
Sir Walter Ralegh's *The Discovery of Guiana* is a masterpiece of early travel literature that brings together important themes of Renaissance exploration, the European encounter with the New World, and the culture and politics of early modern Europe. Part travel journal, part geography primer, part political tract, Ralegh's account offers insight into a time of worldwide transformation. Benjamin Schmidt's insightful introduction places Ralegh's 1595 American adventure against a backdrop of sixteenth-century colonial rivalry and Elizabethan court intrigue. The volume includes additional documents from the Age of Exploration, including contemporary engravings that illustrate prevailing images of the New World and portraits of Ralegh that emphasize the importance of Renaissance self-fashioning. Document headnotes, a chronology, questions for consideration, and a selected bibliography offer additional pedagogical support.


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