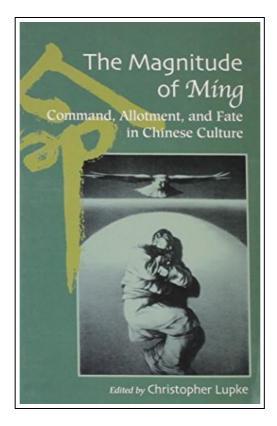
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THE MAGNITUDE OF MING: COMMAND, ALLOTMENT, AND FATE IN CHINESE CULTURE (HARDBACK)



University of Hawai i Press, United States, 2005. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English. Brand New Book. Few ideas in Chinese discourse are as ubiquitous as ming, variously understood as command, allotted lifespan, fate, or life. In the earliest days of Chinese writing, ming was already present, invoked in divinations and etched into ancient bronzes; it has continued to inscribe itself down to the twentieth century in literature and film. This volume assembles twelve essays by some of the most eminent scholars currently working in Chinese studies to produce the first comprehensive study in English of ming s broad web of meanings. The essays span the history of Chinese civilization and represent disciplines as varied as religion, philosophy, anthropology, literary studies, history, and sociology. Cross-cultural comparisons between ancient Chinese views of ming and Western conceptions of moira and fatum are discussed, providing a specific point of departure for contrasting the structure of attitudes between the two civilizations. Ming is central to debates on the legitimacy of rulership and is the crucial variable in Daoist manuals for prolonging one s life. It has preoccupied the philosopher and the poet and weighed on the minds of commoners throughout imperial China. Ming was the subject of the great critic Jin Shengtan s last major literary work and drove the narrative of such classic novels as The Investiture of the Gods and The Romance of the Three Kingdoms. Confucius, Mencius, and most other great thinkers of the classical age, as well as those in ages to come, had much to say on the subject. It has only been eschewed in contemporary Chinese philosophy, but even its effacement there has ironically turned it into a sort of absent cause.



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