

Jessica O'Leary

Elite Women as Diplomatic Agents in Italy and Hungary, 1470–1510

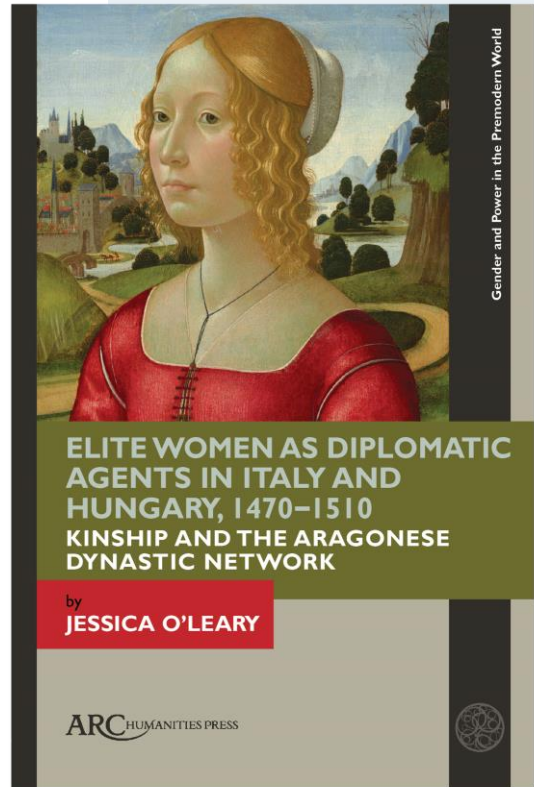
Kinship and the Aragonese Dynastic Network

This book explores the diplomatic role of women in early modern European dynastic networks through the study of Aragonese marriage alliances in late fifteenth-century Italy and Hungary. It challenges the frequent erasure of dynastic wives from diplomatic and political narratives to show how elite women were diplomatically active agents for two dynasties.

Chapters analyze the lives of Eleonora (1450-1493) and Beatrice d'Aragona (1457-1508), daughters of King Ferrante of Naples (1423-1494), and how they negotiated their natal and marital relationships to achieve diplomatic outcomes. While Ferrante expected his daughters to follow paternal imperatives and to remain engaged in collective dynastic strategy, the extent of his kinswomen's continued participation in familial projects was dependent on the nature of their marital relationships. The book traces the access to these relationships that enabled courtly women to re-enter the diplomatic space after marriage, not as objects, but as agents, with their own strategies, politics, and schemes.

BIOGRAPHY

Jessica O'Leary is a cultural and social historian based at Monash University. Her work focuses on politics and diplomacy during the early modern period.



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