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FRANCESC DE BORJA. EL DUC SANT
(Francesc de Borja. The Saintly Duke),
Josep Piera

Coinciding with the 500th anniversary of his birth and based on information from contemporary chronicles, from the historians of the age—and of our age— as well as from his biography written in the 16th and 17th Centuries, the biographer Josep Piera presents the story of Francesc de Borja (1510-1572). Francesc de Borja was a descendent of the Aragonese royalty and of two popes. He was the 4th Duke of Gandia, Viceroy of Catalunya, counsellor to the Emperor Charles 1st of Spain and to the German royalty and a leading Jesuit figure. This is the most complete biography of Francesc de Borja yet written, telling the story of a noble civilian, a courtly man and a Jesuit who confronted many of the preconceptions of his age. The author challenges the mythology that surrounds the lives of the Borja family, which often tends to sensationalise or repeat the rhetoric of contemporary hagiography. The author has distanced himself from the legends of the 19th century, the banalities of religious accounts and anti-Jesuit polemics to get to the truth behind this extraordinary historical figure.

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Josep Piera (Beniopa, La Safor, 1947) is a poet, essayist and writer. His poetry has been collected in *Dictats d'amor* (Poesia 1971-1991), *En el nom de la mar* (1999) and in *Cants i encants* (2004). He has studied and translated the Arabic Valencian poets in his essay *El paradís de les paraules* (1995). His books include *El cingle verd* (1982), *Estiu grec* (1985), *Un bellíssim cadàver barroc* (1987), *Ací s'acaba tot* (1993), *Seducions de Marràqueix* (1996, Premi Sant Joan Caixa de Sabadell 1996), *El jardí llunyà* (2000), *El temps feliç* (2001), *A Jerusalem* (2005) and *Putà postguerra* (2007).

His most important work is the biography of the medieval poet Ausiàs March, in *Jo sóc aquest que em diuen Ausiàs March* (2001).

