

Ese príncipe que fui

That Prince I Was



UK panel's choice Year 2015

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Prince or imposter? The impossible story of the last descendent of Moctezuma. In the 16th century, one of Moctezuma's daughters was abducted by a Spanish nobleman and taken to a remote Pyrenean village, where she gives birth to a boy and begins the insane line that will come to an end in the 21st century. Fascinated by this, the narrator uncovers the unlikely but true story of Kiko Grau, a descent of the boy born to an Aztec princess and a member of the Barcelona upper middle class. With a mixture of delirium, guile and the historical responsibility imposed on him by his lineage, Kiko Grau presented himself as an Imperial Highness and set out to con any pretentious, well-heeled bourgeois in search of aristocratic titles. Grau finally had to flee Spain and settle in an obscure town in the Mexican jungles, whose inhabitants are the only people to recognise his links to pre-Hispanic royalty.

UK panellists opinion:

This is a most unusual book. The story at its heart – or one of them – is that of an Aztec princess, the daughter of Moctezuma, who in 1519 is kidnapped (...) by a Spanish baron who takes her back to Spain as his wife (...). She arrives in Spain with her entourage (...) There she and her husband have a child, a son, and a significant dynasty will follow (...) the main character is not this princess or her child, but a distant descendent our narrator has discovered in the twentieth century, the direct heir not just to the Spanish nobility but to Moctezuma himself. The narrator refers to him always as Su Alteza Imperial – His Imperial Highness.

This man – Su Alteza Imperial – has completed his education (Oxford) and learned of his remarkable lineage, and so decides to take on the Moctezuma name which has been lost, so he is now not plain Kiko Grau but Federico de Grau Moctezuma, with aspirations to the great imperial glory he feels is his birth-right.

But here's the thing... It's not clear what exactly this book is, but it's testament to the quality of the writing and the author's boldness that this never matters (...)

(...) It's a fascinating experiment in telling a story, and really ambitious with it; it's colourful (with a great lead character – and some hidden treasure, too) and rich, and beautifully written – not an easy or an obvious book, certainly, but a very good one.

From the reader's report by [Daniel Huhn](#) [3]

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Additional information **Prizes and reviews:**

"A magical, overpowering imagination" Jorge Semprún. "A very special writer" Delphine Peras, Lire.

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