

The Comuneros of Castile: The Forging of a Revolution, 1475–1521. By STEPHEN HALICZER. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981. Map. Notes. Glossary. Index. Pp. ix, 305. Cloth.

In recent years, historians have been able to choose between two persuasive interpretations of Castile's "Great Revolt." Joseph Pérez, in *La revolución des "comunidades" de Castile* (1970), stresses economic and social conflicts in Castilian society; José Antonio Maravall, in *Las comunidades de Castilla: Una primera revolución moderna* (1963), emphasizes political and ideological tensions. The former sees the revolution as directed against the aristocracy, the latter as against the monarchy. One of the many attributes of Stephen Haliczer's study is that it offers a synthesis of these two interpretations. Haliczer's concern is less with the revolution itself and more with its significance: the causes and results of the revolt. In discussing these matters, he is provocative, original, and convincing.

The author examines the "long-term underlying causes" (p. 9) within the theoretical context of functionalist sociology and analyzes the "dialectical" changes brought about by economic development and urbanization in the fifteenth century. The most important result of these changes was a strain on traditional social hierarchies (p. 23) and conflict between the aristocracy and the cities. While the author needs to give more attention to differentiation within and among the cities, his model both explains and convinces.

The tensions brought about by these social changes were not resolved by the state and Haliczer argues for a major revision in our assessment of the crucial reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. Rather than curtailing the power of the great aristocracy, the monarchy failed to resist an aristocratic offensive. In turn, this failure led to the rise of an urban opposition and, ultimately, to the revolution itself. Precisely when and why the policy of the monarchy changed in favor of the aristocracy could be analyzed more precisely, but here again Haliczer's explanation is persuasive.

The discussion of the consequences of the revolution is provocative: "the real loser . . . was the monarchy" (p. 205), which was, "if anything, too successful" (p. 234). After the defeat of the revolution, the monarchy returned to an alliance *with* the urban elite and many of the reform proposals of the *comuneros* were implemented. Haliczer revises our view of the Castilian Cortes by portraying it as a body that maintained and even increased its power and importance (pp. 219–227). Thus, by leading to an alliance between the monarchy and the cities, the defeat of the *comuneros* led ultimately to cooptation of the middle ranks of society (p. 229). And this, in turn, led to a weakening of economic influence and a

loss of political power by the urban elite. Hence, the ruinous policies of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries could be pursued unchecked (p. 234). Here again, more precision is desirable—"urban elite," "urban middle class," "middle ranks" are used interchangeably—but the thesis of cooptation is an exciting one. Indeed, the entire book is exciting.

Denison University

MICHAEL D. GORDON

NATIONAL PERIOD

Brazil in the International System: The Rise of a Middle Power. Edited by WAYNE A. SELCHER. Foreword by RONALD M. SCHNEIDER. Boulder: Westview Press, 1981. Notes. Graphs. Tables. Index. Pp. xxvii, 251. Cloth. \$28.50.

Power and Ideology in Brazil. By PETER McDONOUGH. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981. Tables. Figures. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. xxxiv, 326. Paper. \$7.95. Cloth. \$25.00.

Authoritarian Capitalism: Brazil's Contemporary Economic and Political Development. Edited by THOMAS C. BRUNEAU and PHILIPPE FAUCHER. Boulder: Westview Press, 1981. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. xvi, 272. Paper. \$12.50. Cloth. \$26.00.

Historians of Latin America will find these three volumes on Brazil in the 1970s of unequal value and usefulness. Each contains much factual detail on Brazilian policies and politics, a good deal of which has not been readily available in English. The two edited works also provide some intriguing bases for comparing authoritarian domestic and foreign policies in Brazil with those in other Latin American and Third World nations. Bruneau and Faucher's *Authoritarian Capitalism* and McDonough's *Power and Ideology in Brazil* both focus on the development of Brazil under an authoritarian regime, and they rely heavily on statistical analysis to interpret Brazilian actions and motivations. To a greater extent than Selcher's *Brazil in the International System*, they expose the pitfalls awaiting students of the contemporary scene who attempt to build theories of political behavior at once specific and flexible enough to explain the present and to anticipate future developments. Subsequent events in Brazil raise serious questions about some of their perceptions and hypotheses of political changes.