

Series de Coeck, *The Adoration of the Magi (detail), oil on canvas, 328 x 238 cm, 1617. Altarpiece of the Capuchin Church in Enghien (Namur, Belgium). Copyright Studeo Benzer Enghien.*



INVITATION TO A LECTURE

PLANNING THE ARENBERG DYNASTY

SCENARIO THINKING, FEMALE SUCCESSION AND GENERATIONAL CONFLICT FROM 1550 TO 1660

Mirella Marini

The Arenberg dynasty saw the light in mystic times almost a thousand years ago. Or so they say, and unfortunately historians tend to repeat this claim. Interestingly, this aristocratic family is a prime example of dynastic identity formation in the 17th century, not because it was so ancient, but because it was relatively young. As a younger branch of the la Marck family, its separate identity as 'Arenberg' was mainly the creation of Charles, princely count of Arenberg and his wife Anne of Croy, later known as the duchess of Aarschot. In this lecture I will outline their dynastic plan and show how various circumstances, both succession crises, as gender based conflicts, interfered with the original plan as laid out by Charles and Anne. As Jasper van der Steen stated, dynastic scenario thinking or planning for the future, was an important factor in the formation of dynasties in early modern Europe. However, in this lecture I argue that despite the existence of elaborate scenarios in wills, marriage contracts and family contracts, specific generational conflict and female succession can and will interfere with these scenarios.

Mirella Marini obtained her MA in history from the KU Leuven (2006), after which she held research positions at the VU University Amsterdam and at the University of Antwerp. Her research interests include female authority, dynastic identity formation and diplomacy. With Liesbeth Geevers she edited the volume *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities*. Marini works as a policy officer at the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for the Sciences and the Arts/Young Academy of Belgium, and is a committee member of the European branch of the Society for Court Studies..