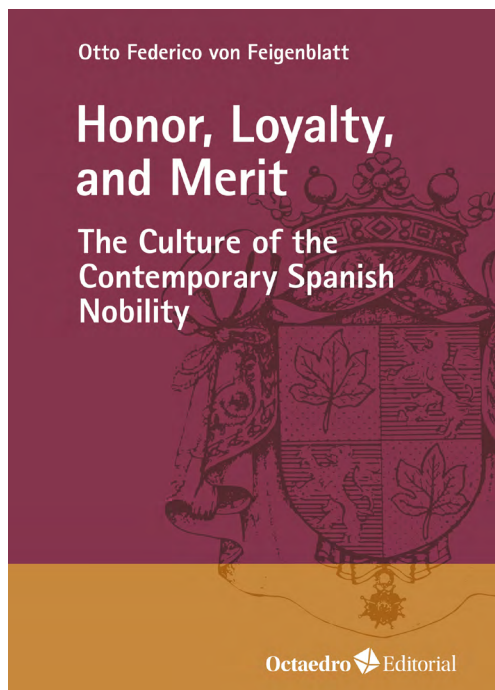


NOVEDAD - OCTUBRE 2022



# Honor, Loyalty, and Merit

The Culture of the Contemporary  
Spanish Nobility

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Colección: Horizontes	PVP: 15,80 €
Tema: Sociedad	Ref. 09140-0
Género: No ficción	Formato: 15 x 21 cm
ISBN: 9788419312822	Páginas: 122
	Encuadernación: Rústica



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The Spanish nobility continues to be influential in the early 21st century in politics, academia, and the economy. The polarized socio-cultural environment in Spain in the early decades of the millennium is paralleled by an increasingly divisive political discourse and deadlock in terms of governance. Understanding the subcultures of the most influential socio-political groups is important to be able to interpret the political developments. A vast array of studies have been conducted about the rise of the extreme left but there is a dearth of studies dealing with the impact of the traditional nobility in contemporary Spain. The present study presents an emic model of elite culture through the application of a grounded theory approach to texts released by five of the main noble associations in Spain during the last ten years. An inductive approach focuses on the identification of important themes and concepts as expressed and understood by the participants. Traditional noble associations are the focus of the study, in particular, the associations under Royal patronage. The resulting emic model aims to map the mores, norms, and values of a highly visible social group about which there are very few sociological and anthropological studies.