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| Sommario/riassunto | Roman identity is one of the most interesting cases of social identity because in the course of time, it could mean so many different things: for instance, Greek-speaking subjects of the Byzantine empire, inhabitants of the city of Rome, autonomous civic or regional groups, Latin speakers under 'barbarian' rule in the West or, increasingly, representatives of the Church of Rome. Eventually, the Christian dimension of Roman identity gained ground. The shifting concepts of Romanness represent a methodological challenge for studies of ethnicity because, depending on its uses, Roman identity may be regarded as 'ethnic' in a broad sense, but under most criteria, it is not. Romanness is indeed a test case how an established and prestigious social identity can acquire many different shades of meaning, which we would class as civic, political, imperial, ethnic, cultural, legal, religious, regional or as status groups. This book offers comprehensive overviews of the meaning of Romanness in most (former) Roman provinces, complemented by a number of comparative and thematic studies. A similarly wide-ranging overview has not been available so far. |