context, even the meagre benefits received by the *Caballeros Mutilados* constituted a very real privilege, and helped to consolidate public perceptions of the Francoist war disabled as the fortunate recipients of the regime's patronage. For example, the 1938 BCMGP legislation reserved 30 per cent of vacant posts in the public sector for the war disabled of the Nationalist army, and stipulated that private companies should also favour *mutilados* in their hiring practices.[76] Such legislative provisions triggered unprecedented efforts on the part of employers to recruit *mutilados*, reflected in the explosion of job adverts which emerged in the regime's press outlets during the war and throughout the 1940s.[77] No doubt keen to advertise their patriotic credentials to the new regime, employers jostled for print space in the nation's daily newspapers, offering a range of positions from watchmakers and telephone engineers, to petrol station or warehouse attendants and orderlies in psychiatric hospitals.[78] Most of the jobs advertised were restricted to unskilled roles, but such public overtures to inclusivity helped to tie the 'Mutilated Gentlemen' indelibly to the triumphalist narrative of the 'Crusade', and had a lasting effect on public perceptions of their privilege.

[75] Miguel Ángel del Arco Blanco, *Hambre de Siglos: Mundo rural* y *apoyos sociales del franquismo en Andalucía oriental, 1936-1951* (Granada, 2007), 312.
[76] *BOE*, 540, 14 Apr. 1938, arts. 30 and 38.
[77] See, for example, *ABC*, 20 Jan. 1940; 25 Feb. 1942; 13 May 1942; 26 May 1943; 17 June 1943; 24 June 1947.
[78] *ABC*, 17 Oct. 1939; *ABC*, 24 Nov. 1950; *La Vanguardia*, 8 Dec. 1939; *La Vanguardia*, 13 Nov. 1960; *ABC*, 24 June 1947; 20 Jan. 1940; 13 May 1942; Paloma Vázquez de la Torre and Olga Villasante, 'Psychiatric Care at a National Mental Institution during the Spanish Civil War (1936–39): Santa Isabel de Leganés', *History of Psychiatry*, xxvii:1 (2016), 54.

Other non-material factors helped to consolidate public perceptions of Mutilated Gentleman privilege, as well as a sense of entitlement amongst the veterans themselves. In particular, public events such as bullfights and football matches were frequently held in honour of the Mutilated Gentlemen in the post-war.[79] Such events often left a deep impression on attendees. Many years later, one Carlist *mutilado* fondly recalled throwing his iconic red beret into the ring at one such event. To his surprise, the *boina* was retrieved by the famous bullfighter Victoriano de la Serna, who kissed it before throwing it back.[80] Many *mutilados* soon came to feel entitled to such displays of gratitude, becoming frustrated or even aggressive when reality failed to live up to expectation. In July 1938, a group of *mutilados* walked out of a play at a theatre in La Línea de la Concepción when a local delegate for Public Order refused to give up his private box for them.[81] Similarly, in a 1939 incident in Zaragoza, between sixty and seventy disabled veterans forcibly tried to gain entry into the bullring despite not having tickets.[82] In the former case, *mutilados* returned to the theatre to 'patriotic and eloquent' applause, while in the latter, veterans were eventually granted entry to the bullfight following the intervention of the Civil Governor.[83] Francoist *mutilados* thus became accustomed to certain public privileges and could cause disruption if they felt their sacrifices for the *Patria* went unacknowledged. That veterans felt the need to police such public commemorations not only contextualises the *mutilados*' culture of 'humility', but also reflected an awareness of the fragility of

[79] See, for example, AGMAV, C.2925, 16, 4; Sid Lowe, *Fear and Loathing in La Liga: Barcelona Vs Real Madrid* (London, 2013), 57.
[80] Pablo Larraz Andía and Víctor Sierra-Sesúmaga, *Requetés: De las Trincheras al Olvido* (Madrid, 2010), 833.
[81] AGMAV, C.2925, 16, 4, Unsigned letter to Sr Jefe de la Oficina de S.I.P.M., 11 July 1938.
[82] AGMAV, C.3063, 12, 17, 'Gobierno Militar de Zaragoza, Asunto: Justicia/Delitos: Diversos escándalos producidos en esta plaza, 1938-1939'.
[83] AGMAV, C.3063, 17, Note to Señor Gobernador Militar de la Plaza, Zaragoza from Guardia Civil, Comandancia de Zaragoza, Zaragoza, 10 Apr. 1939.


Figure 2: 'Spanish antifascist *mutilados* begging for public charity on the streets of Spain'. Image printed in Paris within the exiled Republican newspaper, *La Voz del Mutilado*, 20 Nov. 1947. Source: España. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte. Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica. Liga de Mutilados e Inválidos de la Guerra de España (Incorporados, 133, 3)

their privilege. At the same time, these symbolic acts and other non-material benefits — such as reserved seating on public transport and the right to skip queues (a much coveted advantage at a time of widespread food shortages) — cemented public perceptions of the Mutilated Gentlemen as privileged members of the Francoist 'national community'.[84] In subsequent years, annual rituals, duly reported on in the press, served to preserve the memory of the *mutilados*' sacrifices in the Civil War. Each year, veterans around the country would celebrate the day of their patron saint, the Archangel St Raphael, and representatives of the *mutilados* were periodically invited to visit Franco at El Pardo.[85]

[84] Such privileges were enshrined in the 1938 BCMGP legislation, and prominent notices on public transport reminded citizens that they should give up their seats for the Francoist war disabled. See *BOE*, 540, 14 Apr. 1938, art 79.

[85] St Raphael, associated with healing, was selected as patron saint of the BCMGP in 1938. In Spain it was common for military corps to have their own patron saints, and this practice continues

The military health system also provided Nationalist veterans with privileged access to prosthetics and technology which could conceal the visual markers of impairment.[86] Such benefits were unavailable to Republican veterans, whose wounds were often visible for all the wrong reasons as they begged on the streets in order to survive (see Figure 2).[87]

The relative privilege of Francoist *mutilados* compared to their disenfranchised Republican counterparts masked the heterogeneity of the 'Mutilated Gentleman' category. Through their association with the winning army in the Civil War, the *Caballeros Mutilados* were by their very nature 'victors'. However, the vast differences between the experiences of *Caballeros Mutilados* from different backgrounds belie the limitations of this categorisation. Despite the regime's public lauding of the Civil War's mutilated 'heroes', veterans had to overcome an often-lengthy application process before they could be recognised by the state. In order to join the Corps, veterans were assessed by trained physicians and given a percentage rating of disability, based on a translated version of the French law of 1919 catering for veterans of the Great War.[88] This involved submitting various pieces of paperwork, which included a signed application statement providing the names of witnesses who could testify to the circumstances of an individual's wounding and confirm that personal negligence played no part in the incident.[89] Here class and military rank played a key role in determining *mutilados*' experiences with the system. Despite the apparent bureaucratic objectivity of the BCMGP application process, significant differences emerged in the treatment of veterans from different backgrounds,

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to this day. AGMAV, C.2331, 60, 24, 'Santos Patronos. Propuesta del general de la Dirección de Mutilados para que se le designe como patrono del Cuerpo de Mutilados de guerra al arcángel San Rafael', Dec. 1938. For reports on St Raphael festivities, see, for example: *ABC*, 26 Oct 1939; 25 Oct. 1956; 25 Oct. 1959; 25 Oct. 1964; 24 Oct. 1968; 26 Sept. 1973; 23 Sept. 1975.

[86] *BOE*, 540, 14 Apr. 1938, art. 81.

[87] Republican *mutilados* described how under the regime they 'bore on their bodies the stain of their dishonour'. See Bravo-Tellado, *Mutilados*, 33.

[88] Garnaud, *Application de la loi*.

[89] On self-mutilation during the Civil War, see Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors*, 210-211; Michael Seidman, *Republic of Egos: A Social History of the Spanish Civil War* (Madison, Wis., 2002), 84.

particularly between military personnel who continued to serve in the armed forces, and ex-combatants who pursued careers in civilian occupations. For example, the applications of officer *mutilados* were generally processed more quickly than those low-ranking or 'civilian' veterans. One infantry lieutenant who sustained a head injury near Badajoz in 1938, experienced delays with his application until Millán Astray himself intervened directly on his behalf, explaining that officer *mutilados* should not have to wait for their applications to be processed.[90]

When it came to treating mentally ill veterans, differences in the experiences of 'military' and 'civilian' veterans were enshrined in law. A 1944 law purportedly granted entry as 'accidental absolute *mutilados*' to all Francoist military personnel immobilised through 'lunacy', 'no matter what the cause'.[91] However, later, in 1948, another law specified that mental illness would only be recognised when its cause was clearly traceable to military service, such as physical injury to the head, malnutrition or infection.[92] Other illnesses, such as hereditary schizophrenia, manic-depressive psychosis and paranoia would only be recognised if the patient had seen at least ten years of active service. Few conscripts who returned to civilian life after the war had accumulated this number of years. Consequently, in practice the link between mental illness and psychological trauma during the war was often ignored, particularly for 'civilian' veterans. Meanwhile, the mental health legislation could be used surreptitiously to support long-serving military personnel suffering with the neurological symptoms of venereal disease, whose conditions would otherwise have failed to qualify for BCMGP support.[93]

[90] AGMS, F1475, 0.
[91] *BOE*, 2, 2 Jan. 1945, 69-70.
[92] *BOE*, 119, 28 Apr. 1948.
[93] AGMS, D1264, 0; E611, 0.

Furthermore, BCMGP administrators could exercise discretion when considering applications, often overlooking inconsistencies or gaps in testimonies or documentation, particularly when presiding over the case files of their commanding officers. Given that many officer *mutilados* were themselves employed within the BCMGP's administrative structures, they were ideally located to influence the outcomes of their own case files. One infantry captain injured near Castellón in 1938 was initially judged to be within the least severe 'useful' category of mutilation but requested in 1944 for his classification to be revised up to the 'permanent B' category.[94] As chairman (*vocal presidente*) of the provincial BCMGP Commission which was charged with processing his request, the officer was well-placed to receive a positive outcome. He did not, of course, preside over his own case, but both the judge and secretary dealing with his request were his military subordinates by a significant margin. By the time the *mutilado* had put in his request for 'permanent' status he had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, and it is clear that the lieutenant and sergeant *mutilados* judging his application had little incentive to present their superior with an unfavourable verdict.[95]

Though it did not offer *mutilados* a physical home, the BCMGP as an institution shaped the lives of many veterans — particularly those from the higher-ranking, officer classes who were employed within its central and local offices — and was key to fostering public perceptions of the *Caballeros Mutilados*' privilege. The grand building on Calle de Velazquez which housed the BCMGP's national headquarters in Madrid, constituted the spiritual home of the *mutilados*, and was filled with BCMGP paraphernalia including portraits and busts of Millán Astray, images of the Malagan mutilated Christ, as well as plaques and flags bearing the insignia of the Corps, an aesthetic shared by local and

[94] AGMS, F1094, 2.
[95] For further examples, see AGMS, B1356, 0; E862,01.

provincial delegations. In this sense, the BCMGP was more than just an administrative body. Though the *mutilados* did not enjoy the autonomy of other veterans' movements during this period, the Corps constituted a focal point for perceptions of war disablement.[96] Part administrative body, part employer of the war disabled, part cultural monument to wartime sacrifices, the BCMGP and its smartly-dressed and stably-employed *mutilados* provided a stark contrast to the marginalised 'invalids' of the past.

### ii. The evolution of 'Mutilated Gentleman' privilege beyond the 1940s

The gap between perceptions and experiences of Francoist veteran privilege widened as Spain's economy began to recover in the late 1950s and 1960s. So too did the divide between 'military' and 'civilian' *Caballeros Mutilados*. The latter had been exposed to few opportunities for career progression in their low-skilled posts, or struggled to live off pensions which had not been revised since their introduction in 1938.[97] As was the case in other contexts, the desire to return disabled veterans to the workplace was not matched by a willingness to compensate for the loss of status and earning potential stemming from war injury.[98] Many *mutilados* in Francoist Spain, for example, became doormen or security guards, which provided economic stability, but hardly reflected the prestige of the war hero or offered many opportunities for career progression.[99]

[96] On war veteran movements beyond Spain, see, for example, Ángel Alcalde, *War Veterans and Fascism in Interwar Europe* (Cambridge, 2017).
[97] *BOE,* 311, 29 Dec. 1958, 11907.
[98] Jessica Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (Chippenham, 2008), 103, 113-114.
[99] Benito Nogales Puertas, *La Reorientación y Colocación Profesional de Mutilados de Guerra (Estudio de Organización Nacional)* (Santiago de Compostela, 1939), 208.

As Spain's economy recovered, the static nature of such employment also meant a decline in the relative privilege of *mutilados*.[100] Those whose wounds had deteriorated over time were particularly vulnerable. One veteran who suffered the amputation of several fingers in 1937 found a job as an orderly in a health centre after the war, but left in 1952 when his chronic polyarthritis prevented him from carrying out his duties.[101] BCMGP officials judged his condition unrelated to wartime service, and rejected the ex-combatant's request to be reclassified as 'permanent'. Even veterans with 'permanent' or 'absolute' pensions struggled to make ends meet, particularly if — conforming to the regime's pronatalism — they supported numerous dependents.[102] One legionnaire injured in 1937 received a monthly 'permanent' pension of 327.70 pesetas, which proved insufficient to cover the needs of his eleven children.[103] In 1957, he wrote to the local BCMGP office asking for a donation to help provide for his family. A short time later, the veteran 'won' 2000 pesetas in a raffle, organised as part of the BCMGP's annual St Raphael celebrations. In this instance, the veteran's favourable contacts in the BCMGP bailed him out, a solution unavailable to most. Pensions were eventually revised in 1958, but again remained unchanged thereafter until 1976.[104]

Meanwhile, 'military' *mutilados* who remained employed within the armed forces reaped the benefits of their proximity to the military establishment. Their status as higher-ranking soldiers and officers not only afforded them the superior provisiona granted to them by law — notably more generous pensions than for the troops — but also meant

[100] Pablo Martín Aceña and Elena Martínez Ruiz, 'The Golden Age of Spanish Capitalism: Economic Growth without Political Freedom', in Nigel Townson, *Spain Transformed: The Franco Dictatorship, 1959-75* (Basingstoke, 2010), 30-46.
[101] UGM, 12293.
[102] On pronatalism in Francoist Spain, see Mary Nash, 'Pronatalism and motherhood in Franco's Spain', in G. Bock, and P. Thane, (eds.), *Maternity and Gender Policies: Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s-1950s* (London, 1991), 168-172.
[103] UGM, 16654.
[104] *BOE,* 311, 29 Dec. 1958, 11907; *BOE*, 63, 5481, 13 Mar. 1976, 5209-5219.

they were in a position to benefit fully from Francoist war disability legislation, as well as the army's patronage structures. The many *mutilados* employed within the administrative structure of the BCMGP itself not only enjoyed stable employment, but also remained up to date with legislative developments that might benefit them. In particular, many officer *mutilados* were able to benefit from the legislation passed in 1942, which allowed them to access the more lucrative 'permanent B' classification if their wounds impeded them from advancing in their military careers.[105] 'Military' *mutilados* were also more likely to earn additional income from awards associated with their service, such as the *Cruz de Constancia* (medal for long service) and the prestigious Cross of the Royal Military Order of St Hermenegild.[106] Most importantly, as 'active' military personnel, officer *mutilados* were also eligible for promotions for seniority. Over time, this meant many *mutilados* rose to high-ranking positions, many finishing their careers as captains or even colonels.[107]

We can get a sense of the typical career trajectory of the 'military' war disabled through the example of one *mutilado*, who began his military career as a Carlist militiaman in the Civil War.[108] Injured in 1938, he was initially classified as 'useful', but saw his classification revised to 'permanent' in 1943. By the end of the conflict, the erstwhile *requeté* had attained the rank of lieutenant, and continued to rise automatically through the ranks until his promotion to a colonel in the 1970s. Another *mutilado* began his career in 1918, rising to the rank of sergeant major (*brigada*) by the outbreak of war.[109]

[105] *BOE*, 364, 30 Dec. 1942.
[106] The Royal Military Order of St Hermenegild commemorates sacrifice and long-term service to the armed forces. Luis Gravalos Gonzalez and José Luis Calvo Perez, *Condecoraciones Militares Españolas* (Madrid, 1988), 48-49, 225-226, 379.
[107] See, for example, AGMS L865,5; M4723,0; AGMS B1356,0. On promotion structures within the Francoist army, see Julio Busquets, *El Militar de Carrera en España* (Barcelona, 1971), 132.
[108] AGMS, M4723,0.
[109] AGMS, E862, 01.

Promoted to the officer classes during the Civil War, he was injured soon after at Teruel and initially categorised as 'useful'. Also reclassified as 'permanent' following the 1942 revisions, the *mutilado* had various bureaucratic roles in and outside the BCMGP, including as chairman (*vocal militar)* of a local BCMGP Commission, which enabled him to provide for his wife and six children. Over his lifetime, he eventually reached the rank of lieutenant colonel. Here, it is important to distinguish between a stable career and a prestigious one; advancements for seniority were held in lower esteem than promotions in battle or for merit.[110] Indeed, the fact that many 'military' *mutilados* occupied posts within the national and local delegations of the BCMGP which they themselves created a need for, constituted a kind of 'workfare' which brought into question the 'usefulness' of such individuals.[111] *Mutilados* who might otherwise have gone on to occupy positions of great responsibility thus certainly led less illustrious careers as bureaucrats within the BCMGP administration.

Nonetheless, public perceptions of *Caballero Mutilado* privilege held firm, and in fact gained renewed prominence in Spain with the relaxation of censorship from 1966.[112] These legislative innovations fostered attempts to improve the circumstances of the Republican war disabled. Just ten days after the repeal of the Law of Political Responsibilities, the editor of the Falangist daily *SP*, Rodrigo Royo, decried the 'unjust' circumstances of Republican disabled veterans, underlining the fact that most served in the loyalist forces through 'mere geographical accident'.[113] Efforts to address the needs of Republican veterans gained momentum over the late 1960s and early 1970s,

[110] Sebastian Balfour, *Deadly Embrace: Morocco and the Road to the Spanish Civil War* (Oxford, 2002), 165; Busquets, *Militar de Carrera*, 132.
[111] Heli Leppälä, 'Welfare or Workfare?: The Principle of Activation in the Finnish Post-War Disability Policy, Early 1940s to Late 1980s', *Journal of Social History*, xlix, 4 (2016), 959-981.
[112] *BOE*, 67, 19 Mar. 1966.
[113] *SP*, 20 Nov. 1966.

culminating in 1973 and 1974 when 47 *procuradores* (representatives in the Spanish Parliament) agreed to sign a document supporting Republican *mutilados* in their attempts to secure pensions.[114] Though such attempts were in vain, they reinforced perceptions of Francoist *mutilados* as the regime's favoured citizens. Implicit within such discussions was the idea that parity between Francoist and Republican veterans would resolve the problems of the latter; no consideration was given to the inadequacies of provision already in place for the *Caballeros Mutilados*.

This tendency to view provisions for Francoist veterans solely relative to the hardships experienced by Republicans explains the emergence of the *Caballero Mutilado* trope within dissident literature published in the latter years of the dictatorship. The most striking example of this came in 1973, with the publication of Juan Marsé's *Si te dicen que caí*.[115] Set in 1940s Barcelona, Marsé's work offered an unflattering portrait of the 'Mutilated Gentleman' expressed through the character of second lieutenant Conrad. Usually referred to in the diminutive as *Conradito*, or simply 'the invalid' (*el inválido*), Marsé's paraplegic 'Mutilated Gentleman' reflected certain aspects of Bourke and Koven's 'dismemberment' thesis. Sexually impotent, one of Conradito's favourite pastimes was to pay impoverished working-class Catalans to fornicate in his apartment as he watched from behind a curtain. In this sense, Conradito's position of power over his able-bodied subordinates also frustrates the 'dismemberment' paradigm. In the novel, the character is not the object of pity, but is despised as a symbol of the Francoist regime's decrepitude, and a figure of both privilege and decay. The ridiculing of the Francoist war wounded also emerged in cultural productions within Spain, such as the character of *Tío Miguel* (Uncle Miguel) in Carlos Saura's 1973 film *La Prima Angélica* (Cousin

[114] Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 93.
[115] Juan Marsé, *Si te Dicen que Caí* (Barcelona, 1993 [1973]).

Angelica).[116] *Tío Miguel*'s plaster arm cast is so rigid that it forces him to adopt the Falangist salute, a less than subtle allusion to the idea that only the broken continue to support the regime. The 1979 assassination by ETA of *Caballero Mutilado* Sergio Borrajo Palacín — a relatively obscure figure serving as the BCMGP provincial head for Álava at the time — can be interpreted as the most violent culmination of perceptions of Mutilated Gentlemen as symbols of Francoism.[117] Despite growing disparities between the experiences of 'military' and 'civilian' *mutilados*, visions of the 'Mutilated Gentlemen' as Franco's loyal stooges thus continued to dominate perceptions of the 'Nationalist' war disabled in the regime's dying years.

### iii. After Franco: Spain's transition to democracy and the erosion of 'Mutilated Gentleman' privilege

Spain's relatively peaceful transition to democracy came gradually and involved a careful process of compromise between new and old political elites.[118] As a result, the first few years after Franco's death in 1975 saw little change in the circumstances of Francoist *mutilados* of the Civil War. Updates to the BCMGP's rules and regulations went ahead as planned in 1976, and *mutilados* close to the BCMGP administration continued to be honoured with invitations to visit to the new head of state, Juan Carlos I, much as they had visited Franco over many years at El Pardo (Figure 3).[119] Definitive

[116] *La Prima Angélica* [film], directed by Carlos Saura (Mercury Films, 1973).
[117] *El País*, 15 Feb. 1979; *El Mundo*, 15 Feb. 2016.
[118] Alexandra Barahona De Brito, Carmen González Enriquez and Paloma Aguilar, 'Introduction', in Alexandra Barahona De Brito, Carmen González Enriquez, and Paloma Aguilar (eds.), *The Politics of Memory and Democratisation* (Oxford, 2003), 12.
[119] See also *ABC*, 22 Oct. 1982.

Figure 3: *Caballeros Mutilados* visit King Juan Carlos I at the Zarzuela Palace outside Madrid, c. late 1970/early 1980s. Source: España. Ministerio de Defensa. Unidad de Gestión de Mutilados. **©Casa de S.M. el Rey**

change was, however, detectable in the momentum gathering behind attempts to recognise the Republican disabled of the Civil War. July 1977 saw protests in Barcelona's Ciudadela organised by the Republican League of *Mutilados* in the War of Spain (*Lliga de Mutilats de la Guerra d'Espanya*), during which former Republican soldiers demanded recognition as veterans, as well as pensions equal to those paid to the victorious side.[120]

[120] Republican veterans had, in theory, been able to benefit from a 1976 law which granted pensions in favour of Spaniards who had sustained injuries in the war but who were not permitted to enter the BCMGP. This law did not refer to Republican veterans explicitly, but certain references to the situations of those living abroad which appeared in a complementary law in 1977 undoubtedly referred to Republican veterans in exile. At the 1977 demonstrations, Republicans criticised the fact that many were still awaiting pay-outs under this legislation, and protested the large discrepancies between these and pensions paid out to Francoist *mutilados*. See *Mundo Diario*, 15 July 1977; *Tele/eXpres*, 15 July 1977; *La Vanguardia*, 15 July 1977.

In 1977, the Holy Week procession of the Venerable Confraternity of the Most Holy Mutilated Christ in Malaga was cancelled, reportedly as a result of pressure from Republican *mutilados* wishing to take part.[121]

In the end, Republican *mutilados* had to wait until June 1980 for legislation to be passed granting them pensions for their Civil War service.[122] Although this legislation failed to compensate Republican veterans and their families for decades of hardship, missed job opportunities, and military promotions, it did signal a definitive rupture with the past, and reflected Spain's rapidly changing socio-political climate. Indeed, by the 1980s the BCMGP had become a relic of the former regime, and the BCMGP's Madrid mansion on Calle de Velázquez remained steeped in Francoist iconography. By this point the culture of the BCMGP was so indistinguishable from Francoist militarism that it is possible that those *Caballeros Mutilados* who remained close to the institution failed to notice its increasing disharmony with the rapidly changing world around them. This would explain their outrage as post-transition governments sought to dismantle the BCMGP as part of broader attempts to distance themselves from the anachronistic Civil War narratives of the Francoist dictatorship. While some scholars have suggested that veteran privilege is limited under dictatorships given the paucity of opportunities for citizens to hold their rulers to account, in the Spanish case the Francoist regime was the ultimate guarantor of *Caballero Mutilado* prestige.[123] As a result, from the late 1980s, the *Caballeros Mutilados* — particularly those 'military' *mutilados* who had become accustomed to visits to El Pardo and other state honours — began to see the definitive deterioration of their privileged position in Spanish society. In 1989 a law was passed

[121] *ABC*, 6 Apr. 1977.
[122] *BOE*, 165, 10 July 1980, 'Ley 35/1980, de 26 de junio, sobre pensiones a los mutilados excombatientes de la zona republicana.'
[123] Martin Crotty and Mark Edele, 'Total War and Entitlement: Towards a Global History of Veteran Privilege', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, i (2013), 19.

extinguishing the BCMGP and forcing all members into retirement.[124] This left just a handful of staff in the former Madrid headquarters to deal with the remaining pension files of those wounded in military service during the Civil War and subsequent decades of dictatorship. The magazine for the Association of 'Mutilated Gentlemen' offers an insight into how some Francoist *mutilados* responded to legislative changes during and after Spain's transition to democracy. The anonymous author of the poem referenced in the opening lines of this article, for example, lamented that the 'Mutilated Gentlemen' had, after so many years of loyal service, been pushed away from the 'big military family'.[125]

This feeling of having been snubbed by post-Franco governments continues to be felt to this day. In a 2017 article commemorating the 80th anniversary of the BCMGP, one anonymous defender of the erstwhile corps lamented 'those who suffer in silence the ingratitude of a nation to which they gave their best years, people invisible to the Spanish state which has forgotten its most sacred mission, to honour the history of Spain and its Heroes [sic], like the *mutilados* for the Fatherland.'[126] This feeling of adversity might explain the remarkable resistance of *mutilado* culture to the passage of time, and some BCMGP traditions live on to this day, particularly through ACIME, or the *Asociación Española de Militares y Guardias Civiles con Discapacidad* (Spanish Association of Military Personnel and Civil Guards with Disabilities). ACIME is a not-for-profit organisation established in 1989, which exists as a support network and pressure group for disabled military personnel. Though it declares itself apolitical and non-religious, ACIME has inherited certain traditions of the former BCMGP, including the annual St

[124] *BOE* 172, 20 July 1989, 'Ley 17/1989, de 19 de julio, Reguladora del Régimen del Personal Militar Profesional', Provision 6, 'Cuerpo de mutilados de guerra por la Patria', 23146-23147.
[125] '…Y fuimos declarados a extinguir', 60.
[126] *La Gaceta*, 22 Jan. 2017.

Raphael celebration. The BCMGP's headquarters in Madrid's upmarket Salamanca district remained dedicated to managing the remaining Francoist disabled veterans' case files until relatively recently, when in 2016 it was sold to the Rey Juan Carlos I University.[127] Despite this, the building and its BCMGP history remain iconic in right-wing circles, and in the same year it was illegally occupied by the neo-nazi social welfare organization, *Hogar Social Madrid*.[128] By the time much of this research was undertaken, in October 2015, the BCMGP's archive and remaining active personnel files had been transferred to a basement office just north of Madrid's Plaza de Castilla, where they continued to be managed by a solitary Ministry of Defence employee. Although later called the *Unidad de Gestión de Mutilados* or *Mutilado* Management Unit, echoes of the BCMGP remained in the paintings of St Rafael and the Malagan mutilated Christ which hung from the walls.

The acrimony with which some surviving *Caballeros Mutilados* have faced the gradual decline of the once prestigious corps might be viewed with some irony given the conditions endured by Republicans under the dictatorship and beyond.[129] Certainly, despite being forced into retirement, civil war *mutilados* of the former BCMGP were never stripped of their pensions or military honours. Nonetheless, the sentiment that Francoist *mutilados* are fighting a losing battle against history reflects the very nature of the BCMGP, which was always more than an administrative, pension-awarding body. The BCMGP and the 'military' *mutilados* who served within it enjoyed a long-term sense of privilege rarely conferred on the war disabled of other twentieth-century conflicts. Yet

[127] *El Diario*, 9 Jan. 2017; *El País*, 14 Dec. 2016.
[128] This group provides food banks and other welfare services exclusively to non-foreigners. *El País*, 14 Dec. 2016; 28 Mar. 2017.
[129] See *La Gaceta*, 22 Jan. 2017 and 'Mutilados de Guerra por la Patria', *Militares* xcv (2012), 13-14.

once the royal visits and prestigious headquarters had been consigned to history, these *Caballeros Mutilados* have struggled to digest the definitive erosion of this privilege.

### iv. Conclusion

This article identifies the concept of 'privilege' as a vital analytical framework for elucidating the often-contradictory history of Franco's *Caballeros Mutilados*, who enjoyed the advantages of their status as 'victors', while being under-served by a state which, particularly in the case of 'civilian' *mutilados*, failed to adequately support their needs. In this sense, 'privilege' throws into relief hierarchies within the 'Mutilated Gentleman' category, as well as how war disability intersected with other identity markers. From the very beginning of the dictatorship, the Francoist war disabled became closely associated in the public imaginary with the regime's triumphalist narrative of the Civil War. This narrativization of impairment was essential to the veterans' collective identity and their perceived privilege, but it was also, ultimately the undoing of this privilege during the transition and beyond. The undeniable paucity of Francoist provisions for its own maimed veterans sits uneasily with the fact that these veterans were provided for in a way that disenfranchised Republican *mutilados* could only hope for. Francoist Spain was not unique in fostering these kinds of contradictions or hierarchies between different disability groups. Beyond the Iberian Peninsula, veterans have frequently protested the inadequacy of state provisions while simultaneously occupying a position of privilege compared to other disability groups.[130] Nonetheless, the context of

[130] See, for example, Sebastian Schlund, 'Kompensation des "Makels"? Der organisierte Sport kriegsversehrter Männer in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1950 bis 1968' in Bernhard Gotto and Elke Seefried (eds.), *Männer mit "Makel". Männlichkeiten und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Berlin, 2016), 49-61; Adrienne Phelps Coco, 'Diseased, Maimed, Mutilated: Categorizations of Disability and an Ugly Law in Late Nineteenth-Century Chicago',

post-Civil War Spain which saw two cohorts of veterans injured in similar circumstances, often on the same battlefields, experience diametrically opposed treatment after the war, sheds light on the role of socio-political context in shaping the lived experiences of those with physical and mental impairments. The normalisation of the *Caballero Mutilado* masculine attributes of 'suffering' and 'humility' played an important part in fostering their privilege, but gender alone cannot explain the less tangible, relative benefits which resulted from their connections to the victorious side in the Civil War. This research, therefore, raises questions over the fate of other veterans in similar multi-cohort contexts, including soldiers affected by shifting national boundaries after the First and Second World Wars, or ex-combatants of civil wars that did not result in right-wing dictatorships. The history of the *Caballeros Mutilados* not only consolidates our understanding of the complexities of post-war Francoist society, particularly amongst the community of 'victors', but also underscores the importance of exploring how intersecting social identities map onto different socio-political topographies in different ways, which helps to refine our understanding of the historical fluidity of 'disability' more broadly.

*Journal of Social History* 44: 1 (2010), 24; Stephen Garton, *The Cost of War: Australians Return* (Melbourne and New York, 1996), 85-87.