

Global Aldrovandi: Exchanging Nature in the Early Modern World

3rd Brill Seminar: Bologna, 16–17 June 2022

Organizers:

Marco Beretta (University of Bologna)

Davide Domenici (University of Bologna)

Lia Markey (Director of the Center for Renaissance Studies, Newberry Library)

Offiss – Dipartimento di Filosofia e Comunicazione, Dipartimento di Storia Culture Civiltà, University of Bologna, Co-sponsored by Brill (Leiden) and the Center for Renaissance Studies, Newberry Library

Location: Aula Prodi, Dipartimento di Storia Culture Civiltà, Piazza San Giovanni di Monte 2

Presentation

The Bolognese polymath Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605) sought to make sense of the changing world of the sixteenth century. Europe’s explorations and conquests in Asia, Africa, and the Americas both challenged and inspired Aldrovandi’s project to produce a revised *Historia Naturalis*. The newly “discovered” worlds not only revealed an astonishing amount of previously unknown animals, plants, and artifacts, but they also posed a new epistemological challenge: They brought into question the methodological and taxonomic Aristotelian framework that Aldrovandi had employed.

Substantial scholarship devoted to Aldrovandi and the New World has begun to explore Aldrovandi’s global interests. The proposed international conference aims to expand our knowledge of Aldrovandi’s conception of the world by examining the effects that the changing globe had on Aldrovandi’s work, investigating what types of extra-European specimens were included in his research and how the author managed to include them in the general architecture of his intellectual project. For instance, what did Aldrovandi collect from Africa and Asia and how were these other regions of the world represented and described in his publications? What did his extensive correspondence with northern European scholars inform him of other parts of Europe? How did Aldrovandi think comparatively about different regions of the world?

PROGRAM

Thursday, June 16

9:45 Marco Beretta (University of Bologna), Welcome

Institutional welcome by:

- Alberto Credi (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bologna)
- Giovanni Matteucci (Director of the Department of Philosophy and Communication, University of Bologna)
- Francesca Sofia (Director of the Department of History and Cultures, University of Bologna)
- Roberto Balzani (Director of Sistema Museale di Ateneo, University of Bologna)
- Laura McEnaney (Vice President for Research and Academic Programs, Newberry Library)

Marco Beretta, Presentation of the Brill seminar

10:30 Paula Findlen (Stanford University), Opening Remarks

SESSION 1

Chair: **Marco Beretta** (University of Bologna)

11:00-11:45

- Davide Domenici (University of Bologna), “Indigenous American Knowledge in Aldrovandi’s Works.” Respondent: Peter Mason (Rome)

11:45-12:30

- Caroline Duroselle-Melish (Folger Shakespeare Library), “New World Artifacts, Old Graphic Techniques and Visual Strategies? Woodcuts of Artifacts from the Americas in *Musaeum Metallicum*.” Respondent: Lia Markey (Newberry Library)

12:30-13:00 General discussion

Lunch break

SESSION 2

Chair: **Davide Domenici** (University of Bologna)

15:00-15:45

- Noemi di Tommaso (University of Bologna), “Africa in Ulisse Aldrovandi’s Correspondence.” Respondent: Ingrid Greenfield (Universität Basel/Villa I Tatti)

15:45-16:30

- Cristiana Scappini (University of Bologna) and Daniela Picchi (Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna), “Ulisse Aldrovandi: per Hieroglyphica ad Aegyptum.” Respondent: Matteo Martelli (University of Bologna).

16:30 General discussion

Friday, June 17**SESSION 3**

Chair: **Lia Markey** (Newberry Library)

9:30-10:15

- Barbara Di Gennaro Splendore (Bologna), “Aldrovandi’s Farmaceutica. Global Knowledge, Local Remedies.” Respondent: Iolanda Ventura (University of Bologna)

10:15-11

- Rebecca Zorach (Northwestern University), “Per totum universum insinuans’: Fossils and Formative Powers, the Local and the Global.” Respondent: Monica Azzolini (University of Bologna)

11-11:45

- Hannah Marcus (Harvard University), “Aldrovandi in Old Age: How an Elderly Man Saw his World.” Respondent: David Lines (University of Warwick)

11:45-12:15 General discussion

Lunch break

SESSION 4

Chair: **Paula Findlen** (Stanford University)

14:15-15:30

- Alessandro Tosi (University of Pisa), “Images from the East. Ulisse Aldrovandi and the Orient.” Respondent: Maria Vittoria Spissu (University of Bologna/Newberry Library)

15:30-16:15

- Elena Canadelli (University of Padua) and Luca Tonetti (University of Bologna), “Aldrovandi’s Collections in Circulation: Assembling and Disassembling Objects during the Napoleonic Era and Beyond.” Respondent: Paolo Savoia (University of Bologna)

16:15-16:45 General discussion

Coffee break

17:00-18:00 Final Discussion