

RULING & RELATIONSHIPS:
THE FUNDAMENTAL BASIS OF THE EXERCISE OF POWER?
THE IMPACT OF MARITAL & FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
ON THE REIGNS OF THE QUEENS REGNANT OF NAVARRE
(1274-1517)¹

*PODER Y PARENTESCO:
¿LOS FUNDAMENTOS DE REINAR?
EL IMPACTO DE LAS RELACIONES FAMILIARES Y CONYUGALES
EN LOS REINADOS DE LAS REINAS TITULARES DE NAVARRA
(1274-1517)*

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Summary: Family relationships were the foundation of dynastic monarchy and provided a crucial basis for the support of the rule of a reigning queen, who was arguably in a far more vulnerable position than that of her male counterparts. This article will examine the situation of the queens regnant of Navarre, between 1274 and 1517 with particular regard to their relationship with their natal and marital families. It will highlight various examples which demonstrate the key support that reigning queens received from their family members, which was especially vital in times of crisis. While the paper will also discuss episodes of conflict and tension within the queens' family over the succession, it will ultimately argue that support from within the dynasty and from her ruling partner, the king consort, played a vital role in securing and maintaining the rule of a reigning queen.

Resumen: Las relaciones familiares constituyeron el fundamento de la monarquía dinástica y proporcionaron una base de apoyo crucial en el gobierno de una reina con potestad propia, que se encontraba en una posición mucho más vulnerable que sus homólogos masculinos. Este artículo examinará la situación de las reinas titulares de Navarra entre 1274 y 1517, con especial énfasis en su relación con sus familias, tanto de origen como política. Estudiaremos varios ejemplos que ponen de manifiesto la importancia de los apoyos que las reinas gobernadoras recibieron de los miembros de su familia, primordiales en época de crisis. Aunque el artículo también trata episodios de conflicto y tensión en torno a la sucesión dentro de la familia de la reina, mantenemos que, en última instancia, el apoyo desde el interior de la propia dinastía, y de su pareja, el rey consorte, desempeñó un papel fundamental a la hora de garantizar y mantener el poder de una reina gobernadora.

¹ Abbreviations used: ADPA = Archive de Pyrénées-Atlantiques; AGN = Archivo General de Navarra; AGS = Archivo General de Simancas; AHN = Archivo Histórico Nacional; BL = British Library.

Keywords: kingdom of Navarre; queen regnant; king consort; intradynastic relationships; Capetian dynasty; Evreux dynasty; Trastámara dynasty.

Palabras clave: reino de Navarra; reina gobernadora; rey consorte; relaciones dinásticas; dinastía Capeta; dinastía de Evreux; dinastía Trastámara.

SUMMARY

1. Introduction: the importance of family ties.– 2. Sharing power with consort kings: a queen's staunchest ally?– 3. Leveraging family ties: the importance of intradynastic support.– 4. Cooperation or competition? Family members as rivals.– 5. Conclusions: the queens regnant of Navarre, at the centre of the family web.– 6. Bibliography.

1. INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY TIES

For any ruler, the challenge is three fold: first, to acquire the throne; then to maintain both one's position and authority while simultaneously administering the realm. For a female ruler, that task is far more daunting and the path of succession can be more difficult, as their claim can be easily thwarted by the birth of a brother or challenged by a man who argues that they have a greater right to rule. If she does successfully gain a throne, a queen is arguably on shakier ground due to her gender; thus maintaining her position becomes vital and exercising authority can be more of a struggle. In looking for support to establish and maintain her rule, the logical place for a queen to start is within her own natal and marital family connections that, theoretically at least, would have a vested interest in keeping her on her throne. However, while the need to preserve dynastic continuity can be a factor which enabled the accession of regnant queens, one of the greatest threats that a female ruler could face was a rival claimant from her own family. Indeed while Daniel Schönplflug has highlighted the crucial importance of kinship ties in the practice of dynastic monarchy, he also notes that these dynastic kinship networks fostered both cooperation and competition-this can be demonstrated in the experience of the reigning queens of Navarre².

This article will explore the ways in which the queens regnant of Navarre (1274-1517), rose to the challenge of female rulership, maintained their position and exercised rule³. Navarre makes an ideal case study for

² Schönplflug 2001.

³ The queens regnant of Navarre included in this study are Juana I (r.1274-1304), Juana II (r.1328-1349), Blanca I (1425-1441), Leonor (lieutenant: 1455-1479, queen: 1479), Catalina (r.1483-1517; kingdom of Navarre annexed 1512). For a study of these particular queens, see

analysing the relationships of ruling queens as it had the largest number of regnant queens in Continental Europe during the Middle Ages⁴. Moreover, Navarre's challenging political situation, in a contested area at the border of Iberia and France and the queens' complicated marital and familial ties on both sides of the Pyrenees also makes this particular case study relevant to our understanding both of queenship and regional political dynamics. This paper will argue for the crucial role of marital and familial relationships and networks in their reigns and the positive and negative impact these relationships had in exercising their rule. It will examine the personal and political partnership the queens had with their husbands, the king consort, and how effectively they were able to exercise power together. It will also explore the ways in which relationships with their extended family could aid in the exercise of authority, by providing crucial support, acting as proxy rulers or representatives and in diplomatic negotiations. Conversely, this paper will also demonstrate how marital and family relationships could undermine these female rulers, through competition for the throne, overbearing regents, intradynastic rivalry or the unpopularity of a king consort. Ultimately however, it will argue for the vital significance of family support to enable reigning queens to effectively exercise rule.

2. SHARING POWER WITH CONSORT KINGS: A QUEEN'S STAUCHEST ALLY?

Theresa Earenfight, in her seminal article *Without the Persona of the Prince* argues that kingship and queenship are an unified pair that need to be analyzed together in order to fully understand the premise and practice of monarchy⁵. Earenfight discusses the idea of corporate monarchy as a "flexible sack" that can accommodate a number of people. This idea of corporate monarchy, that the ruler themselves may be the figurehead upon which the crown is placed while real authority is exercised jointly by a number of people close to the monarch, has become a key theory in regard to analysis of monarchy in the Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages. Those who form part of this ruling cohort

Woodacre 2013; the material in this paper is broadly based on my monograph on the queens regnant, however this paper has a very particular focus on relationships which has allowed me to expand my previous analysis in certain areas and bring in new material, where appropriate. For a broader survey of Navarrese queens regnant and consort, see Pavon 2014.

⁴ The only other medieval kingdom with the same number of regnant queens was the kingdom of Jerusalem-however as the Crusader States were arguably outside the framework of European monarchy and a very unique environment, it is somewhat difficult to compare their situation equitably with the regnant queens of Navarre.

⁵ Earenfight 2007, *passim*.

are most often members of the extended dynasty: the monarch's consort, their children, parents, siblings, uncles etc. However, the ruling cohort can also include those whose position of power and influence with the monarch is determined by favour, such as *privados* and royal mistresses. The important element to consider here is that monarchs, whether male or female, do not rule alone; thus it is vital to understand their relationships with those around them and how they share power with trusted members of their family and court. Indeed Janna Bianchini has argued that female rulers, in particular, require a male co-ruler, be it a son, male relative or spouse, in order to secure their sovereign authority and make it palatable⁶. The majority of all queens regnant were married and thus shared rule with a spouse, however even the unmarried Early Modern queens Elizabeth of England and Christina of Sweden shared rule with a close male adviser (respectively with William Cecil and Axel Oxenstierna)⁷.

As all of the queens regnant of Navarre were married it is vital to examine their relationship with their consorts. It must be noted that some of the queens were unmarried for extended periods, such as minorities, in the case of Juana I and Catalina and as widows like Juana II and Leonor. Minority rule also requires intensive support from family members and will be discussed at length later, however as all of the queens' reigns featured a lengthy period of marriage, we will begin by analyzing the relationship between the queens and their male consorts.

While this paper will focus on the importance of family relationships, elsewhere I have thoroughly explored the political and personal partnerships between these queens and their spouses and established a suggested framework for understanding their power-sharing dynamic⁸. To summarize, in the case of the Navarrese queens regnant, three different forms of partnership style emerged which were labeled as "His Way", "Team Players" and "Divide and Conquer". While the relationship of other ruling pairs could certainly offer examples of other partnership styles, these three typologies describe the partnership of the queens regnant in this study and could potentially be applied to the analysis of other ruling partnerships as well.

The "His Way" style was exemplified by the partnership of Juana I of Navarre and her consort Philippe IV of France (Felipe I of Navarre)⁹,

⁶ Bianchini 2012. Bianchini also discusses the concept of plural or corporate monarchy in her introduction, pp. 1-13.

⁷ A work which addresses both queens and their relationship with their male advisors is Monter 2012, particularly chapter 5 "Husbands Finessed: the Era of Elizabeth I 1550-1700".

⁸ Woodacre 2013.

⁹ Note: I have tried to use Spanish forms of the names whenever possible; however for French kings such as Philippe IV and Philippe VI de Valois I have kept the French names. Re-

from their marriage in 1284 until Juana's death in 1304. As the label implies, in their relationship Philippe appears to have had a great deal of latitude to rule both France and Navarre as he saw fit with little apparent input or interference from Juana. This is not to say that their personal relationship was poor as both chroniclers and historians assert that they had a very close and apparently affectionate relationship engendered from their shared childhood experience at the French Court and early marriage¹⁰. Indeed the bond between the couple may explain why Juana largely remained at her husband's side for the duration of her life, rather than return to Navarre to rule her domains personally. They couple tended to remain together, largely in Paris and the Ile de France region, although they did frequently make a visit to Juana's Champenois domains which were far closer to Paris than her Pyrenean realm¹¹. Since Philippe was the senior partner in their relationship, being not only male but the ruler of the larger and more powerful domain, it is not surprising that the needs of France dominated their domestic and foreign policies.

The "Team Player" dynamic, which was applied to the cases of Juana II and Felipe (Philippe) d'Evreux (joint reign as Felipe II with Juana II: 1328-1343) and to Catalina and her consort Jean d'Albret (joint reign as Juan III with Catalina: 1484-1516), offers a very different example of partnership. These queens were married to territorial lords, rather than another sovereign as in the case of Juana I, and this may have been more favourable both to the agency of the queens and to Navarre itself, as the realm would have been the most important part of their joint territorial domains, rather than the lesser of two unified realms. The documentary evidence from the reigns of Juana II and Catalina suggest that both queens were very active in the governance of their kingdom, from negotiating with foreign powers, to administering the realm, meting out justice and exercising all the powers normally associated with the sovereign's prerogative. However, they shared authority with their consorts, who participated in their coronation (controversially in the case of Felipe d'Evreux who had to argue for and justify his inclusion in the ceremony) and were clearly involved in all aspects of rule with their wives¹². While we

ferring to Philippe IV as "Philippe" also helps to avoid confusion with Philippe d'Evreux who I will refer to as "Felipe".

¹⁰ Master Arnaud Garsie claimed that the king "always wanted to be near his wife", quoted in Brown 1987, p. 287. For further discussion of the royal couple's relationship, see Strayer 1980, p. 9.

¹¹ Lalou 1986, pp. 25-27. Lalou notes that Philippe and Juana visited the county of Champagne for fourteen years in succession during their twenty year joint reign.

¹² For a specific discussion of the controversy regarding Felipe d'Evreux's inclusion in Juana II's coronation, see Woodacre 2013, pp. 61-63. For a wider overview of Navarrese coronation practices, the classic reference work is Lacarra 1972.

can clearly see both partners working together to rule jointly, in this dynamic it is also possible to see individual action on the part of both spouses and separation when necessary to ensure that the presence of one of the ruling pair is visible in particular areas of their joint domains. The itinerary of Catalina and Juan d'Albret, compiled by Álvaro Adot Lerga, notes extensive periods of separation where Juan effectively functioned as his wife's representative in areas of their large Pyrenean amalgamation as it was impossible for Catalina to be in more than one of her various territorial capitals at a time¹³. In the case of Juana II and Felipe d'Evreux, the couple undertook an unusual swap-between 1342-1343 Juana administered Felipe's ancestral patrimony in Northern France while Felipe ruled Navarre and took part in a campaign with other Iberian rulers¹⁴. This dynamic illustrates the crucial support that a consort can offer to a ruling queen, working as her partner, ruling in cooperation with her husband in order to provide the most effective administration for their joint, and widespread, territorial domains.

The third of these partnership styles, "Divide and Conquer", illustrates the mode of rule of both Blanca I and her consort Juan of Aragon (joint reign 1425-1441) and their daughter Leonor's partnership with her husband Gaston IV of Foix (joint lieutenants of Navarre 1455-1472). As the name suggests, this style involves the greatest deal of independent action on the part of both partners. Again, as in the case of Juana II and Catalina, both of these female rulers were married to partners who were princes or territorial lords, not sovereigns in their own right¹⁵. Blanca and Leonor were primarily responsible for the rule of Navarre, which was entirely appropriate given the fact that both were the natural or hereditary sovereigns. This enabled their spouses to spend the majority of their time outside of the realm; in Juan's case enmeshed in conflict in Castile or ruling as lieutenant for his brother in Aragon while Gaston needed to remain involved in the rule of his French county and travel to the French court as needed.

One significant difference between these two pairs is the level of support and cooperation between the two spouses. Gaston provided crucial military and financial support to Leonor, enabling her to retain her position and power as princess-lieutenant of Navarre in very challenging circumstances. While they were often physically separate, their ambition and policy was completely unified

¹³ Adot 1999, *passim*.

¹⁴ On Felipe's participation in the Iberian Crusade, see Mahn-Lot 1944, *passim*.

¹⁵ However, it is important to note that Juan of Aragon, the husband of Blanca I became King of Aragon in 1458 when his brother, Alfonso V, died without issue. However, this was sixteen years after the death of Blanca in 1441, so during their joint reign in Navarre, he was not a sovereign ruler in his own right.

and focused on the desire to obtain and then retain the kingdom of Navarre for themselves and their descendants¹⁶. Juan of Aragon however, frequently engaged in activities which ran counter to the benefit of Navarre, in particular creating a prolonged and costly conflict between Navarre and Castile. Blanca marshaled the defense of the realm while simultaneously working for peace with her Iberian neighbours, desperate to end the destructive conflict¹⁷.

In drawing together the examples of all of the reigning Navarrese queens in this survey, we have seen how consorts could provide key support for a female ruler, by ruling alongside her and pursuing a unified policy. This is particularly true of the situation of Felipe d'Evreux and Gaston of Foix. Felipe d'Evreux was a very effective co-ruler who was popular with his Navarrese subjects who called him *Felipe el Noble* and accorded him burial in the Cathedral of Pamplona as a true Navarrese monarch. His popularity and effective co-rulership allowed the pair to reign successfully in Navarre and their wider French dominions as a unified pair. Gaston of Foix also worked in complete harmony with his wife Leonor to achieve their joint goal of retaining the rulership of Navarre and his military and financial support made this possible. However, we can also see consorts undermining the reign and authority of a queen regnant.

Certainly Juan of Aragon's actions *vis-à-vis* Castile which dragged Navarre into a destructive conflict with its neighbour undermined Blanca I's efforts to maintain the peace and prosperity which had characterized the "golden age" of her father's reign in Navarre¹⁸. The unpopularity of a consort could also be detrimental to a queen's authority. Juana I's marriage to a French prince, later King Philippe IV, which resulted in her total absence from the realm engendered considerable conflict over the tendency of French governors to implement a foreign style of administration which was perceived to be at odds with tradition and the principles of the *Fueros*¹⁹. The unpopularity of Juana I's French consort may have been one reason why his name was omitted from her Navarrese coinage and why many Occitan charters deliberately omitted any reference to him²⁰. Moreover, overt criticism of Philippe IV of

¹⁶ On Gaston's ambition, see Reglà 1951, *passim*.

¹⁷ Woodacre 2013, pp. 104-105. This will also be discussed later in this article.

¹⁸ On the reign of Blanca's father, Carlos III, see Castro 1967 or Ramírez Vaquero's more recent evaluation (2007).

¹⁹ A formal complaint from the *Buenas Villas* was sent to Juana and her husband in 1294 to protest at the administration of the French governor, Hugh de Conflans; AGN Comptos, caj. 4, no. 98 dated 29 May 1294.

²⁰ For examples of her coinage see Poey d'Avant 1961, p. 176 and pictorial example on plate LXXI. Examples of Occitan documents which refer to Juana only can be found in García 1990, p. 203 (Original provenance AGN Irache, leg. 8, no. 230, dated April 1, 1303) and p. 166 (original provenance AHN San Juan, leg. 720-21, no. 46, dated February 7, 1299).

France resulted in reprisals, including one Navarrese man who had his tongue cut out for daring to speak ill of the consort²¹.

Nor was Philippe IV of France the only unpopular consort. Catalina I's marriage to Juan d'Albret instead of Juan, Príncipe de Asturias, proved highly unpopular with her Navarrese subjects who had protested vehemently in favour of the Castilian match²². Juan's overtly French and very familiar style of rule further alienated his subjects²³. Indeed the Cortes protested when Catalina sent her husband to Navarre in her stead in late 1496; she had to reassure them that she would soon arrive in person, once she had finished the business which detained her in her French territories²⁴. Although the annexation of Navarre in 1512 has been attributed to Juan d'Albret's failings as a consort king, the chronicler Moret defended him:

Pero lo que nosotros no podemos sufrir es la injusticia manifiesta que unos y otros hacen al rey D. Juan de Labrit, á quien pintan hombre de reservas, de dolos, de reflexiones políticas y de venganzas mortales, siendo lo cierto que no tuvo nada de esto²⁵.

Famously, however, Catalina supposedly commented that if she had been the man and he the woman, they would not have lost their kingdom²⁶. While this quote is highly unlikely to be accurate, the fact that it is still cited in material about this royal couple today demonstrates the enduring perception that Juan d'Albret critically undermined Catalina's rule.

These examples, both positive and negative, demonstrated the consort's vital significance as her personal and political partner to the perceived success or failure of the reign of a queen. While a consort who was an effective co-ruler, whose goals and policies were in line with Navarre's best interests could prove to be a valuable partner and provide crucial support for a queen, the queen's authority could be partially or completely undermined by a consort whose unpopular or costly actions harmed the realm or upset the populace.

²¹ Segura 2005, p. 266. The episode is documented in AGN Reg. 8, f. 10v. (1304).

²² For further details on the suits of Juan Príncipe de Asturias and Juan d'Albret for Catalina's hand, see Woodacre 2013, pp. 136-139.

²³ For examples of contemporaries who discuss how Juan's French style of rule and behaviour jarred with the expectations of his subject see Moret 1891, vol.7, pp. 157-158 and Favyn 1612, p. 677.

²⁴ AGN Comptos, Caj. 166, no. 25, dated 15 December 1496 at Pau. Original text is "seguir los grandes y arduos negocios ...en este nuestro Senorio de Bearne y en los otros Senorios y tierra nuestras ...y sobrebiene se requeriria ...de aquellos nuestra presencia Real".

²⁵ Moret 1891, vol. 7, p. 134.

²⁶ The fame of this quotation may be due in part to its inclusion in Diderot's famous Enlightenment work the *Encyclopédie*; Diderot, le Rond d'Alembert 1761, p. 48.

3. LEVERAGING FAMILY TIES: THE IMPORTANCE OF INTRADYNASTIC SUPPORT

3.1 Family support for minority rule

While Kings consort played important supporting roles in the rule of the Navarrese queens, the wider members of her natal and even marital family were vital in reinforcing a queen's authority and assisting her with administration. Female rule in Navarre had a very precarious beginning—the accession of the infant Juana I was met with internal chaos and the realm's Iberian neighbours, Castile and Aragon, sought to capitalize on Navarre's weakened state, ruled by an absentee child queen and her foreign mother, in order to seize control of the kingdom. The regent Blanche of Artois, fully aware of the danger to her daughter's throne, fled north of the Pyrenees to seek help from her (and by extension the queen's) relatives. She approached her cousin, Philippe III of France for assistance, eventually crafting the Treaty of Orléans which set up a marriage between her daughter Juana and his son Philippe. This agreement made Philippe III the guardian of his future daughter-in-law and the effective ruler of Navarre in return for his military support to ensure that Juana retained her throne. Philippe III sent forces to secure the Pyrenean kingdom for his young charge, led by the queen's own uncle, Robert of Artois²⁷. In this way, Juana I's reign was preserved by the combined efforts of her cousin/father-in-law, her uncle and her mother, who all had a vested interest in maintaining her position for the greater good and glory of the family.

Minority rule, whether on behalf of a young male or female rule, was a precarious time for any kingdom when the lack of strong adult sovereign could leave the realm weak and vulnerable, as seen in the example of Juana I. However relatives could provide crucial support during a queen's minority, as we have seen in the actions of Juana I's mother, uncle and father-in-law Philippe III of France, which enabled Juana to retain her throne in the most challenging of circumstances. Moreover, Juana's mother and father-in-law worked together to administer her lands during her minority, with Philippe taking responsibility for Navarre and Blanche of Artois and her new husband Edmund of Lancaster governing Juana's Champenois lands.

However, the task of dislodging close relatives serving as regents and viceroys could prove difficult for a young queen after she reached her majority. By 1284, Philippe argued that Juana, now eleven years of age, had reached her majority and that Blanche and Edmund should relinquish the rule

²⁷ For more on Robert's leadership of the French forces and the uprising itself see Anelier 1856, *passim*.

of the counties to Juana, or more accurately perhaps to him. When Blanche and Edmund proved reluctant to cede the county, Philippe held an inquest in Champagne in order to establish Juana's majority and the precedent that at her age, she was considered old enough to receive homage and administer her own inheritance. The inquest established

that it is the custom of the region of Champagne, and for the county itself, that a woman who has completed her eleventh year and begins her twelfth may do homage to her lords (seigneurs) and may receive homage [from her vassals]²⁸.

Thus Blanche and Edmund were forced to concede the administration of Champagne, although negotiations regarding the compensation for this and her dower rights continued on into the reign of Philippe IV²⁹.

The early years of the reign of Catalina I and indeed that of her elder brother, Francisco Febo, demonstrate how minority rule required multiple relatives to assist in the rule of the realm for an underage ruler. While their mother, Magdalena of France, served as regent through the reigns of both of her children from 1472 until her death in 1495, a number of relatives provided support in order to administer the complex mix of territories on both sides of the Pyrenees³⁰. The kingdom of Navarre had a long history of governors and lieutenants who had the authority to govern the realm in the absence of the ruler. This institution had been extremely important to during the Champenois, Capetian and Evreux dynasties to provide continuity of rule during the sovereign's absence, given the necessity of dividing the ruler's physical presence between their French and Iberian territories. Governorship had been a feature of Juana I's rule as she remained in France for the duration of her reign and had also been employed by Juana II during periods when neither she, nor her husband Felipe d'Evreux could be physically present in Navarre.

During the minority rule of Francisco Febo and his sister Catalina, it became nearly impossible for the young sovereigns to exercise personal rule in Pamplona due to the extremely unstable political situation there after decades

²⁸ Evergates 1993, p. 56 (Doc. 38).

²⁹ García 2014, pp. 120-121.

³⁰ Magdalena's regency began with the death of Gaston IV of Foix in 1472, she assumed the regency for her son Francisco Febo in the territories bequeathed to him by his grandfather Gaston. However, she only became regent in the kingdom of Navarre in 1479, on the death of Leonor, Francisco Febo's grandmother. On Francisco's death in 1483, Magdalena continued as regent for her daughter, Catalina and maintained a role in the government of her daughter's French and Iberian territories until her death in early 1495. For a recent biography of Magdalena, see Burgui 2014.

of civil war in Navarre and the need to simultaneously establish royal authority in their French territories. Thus an amplified version of the governorship or lieutenancy was developed for Catalina's two uncles, Cardinal Pedro and Jaime de Foix who both served as viceroys in Navarre under her reign and that of her brother, Francisco Febo³¹. The fact that they were designated as viceroys, rather than governors or lieutenants, stemmed from the need for the viceroy to wield virtual sovereign authority in the turbulent political situation in the realm and the proviso that tender age of the ruler limited their ability to give input to the viceroy. Their elevated status also reflected the fact that both men were the sons of the last regnant queen of Navarre, Leonor, and thus infantes of the realm. Pedro was also a cardinal of the Church and man with considerable power and influence in his own right. He was named viceroy in the early months of his nephew's rule and remained in post until 1484, when his collusion with the failed suit of the son of the Reyes Católicos for Catalina's hand put him in opposition to the regent Magdalena of France and he was replaced by his brother, Infante Jaime de Foix³².

However, in 1486, Jaime was struggling with the political situation and it was difficult to reappoint Pedro to the post due to opposition from the Agramont faction in the realm³³. This led to the appointment of Catalina's father-in-law, Alain d'Albret, who served as her governor and lieutenant general (not viceroy) in Navarre between 1486 and 1493³⁴. While Alain did consult with the young sovereigns and made it clear that his authority rested on his connection to his son and daughter-in-law, he also ensured that he leveraged his position to further his own political interests³⁵. For example, Alain used a visit to the Reyes Católicos in March 1488 to not only broker an alliance for Navarre's benefit but to secure the monarchs' support for his own political projects in Brittany³⁶.

Like Juana I, Catalina also struggled with relatives who grew accustomed to ruling on her behalf during her minority. Despite the fact that

³¹ Álvaro Adot Lerga's excellent recent article traces the development of the position of viceroy in Navarre and compares it to the position of governorship and lieutenancy which had been used by earlier Navarrese rulers, see Adot 2013. For a comparative discussion of the lieutenancy in Aragon, which also influenced the Navarrese situation, see Lalinde Abadía 1960.

³² Adot 2013, pp. 617-618.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 618.

³⁴ For the official appointment of Alain d'Albret as governor and lieutenant general of Navarre, see AGN Comptos, caj. 176, no. 13 dated 24 September 1486 at Saint Juan Pied-de-Port. The document is also reprinted in Adot 2013, pp. 626-627.

³⁵ For an example of his consultation with Catalina and Juan, see a document from 1489 which asks for their consent for an alternative programme of compensation for clerical staff due to constrained funds; AGN Comptos, Caj. 193, no. 31, 2 dated 1 October 1489 at Olite.

³⁶ For more discussion of Alain d'Albret's governorship, see Woodacre 2013, pp. 141-143.

she married when she was approximately fifteen years old in 1484 to a spouse of similar age, the consummation of the marriage appears to have been delayed for several years until 1491³⁷. This may have been a strategic decision by the young couple's respective parents who could arguably retain their positions as regents in Béarn and Navarre while their children were still considered to be too young to share a bed, let alone rule independently. After their marriage was consummated and the royal couple's adult status was affirmed by the birth of their first child Ana in 1492, they began to take increasing responsibility. Alain d'Albret's term as governor of Navarre finished in December 1493 and the couple arrived in Pamplona in early 1494 for their coronation. However, Magdalena continued to rule alongside the young couple and her name often preceded that of the Navarrese sovereigns in their address clause³⁸. Magdalena's death in January 1495 allowed Catalina and her consort to truly rule in their majority, however it also removed their keenest supporter who had defended Catalina's rights and administered her Foix-Béarn patrimony for over twenty years.

Later in her reign, Catalina began to use her children as her representatives in Navarre. Over a period of approximately 15 months between September 1499 and December 1500 the infantes Catalina and Andrés Febo both served as the queen's lieutenants-general. However, due to the fact that both infantes were very young, under the age of five years, the Consejo Real was responsible for administration, though the children's role as lieutenant was acknowledged in the address clause of any documents emitted³⁹. Later, Catalina's heir Enrique served as governor both in his infancy between September 1504-May 1505 and again over various short periods in 1509, 1510 and 1511⁴⁰. While her children, due to their young age were unable to assist their mother with the tasks of administering the realm itself, they served a key function in representing the sovereign and keeping the ruling family physically present in Navarre. Andrés Febo and later Enrique, as the queen's heirs, also demonstrated dynastic continuity and the queen's desire for them to retain a strong connection to the Navarrese, instead of remaining over the Pyrenees for the duration of their childhood-establishing a bond between the younger members of the family and the kingdom.

³⁷ Anthony, Courteault 1940, p. 17. Their first child, Ana, was born in 1492, so it clear that the marriage was consummated before 1491, if not before.

³⁸ See the agreements with Ferdinand and Isabel of January 1494 and the Treaty of Medina del Campo, April 19, 1494 which are reprinted in full in Adot 2005, pp. 339-340 and pp. 340-341. (AGS Patronato Real, leg. 12, f. 58 and AGS Patronato Real, leg. 12, f. 17).

³⁹ Adot 2013, p. 610.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 611.

3.2 Family ties and diplomacy

Family ties could also be leveraged in order to facilitate peace-making and diplomacy. In the fifteenth century, the Navarrese rulers found themselves surrounded by Trastámara cousins on all sides. The Trastámara dynasty originated in Castile but gained the throne of Aragon when Fernando de Antequera was named King of Aragon in 1412. By the 1430s, through the use of effective matrimonial diplomacy, Trastámaras were on the throne of every Iberian kingdom: Castile, Aragon, Portugal and Navarre. Blanca was the daughter of a Trastámara princess, Leonor of Castile, and married a Trastámara cousin, Juan of Aragon. During Blanca's reign, Navarre was drawn into a war with Castile; a war that could also be described as an intra-Trastámara conflict. However, Blanca used these same relationships to facilitate her persistent peace-making efforts, dispatching trusted servitors to her cousins in Castile and Aragon in order to end the damage that Navarre was sustaining in the war⁴¹. These efforts were a success resulting in the Truce of Majano in 1430 and the important Treaty of Toledo in 1436⁴². This treaty built a lasting peace between the Trastámara cousins in Castile, Navarre and Aragon by forging yet another family tie between them, the marriage of the princess Blanca to Enrique, Príncipe de Asturias. Although the marriage itself was an eventual failure, the treaty did stabilize relations between the Iberian kingdoms and the network of Trastámara cousins.

Extended members of the family and relatives by marriage could also provide useful support for a queen's rule. The very point and purpose of matrimonial diplomacy was to obtain vital allies to ideally ensure peace but also to provide assistance in times of conflict. In 1329, almost immediately after Juana II's reign began in Navarre, the queen and her husband opened up negotiations to marry one of their daughters to Pedro, the heir to the kingdom of Aragon⁴³. The negotiations were prolonged but an agreement was finally signed in 1333, although the wedding itself was delayed until the young bride, Maria, reached suitable age for marriage⁴⁴. However, even before he formally

⁴¹ Blanca's personal secretary, Simon de Leoz and her confessor Pedro Beraiz, Archbishop of Tiro, were compensated for a series of trips to Castile in 1430 in the efforts to secure the Truce of Majano; see AGN Comptos, Caj. 111, no. 3, 33 dated 8 February 1430; Caj. 111, no. 3, 4 dated 17 August 1430; Caj. 111, no. 3, 5 dated 22 August 1430 and Caj. 111, no. 12, 36 dated 22 December 1430. There is also evidence of a messenger compensated for delivering *secret letters* to the King of Castile later in 1430; AGN Comptos, Caj. 111, no. 3, 2 dated 8 September 1430. With regard to the involvement of Alfonso V of Aragon, see Ryder 1990, p. 168.

⁴² AGN Comptos, Caj. 129, no. 32 dated 25 July 1430 at Majano.

⁴³ For more detail on the marriage see Castro 1947, *passim*.

⁴⁴ For the negotiations see AGN Comptos, Caj. 7, no. 35. Other related documents are AGN Comptos, Caj. 7, nos. 36-7 and 47 dated between April 1332 and April 1333. The text of the agreement is also printed in full in Castro 1947, pp. 121-144.

became Juana's son-in-law, the matrimonial diplomacy reaped dividends: in 1335 Pedro provided support to the queen during a conflict between Navarre and Castile, and her son-in-law continued to be a key ally in the region. The wedding of Maria to Pedro IV of Aragon finally took place in 1338 and although the marriage itself only lasted nine years as Maria died young, the family connection built a stable alliance between the two kingdoms which was reaffirmed in a treaty between Juana and Pedro in August 1349⁴⁵.

Family members could also facilitate matrimonial alliances. Juana II's cousin, Philippe VI de Valois provided Juana's daughter Inés a generous settlement of territory in the *sénéchausée* of Toulouse to enable her marriage to Gaston Febo of Foix in 1349. Although it has to be acknowledged that Philippe wanted the match for his own reasons, he was also leveraging his role as a senior member or patriarch of the extended family. Indeed the document issued by Philippe to donate the lands to the bride Inés is littered with familial references, which reinforce a sense of connection between all parties, even if these relationships are not necessarily correct⁴⁶. Philippe names Juana II as his niece, even though they were actually first cousins once removed. Philippe employs the term 'cousin' very liberally, naming the bride (*chiere cousine*), groom (*féal cousin*) and the groom's mother Alienor, Dowager Countess of Foix (*amée cousine*) as cousins, even though Inés was the only close blood relation.

Matrimonial diplomacy within the dynasty was another way to ensure that territories remained under control of the family in addition to reinforcing familial bonds and the intradynastic support network. The period of Hapsburg rule in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is an almost extreme example of this with repeated marriages between pairs of siblings in Castile and Portugal and marriages between close cousins and even uncles and nieces between the Austrian and Castilian branches of the family. The Navarrese queens also had a tendency to marry their relations: Juana I and Philippe IV of France were cousins as were Juana II and Felipe d'Evreux and Blanca was married to her Trastámara cousin Juan of Aragon. Isabel I of Castile and Fernando II of Aragon were keen to reinforce the family connection between themselves and Catalina of Navarre and through a series of attempted marriages. At the beginning of Catalina's reign, they attempted to secure the young queen herself as a bride for their son Juan, Príncipe de Asturias⁴⁷. After Catalina married Juan d'Albret instead, they began an extended campaign

⁴⁵ AGN Comptos, caj. 11, no. 35, dated 27 August 1349 at Conflans. Also printed in Barragán 1997, document 180.

⁴⁶ Document XXXVIII, dated 10 May 1349 in Brutais 1890, pp. 48-52.

⁴⁷ For an extended discussion of this suit see Woodacre 2013, pp. 136-139.

of betrothals, first for Catalina's eldest daughter Ana and later for her son and heir, Enrique⁴⁸. At a time when Catalina's position was threatened by alternative claimants and instability within the realm, the continued support of her relatives, the Reyes Católicos, cemented by these repeated treaties and projected marital alliances to reinforce family bonds, was crucial.

While none of these intended marriages came to fruition, the Reyes Católicos came up with another way to use family connections to ensure peace and good relations between the Iberian kingdoms. A treaty was signed in March 1495 which appears to have followed shortly after a seemingly impromptu family reunion between Catalina and the Reyes Católicos in early 1495 which is described in Moret's *Anales*⁴⁹.

Con esta ocasión concertó la reina Doña Catalina vistas con los Reyes, *sus tíos*, para la villa de Alfaro, por donde habían de pasar. En ellas fué acariciada y favorecida con singulares expresiones de honor y amor la Reina de Navarra. No se sabe que en estas vistas tratasen de otras cosas que de las personales y tocantes a la congratulación y amor reciproco, *como parientes tan estrechos*⁵⁰.

Although Moret rightly notes that we can have no certain knowledge of whether political matters were discussed or whether the conversation remained purely on a personal, familial level, it is possible that this meeting inspired the terms of the treaty which was signed on 4 March 1495 at Pamplona between the Navarrese rulers and the Reyes Católicos. This treaty contained an exchange designed to assure good relations between the neighbouring realms through a mutual family member; it required Catalina and her husband Juan d'Albret to release their infant daughter Magdalena to the custody of Isabel and Fernando for five years, in order to secure the terms of the treaty⁵¹.

⁴⁸ Three different treaties were signed which contained matrimonial alliances between 1494 to 1504. The Treaty of Medina del Campo, signed on April 19, 1494 included a match for their eldest daughter Ana and either Juan, the Principe de Asturias or one of his cousins (AGS, Patronato Real, leg. 12, f. 58, also printed in Adot 2005, pp. 340-341). The second treaty was signed in Seville on 14 May 1500 and called for the marriage of Ana or another yet to be born heir to the throne with a grandchild of the Reyes Católicos (AGS, Patronato Real, Leg. 2, f. 14 also printed in Boissonade 1893, Document XV, pp. 605-607). The third treaty was signed at Medina del Campo and contained a marriage for Catalina's young son and heir Enrique and the Reyes Católicos' granddaughter Isabel, the daughter of Juana of Castile and Felipe of Flanders (ADPA E 550, also printed in Adot 2005, pp. 346-351 and in Boissonade 1893, Doc. XIX, pp. 610-618).

⁴⁹ Although the 1891 version of the *Anales* which has been cited in this paper solely credits P. José de Moret it is important to note the work of his successor P. Francisco de Alesón, see Goyena 1944.

⁵⁰ Moret 1891, vol. 7, p. 133. My emphasis above in italics.

⁵¹ The full text of the treaty is printed in Adot 2005, pp. 343-344 (AGS Patronato Real, leg. 12, f. 24).

Although the infanta Magdalena was treated with care and kindness by her relations in Castile, the young princess never returned to Navarre, dying at the Castilian court in May 1504, only a few short months before the death of Isabel of Castile⁵². These two deaths in 1504 marked a key turning point in family relations. The death of the princess severed the living bond between the two realms and the matrimonial alliances promoted by Isabel who appeared to favour the policy of building and reinforcing family alliances between Navarre and its neighbours withered and failed to come to fruition.

Diplomacy was another area where family members and dynastic ties could prove vitally useful; Catalina's reign provides excellent examples of this⁵³. While diplomacy was a crucial area of political agency and activity for any sovereign, Catalina found it difficult to travel to negotiate with her peers given the need to maintain her presence in her own territories and frequent pregnancies. However, family members could act as trusted ambassadors to represent both the queen and dynastic interests; Catalina's husband, father-in-law and her uncle Pedro also sometimes served as her emissaries to foreign courts to negotiate on her behalf⁵⁴. Letters were another useful means of political negotiation and influence; Catalina of Navarre and her first cousin, Anne, sovereign Duchess of Brittany and queen consort of France both made extensive use of epistolary diplomacy across their extended family network to reinforce family ties and to call on extended members of the family for support when needed. Both Catalina and Anne were frequent correspondents with the Reyes Católicos and used language which deliberately reinforced their familial relationship⁵⁵. In their letters specifically to Fernando of Aragon, both queens addressed him as a surrogate father and patriarch of the family in an attempt to garner his political support and to remind him of his familial responsibilities in order to obtain his assistance⁵⁶.

⁵² For more detail on the life of the young princess see López de Meneses 1965, pp. 5-11.

⁵³ For further discussion, see Woodacre 2015b, *passim*.

⁵⁴ Adot 2012, pp. 70-71. Juan d'Albret undertook several important missions including one to the *Reyes Católicos* in 1500 and another to the court of France in 1502.

⁵⁵ Anne and Catalina frequently addressed the Reyes Católicos as aunt and uncle, as Ferdinand was their half-great uncle through their grandmother Leonor of Navarre. Ferdinand and Isabel would respond in kind, for example Ferdinand's letter of 17 February 1506 to Catalina and Juan d'Albret addresses them as "los muy ilustres Rey y Reyna de Navarra, nuestros muy caros y muy amados sobrinos"; printed in Boissonade 1893, p. 621.

⁵⁶ For an example of this type of language, see Missive from the King and Queen of Navarre to Ferdinand of Aragon (instructions to the ambassadors Rada and Mauleon), Appendix 16, Doussinague 1944, p. 274. Catalina instructed her ambassadors to remind Ferdinand that she and her husband had always "obedescer y honorar como a proprio padre".

4. COOPERATION OR COMPETITION? FAMILY MEMBERS AS RIVALS

As discussed previously, matrimonial diplomacy created family ties between the Navarrese and their neighbours, they were closely related to the Castilian, Aragonese and French royal houses through repeated intermarriage. It has been demonstrated that family bonds could create allies and these relationships could be leveraged in diplomatic negotiations to considerable political benefit. However, close relations could also be rivals, particularly when they produced competing claims for ancestral territory.

Juana II of Navarre was a close relation of five successive kings of France; born in the final years of the reign of her grandfather, Philippe IV, she was the only surviving child of Louis X and her claim to the French throne was usurped by her uncles Philippe V and Charles IV and finally by her cousin Philippe de Valois. Her consort Felipe d'Evreux, was also a Prince of the Blood with a claim to the French throne to match that of his Valois cousin.

The usurpation of Juana's place in the line of French succession could be seen as purely misogynistic; indeed this situation became the basis for the establishment of Salic Law which denied all women the opportunity to rule France in their own right⁵⁷. It could also be seen as a purely opportunistic move on the part of Philippe V, to seize power from his young and vulnerable niece. However, an alternative interpretation of the situation is that of Juana's rejection as a claimant did not necessarily stem from her youth or gender but rather from a concern that Juana was not truly a member of the Capetian family.

Juana's mother, Marguerite of Burgundy, was accused of adultery in 1314 and subsequently imprisoned in the Château Gaillard, where she died shortly thereafter⁵⁸. As Juana was only two years old at the time of the scandal it was a reasonable supposition that Juana may have been a product of her mother's alleged affair, even though Louis X asserted that she was his legitimate child on his deathbed⁵⁹. However, Philippe V's decision to reject Juana's claim to the French throne appeared to confirm the suspicion of her illegitimacy.

However, Juana had ample support from her maternal relatives, especially her formidable grandmother, Agnes, Duchess of Burgundy and

⁵⁷ There has been a significant amount of scholarship on Salic Law, both generally and in respect to Juana II's failed succession to the French throne. A few particularly relevant pieces include Hanley 1998; Peyrebonne 2002; Taylor 2001; Viennot, 2006.

⁵⁸ There are several accounts of the scandal in contemporary chronicles including; Paris 1956 and the anonymous chronicles *E Chronico Sanctae Catharinae de Monte Rotomagi* and *Ex Anonymo Regum Franciae Chronico*.

⁵⁹ In the chronicle attributed to Johanne Parisiensis (John of Paris), it notes "quam rex Ludovicus, dum viveret, pro filia legitima recognovit"; Parisiensis 1855, p. 663.

daughter of the sainted Louis IX. Agnes and her son (Juana's uncle) Eudes IV of Burgundy, appealed to the Parlement on Juana's behalf and wrote letters to important nobles in an attempt to build support for Juana's claim to both the French throne and the rich counties of Champagne and Brie⁶⁰.

Ultimately, however Juana's fate was negotiated between her two uncles, Philippe of France and Eudes of Burgundy. After the death of Louis X, an agreement had been drafted to allow Felipe to serve as regent until Louis' pregnant widow, Clémence of Hungary, gave birth⁶¹. This agreement protected Juana's rights to her grandmother's lands in Navarre, Champagne and Brie and allowed Juana to live with her Burgundian family on condition that she did not leave France or marry without the agreement of her Capetian relatives⁶². When Clémence's long awaited child, Jean, died shortly after his birth in November 1316, it was unclear what would happen to Juana's disputed rights. Philippe refused to meet with Eudes or even respond to his request to renegotiate their agreement over Juana's claim until after Philippe had himself crowned as King of France⁶³.

Indeed a new agreement was not reached between Juana's two uncles until over a year later, in late March 1318⁶⁴. Philippe strategically used matrimonial diplomacy to create and reinforce family ties to convert Eudes from an enemy to a son-in-law by marrying Eudes to his eldest daughter Jeanne, who brought with her the counties of Burgundy and Artois. This agreement also proscribed the marriage of the young princess Juana to her close cousin, Felipe d'Evreux who was another Capetian prince of the Blood, therefore keeping her claim within the family and preventing a foreign husband from asserting her rights to the French throne in future⁶⁵. By keeping it all in the family, Philippe contained the threat of Juana's claim and neutralized her supporters by converting them into close family members.

On Philippe's death in 1322 without surviving male issue, Juana inherited neither her father's French patrimony nor her grandmother's territories in Navarre, Champagne and Brie. Instead her rights were again usurped by another uncle, now Charles IV. No protest was made by Juana's Burgundian relatives this time, as her uncle Eudes was now married to

⁶⁰ Hallam 1980, p. 365. Servois 1864, p. 71.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, p. 50. Lehueur 1897, p. 37.

⁶² *Ibidem*, p. 43.

⁶³ Servois 1864, p. 53.

⁶⁴ The full text of the agreement is reprinted in Secousse 1755, pp. 6-10.

⁶⁵ Juana was married to Felipe d'Evreux only months after this agreement was signed on 18 June 1318, at only 7 years of age. Fermín Miranda Garcia notes that a dispensation was needed due to the bride's age and that the marriage was not consummated until 1324; Miranda 2003, p. 23.

Philippe's daughter and Juana's first cousin Jeanne who also potentially had a claim to these territories if the question of female inheritance was reopened.

After Charles' death in 1328, a family conference was held at St. Germain-en-Laye to attempt a resolution to the complex situation regarding the inheritance of the patrimony, including the rights to two thrones and several important French counties. The group of first cousins with a potential claim to this territory was rather large, including not only Juana but the four surviving daughters of Philippe V and Charles IV's two surviving daughters. More ominously perhaps were the potential rights of the male cousins in this generation, Edward III of England and his brother, John of Eltham, sons of her aunt Isabella. Potentially, if all of Isabella's children were considered claimants, her daughters Joan and Eleanor had rights on this territory as well; so might Isabella herself as the last surviving child of Philippe IV. This tangled mess and the possibility of the English king, as the eldest male child of this generation of cousins, taking possession the French and Navarrese thrones and these important counties proved a difficult situation for the family to resolve. The neatest solution was to bypass the rights of the entire generation to the French throne and the only feasible way to do this was to exterminate the rights of women and importantly female line claimants to the French throne. Philippe de Valois, a more distant Capetian cousin, was instead selected for the French crown. Felipe d'Evreux, Juana's husband, had an equally strong claim as his Valois cousin but as this would effectively put Juana on the throne and potentially reignite the rivalry between the group of first cousins, it may have seemed logical to settle the succession on the Valois instead. Thus, with the exception of the crown of Navarre, which was inherited by Juana in accordance with the wishes of the Navarrese themselves, the rest of this generation of royal first cousins was effectively disinherited, although the daughters of Philippe V and Charles IV did receive some financial compensation for their patrimonial rights⁶⁶.

The situation regarding Juana's rights of inheritance is a vital case study for understanding family dynamics. Any family, royal or otherwise, can reach a crisis over inheritance issues, particularly when significant amounts of money, power and influence are at stake. Initially, Juana's maternal and paternal relatives were in conflict over the issue of her rights to her father's patrimony-highlighting how family members can be both vital supporters and usurpers of one's position and rights. This situation was only resolved when Philippe V was able to convert Juana's uncle Eudes into a close family

⁶⁶ For more on the programme of compensation of the female Capetian cousins see Cazelles 1958, p. 50; Baleztena 1978, document no. 52, p. 34.

member and ally instead of a combatant. From this point onwards, the rights to this impressive patrimony was negotiated from within the family at each point of potential crisis; the death of Philippe V in 1322 and Charles IV in 1328. An intradynastic resolution, within the family, eventually provided for a settlement to the succession of the Navarrese and French crowns and a programme of compensation for the remaining princesses. However, it did not effectively address the claims of the male cousins, Edward III of England and potentially John of Eltham—their exclusion from the family resolution led, in part, to the start of the Hundred Years War.

This situation also highlights the importance of being perceived as family; that is of being included in the inner circle and acknowledged as one of their own. The possibility that Juana was an illegitimate daughter of Marguerite of Burgundy was one of the reasons why her claim to the French throne was rejected. Her Burgundian relatives were not affected by this as Juana's maternal links were unquestioned, indeed defending Juana's rights may have been a way to repair the reputation of Marguerite, by insisting that her daughter Juana was a fully legitimate Capetian princess, not the product of her mother's alleged affair. Juana always considered herself to be a Capetian and affirmed her links to the dynasty through her address clause⁶⁷ and through the decorative scheme of her Book of Hours⁶⁸. She also continued to acknowledge her maternal connections to the House of Burgundy and commissioned a *tapis vert* for her mother's tomb⁶⁹. Juana's own tomb, in the Capetian necropolis at Saint Denis, created a permanent connection to the dynasty, even if her membership was contested during her lifetime⁷⁰.

Juana II was not the only Navarrese queen who faced a challenge to her right to the throne from uncles and cousins. Catalina came to the throne in 1483 as the heir of her brother, Francisco Febo who died young without issue. Her claim was immediately contested by her paternal uncle, Jean, Vicomte de Narbonne. Jean had also contested her brother's accession, claiming that his rights were superior as the eldest surviving male child of Gaston IV of Foix

⁶⁷ For an example of her individual solo clause which begins "lehanne, fille du roy de France..." see AGN Comptos, caj. 9, no. 88 dated 7 October 1344 at Pont de Charenton, also printed as document 159 in Barragán 1997, p. 250-251.

⁶⁸ Several art historians have discussed and debated the dating and significance of the decorative programme of Juana's Book of Hours. See Keane 2004, p. 238; Mertzman 1994, p. 19 and Martínez 1987, p. 338.

⁶⁹ ADPA E 519, "Compte de recettes et dépenses rendu par Adam de La Grève, argentier de Philippe d'Évreux et de Juanne, roi et reine de Navarre", dated c. 1330.

⁷⁰ While Viennot has argued that Juana's tomb in the royal necropolis at Saint Denis is "un geste d'expiation des usurpateurs envers une princesse qui aurait dû être reine de France" (Viennot 2006, p. 324) it is more likely that Juana's daughter, Blanche who became Philippe de Valois' queen in 1350, was the one responsible for Juana's placement there.

and Leonor of Navarre over the children of his elder brother who had died before ever reigning in Foix or Navarre⁷¹. As a young unmarried girl, Catalina was arguably in a weaker position than her brother and Jean also used the pretext of Salic Law, even though it had no weight in the Navarrese succession nor in the laws of inheritance which regulated her rights to Catalina's French patrimony. Indeed the right of females to inherit family property was firmly entrenched in the ancient Basque traditions of the region, making Jean's protests over Catalina's gender rather far-fetched⁷².

Catalina's first cousin on the maternal side, Charles VIII of France, could not necessarily be counted on for support as Jean was an important French noble who was married to the French princess Marie d'Orléans. Although Charles called a council at Montargis to debate the relative claims of Jean and Catalina, ultimately he left it to the *États du Béarn* to select their preferred candidate⁷³. This played to Catalina's advantage as the *États* had already confirmed her as *Dame Souveraine* immediately after her brother's death in 1483⁷⁴. The counties of Bigorre and Foix had also issued proclamations of support for her rights and confirmed her as the rightful successor. However, her uncle had a powerful group of supporters in the region and armed conflict broke out in the region, forcing Catalina to call on her vassals to defend her rights with arms⁷⁵.

Theoretically, the question of the succession was resolved by the signing of the Treaty of Tarbes on 7 September 1497⁷⁶. However, while it specifically noted that neither *he and his heirs will not make or cause a debate, question the rights for himself or for another*, Jean's children, Gaston and Germana de Foix, continued to press the claims of their father after Jean's death in 1500⁷⁷. Indeed, Catalina's cousins Gaston and Germana potentially posed a greater threat than Jean de Narbonne, particularly after the accession of their maternal uncle, Louis XII, to the French throne in 1498. Louis had great affection for both Gaston and Germana, treating them as virtual surrogate children after they were orphaned in 1500. Indeed Gaston and Germana's rapid

⁷¹ Ramírez 1993, p. 102-103.

⁷² Moret noted that Juan de Narbonne "wanted to imagine that the Salic Law was observed in Navarre, which excluded daughters from the inheritance of the kingdom of France", Moret 1891, vol.7, p. 91. For more on Basque inheritance customs, see Frank, Laxalt, Vosburg 1976 and an extended discussion in Woodacre 2013, pp. 22-23.

⁷³ The letter dated from Montargis on 2 October 1484 can be found in Tucoo-Chala 1961, pp. 175-176.

⁷⁴ Cadier 1886, p. 183.

⁷⁵ Bourret 1998, p. 87.

⁷⁶ AGN Comptos, Caj.177, no. 20, dated September 7, 1497 at Tarbes. The treaty is also reprinted Boissonade 1893, pp. 590-595 (ADPA E547).

⁷⁷ Boissonade 1893, p. 595.

rise in both the French court and the wider European stage during the reign of their uncle demonstrates how significant family support can be. Louis not only favoured their claim to the throne of Navarre but promoted their fortunes; Gaston served with glory as a commander of his uncle's armies in Italy and Governor of Milan and was named as Duke of Nemours, a title previously held by Navarrese rulers in 1507. The sixteenth-century writer André Thevet remarked that Gaston *was shortly seen to spread the glory of his name to all parts of the earth, making it frightening to his enemies, wonderful to his allies, and desirable to his family*⁷⁸. However, his impressive reputation would not have been so desirable to his cousin Catalina for as Christian Bourret noted, it made Gaston a *redoubtable competitor* for her Navarrese throne and Bearnaise territories⁷⁹.

His sister Germana became a lady-in-waiting to Anne de Bretagne, who was not only her aunt by marriage but her first cousin through Anne's mother, Marguerite de Foix. This made Germana doubly precious to the French royal couple, raising her from the daughter of a provincial lord to a virtual French princess. Germana moved even higher when her dotting aunt and uncle arranged her marriage to Fernando II of Aragon, making her a queen whose new domains bordered on those of her cousin and rival Catalina of Navarre. Gaston's death at the Battle of Ravenna in April 1512 appeared to remove the threat from Catalina's Narbonne cousins; not only was the formidable Gaston dead but Louis was forced to abandon any support for Germana's claim as that could allow Fernando to rule the important French Pyrenean counties which were part of the contested patrimony⁸⁰. Louis' changed stance failed to prevent Fernando of Aragon from annexing the kingdom of Navarre in July 1512, but fortunately for Louis, Fernando did not cross the Pyrenees to press his wife's claim to Catalina's French territories.

This situation again highlights intradynastic competition for territory and how family members can both enable and undermine one's claim to the throne. Just as in the case of Juana II, Jean de Narbonne felt that his claim was superior to that of his young niece, Catalina and sought to usurp her place. Although he personally was unsuccessful, unlike the Capetian kings Felipe V and Charles IV, Jean's children continued the family rivalry for the Foix-Navarre patrimony. This rivalry intensified thanks to the intervention of other family members through both natal and marital connections. Louis XII

⁷⁸ Thevet 2010, p. 59.

⁷⁹ Bourret 1998, p. 95.

⁸⁰ Moret argued that "if she became Princess of Béarn and had children with Ferdinand, the Spanish would establish themselves in France. This had to be prevented at all costs". Moret 1891, vol.7, p. 282.

may have been Catalina's distant cousin but he was Gaston and Germana's uncle and Louis' support for their claims and promotion of their careers, made them challenging rivals for Catalina's territories. Anne de Bretagne was first cousin to both Catalina and Germana but her connection to Germana was far stronger as she was also her niece by marriage and Anne's lady-in-waiting. Indeed surviving letters between the two women are a testament to the familial affection between them⁸¹. Fernando of Aragon was a half-great uncle to Catalina, Germana and Anne de Bretagne and although he and his first wife Isabel I of Castile had reasonably good relations with Catalina, signing a number of treaties to promote peace based on close family ties, his marriage to Germana in 1505 radically altered his relationship with Catalina. It was natural that Fernando would support the claim of his new wife over that of his half-great niece, leading in part to the Annexation of Navarre in 1512. Thus while Jean de Narbonne was unsuccessful at usurping Catalina's throne, eventually his daughter Germana successfully laid claim to her cousin's title queen of Navarre.

Leonor of Navarre also makes an interesting case study for the tension over contested family claims. She not only participated in the demolition of her elder brother and sister's claim to the Navarrese throne but was briefly unseated herself by her own son. Her relationship with her father, Juan II of Aragon and her half-brother Fernando of Aragon, was also stormy. While Juan promoted Leonor above her siblings in the line of succession and made her lieutenant of Navarre, there was considerable tension between father and daughter over control of the realm.

As the daughter of Blanca I of Navarre and her consort, Juan of Aragon, Leonor had been assured a place in the royal succession from birth—after that of her elder brother Carlos, the Príncipe de Viana and *in default of our very dear and very beloved second born daughter Blanca, her elder sister*⁸². However, an opportunity for Leonor to bypass her elder siblings in the line of succession was opened up by the conflict between her brother and sister and her father Juan of Aragon. This conflict stemmed from Juan's decision to retain the crown of Navarre after the death of Blanca I, rather than pass it on to the heir, Carlos, Príncipe de Viana⁸³. While Leonor's sister

⁸¹ Examples include a holograph letter from Germana de Foix to Anne de Bretagne, dated 29 October 1508, British Library (hereafter BL) Add MS 18741, f. 16 and a holograph letter from Anne de Bretagne to Germana de Foix, undated, BL Egerton MS 763, f. 36.

⁸² AGN Comptos, Caj. 104, no. 23, 1 dated 9 August 1427 at Pamplona. Original text is “à falta de nuestra muy cara é muy amada fija sedo genita la Infanta Doña Blanca su hermana mayor”.

⁸³ Ramírez Vaquero discusses the possible motivation for the codicil in Blanca's will in Ramírez 1999, pp. 336-339.

Blanca supported her brother's fight against the perceived usurpation of his claim by his father, Leonor chose not to support her brother and sister. She was rewarded in December 1455, when Juan disinherited his two elder children and named Leonor and her husband Gaston IV of Foix as his lieutenants-general in Navarre as the heirs to the kingdom and the Duchy of Nemours⁸⁴.

However, while it was a considerable advantage to have her father's support for her new position as governor and heir apparent, Leonor still faced a considerable challenge from her elder siblings, who were widely considered to be the rightful heirs to the realm and had a powerful base of supporters in the Beaumont faction. While Juan and Carlos' relationship remained stormy, there were periods of reconciliation which threatened to unseat Leonor as lieutenant and heiress of the realm. The Catalans supported Carlos and pushed Juan to name the Príncipe de Viana as his universal successor, which he finally agreed to in June 1461⁸⁵. While this might have been disastrous for Leonor's position in Navarre, Carlos' death only a few months later in September 1461, removed that potential obstacle to her ambition.

This left the two sisters, Blanca and Leonor. Leonor had the advantage of being her father's designated heir in Navarre and was the mother of several children who could guarantee dynastic continuity, but her sister was still the elder child and had the support of the powerful Beaumont faction. The two sisters set up rival courts: Blanca at Olite and Leonor at Sangüesa, only 40 kilometers away. Moreover, there was another potential threat within the family, the possibility that Blanca and Leonor's first cousin, the Count of Armagnac, might stake a claim to the title of Príncipe of Viana as the nearest male claimant⁸⁶.

Blanca clearly posed a threat to her father and sister; she was a sympathetic figure with a clear right to the throne around whom those who opposed Juan of Aragon and by extension Leonor, as his lieutenant and nominated successor, could rally. A plan was formulated to remove Blanca from the realm with the cooperation of the king of France, Louis XI who was now tied to Leonor through the marriage of his sister Magdalena, to Leonor's son and heir. The idea was to lure Blanca out of the realm through a proposed marriage to Charles, Duc de Berry, but Blanca refused to cooperate with the

⁸⁴ Leseur 1893, p. 39. Leonor and Gaston's position as heirs apparent of Navarre was reconfirmed in a second agreement signed at Estella in January 1457; see Zurita 1980-1990, vol. 7, p. 168. The agreement is AGS Patronato Real 1.229

⁸⁵ Bisson 1986, p. 149. Carlos was released on 25 February 1461 and the document which included a promise to name Carlos as Juan's universal successor was signed at Villafranca on 21 June 1461.

⁸⁶ The Count of Armagnac was Leonor's first cousin as he was the son of Leonor's aunt Isabel de Navarra, daughter of Carlos III. See Ramírez 2002, pp.108-109.

scheme, realizing that it was a pretence designed to get her out of Navarre. The princess was then taken north by force, through the Pyrenees and held at Orthez, a stronghold of the Count of Foix, her brother-in-law.

En route to her prison in April 1462, Blanca penned a protest against her brutal treatment by her family members⁸⁷. It begins by tracing her right to the throne, through her mother and brother and by the agreements for her parents' marriage and for the succession of the realm. Blanca detailed the plot to take her north and railed against her abduction by her own family: *y porque yo era sabidora de lo que los ditos mi padre, hermana y Conde de Foix tenían tractado de faser de mi*. She berated her father as a poor parent to her brother, claiming that *el dito Rey don Juan olvidando el amor é deudo paterno por él al dito su fijo el Príncipe debido*. Blanca was clearly hurt by Juan's treatment of her, even though she hoped he might see the error of his ways and repent of his cruelty towards his eldest daughter:

En cuanto al dito mi señor padre no quiero ni entiendo proceder á otra cosa por respeto de me ser padre; suplico al Señor Dios que le quiera perdonar aqueste tan grave caso é pecado contra mí (*que soy su carne propia*) cometido, é lo quiera y luminar el entendimiento, de manera que venga en conocimiento e faga verdadera penitencia⁸⁸

Failing the support of her nuclear family, Blanca appealed to any and all wider family members that could possibly help her, including her first cousin, the Count of Armagnac, and her former husband, Enrique IV of Castile. In her most desperate hour, she penned a declaration which donated her rights to the kingdom of Navarre to Enrique IV⁸⁹. Much of the text is identical to the protest, vilifying her father, sister, brother-in-law and even her nephews and nieces for taking part in this scheme to abduct and disinherit her. However, she did leave something specifically to her sister: not her rights to Navarre and all of its appurtenances, but only *una arinzada de tierra blanca en el jardín Jusí* and *30 florines carlines* for its maintenance. With this defiant clause, Blanca made several barbed points; that she as the true heiress of Navarre had the right to dispose of all its land as she wished, that Blanca, unlike her sister, would leave something to Leonor out of sisterly courtesy but

⁸⁷ *Protesta de la Princesa Blanca*, pts. 1 & 2. Full transcribed text available at <http://www.euskomedia.org/PDFAnlt/cmn/1922191195.pdf> [accessed: 16/10/2014] Original document AGS, Patronato Real, ES.47161.AGS/3.2.48/PTR, Leg. 12, Doc.12, dated 23 April 1462.

⁸⁸ This passage is significantly repeated in both the original protest and the document which willed her rights to Navarre to Enrique IV. Note: my emphasis above.

⁸⁹ Original document AGS Patronato Real ES.47161.AGS/3.2.48/PTR, Leg. 12, Doc.11, dated April 30, 1462. Also available online at Euskomedia, see note 86 above.

that all that Leonor would ever rightfully own of Navarre was a patch of land in the gardens of the palace of Olite.

While Blanca's defiant protests have survived to testify to this intensive family dispute, ultimately they were unsuccessful in securing supporters to rescue her from imprisonment in the fortress at Orthez, where she died just over two years after her initial seizure, in December 1464⁹⁰. However, the death of Juan of Aragon's rebellious elder children failed to put an end to the family dispute over the rights to Navarre. Leonor and Gaston pushed to be promoted to king and queen of Navarre, contesting Juan's right to control the kingdom, just as her siblings Carlos and Blanca had done during their lifetimes. Juan responded to Leonor's attempts to seize the crown by stripping her and Gaston of the lieutenancy in favour of her son, Gaston and his wife Magdalena of France. Once again Juan showed absolutely no respect for the Navarrese *Fueros*, the previous affirmations of the line of succession or even his own agreements with Leonor and Gaston regarding their position as heirs apparent. Juan clearly viewed the governance of Navarre as a position that he could bestow at will to whichever member of his family he felt would be most compliant to his wishes.

This abrupt change created a great deal of tension within the immediate and extended family. Leonor and Gaston were horrified both at Juan's decision and at their son's decision to take up the post, which they clearly viewed as a betrayal, issuing a document listing *las causas dont monsieur le prince et madama la princessa de Navarre son mal contentz de monsieur lo prince de Viane lor filh*⁹¹. In this document Leonor and Gaston castigate both their son for the *tres grand deshonor et dampnadge* done to his parents through his acceptance of their rightful position and they railed against Juan for his ingratitude for all the years of service they had given him as governors of Navarre⁹².

The repercussions of this internecine struggle went far beyond the immediate family as the young Gaston's brothers-in-law, Louis XI of France and Charles, Duc de Guyenne immediately waded into the centre of the conflict. The Duc de Guyenne dispatched an envoy, Brunet de Longchamps to Leonor and Gaston in August 1470, with the intent of resolving the family dispute and reconciling the young Gaston with his parents⁹³. The envoy was instructed to explain and justify the young Gaston's actions, noting that his filial obligations were not just to his parents, but his grandfather Juan of

⁹⁰ Ramírez 2002, pp. 110-112 and Zurita 1980-1990, vol.7, pp. 408-410.

⁹¹ Leseur 1893, dated May or June 1470, pp. 373-376.

⁹² *Ibidem*, p. 373.

⁹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 376-383.

Aragon as well: *sinon tant seulement celles que Dieu et nature ont ourdonné, et desire de le servir comme filz doit faire a son grant pere*⁹⁴.

In the same month, Louis IX also dispatched the senechal de Limosin to Leonor and Gaston to defuse the conflict, noting that *jurera led[ite] mons[ieur] le prince de Vienne a mon[dite] s[eigneur] le prince et dame de Navarre de leur estre bon, loyal et obesissant filz et de les servir en tout et par tout ainsi qu'il leur plaira luy ordonner*⁹⁵. Gaston IV responded to his liege lord Louis XI that in spite of the dishonour that the young Gaston had done to his parents, that they would forgive him in order to please Louis and the Duc de Guyenne⁹⁶. However, Gaston IV was adamant that they would not condone their son's usurpation of their rights in Navarre during their lifetimes, as it would not be in their interest to abjure their position. Tragically, the young Gaston died only a few months later, while participating in a tournament in November 1470⁹⁷. The prince's death, in the midst of an unresolved and extremely tense family crisis, was a devastating blow to Leonor and Gaston IV, who mourned the loss of their eldest son deeply⁹⁸. However, while the young prince died before fully reconciling with his parents over his usurpation of their position, his death did bring about a rapprochement between Leonor and her father, Juan of Aragon. In the Convention of Olite, signed in May 1471, approximately six months after the death of young Gaston, Leonor was reconfirmed as lieutenant and heiress apparent of Navarre but she had to agree that Juan would retain the position of King of Navarre until his death⁹⁹. Juan, Leonor and her younger half-brother Fernando of Aragon worked together for another seven and a half years, albeit uneasily at times, but without any further direct conflict over the succession of Navarre¹⁰⁰. Finally, twenty four years after Leonor was named as heiress of Navarre, after the deaths of her brother, sister and even her own son, who had all stood in the way of her ambition, Leonor finally became queen of Navarre when her father Juan II of Aragon died in January 1479 but her brief reign only lasted a matter of weeks as she died the following month.

This lengthy saga again demonstrates how the rights to the throne can create tension and conflict between the family. While all of the nuclear

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 378-379.

⁹⁵ Leseur 1893, dated 9 August 1470 at Saint-Martin-de Candes, pp. 383-384.

⁹⁶ Leseur 1893, dated 27 September 1470 at Corella, pp. 384-386.

⁹⁷ Zurita 1980-1990, vol.7, 645.

⁹⁸ Leseur 1893, p. 256.

⁹⁹ A transcription of the Conventions can be found in Moret 1891, vol. 7, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰⁰ For further discussion of the uneasy relationship between Juan, Leonor and Ferdinand in this period, see Woodacre 2013, pp. 127-130. See also Suárez 1982.

family possessed the same blood or lineage to support their claim, the laws of succession were in place in order to delineate the rights of individual members of the dynasty and provide a logical order which was intended to prevent conflict. Juan's repeated manipulation of this logical progression, first to circumvent his son's accession, then to place Leonor ahead of her elder siblings and finally to replace her with her own son, destroyed the line of succession and created civil war both within the family and the realm over whose authority and rights were superior.

This situation also demonstrates the anger and hurt caused in the family when the concepts of filial and parental duty were overridden. This can be seen clearly in both Princess Blanca's virulent protests over the usurpation of her rights (and that of her brother the Príncipe de Viana) and in Leonor and Gaston's reaction to their son's seizure of their position as governors of Navarre. In both situations, the root of the grievance was not just the destabilization of the order of succession but the fact that members of the family had treated each other with so little respect. The expectation is that family members would protect each other's interests, support one another's position and treat their relations with affection and honour. In this situation, naked ambition and self-interest drove members of the family to completely ignore their bonds of blood in order to gain or retain the rights to the kingdom.

5. CONCLUSIONS:

THE QUEENS REGNANT OF NAVARRE, AT THE CENTRE OF THE FAMILY WEB

The most fundamental aspect of rulership is first gaining and then retaining the crown and the power that comes with it. Indeed, this is the key premise of Machiavelli's famous political manual *The Prince*, which was written during the lifetime of the last Navarrese queen in this study in the early sixteenth century. In this survey we have examined the difficulties that these women faced both in claiming the throne and then exercising the prerogatives of their position. We have seen the vital support provided by key members of their family and their kings consort during their respective reigns. Juana I's mother, uncle and father-in-law banded together to preserve and defend her throne in the face of internal upheaval and external forces which threatened to unseat her. Juana II and Leonor had consorts whose military, diplomatic and financial support helped them to retain their position and in Juana II's case considerably improve the administration of the realm after a period of absentee rule and sovereign neglect. Consorts, parents, uncles and even children assisted queens by acting as regents, viceroys and representatives of the queen's sovereign authority, assisting in the administration of the realm

when the queen was too young to assume the full responsibility or in areas of her territory where she could not maintain a permanent physical presence. In all of these ways, family members worked together to support and enable the rule of the queen and assist her with administration.

However, this study has also demonstrated a fundamental weakness in dynastic familial relationships, competition for the throne. It must be noted that this is not a problem which is unique to female sovereigns—the usurpation of the throne of Richard II of England by his cousin Henry of Bolingbroke and the prolonged fight between the Lancastrian and York branches of the Plantagenet dynasty in the fifteenth century are an excellent example of an intradynastic dispute over the right to the throne. Nevertheless, a female ruler was arguably less secure on her throne, leaving her more vulnerable to the claims of male relatives who could use her gender as a pretext to unseat her. Indeed, Jean de Narbonne attempted to use this justification, even though as Moret rightly noted, it was a poor argument after the accession of so many female rulers in Navarre¹⁰¹. In addition, women could also prove to be successful challengers against another female claimant; we can see three such cases in and near Navarre between 1450-1520 with the battle between the Navarrese sisters Blanca and Leonor, Isabel *la Católica*'s triumph over Juana *la Beltraneja* and Germana de Foix's indirect victory over her cousin Catalina of Navarre. Three of the Navarrese queens in this study were forced to combat serious threats to their position from family challengers with mixed results: Juana II lost the French throne but ultimately gained the Navarrese crown, Leonor ultimately triumphed after nearly 25 years of struggle to reign for a few short weeks and Catalina saw off the challenge of Jean de Narbonne but was ultimately displaced by his daughter.

The lengthy and dramatic struggle within the family for the governance and succession of Navarre which began with the death of Blanca I in 1441 in many ways continued well into the sixteenth century highlights the damage that competition for the throne can do within the family, creating faction and conflict which can not only damage relations in the family but can destabilize the realm. There is no doubt that the decades of civil war fed by this conflict over the succession eventually enabled the Annexation of 1512 and had a profound impact over all the subjects of the realm, not just within the ruling family.

Although family members could provide the greatest challenge to a ruler's throne, this study has shown that, on balance, the benefits and support that family members can provide ultimately outweigh the possibility that a

¹⁰¹ Moret 1891, p. 91

relative might undermine their position. This supports the concept of plural or corporate monarchy, that ruling families cooperate and co-rule, dividing duties between family members as needed and supporting the administration of the sovereign, be they male or female. While the queens regnant of Navarre did indeed reign and were acknowledged as the rightful sovereigns of the realm, they were aided in the exercise of rule by their consorts and natal family members both during periods of minority rule and as adults. This was particularly important as each queen ruled not only the kingdom of Navarre but also a territorial amalgamation composed of their own patrimony and the lands of their consort, which could be physically distant from Navarre itself. Managing the administration of these widespread and diverse territories made corporate monarchy a vital aspect of their reigns, as the queen and her consort had to maintain an itinerant life style in order to maintain their presence in their respective territories. Consorts and family members could act as the queen's proxy rulers and representatives as well as sharing in the complex task of administering all of her diverse territories in Iberia and France. In sum, while a queen's rule could be potentially undermined by a competitor within the family or an uncooperative consort, she was far more likely to be enabled by the support of her family, who had a vested interest in keeping the dynasty as a whole on the throne and in control of the realm and could assist her with the difficult task of governing her Navarrese kingdom and all of the territory which fell under her domain.

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