

Four generations of the House of Habsburg (Philip the Handsome to Archduke Frederick, 11563), Wolfgang Lazius, *Arbor genealogica Austriacae*, s.a. 1564, image 5, ONB/Wien



INVITATION TO A LECTURE

A DYNASTY IS A DYNASTY IS A DYNASTY

HOW DYNASTIES SUCH AS THE SPANISH HABSBURGS HAVE BEEN, AND CONTINUE TO BE, CONSTRUCTED

Liesbeth Geervers

Dynasties have become more and more an object of study. German-language historiography took a head start some decades ago, but anglophone historians have caught on lately as well with books like Jeroen Duindam's *Dynasties. A History of Social Power, 1300–1800* (Cambridge, 2015), Natalia Nowakowska's collective volume *Remembering the Jagiellonians* (Routledge, 2019) and Robert Bartlett's *Blood Royal. Dynastic Politics in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 2021). However welcome this multitude of voices is, the participants in this new(ish) field do not necessarily talk about the same thing when they talk about dynasties. In this talk, I would like to discuss the plurality of perspectives in current historiography. The Habsburgs, with their long reign over a variety of lands across Europe and beyond, their embeddedness in different local succession regimes, their (localised) tolerance of bastardy and their propensity to employ cognatic kinfolk as governors, provide a treasure trove of sources and cases that serve to highlight how both historical actors and modern-day historians go about constructing the dynasties they write about.

Liesbeth Geervers is Associate Professor in History at Lund University (Sweden). She obtained her PhD at the University of Amsterdam and has since then held positions at various universities in the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden. Her research focuses on dynasties as family groups, and especially the Spanish Habsburgs. Together with Mirella Marini she edited the volume *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities* (Ashgate: Farnham, 2015), and with Harald Gustafsson, *Dynasties and State Formation in Early Modern Europe* (Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, 2023). She also recently published her monograph *The Spanish Habsburgs and Dynastic Rule, 1500–1700* (Routledge: London, 2023).