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Nota di contenuto	Contents; Contributors; 1. Ritual and the Problem of Efficacy; 2. Ritual Healing and the Investiture of the Babylonian King; 3. Jesus and his Followers as Healers: Symbolic Healing in Early Christianity; 4. Healing Rituals in the Mediaeval West; 5. Excommunication in the Middle Ages: A Meta-Ritual and the Many Faces of Its Efficacy; 6. The Work of Zar: Women and Spirit Possession in Northern Sudan; 7. Ritual Humility in Modern Laboratories: Or, Why Ecuadorian IVF Practitioners Pray; 8. Ritual, Medicine, and the Placebo Response; 9. Bell, Bourdieu, and Wittgenstein on Ritual Sense; Index
Sommario/riassunto	How do rituals work? Although this is one of the first questions that people everywhere ask about rituals, little has been written explicitly on the topic. In <i>The Problem of Ritual Efficacy</i> , nine scholars address this issue, ranging across the fields of history, anthropology, medicine, and biblical studies. For "modern" people, the very notion of ritual efficacy is suspicious because rituals are widely thought of as merely symbolic or expressive, so that - by definition - they cannot be efficacious. Nevertheless people in many cultures assume that rituals do indeed "work," and when we take

