



***Príncipe de Viana: el hombre que pudo
reinar. Second edition.***

By Mikel Zuza

Pamplona: Pamiela, 2018

***En recta línea: el imaginario histórico
y literario de los reyes de Navarra de
la dinastía de Evreux.***

By Mikel Zuza

Pamplona: Pamiela, 2021

Reviewed by: Linde M. Brocato



Príncipe de Viana: el hombre que pudo reinar. Second edition. By Mikel Zuza. *Ensayo y Testimonio* n° 205. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2018. 978-84-9172-040-9. 382 pp. €24.00.

En recta línea: el imaginario histórico y literario de los reyes de Navarra de la dinastía de Evreux. By Mikel Zuza. *Ensayo y Testimonio* N° 251. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2021. 978-84-9172-295-3. 349 pp. €24.50.

These two books by Mikel Zuza establish him among the leading scholars of the Évreux of late medieval Navarra, the French ruling house from 1328 until the destruction of Navarra's independence. This destruction resulted from the intransigent campaigns of Juan II, who was at first Navarran king consort and eventually king of Aragon, campaigns brought to an end in 1512 by Fernando el Católico, heir from his second wife, Juana Enríquez—the backdrop of *Príncipe de Viana*. Zuza attends to the rich evidence surrounding Évreux engagement with the demands of their political moment and, in so doing, restores Navarra to its historical importance in both French and Iberian contexts, and the Évreux to their rightful place as heirs to the French throne. A review cannot do justice to these transformative studies, which require a full reading for their wealth of detail (textual and graphic). *Príncipe de Viana* (PV) transcribes and explicates a document containing 87 complaints (*quejas*) against Carlos de Évreux y Trastámara, Príncipe de Viana, proprietary heir (*primogénito*) to the Navarran throne upon his mother's death in 1441. The second, *En recta línea* (ERL), returns to PV and Viana's illustrious house to explore the very French symbolic aspects the Évreux leveraged to underscore their place in the lineage of Charlemagne and Saint Louis.

In PV, Zuza offers a fine example of historical biography for a wide audience; he is an excellent heir to his admired Carlo Ginzburg, as well as to the Navarran historiographical tradition of his training. He offers a thorough reading of manuscript E 540 of the Archives Départementales des Pyrénées-Atlantiques in Pau, which consists of the above-mentioned 87 charges levied by members of the *agramontés* faction serving his father, Juan II (the main factions descended from different bastard lines of the royal house of Navarra, with the *agramontés* faction supporting Juan II, and the *beaumontés* faction supporting Viana). Zuza transcribes, modernizes, and then follows the structure of the document, proceeding point by point to clarify and critique Viana's alleged crimes. Most *quejas* complain of Viana actually exercising prerogatives of the proprietary king of Navarra, which in fact he was, in control of the fisc and of the distribution of entitlements and empowerment. An "Epílogo" closes the book, bringing together into one argument the

threads laid out in the *quejas* to make his point: the Prince of Viana could and did rule, and had every right to do so.

Each charge is given a chapter, often headed by a facsimile reproduction. Most consist of an extensive analysis of the charge itself, further discussion of its significance and context, identification of participants, and evaluation of its possible truth-value. Many also serve as jumping-off points for more extensive explication of some related aspect of Viana's (hi)story. The document was likely intended to highlight the services of *agramonteses* to Juan II, with the date of composition (1456?) indicated by *queja* 95, also perhaps suggesting preparation to counter Viana's just claims before his cousin, the French king. The charges offer a very different perspective on his character, portraying Viana with far greater agency than is generally the case.

Zuza's research offers some particularly useful new dimensions to our understanding. He clarifies the acts described and identifies the players, a tour de force of genealogical sleuthing revealing the tangled networks of kinship at play. Several charges (of bride theft, sexual pursuit, forced marriages) also show that the life of even elite women was unsafe and complicated. For example, charges 18-20 relating to Agnes de Clèves in the Navarran court (PV, 111-136) indicate that she (or her household) was likely more aligned with the *agramonteses*; the last charge is that she was poisoned in 1448 by the *beamonteses* (*queja* 20). Apropos of the steady relationship of the Évreux with Burgundy which remained undamaged by such scandal, Zuza translates into Spanish and includes the chapters from the Burgundian chronicle (written in the 1470s) of Jacques de Lalaing's 1446 stay in the company of the royal couple.

Zuza revises much that has long been taken for granted about Viana, and about the history of fifteenth-century Navarra, and equally revises much that is taken for granted regarding Juan II of Aragon and his lifelong role throughout Iberia, portraying Viana fighting for the integrity of his realm as an independent polity, bringing into our understanding the tangled complexities—and injustices—of the end of the Évreux. The document at Pau also provides startling evidence about a number of previously contested questions. *Queja* 3 alludes to his mother Blanca's deathbed letter urging Viana to take the Navarran throne to which he was heir, alleged in Viana's own 1453 will to have reversed her public testament counseling the opposite; this suggests that in contradiction to received historiography, the *agramontés* clan at the least also knew of it, since most studies assert that only Viana knew (if he had made it up), with Juan II as an additional witness (if the event was true) (PV, 27-28). Another reveals Viana's very early theatrical activity

within the court during *Navidades* of 1449 (*queja* 13) as political protest. Further, the stunning revelation of *queja* 86 proves that Book IV of Viana's *Crónica de los reyes de Navarra* was in fact written and disseminated, "De cómo él mismo dejó hechas crónicas" ["about how he himself left chronicles written"] (PV 254), complaining that he had suppressed *agramontés* arms and honors in narrating the Battle of Aibar. Missing from the chronicle's extant manuscripts, and therefore absent from modern editions which take as a colophon what clearly reads as an introduction to Book IV, scholarly consensus that the *Crónica* remained unfinished in Viana's unsettled final years must be revised, which also suggests a need to reconsider the similar absence of Viana's *cancionero* poetry.

En recta línea (ERL) fills in the back-story of Viana's leveraging of his heritage, by tracing the ideology of spiritual and political preeminence of the French royal house, based on Charlemagne and Saint Louis. While Zuza's research in PV laid the basis for this work, in ERL he declares in a final summation that the words Carlos III, Viana's grandfather, had carved into the sculptural canopy at his tomb's head are "un epitafio que da la clave de todo" ["an epitaph that gives the key to it all"] (ERL, 302). That structure, designed by Carlos III and detailed fully in Chapter I of ERL, was meant as a royal necropolis in Pamplona's cathedral, discussed briefly in PV (70). Zuza cites the epitaph, which in my translation begins:

Here lies in his tomb he of good memory, Carlos IIII king of Navarra and duke of Nemours, descendant in direct line from the emperor Saint Charlemagne, and from Saint Louis King of France. ...] (ERL, 31) [Note: he is Carlos IIII by including Charlemagne in his lineage]

The design of this monument is based on the Capetian royal necropolis designed by (St.) Louis IX, also the model for the tomb of Blanche of Navarre, Carlos III's paternal aunt who cared for him during his childhood in France, widow of Philippe VI.

This Navarran crypt is an architectural representation of their Évreux and Capetian lineage, deprived of their rightful French inheritance even if of more direct descent than the Valois. Zuza details the relevant events of the Hundred Years' War, when the Capetian succession was disrupted amidst a two- and briefly three-way contest for the throne. In the end, Valois permanently replaced Capetian, but here Zuza tells the history of the (political and symbolic) work of Carlos II to revindicate his mother's and his own (Capetian) claims.

Of the remaining sixteen chapters, II-III lay out the ideology of the French monarchy, closely linked to the House of Évreux; IV profiles how Jeanne II de Navarra was

denied the throne upon Louis X le Hutin's death and married to Philippe d'Évreux; V–VII offer a detailed and revisionist history of Carlos II of Navarra's campaign to claim the French throne. With Chapter VIII, Zuza turns his attention to Carlos III el Noble, situating him in the network of French royals to whom he was close kin by blood, marriage, and culture like the Duc du Berry. The remaining chapters (VIII–XVII) consider various aspects of French royal political and religious sensibility and self-projection surrounding Carlos III, with the final chapter (XVII) dedicated to thaumaturgy, a characteristic as much of the Navarran as of the French royal houses, contextualizing Viana's post-mortem miracles as a finale.

Zuza corrects misconceptions about the Navarran Évreux, and about Carlos II, rejecting the nickname "le Mauvais/el Malo" as Valois propaganda shoring up their own contested legitimacy. That smear campaign was also part of the Valois effort to integrate themselves more firmly within the mythos of Charlemagne, Saint Louis, the privileged relationship to God of the French ruling house, and, ultimately, the myth of the Last Emperor and the two Charles. The strength of the Navarran claim to the French throne can be judged from the intensity of Valois anxiety, as well as by the Évreux's own programmatic reinforcement of those characteristics: equally direct descent, and equal commitment to both the religious and secular work expected of this illustrious lineage.

The rewards of the complex interweaving of archival documents, published scholarship, and artistic and architectural detail are considerable. For example, Chapter IX's close reading of texts and of images combines the myth of Clovis' anointing with sacred oil presented by a dove at Reims in 496 with the iconography of the angel-as-dove presenting Saint Louis with the breviary in Jeanne d'Évreux's *Book of Hours*, and adds the heraldic devices of Carlos II's Ujué deploying the arms of France (without the brisure of the Évreux, as Charles V of France had complained, from Chapter VI) upheld by two doves on a boss of a vault, which may condense these doves heraldically. This connects the evidence and argument of the chapter back to the larger points, but it is not quite the end. To close, Zuza adduces the sixteenth-century Huguenots, led by Jeanne III d'Albret and her son Henri III, last kings of a separate Navarre (descended from the Évreux), connecting both to an etymology of "Huguenot" found in seventeenth-century historiography, based on their loyalty to the descendents of Hugo Capet. Henri IV of France thus restores the Capet line of the French royal house (i.e. what Carlos II of Navarra struggled for), and fulfills prophecies whirling around the French monarchy.

The many photographs of architectural and artistic detail throughout both books provide concrete evidence supporting what is deduced from well-known documentary and historiographical sources, and from unexpected literary and archival documents. The author reads these carefully and thoroughly, to identify and situate, for example, a previously-unknown family device, the rose (*ERL*, 215). Zuza grasps the relationships and dynamics among these French and Navarran royal houses, their courts and allies, as well as their heraldic and artistic (self-)representations. Viana opens and closes *ERL*; if an Évreux monarch is short-changed, it is Blanca, who appears in relation to her son in *PV*, and to whom scholars like Eloisa Ramírez Vaquero and Elena Woodacre have devoted attention. On the other hand, Blanca is also an equivocal and complex character, since her apparent enabling (perhaps coerced) of Juan II el Usurpador led to later catastrophes.

One of the most useful dimensions of both books is the depth of heraldic and genealogical detail, likely taking us as close as we can get to a contemporary familiarity with the stakeholders. In both books, streamlined genealogical charts are provided, alas without the genealogical complexities that contemporaries were keenly aware of (and that monarchs controlled via heraldic personnel like *reyes de armas*, subject of one *agramontés* complaint). Ignoring these modes of social knowing handicaps our understanding, and Zuza's work is a worthy corrective model.

Zuza's *PV* is not, *sensu stricto*, a narrative biography, but provides a full transcription of an understudied document that offers important insights and correctives, as he fleshes out the meaning and significance of each *queja*. The Prince of Viana has, since his untimely death, always attracted attention, not always scholarly, so *PV* joins the much smaller tradition of such serious works as the 1999 translation of Georges Desdevises du Dezert's (1889) biography *Don Carlos de Aragón, Príncipe de Viana: estudio sobre la España del norte en el siglo XV*, as well as Eloísa Ramírez Vaquero and Pascual Tamburri Barain's *El príncipe de Viana* (2001), and Vera-Cruz Miranda Menacho's *El príncipe de Viana y su tiempo* (2017), based on her 2012 thesis (of which Ramírez Vaquero was co-supervisor).

The House of Évreux has not attracted serious attention in the form of a collective biography before now, such that there is not even an authorized heading for the family and ruling house as such in Spanish or in English, although Fermín Miranda García published a biography of Philippe III and Jeanne II of Évreux in 2003, without emphasizing the dynastic connections and aspirations of the Évreux and the Valois. Beyond *ERL*, scholars must rely on two French dissertations: M.-L. Lemonnier-Surget's dissertation *Les "ennemis du roi": parenté et politique chez les Evreux-Navarre (1298-1412)* (Université Paris 10, 2008) and that of P.

Charon, *Princes et principautés au Moyen Âge: l'exemple de la principauté d'Évreux, 1298-1412* (École des Chartes, 2014).

The two books are well produced, with beautiful typography and layout, and excellent illustrations. Both include extensive endnotes and bibliography, as well as onomastic indexes. All scholars and libraries with a focus on fifteenth-century Iberia and France, particularly on royals and elite culture and politics, will find these very worthwhile purchases that add immensely to their collection.

LINDE M. BROCATO

University of Arkansas