

THE HIDDEN ORIGINS OF THE GERMAN ENLIGHTENMENT

The early German Enlightenment is seen as a reform movement that broke free from traditional ties without falling into anti-Christian and extremist positions, on the basis of secular natural law, an antimetaphysical epistemology, and new social ethics. But how did the works which were radical and critical of religion during this period come about? And how do they relate to the dominant 'moderate' Enlightenment? Martin Mulsow offers fresh and surprising answers to these questions by reconstructing the emergence and dissemination of some of the radical writings created between 1680 and 1720. *The Hidden Origins of the German Enlightenment* explores the little-known freethinkers, persecuted authors, and secretly circulating manuscripts of the era, applying an interdisciplinary perspective to the German Enlightenment. By engaging with these cross-regional, clandestine texts, a dense and highly original picture emerges of the German early Enlightenment, with its strong links with the experience of the rest of Europe.

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Note on Translation

This is a translation of Martin Mulsow, *Radikale Frühaufklärung in Deutschland, 1680–1720*, vol. 2 (Göttingen, Wallstein Verlag, 2018), with a new introduction and conclusion. This version omits Chapter 6, which will appear later as a separate book. It also deletes most of the quotations contained in the footnotes. The items from the bibliography that are cited only in the now deleted Chapter 6 have been deleted.

Abbreviations

- ADB = Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, 56 vols., Leipzig,
1875–1912
DBA = Deutsches Biographisches Archiv, 1447 fiches, 1982–1985
HAB = Herzog August Bibliothek
TRE = Theologische Realenzyklopädie, 36 vols., 1976–2004