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Sommario/riassunto

Address term systems and their diachronic developments are discussed in a wide range of European languages in this volume. Most chapters focus on pronominal systems, and in particular on the criteria that govern the choices between a more intimate and a more distant or polite pronoun, as for instance thou and you in Early Modern English, vos and vuestra merced in sixteenth century Spanish or du and Sie in Modern German. Several contributions deal with situations in which more than two terms can be used and several also note co-occurrence patterns of pronominal and nominal forms of address. The volume provides a multivariated picture of the evolutionary lines of address term systems and a representative range of current approaches from pragmatics and sociolinguistics to conversation analysis. It is thus a timely contribution to the rapidly expanding field of historical pragmatics.