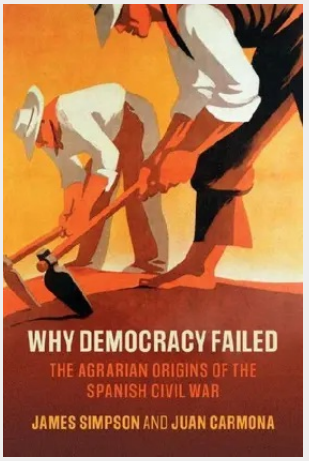
Simpson / Carmona

Why Democracy Failed

In this distinctive new history of the origins of the Spanish Civil War, James Simpson and Juan Carmona tackle the highly-debated issue of why it was that Spain's democratic Second Republic failed. They explore the interconnections between economic growth, state capacity, rural social mobility and the creation of mass competitive political parties, and how these limited the effectiveness of the new republican governments, and especially their attempts to tackle economic and social problems within the agricultural sector. They show how political change during the Republic had a major economic impact on the different groups in village society, leading to social conflicts that turned to polarization and finally, with the civil war, to violence and brutality. The democratic Republic failed not so much because of the opposition from the landed elites, but rather because small farmers had been unable to exploit more effectively their newly found political voice.

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103,30 €
103,30 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9781108487481
Medium: Buch
ISBN: 978-1-108-48748-1
Verlag: Cambridge University Press
Erscheinungstermin: 03.08.2021
Sprache(n): Englisch
Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2021
Serie: Cambridge Studies in Economic History - Second Series
Produktform: Gebunden
Gewicht: 566 g
Seiten: 316
Format (B x H): 157 x 235 mm

Kundenservice Verlag Dr. Otto Schmidt KG
Neumannstraße 10, 40235 Düsseldorf | kundenservice@otto-schmidt.de | 0221-93738-997 (Inland)