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Compiled in China in the fourth-third centuries B.C.E., The Book of Lord Shang argues for a new powerful government to penetrate society and turn every man into a diligent tiller and valiant soldier. Creating a "rich state and a strong army" will be the first step toward unification of "All-under-Heaven." These ideas served the state of Qin that eventually created the first imperial polity on Chinese soil. In this new translation, The Book of Lord Shang's intellectual boldness and surprisingly modern-looking ideas shine through, underscoring the text's vibrant contribution to global political thought. The Book of Lord Shang is attributed to the political theorist Shang Yang and his followers. It epitomizes the ideology of China's so-called Legalist School of thought. In the ninety years since the work's previous translation, major breakthroughs in studies of the book's dating and context have recast our understanding of its messages. This edition applies these advances to a whole new reading of the text's content and function in the sociopolitical life of its times and subsequent centuries. This fully annotated translation is ideal for newcomers to the book while also guiding early Chinese scholars and comparatists in placing the work within a timeline of influence. It highlights the text's practical success and its impact on the political thought and political practice in traditional and modern China.
