Giambattista della Porta (1535? – 4 February 1615), also known as Giovanni Battista Della Porta, was an Italian scholar, polymath and playwright who lived in Naples at the time of the Scientific Revolution and Reformation. Giambattista della Porta spent the majority of his life on scientific endeavors. He benefited from an informal education of tutors and visits from renowned scholars. His most famous work, first published in 1558, is entitled Magiae Naturalis (Natural Magic). In this book he covered Giovanni Battista della Porta, the famous advocate of the science of physiognomy, postulated a "Doctrine of Signatures," in which the study of plants, chiromancy (palm reading), physiognomy, and body parts were propagated as signs of character. Size, shape, and lines visible on the exterior, through their resemblance to other phenomena, were deemed to reveal the truth of the interior. Readers were instructed to survey the faces of individuals as if maps, to compare the faces of humans with animals and plants. His project was inspired by the growing epistemological superiority of opti... Giambattista della Porta's father was Nardo Antonio Della Porta, a man of considerable wealth and importance, owning both land and ships. Giambattista's mother was a sister of Adriano Guglielmo Spadafora, a man of learning who worked as a conservator in the archives in Naples. From 1541 Nardo Antonio was in the service of Emperor Charles V as Scrivano di Mandamento, meaning he was the secretary to the Emperor responsible for civil appeals to the vicariate.