



## Catalogue 02-2019

*Athanasius Kircher - Short list*

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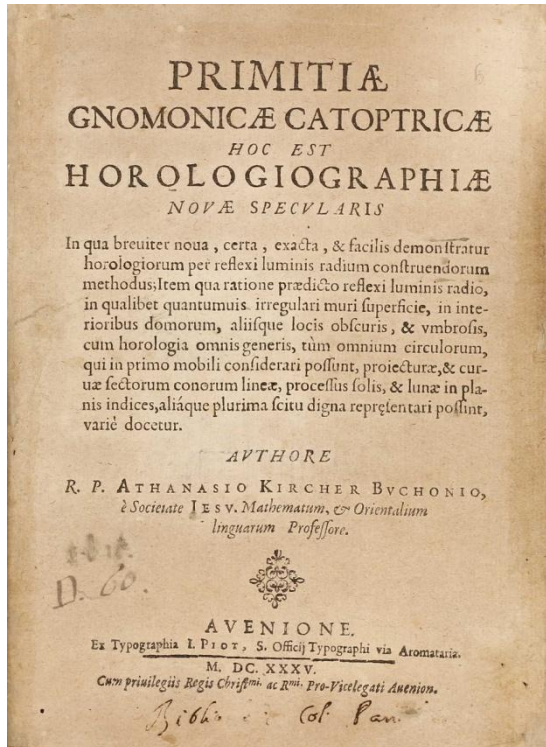
## Milestones of Science Books

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1 **KIRCHER, Athanasius.** *Primitiae gnomonicae catoptricae, hoc est horologiographiae novae specularis, in qua . . . demonstratur horologiorum per reflexi luminis radium construendorum methodus . . .* Avignon: Jean Piot, 1635. 4to (224 x 171 mm). [12], 228, [16] pp., including engraved additional title, woodcut initials and headpieces, several woodcut illustrations and diagrams in text (7 full page), index, errata and privilege leaf bound at end. Signatures:  $\pi^6 A-2G^4 2H^2$ . Bound in 20th-century vellum, spine with gilt lettering piece, new endpapers (light rubbing to extremities). Text heavily browned throughout, some light spotting and faint dampstaining, a couple of early repairs to blank margins, title-page with few tiny holes and paper re-inforcement on verso, leaf D3 with old repair affecting 3 letters, leaf N1 with torn lower blank corner. Provenance: illegible early inked inscription "Biblio Col. Pan.(?)" to letterpress title; Giancarlo Beltrame Library. (#003013) € 6,500



Brunet III, 668. RARE FIRST EDITION of one of Kircher's earliest works which deals with the construction and operation of sundials by reflected light (*gnomonicus catoptricus*). It is also an astronomical work treating with the motion of the sun and moon. The illustrations mainly show sundials and tables. The added engraved title-page has an alternate title: "*Horologium Aven : Astronomico Catoptricum. . .*" The work is dedicated to the city council of Avignon and to Claudius Sylvester, assessor of the city. Kircher's dedicatory epistle is dated from Avignon, 10 May 1633 and the preliminary pages include 4 poetic epigrams to the work. "Shortly after Kircher took up residence in Avignon in 1631, he began earnest research in, among other things, astronomy. He designed an observatory to study the progress of the sun and moon by reflecting their light with mirrors into the De La Motte tower of the Jesuit college. This book is the result of his observations and comprises a series of problems, corollaries, and theorems related to those observations." (B.L. Merrill, *Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), Jesuit Scholar: An Exhibition of His Works in the Harold B. Lee Library Collections at Brigham Young University*, Martino Publ. 2003, p.3-4).

**2** [KIRCHER, Athanasius \(Gaspar Schott, editor\)](#). *Iter extaticum coeleste, Quo Mundi opificium, id est, Coelestis Expansi, siderumque] tam errantium, quàm fixorum natura, vires, proprietates, singulorumque] compositio & structura, ab infimo Telluris globo, usque] ad ultima Mundi confinia, per ficti raptus integumentum explorata, novâ hypothesi exponitur ad veritatem, interlocutoribus Cosmie et Theodidacto*. Würzburg: heirs of J.A. & Wolfgang Endter, 1660. 4to (201 x 157mm). [24], 689, [18] pp., engraved title, full page engraved coat of arms and 12 engraved plates. Contemporary vellum (stained, with worming), blue dyed edges. First leaves with worming affecting some letters, otherwise quite crisp and clean with virtually no browning or foxing. A very good copy in untouched binding. (#002115) € 3,500



Merrill 12 & 14; Caillet 5775; De Backer-Sommervogel IV, 1056-57.14 - Second edition, enlarged and edited by the author's friend and disciple, Gaspar Schott. The first edition of 1656 did not contain any illustrations. This is one of Kircher's most curious works in which a certain Theodidactus, a personification of Kircher himself, has a dream of a journey through the heavens guided by the angel Cosmiel. In the first dialogue Kircher tells of a journey to the moon, which he finds full of mountains and craters. He continues on to Venus, and then on to each of the other planets and to the region of the fixed stars. The sun has blemishes, he announces. He himself had seen sunspots through his telescope some years earlier. Kircher rejected the Aristotelian and Ptolemaic cosmologies for that of Tycho Brahe, who had argued that the sun orbits the earth and is in turn orbited by the planets and the fixed stars. This system was adopted "by most of Kircher's fellow Jesuits, since it allowed them to maintain geocentric orthodoxy while espousing, at least in part, the new, more scientific heliocentricity advocated by the Copernicans" (Merrill).

**3** [KIRCHER, Athanasius](#). *Polygraphia nova et universalis ex combinatoria arte detecta qua quivis etiam linguarum quantumvis imperitus triplici methodo. . . Appendix apologetica*. Rome: ex typographia Varesij, 1663. Two parts in one volume. Folio (330 x 235 mm). 148, 23 [1] pp., including woodcut with motto of Kircher on title page, woodcut initials, one engraved folding plate and two letterpress folding tables. Bound in early 19th century quarter calf over marbled boards, spine lettered in gilt and with gilt ornaments (boards and extremities little rubbed, corners scuffed, little worming to hinges). Internally very little browning, occasional minor spotting, pale dampstaining to blank fore-margin, p.13 with ink smudge to blank fore-margin, a few paper flaws, otherwise quite crisp and clean. A fine, untouched copy with ample margins. (#002718) SOLD

VERY RARE FIRST EDITION. In this work, which greatly influenced Leibniz, Kircher presents an artificial universal language, reworking the work of Trithemius with the same title. The first book proposes the reduction of all languages to only one, and contains a double dictionary of five languages; books II and III are devoted to various encryption systems. Trithemius' work *Polygraphia* is discussed in the appendix.

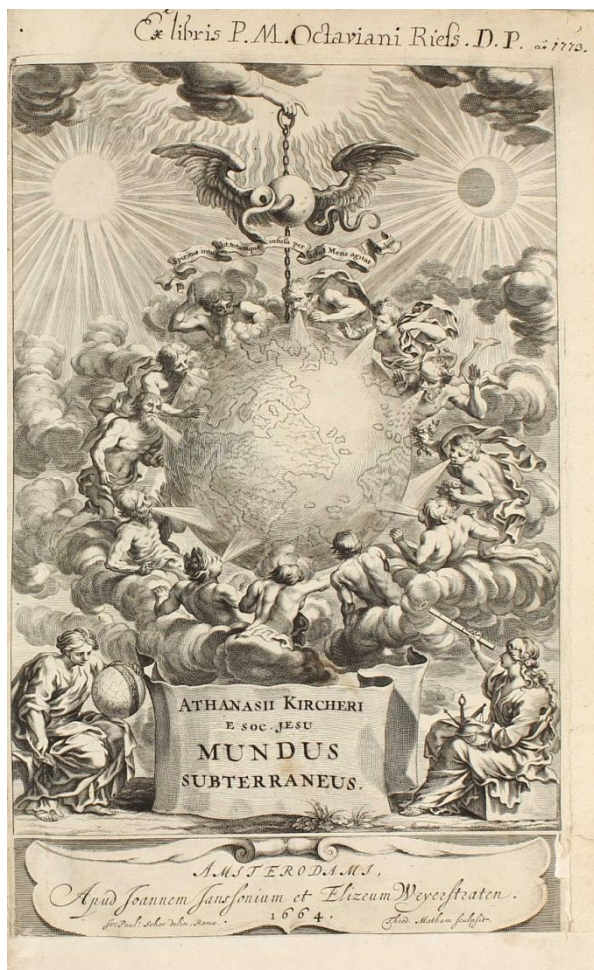
Kircher's "work *Polygraphia nova* provides elements for a carefully crafted codification apparatus that itself is telling of the culture of 'secret monastic languages and codes of mediaeval Europe.'" (Parikka). "This work of the German scholar and mathematician is based principally on the writings of Johannes Trithemius. Joaquín García Carmona and others see also the influence of Blaise de Vigenère, whose multi-alphabet cipher seems to have been transformed by Kircher into a numerical cipher. Of special interest in *Polygraphia* is part 1, where Kircher proposes a system of pasigraphy, or universal writing, employing numerals to stand for words of similar meaning in Latin, Italian, French, German, and Spanish." (Semeiology Collection).

This work is exceptionally rare, with only two copies recorded at auction in the past 30+ years (the Macclesfield copy in 2005 and a presentation-copy by Kircher in 1991, both sold at Sotheby's).

Dünnhaupt/Kircher 15; Sommervogel IV, 1059; Jussi Parikka, *Hidden in Plain Sight: The Steganographic Image*. (In: <https://unthinking.photography/>); *The Philip Mills Arnold Semeiology Collection of the Washington University Libraries* (in: <http://omeka.wustl.edu/>); Fletcher, J. E. (2001), *A Study of the Life and Works of Athanasius Kircher, 'Germanus Incredibilis'*. London: Brill, p.167.

### **The first effort to describe the earth from a physical standpoint**

**4** **KIRCHER, Athanasius**. *Mundus subterraneus, in XII libros digestus*. . . Two parts in one volume. Amsterdam: Janssonius-Waesberge, 1664-1665. Folio (393 x 238 mm). [28], 346, [6]; [12], 487 [1], [10] pp., including allegorical additional title to each part (both dated 1664), engraved portrait of Kircher and dedicatee Pope Alexander VII, engraved device on title of part 1, 21 (12 double-page, one folding) engraved maps and plates, 7 (6 double-page) letterpress tables, 61 engraved illustrations and maps in text, 3 intact volvelles on pp. 132, 154 and 156; numerous woodcut illustrations throughout, woodcut initials and tailpieces, text in double column. Signatures: \*<sup>4</sup>(\*2+[chi]1) \*\*<sup>6</sup>\*\*\*\*<sup>4</sup> A-Xx<sup>4</sup>; (\*<sup>6</sup>)<sup>6</sup> A-Qqq<sup>4</sup>. Engraved titles part of signature, privilegium leaf [chi]1 of part 1 bound at end of book. Near contemporary brown-dyed vellum with yapp edges, earlier, richly gilt leather spine with gilt lettering piece laid down, blue-dyed edges (boards spotted and soiled, ties gone, extremities worn). Little browning of text and plates, occasional minor spotting, some minor dampstaining mostly to lower blank margin, little worming to front endpapers, engraved title and portrait; lower margin of engraved title and a few leaves elsewhere with old paper repair, repaired tear to worldmap; occasional old marginal ink inscriptions and light pencil markings in part II. Provenance: Inscription on first engraved title "P. M. Octaviani Riess. D.P. a(nn)o 1773". Collated complete. (#003102) € 15,000



Norman 1218; Merrill 17; de Backer-S. IV, 1060 f.; Caillet 5738; Ferguson 1:467; Nissen ZBI 219; Sinkankas 3419; Honeyman 1823; Hoover 483; Ward-Carozzi 1257; Sabin 37967; Alden-L. 665/114. - **RARE FIRST EDITION, FIRST ISSUE of both parts**, with the engraved titles dated 1664. Kircher's encyclopedic compilation describes the physical characteristics of the subterranean or 'hidden' world, which, as such, "must always command a high place in the literature as the first effort to describe the earth from a physical standpoint" (Zittel). His speculations on the existence of a vast underground network of springs and reservoirs, as well his attribution of volcanic eruptions and hot springs to fiery, subterranean regions, stem from his observations of the eruptions of Stromboli, Aetna and Vesuvius and of the violent earthquakes that rocked Calabria between 1637 and 1638, all of which he describes in his preface. He also theorized that volcanoes functioned as 'safety valves' for the inner core of the earth. While some of his notions were fanciful (such as the existence of subterranean monsters), others embraced various branches of science, including physics, geography, geology and chemistry. Although largely critical of alchemy and alchemists (whom he called swindlers: 'homines ad omne fraudis genus fictos'), Kircher did support the transmutations of metals, particularly of iron into copper. His views on the influence of weathering, which he attributed to a chemical process and to cold, were reasonably sound, as was that of the

geological action of water and wind, and his interpretation of fossils remained popular until the beginning of the 18th century. The illustrations range from the utterly realistic to the utterly fantastic, such as the crystals copied from from Imperato's *Historia naturale* and a collection of images on stone allegedly formed by nature - including a Madonna - derived from Aldrovandi's *Musaeum metallicum* (1648). In addition to minerals and fossils, Kircher also covers such topics as metallurgy and mining, mines in Spain, Hungary, Peru, and America, pyrotechnic arts, the analysis of mineral waters, poisons, hydraulics, meteorology, distillation, etc. "The most popular of Kircher's works in his day and the best known in ours. The work is not solely geologic. Kircher continues with fantastic speculations about the interior of the earth, its hidden lakes, its rivers of fire and its strange inhabitants. Major topics include gravity, the moon, the sun, eclipses, ocean currents, subterranean waters and fires, meteorology... metallurgy and mining (etc.)" (Merrill). Copies of this voluminous work are almost always found incomplete, lacking either the portraits, the privilege leaf or parts of the 3 volvelles.



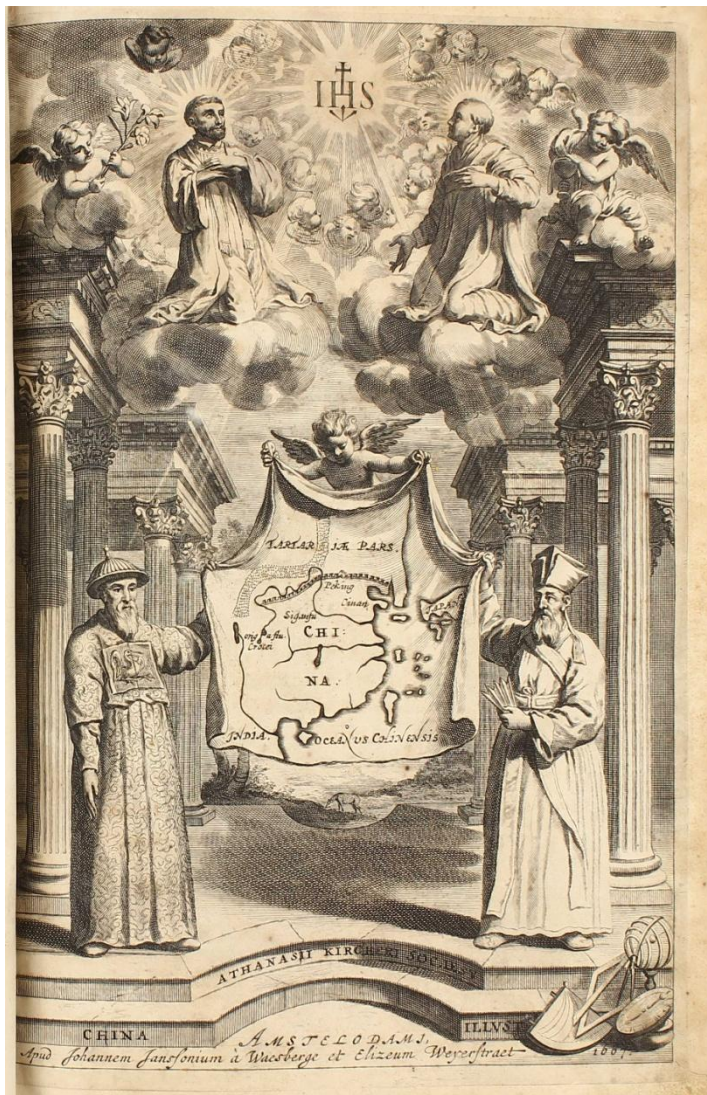
5 **KIRCHER, Athanasius.** *Arithmologia, sive de abditis numerorum mysteriis qua origo, antiquitas & fabrica numerorum exponitur; abditae. . . proprietates demonstrantur; fontes superstitionum in amuletorum fabrica aperiuntur...* Rome: Varese, 1665. 4to (226 x 168 mm). [16], 301, [11] pp., including final blank, engraved allegorical frontispiece, 3 folding letterpress tables (one in red and black), full-page woodcut arms of dedicatee on verso of title-page, woodcut initials, tailpieces and illustrations. Two neat composite eclectic zodiacs in contemporary ink are bound at the end. Bound in contemporary vellum over wooden boards with the original clasps intact, boards ruled in blind, blue-dyed edges, spine with faint ink lettering (vellum cleaned, spine with horizontal split and minor chipping, glue residue from old label at foot of spine, light soiling and spotting of boards). Text crisp and clean, first gathering very little browned only, faint brown spotting to lower margin of 4 leaves, frontispiece trimmed close just touching plate frame at top, table III trimmed close at upper margin just into headline, lower torn corner of leaf O1 repaired, short tear in leaf Q2 without loss. A fine copy, stunningly crisp internally. (#002936) € 6,500



close at upper margin just into headline, lower torn corner of leaf O1 repaired, short tear in leaf Q2 without loss. A fine copy, stunningly crisp internally. (#002936) € 6,500

Merrill 19; Caillet II, 5769; Dünnhaupt/Kircher 18; Sommervogel IV, 1063; Wellcome III, 395. - FIRST EDITION of a treatise on numerology. A rare work of the famous Jesuit and scholar on number mysticism, hieroglyphs etc. Historically very interesting. Beginning with a speculative history of the origin of numbers, it further deals with the decipherment of hieroglyphs and includes much on ancient Near Eastern, gnostic, kabbalistic, and neo-Pythagorean doctrines. "The '*Arithmologia*', one of Kircher's more curious works, is a veritable gold mine of curiosities: magic formulas, amulets, and symbolic matrices" (Merrill) "Un des plus curieux ouvrages de ce prodigieux savant, traitant des nombres mystérieux, magiques, cabalistiques, gnostiques, mystiques, etc... Comme tous ses ouvrages, ce livre est basé sur des principes occultes. - C'est l'un des rares ouvrages donnant les propriétés mystiques et cabalistiques des nombres" (Caillet).

6 [KIRCHER, Athanasius](#). *China monumentis qua sacris qua profanis, nec non variis naturae & artis spectaculis, aliarumque rerum memorabilium argumentis*. Amsterdam: Joan Janssonius van Waesberghe, 1667. Folio (384 x 250 mm). [14], 237, [11] pp. Including engraved allegorical frontispiece title-page, letterpress title-page with printer's woodcut vignette, engraved portrait of the author, 2 double-page and folding maps (of China and South-East-Asia), 23 engraved plates (2 folding), 61 engraved vignettes, several engraved text illustrations, woodcut initials- and tailpieces,

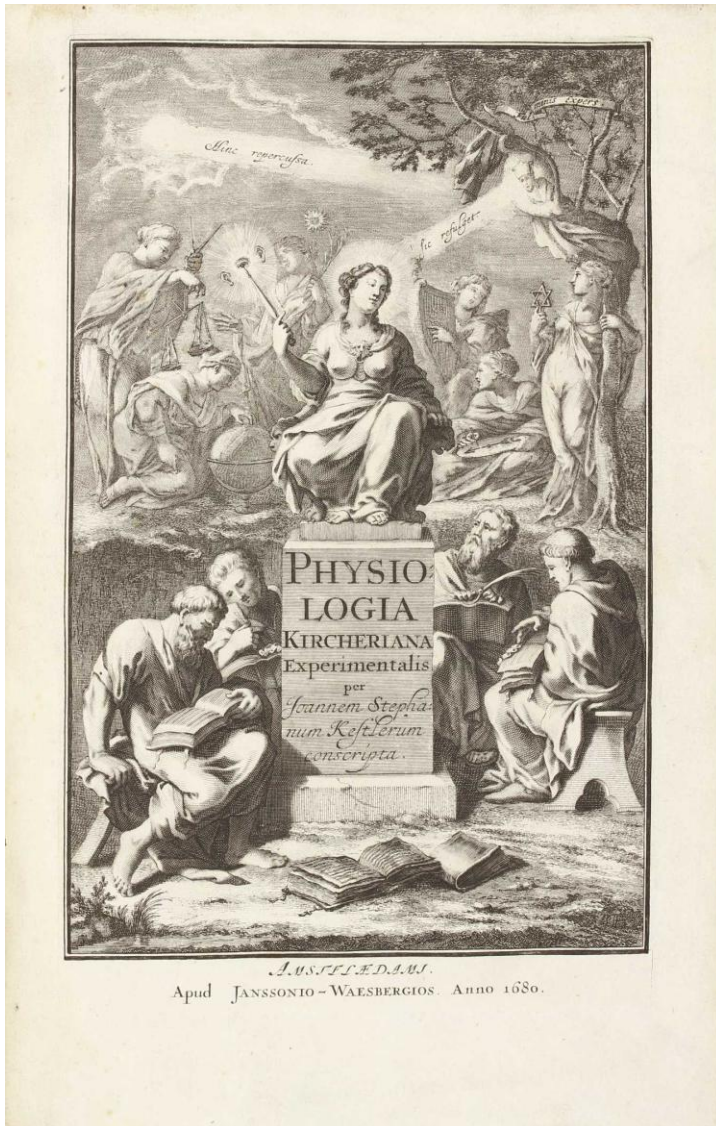


index bound at end. Contemporary full calf, spine decorated and titled in gilt, boards with gilt ruling, sprinkled edges, marbled pastedowns (spine ends chipped, boards spotted and stained, extremities rubbed, binding somewhat bowed). Text somewhat browned and spotted, light dampstaining to upper and lower gutter of some pages and folding plates slightly dampstained at top. Provenance: two illegible old ink stamps to titl-page. A very good copy with wide margins. Collated and complete. (#003130) € 5,000

Honeyman 1824; Caillet 5773; Brunet III, 666; Merrill 20. THE TRUE FIRST EDITION of Kircher's profusely illustrated account of China based on descriptions by many European explorers, including many Jesuits such as Kircher himself. The first edition is larger in size, the Amsterdam and Antwerp counterfeit prints of the same year are about 5 cm smaller and with the engravings redone. The engravings are based on these explorers' sketches and original images imported from Asia. This work includes the first Chinese vocabulary ever printed in the West . . . the standard text for the study of Chinese until the nineteenth century" (Merrill).



7 [KIRCHER, Athanasius](#). *Physiologia Experimentalis, qua Summa Argumentorum Multitudine & Varietate Naturalium rerum scientia per experimenta Physica, Mathematica, Medica, Chymica, Musica, Magnetica, Mechanica comprobatur atque stabilitur. Extraxit, &... redegit... Joannes Stephanus Kestlerus*. Amsteram: Jansson-Waesberge, 1680. Folio (373x247 mm). [8], 248, [8] pp.,



including additional engraved allegorical title, seven copper engravings and numerous woodcuts within text. 19th-c three-quarter vellum, spine with printed title (extremities and boards somewhat rubbed). Minor spotting and even light browning throughout. Provenance: Marcel Bekus (ex-libris to front paste-down and small ink stamp to title verso). A fine, unstained copy with ample margins. (#001966) € 4,900

Garrison-Morton 580, Caillet 5796; Honeyman 1834; Dunnhaupt III, 2348, 34; Krivatsy 6404; Waller 10869; Wellcome III, p.396. FIRST EDITION of this selection from Kircher's voluminous works "which includes the first recorded experiment in hypnotism in animals" (Garrison-M 580). The range of subjects covered encompasses the entire spectrum of his researches, such as astronomy, optics (laterna magica), magnetism, air pressure, harmonics, sundials or waterpipes. Johann Stephan Kestler, the editor, was Kircher's pupil and as Kircher died the year this book was published, it is uncertain to what degree he was involved in its production.

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