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The last decade has seen a surge of scholarly interest in these religious professionals and a good number of high quality publications. Our volume, however, with its unique intercultural character and its explicit focus on appropriation and contestation of religious expertise in the Imperial Era is substantially different. Unlike the rather narrow focus of earlier studies of civic priests, the papers presented here examine a wider range of religious professionals, their dynamic interaction with established religious authorities and institutions, and their contributions to religious innovation in the ancient Mediterranean world, from the late Hellenistic period through to Late Antiquity, from the City of Rome to mainland Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt, from Greek civic practice to ancient Judaism. A further advantage of our volume is the wide range of media of transmission taken into account. Our contributors look at both old and new materials, which derive not only from literary sources but also from papyri, inscriptions, and material culture. Above all, this volume assesses critically convenient terminological usage and offers a unique insight into a rich gamut of ancient Mediterranean religious specialists.
