

## **Preface / Vorwort**

A group of Danish female scholars of legal history invited colleagues working in the field to a conference on gendered legal history with the special theme “Less favored - more favored in law and legal practice”. The primary purpose was to connect legal historians doing research with a gendered perspective in the Nordic, European and Anglo-American countries. The incentive for the conference came from the European network, “Geschlechterdifferenz in europäischen Rechtskreisen / Gender differences in European legal cultures”. The network has its roots in the current flowering, often gendered, research in European Legal History, found in several European countries, including the Nordic countries.

The conference took place on September 27<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>, 2004, at the Royal Library in Copenhagen and the papers from the conference are presented here as reworked articles, some of them in a bilingual (German and English) version, others with a summary in German or English.

The conference underlined the importance of searching for common traits across chronological and geographical limits in order to reveal unique local features and features with a common background and doing so by sharing our research. European Legal History reveals that the female sex in law and legal theory as well as in practice has often been less favored. The papers and the articles of this publication demonstrate, however, that recent research, focusing on gender from a legal, social and economic perspective and demonstrating great ability to ask new questions and throw new light on older ones, has produced a picture that is considerably more varied than a simple ‘less favored – more favored’ dichotomy. There is no universal answer to the question of exactly which gender is less or more favored in a specific situation.

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