



Hispaniola

By Samuel M. Wilson

Paperback. Book Condition: New. Not Signed; In 1492 the island of Hispaniola was inhabited by the Ta&iactue;no, an Indian group whose ancestors had moved into the Caribbean archipelago from lowland South America more than 1,500 years before. They were organized politically into large cacicazgos, or chiefdoms, comprising 70 or more villages under the authority of a paramount cacique, or chief. From the first voyage on, Columbus made Hispaniola his primary base for operations in the New World. Over the subsequent decades, disease, warfare, famine, and enslavement brought about the destruction of the Ta&iactue;no chiefdoms and almost completely annihilated the aboriginal population of the island. This book examines the early years of the contact period in the Caribbean and in narrative form reconstructs the social and political organization of the Ta&iactue;no. Wilson describes in detail the interactions between the Ta&iactue;no and the Spaniards, with special attention paid to the structure and functioning of the Ta&iactue;no chiefdoms. By providing additional information from archaeology and recent ethnography, he builds a rich context within which to understand the Ta&iactue;no and their responses to the Europeans. The Ta&iactue;no are especially important in a New World context because they represent a society undergoing rapid sociopolitical change...

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