

Athanasius Kircher's Theatre of the World

Joscelyn Godwin



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Athanasius Kircher (1602-80) was acknowledged to be the most learned man of his age. By profession a Jesuit priest, he made himself an authority on every subject under (and above) the sun and published the results of his researches in over thirty lavishly illustrated volumes in Latin. His museum in Rome was famous and visited by everybody in the world of learning. Inevitably, his work has been superseded in most areas of study, but he remains a key figure in the history of ideas and in recent years there has been a revival of interest, in which Joscelyn Godwin has played a leading role. But while every other aspect of his thought has been studied, the fascinating engravings with which he illustrated his ideas have been largely ignored. This book fills that gap. It is divided into 15 chapters grouped by the engravings subject; these illustrations reveal his singular mind and the way he was drawn to mysticism and magic.

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