Antonio Pigafetta Encyclopedia Article

Antonio Pigafetta

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1491?-1534

Italian sailor who wrote a classic account of his participation in the historic global circumnavigation begun by Ferdinand Magellan (c. 1480-1521). In 1519, the expedition sailed from Spain with five ships, but its leader was killed in 1521, and the following year only one ship—the *Victoria*—returned to Spain bearing a handful of men. Pigafetta was among the survivors, and at the behest of King Charles V, he wrote about his experiences in *Primo viaggio inforno al globo terraqueo.* Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez, in his 1982 Nobel Prize lecture, praised Pigafetta for "a strictly accurate account that nonetheless resembles a venture into fantasy."