



Aristocracy and the Modern World

Ellis Wasson

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Ellis Wasson offers one of the first comprehensive studies of the European ruling class during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Distilling a wealth of recent research, Wasson analyses the role of aristocracy in modern times, focusing on the tensions that exist between egalitarian values and the way elites shape society.

Wasson explodes myths and jettisons stereotypes in sweeping coverage that takes the story from the Congress of Vienna to Stalingrad. The study recounts the change from the genteel world of court balls to Café Society and finally on to Eurotrash. It also contrasts the paradox of continued aristocratic social power and cultural leadership with the gradual decline in their political authority. *Aristocracy and the Modern World* covers key topics, such as:

- the fabulous wealth of the great magnates
- the relationship between servants and masters
- interaction with the middle classes
- concepts of honour
- culture, recreation and gender
- local authority and national power.

Lively and authoritative, the book reviews developments in Scandinavia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, France, Italy and Spain as well as in Britain, Germany and Russia. It is essential reading for all those with an interest in modern European history.

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