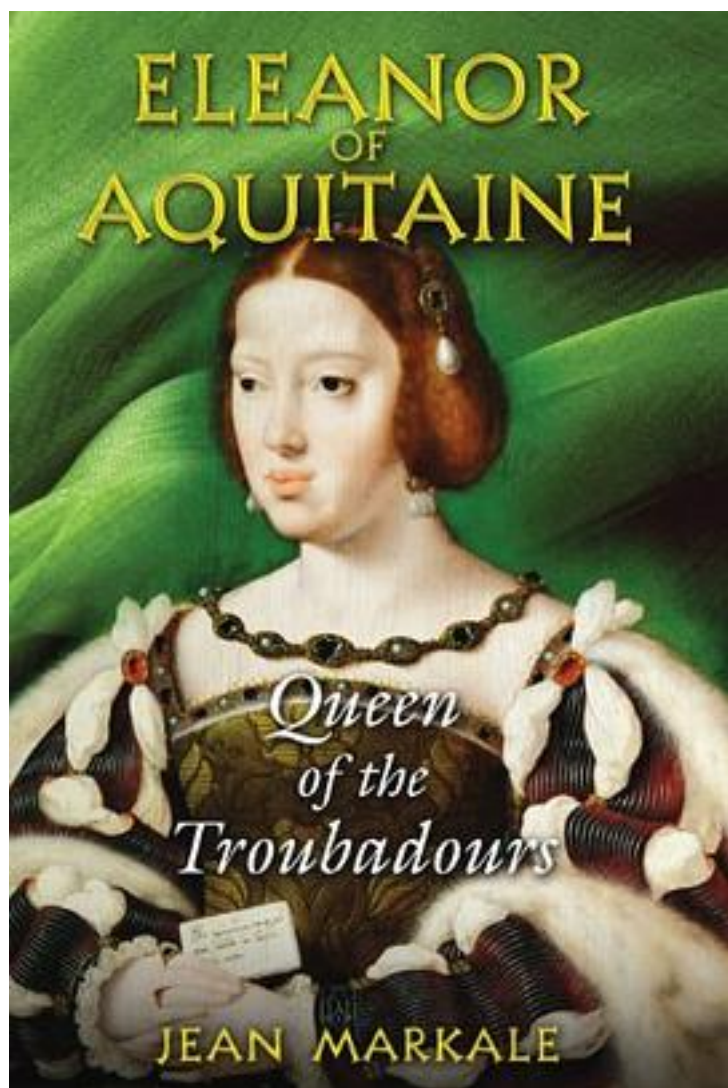


# Eleanor of Aquitaine



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著者:Flori, Jean/ Classe, Olive (TRN)

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Eleanor of Aquitaine (1124-1204) still fascinates and intrigues historians today, who continue to try to penetrate the mystery surrounding her extraordinary life. Twice queen - of France as the wife of Louis VII, then of England as the wife of Henry II - and mother of three kings, she came into contact with famous churchmen such as Suger, Bernard de Clairvaux, and Thomas Becket; travelled across Europe; lived to be eighty; reigned for sixty-seven years; and produced getting on for a dozen offspring at a time when many women died in childbirth. In old age Eleanor retired to the Abbey of Fontevraud, where she died and was buried beside Henry II and their son Richard I, the Lionheart. In this book, Jean Flori attempts the difficult task of writing the full story of this "unruly and rebellious" queen who was determined, in spite of the huge moral, social, and political and religious pressures bearing down upon her, to take charge of her own life in all its aspects. The book is in two parts. The first part is an account of what is reliably known about Eleanor's life and her role in history, in the main based on contemporary sources and drawing on the work of previous historians. The second part deals with questions about Eleanor and her legend currently under debate by scholars. This part draws on hypotheses and controversies, and has recourse to ancient sources and a wide range of recent studies, addressing in particular her role in the second crusade, courtly love, power and patronage, and the Plantagenet Court and arthurian literature.

作者介绍:

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