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Sommario/riassunto	The study of ritual practice in the past is an accepted part of archaeological research these days. Yet, its theoretical basis is still not fully mature. This book aims at making a contribution to the study of ritual practice in the past by assembling a theoretical framework, which is tailored to the needs of archaeology, and which helps to identify and interpret the remains of rituals in the past. This framework is applied in a special archaeological region: the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, a former salt marsh area. In the past, people lived here on artificial dwelling mounds, so-called terps. Preservation conditions are excellent in this wetland area. This study makes use of the well-preserved remains of rituals in terps, to examine the role of ritual practice in the societies of the pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age in this area.