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Sommario/riassunto	Service to others was integral to medieval and early modern European culture. It played a prominent role in the Christian world view. People tend to think of state service as the typical male form of work. However, this notion does not do justice to the early history of states and their servants, and it obscures the role of women and gender entirely. Teasing out these entanglements, this book shows how early modern state formation was subsidized by ordinary people's work and how, the then changing relationship between state authorities and families shaped the understanding of work and gender. It introduces the people, the period, the urban environments and the state

administration under consideration. The book then analyses the role of violence and hostility in state servants' working lives and the expectations of servants to behave in certain ways. It demonstrates the vital role of small-scale market relations and of cooperation and mutual help among women. The book also analyses the relationship among lower state servants' families, discussing how social control and contact were parts of daily life and how society was knit together through these many practices. It discusses why early modern state formation created more opportunities for men than for women, when another outcome seems equally possible. The history of state formation throws new light on how different forms of service for others were understood and gendered over time, while people's everyday activities elucidate the mechanisms by which states were formed.
