

1414, the year of Columbus

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Versió anglesa per al diari «Catalonia Today» de l'article que en Miquel Riera va redactar al diari «El Punt-Avui+», sobre el llibre «La data de naixement d'En Colom» (2017) d'en Jordi Bilbeny. L'Institut Nova Història el torna a publicar, ara en aquesta versió anglesa, i prega als lectors interessats que ajudin a fer-ne difusió arreu del món.

Jordi Bilbeny publishes his book on Columbus, born 1414 in Barcelona and identifying him as Joan Colom i Bertran. Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America was in fact a Catalan noble, Joan Colom Bertran who was born in Barcelona in 1414, according to the historian from Arenys, Jordi Bilbeny in his latest book on the question of Columbus' date of birth recently published by Librooks.

Bilbeny, who had already identified him as Admiral Joan Colom Bertran, now deals with the origin of the aristocrat, soldier and navigator born into Catalan high society and sets his year of birth as 1414, which would automatically make his discovery of America at 78 years of age, and as he died in 1506, that would mean he would have been 92.

The fact that this timeline would have Columbus visiting America between 1502 and 1504, at almost 90 years of age is not be a problem for Bilbeny who refers the reader to various historical sources describing a very old man, "venerable", with white hair who spent the end of his life almost prostrate in bed afflicted by diseases, who for example, had to beg the King's permission "to travel on a stretcher." Columbus even compared himself to the image of Abraham, who died at more than 100 years old. The writer also lists a number of people who at the time lived to a very old age, including Ramon Llull.

So how does Bilbeny arrive at his conclusions? If in fact he was Joan Colon i Bertan, then he is mentioned in his grandfather's will as Joanet in 1419. There are also records relating to legal disputes with the crown and Admiralty as well as lawsuits following his death.

Even before the writer takes us into his claims to Colom’s Catalan heritage, he once again dispels the myth of the Genovese wool farmer Cristoforo Colombo, a man with no education, military or naval background and most especially, bereft of aristocratic lineage .

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