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## *Gender in Early Modern German History*

Why did parents prosecute their children as witches? Why did a sixteenth-century midwife entice a burgher woman to pretend that she was giving birth to puppies?

This volume presents a range of startling case-studies from German society between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment which make us think anew about the meanings of gender and identity in the past and which relate, above all, to the lived experiences of men and women, whose lives and choices mattered. The book argues for approaches to early modern history that point to the complexity of people's attitudes, in terms of contemporary experiences of the physical, both emotional and imaginary; of shifting symbolisations of evil; sexual symbolisms; of perceived boundaries between the 'real' and the 'fantastical', family structures and spiritual worlds. The volume also points to the records and readings which allow us to recover multiple perspectives of female and male experiences in early modern German society, and to use material with which to re-envision meanings of gender in the past and present.

ULINKA RUBLACK is Lecturer in History, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of St John's College.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,  
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521179973](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521179973)

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First published 2002  
First paperback edition 2010

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-0-521-81398-3 Hardback  
ISBN 978-0-521-17997-3 Paperback

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*Ländlicher Hexenglaube in der Frühen Neuzeit*, 2nd edn (1993); *Andere Umstände: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Geburt* (1998).

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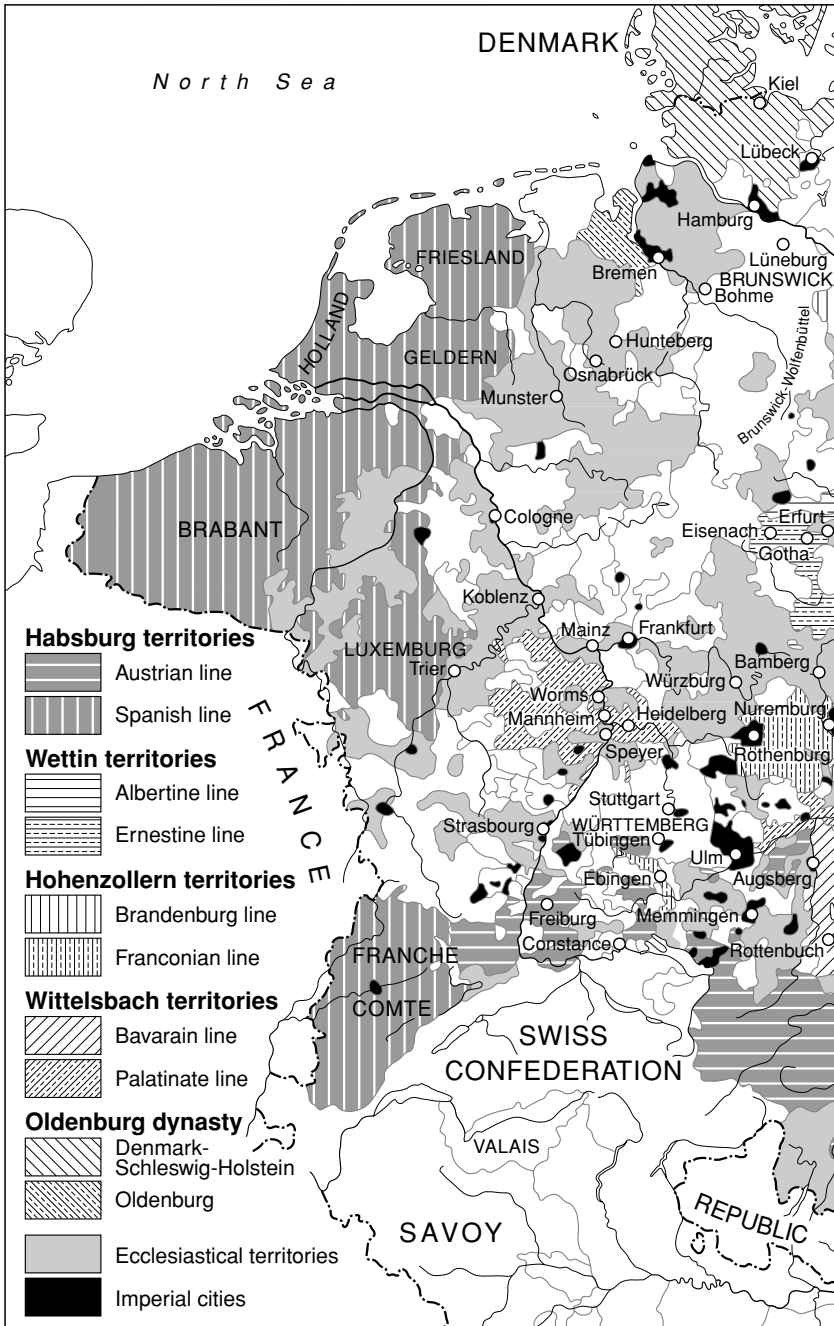
## *Preface*

This volume arose out of the wish to make accessible to English-speaking audiences some highly original German scholarship on gender history in the early modern period on mainline teaching topics, such as gender and revolt, community, confessionalism or the Counter-Reformation, on which little research is available so far. Its ambition, moreover, is to map out a new approach to gender history, which fully takes account of the distinctiveness of past subjectivities.

The making of this book has benefited much from the excellent co-operation of its contributors, from superb translations by Pamela Selwyn, from Joanna Innes' early encouragement as former series editor and Lyndal Roper's discipline and care in producing the volume, and from Bill Davies' prompt and reliable support from the Press. I wish to thank them all.

The editor also wishes gratefully to acknowledge *Past & Present* for permission to reprint Lyndal Roper's essay 'Evil imaginings and fantasies': child-witches and the end of the witch craze', where it first appeared in no. 167 (May 2000); *Suhrkamp* publishers for permission to publish the translation of Heide Wunder's article 'Wie wird man ein Mann? Befunde am Beginn der Neuzeit (15.–17. Jahrhundert)', in Christiane Eifert *et al.*, eds., *Was sind Frauen? Was sind Männer? Geschlechterkonstruktionen im historischen Wandel*, Frankfurt-on-Main, 1996. Eva Labouvie's article first appeared in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 1 (1990) and is reproduced with a note on further research on men in witchcraft trials published since.

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Map 1. Germany around 1547.

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