

# CULTURE AND COSMOS

*A Journal of the History of Astrology and Cultural Astronomy*

Vol. 14 no 1 and 2, Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter 2010

Published by Culture and Cosmos  
and the Sophia Centre Press,  
in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David,  
in association with the Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology  
in Culture,  
University of Wales Trinity Saint David,  
Faculty of Humanities and the Performing Arts  
Lampeter, Ceredigion, Wales, SA48 7ED, UK.

[www.cultureandcosmos.org](http://www.cultureandcosmos.org)

Cornelia Linde (trans.) and Dorian Greenbaum (trans. and annotated), 'Kepler's Methods of Astrological Interpretation for Rudolf II, 1602', *Culture and Cosmos*, Vol. 14 no 1 and 2, Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter 2010 pp. 79-104.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue card for this book is available from the British Library

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ISSN 1368-6534
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# **Translations of Kepler's Astrological Writings**

## **Part I. Kepler as Practising Astrologer**

### **Section 2. Kepler's Clients**

#### **Subsection 1. Kepler's Methods of Astrological Interpretation for Rudolf II, 1602**

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**Translated by Cornelia Linde and Dorian Greenbaum; annotated by Dorian Greenbaum**

*After Tycho Brahe's death in 1601, Kepler was appointed Imperial Mathematician (included in the job description: Court Astrologer) for the Emperor Rudolf II. It is clear that Kepler took his responsibilities as astrologer to the Emperor seriously. Interpretations of Rudolf's natal chart are extant as well as delineations of his solar returns, transits and directions; Kepler performed these according to both 'traditional' methods and to his own preferred ones. In addition, the psychological implications of the interpretations on the Emperor also concerned Kepler, as is evident in a letter he wrote to an unnamed official in 1611. The next three sections cover, first, Kepler's delineation of Rudolf's natal chart, directions and solar returns by his preferred methods (these contain some theory as well); second, his interpretations by traditional methods; and finally his letter to the official. Note that, for reasons of clarity, we first translate the interpretation by Kepler's preferred methods, though these follow the traditional methods in the text.*

*Taken from Opera Omnia 8, pp. 338-343; Gesammelte Werke 21, 2.2, pp. 428-433.*

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Cornelia Linde (trans.) and Dorian Greenbaum (trans. and annotated), 'Kepler's Methods of Astrological Interpretation for Rudolf II, 1602', *Culture and Cosmos*, Vol. 14 no 1 and 2, Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter 2010 pp. 79-104.

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*Additions to the text of OO which appear in GW are added between forward slashes (/).*

[*OO* 8, p. 338; *GW* 21, 2.2, p. 428]

**The Nativity of the Emperor Rudolf [II] (written in 1602)<sup>1</sup>**

[*Pulkovo XXII, 306r*] Whatever we follow in astronomy needs to be confirmed by either reason or experience. For authority is worth nothing when the author himself is deprived of these means. Likewise, think about so many causes – directions, revolutions, transits, annual, monthly and daily profections, etc. – it is impossible for them ever to be established either through experience or for them to be tested and examined through experience today. For if all these causes are mixed together, there is no day on which [*GW* 21, 2.2, p. 429] both happy and unfavourable signs would not happen.

And so I have no scruples about rejecting from such a large pile the signs which are plainly based on no reason other than a silly and untrustworthy one. In this way all profections fall, half of the directions, and the greater part of houses, exaltations, triplicities, terms and the ambiguities of the faces; [only] a few and much more easily confirmable signs remain.<sup>2</sup>

[*Pulkovo XXII, 306v*] Out of these, therefore, some have an acknowledged reason of a manifest cause, such as the nativity or radix itself, and in it the altitudes of the planets through the zodiac and the conjunctions with fixed stars. Thus far the reasons for some of these things have been hiding in the deepest contemplation of nature, yet the most sound and brought to light by me, I hope, are such as those which we call ‘aspects’. Some reasons, even if they do not have a known cause, nevertheless follow the method and analogy of a cause, whereby I strive more and

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<sup>1</sup> Title in *OO* (presumably added by Frisch); in *GW*, the editor has added the title ‘No. 1150c Interpretation of the Solars for 1602 and 1603 according to Kepler’s Methods’.

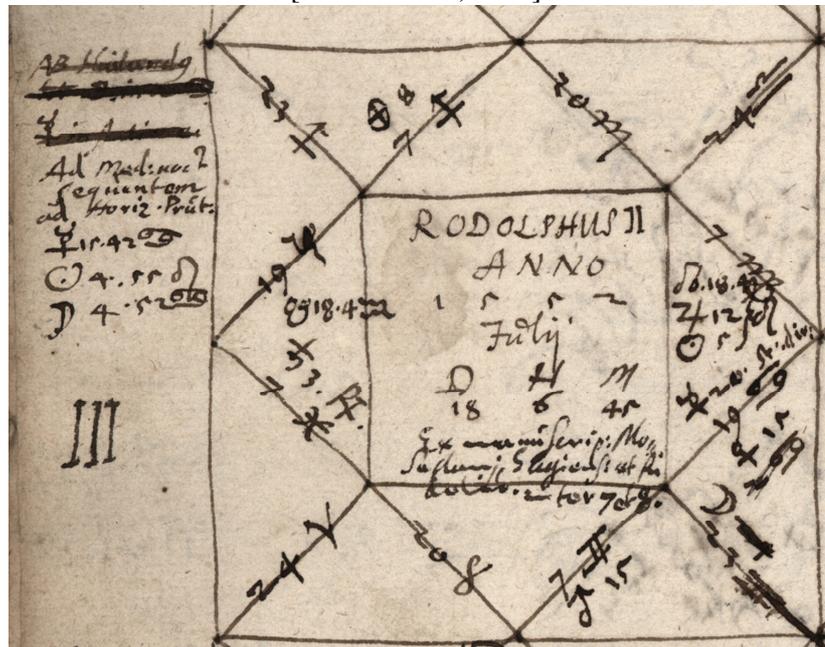
<sup>2</sup> Yet Kepler seems to cover all bases with Rudolf, since the first part of his interpretation of Rudolf’s 1602 and 1603 Solar Returns describes in detail the ‘common’ techniques used by ‘renowned’ astrologers, which include reception by dignity and profections. (See **Part I.2.2**, which follows the present section, for these interpretations, pp. 106-110.) Though he disavows them, Kepler certainly seems to have a decent grasp of these techniques.

more every day to show those causes: of such are transits, directions and revolutions.

For in this the directions, which I retain, differ from the above-rejected profections, because even though the cause of their events is ambiguous (*neutra*), nevertheless even the method of [OO 8, p. 339] profection is absurd, nor is it accepted in nature;<sup>3</sup> for there is no form of motion which in 12 years turns the planets around,<sup>4</sup> but the directions in fact accommodate themselves to daily motion.<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 1. Rudolf II's Natal Chart in Kepler's Hand**

[Pulkovo XVII, 205v]<sup>6</sup>



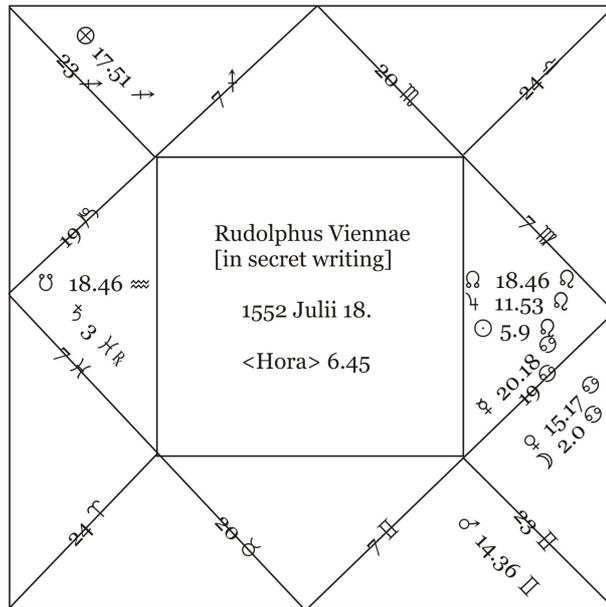
<sup>3</sup> Kepler denies the validity of profections because, unlike directions, neither their rationale nor method has any basis in nature.

<sup>4</sup> Every year each planet and chart point is moved forward by one zodiac sign, so that they will make a complete revolution in twelve years. ('for ... around' was added in the margin of the manuscript.)

<sup>5</sup> For more on Kepler's views of directions and profections, see **Part III.1** in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> See the transcribed positions in *GW 21*, 2.2, No. 547, p. 250.

**Figure 2. Drawing created from transcribed positions of Kepler's other drawing of Rudolf's natal chart [Pulkovo XXI, 455v]<sup>7</sup>**



[Pulkovo XXII, 307r] **The Nativity or Radix**

No flattery is necessary here. The signifying causes are of such grandeur (*majestas*) paired with the highest authority, which is undefeated by the most powerful enemies, and at the same time connected with the good fortune and vigour of both body and intellect; of these, I say, the causes are evident that such kinds [of placements] can be hoped for in the nativity of any Monarch.

(1) All the planets are standing around the horizon.<sup>8</sup>

(2) The Sun and Moon are both accompanied (*stipantur*) by a twin escort.<sup>9</sup> The Moon is also in an exact trine with Saturn, and in turn the Sun rejoices in the 7<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Two natal charts for Rudolf II exist in Kepler's hand. One is reproduced in **Figure 1**; this one is in *Pulkovo XXI, 455v*, with positions in *GW 21, 2.2, No. 126, p. 65*. The positions in the two charts have some slight differences (see below, **Table 1**, for a comparison).

<sup>8</sup> All the planets are within 45 degrees of the horizon, either rising or setting.

(3) Six planets are in the highest part of the zodiac and with the decline of summer they display their greatness (*amplitudo*) in the rising and setting itself. Between them the Moon is like a queen, almost in the cardinal point of the summer solstice itself. Now, I would have made little of the dominion of the Moon in Cancer and the Sun in Leo, their own signs, if these already-mentioned ones had not been present together with them.

(4) The portion (*locus*) of the sky in which the six planets are fixed is equipped with the brightest, greatest and most beautiful fixed stars;<sup>10</sup> another position like this cannot be found in the whole sky. Even so, [a portion] next to this in rank, in the constellations of Scorpio [*Pulkovo XXII, 307v*] and Corona, occupied the Midheaven in this nativity.

(5) The position of the Sun, without which all the rest could be inactive, enters onto 5° Leo, in whose confines (*confinium*) was the great conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in 1563, which will recur in 1623.<sup>11</sup> And so just as the highest of the things of this century has to depend on the fire trigon, i.e. these Saturn-Jupiter conjunctions, so also does this person have to depend on them.

But since some things seem to be missing for the greatest splendour, I bring forth the causes: (1) as we broaden both past and future (*absentia*) matters, we diminish the present; (2) 'the one who is the artisan of his

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<sup>9</sup> This sounds like the concept of *doryphoria*, or spear-bearing, in which planets of the same sect accompany the Sun and Moon; usually these planets are ahead of the Sun and behind the Moon. In this case, Mercury, which is diurnal in this chart (it rises ahead of the Sun) is with the Sun, and Venus, a nocturnal planet, follows the Moon. But Jupiter, a diurnal planet, is also with the Sun in Leo; and Mars, a nocturnal planet, is in Gemini near the Moon.

<sup>10</sup> The fixed stars in this region of the sky include Aldebaran, Castor, Pollux, Regulus, Sirius and Procyon.

<sup>11</sup> This is not exactly true. The great Jupiter-Saturn conjunction of 1563 was exact at 29°10' Cancer in August of 1563; although Jupiter and Saturn moved into the same degree of Leo (0° Leo) in 1563, the conjunction was not exact in Leo. The 1623 exact conjunction did occur in Leo at 6°6', very close to Rudolf's Sun. Kepler discusses the movement of the Jupiter-Saturn conjunctions from the water trigon to the fire trigon in his *De stella nova* of 1606 (the new star appeared in 1604, around the time of a Jupiter-Saturn conjunction in Sagittarius). See Patrick J. Boner's translation of three chapters of *De stella nova*, **Part II** in this volume.

own fortune',<sup>12</sup> and who gets praise from generosity, mercy and fairness, neglects the rights of majesty; (3) Jupiter is configured neither with Saturn nor Mercury.<sup>13</sup>

#### About the past<sup>14</sup>

It is sufficiently clear that in judgements of this kind you are looking for amusement (*delectatio*) and nothing else. And you who care so diligently, for the whole of posterity, about this most divine restoration<sup>15</sup> (certainly with some expense), are indeed most worthy because of your most honest pleasures. [*Pulkovo XXII, 308r*] Since indeed some traces of fear always darken the pleasure which is sought from the foreshadowing of future things, so much the less should I leave off from this topic concerning the past, as someone who offers genuine pleasure. But this inquiry is necessary for the investigation of the rising degree (*gradus orientis*).

[*GW 21, 2.2, p. 430*] About directions (the tool which has to be used in this matter), however, more has to be said in advance, because I follow a certain scheme (*ratio*) combined from those which most recently Tycho, Regiomontanus and the ancients handed down differently. For if I do not blend them like this, I cannot trace the directions back to the manner of their natural cause.

This is the manner of the natural cause. [*Pulkovo XXII, 308v*] Neither the thirty-year periods of Saturn nor the twelve-year periods of Jupiter govern our lives, but the yearly cycle of the Sun and the daily cycle of the sky, of which the former restores the summers and the harvests, the latter the night, the quiet and the digestion, without which we /clearly/ could not lead a life. Therefore the proportion of a day to a year, the proportion of 1 to 365, is the one that is effective for our life.<sup>16</sup> And the day is indeed

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<sup>12</sup> The *GW* editor rightly attributes this phrase to [Appius in] Ps.-Sallust, *De rep.* I, 1.2. A more common English translation is 'Every man is the architect of his own fortune.'

<sup>13</sup> This entire paragraph added between the lines and the margin of the manuscript.

<sup>14</sup> Phrase added in *OO*; missing in *GW*.

<sup>15</sup> Kepler is referring to a restoration of astrology/astronomy, which both he and Tycho desired.

<sup>16</sup> This is a description of the rationale of directions (modern secondary progressions).

an image of summer, the night of winter, since what is turned around in one day and night, the Sun fulfills in one year. Clearly in the same way, whatever time period, whose start is in the moment of birth, and whatever motion, not only acts in the present, that is in the act itself, while it is present, but also extends its signification in the natural proportion through 365 equal sections (*spatia*). Thus a day signifies a year, two days two years, and what [*Pulkovo XXII, 309r*] the thirtieth day has given light to for you holds the significance of the thirtieth year or birthday.

[*OO 8, p. 340*] If these things are true, then we have to direct the Sun and Moon by the diurnal motion of the Sun onto the ecliptic of that time by equal degrees in like manner, which the ancients call rising by oblique ascensions, and the Midheaven by right [ascensions], which is what Regiomontanus said; this in fact signifies a year, of which the equal ascends with the diurnal motion of the Sun at that time, and which is virtually what Tycho said. But the directions of Jupiter and the Part of Fortune and the so-called converse directions,<sup>17</sup> which Tycho added, clearly drop out.

*In the next section, Kepler provides an astrological analysis of Rudolf's past, present and future. In order to comment fully on what Kepler has done in regard to the aspects he discusses, it was necessary to duplicate his findings using modern calculations; my observations are given in the footnotes. I was unable to duplicate Kepler's results using the angles given in the extant chart diagrams Kepler wrote (see **Figure 1**, above, and **Table 1**, p. 87). The angles which, on the whole, did produce the best fit with Kepler's results were an Ascendant of 23° Capricorn and a Midheaven of 23 ½° Scorpio.<sup>18</sup> Three pieces of textual evidence support these positions or ones very close to them:*

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<sup>17</sup> 'Directiones vero Jovis [*OO has y*] et partis fortunae et conversae dictae directiones'. This could also be translated 'But the directions of Jupiter and the so-called directions of the Part of Fortune and its reverse', but I think 'conversae' goes with 'dictae directiones' as a nominative phrase in apposition with the previous 'directiones', rather than as a genitive with 'partis fortunae'. This also is more probable astrologically.

<sup>18</sup> All of my calculations were done with a modern calculation program, Solar Fire Gold. The date and time producing these Ascendant and Midheaven degrees correspond to 18 July 1552 OS, 6:54:34 p.m. Local Apparent Time in Vienna. Most of my subsequent comments on the directions are based on this date and time. When agreement with Kepler's results could not be obtained with this date and time, I used the M.C. based on Kepler's notes in *Pulkovo XXII, 303v* (see

1. Later in this analysis (GW 21, 2.2, p. 432; OO 8, p. 342; see translation below, p. 97), Kepler mentions  $23^{\circ}$  Capricorn as being the 'greatest degree' (*altissimus gradus*) in Rudolf's nativity, and it can only be the Ascendant to which he refers, since Rudolf has nothing else in Capricorn.

2. These Ascendant and Midheaven positions are close to the angles Kepler used in chart comparisons with Rudolf's brothers,<sup>19</sup> namely  $24^{\circ}$  Capricorn for the Ascendant and  $25^{\circ}$  Scorpio for the Midheaven (see **Table 1**).

3. In Kepler's preliminary calculations on Rudolf's directions (see Pulkovo XXII, 303v, transcribed in GW 21, 2.2, p. 426) he highlights two positions for an adjusted Midheaven: either with a Right Ascension of 231.15, which equates to a longitude of  $23^{\circ}38'$  Scorpio by modern calculation, or a Right Ascension of 232.15, which equates to a longitude of  $24^{\circ}38'$  Scorpio by modern calculation.<sup>20</sup>

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point 3 here and note 19; also the **Panel** at the end of this section, pp. 102-103):  $24^{\circ}38'$  Scorpio (corresponding to 18 July 1552 OS, 6:58:39 LAT in Vienna), and this is stated in the notes.

<sup>19</sup> GW 21, 2.2, pp. 394-396, 'Horoskopvergleich Rudolfs II mit seinen Brüdern (Nr. 1108-1111)'.

<sup>20</sup> For these calculations, see the **Panel** at the end of this section. The sheet of mathematical and astrological notes which contains this calculation is difficult to follow (clearly Kepler was experimenting with different positions), but the section which calculates a new MC by right ascension seems to take into account his father Maximilian's various coronations in 1562, 1563 and 1564 in order to rectify Rudolf's angles. The RAMCs of 232.15 and 231.15 are bracketed, and there is a note by the RAMC of 231.15 which says 'Keep this' (*Retine hoc*).

**Table 1. Rudolf II's house cusps and planetary positions in Kepler's comparison of Rudolf's chart with his brothers' vs. extant chart diagrams**

<b>Chart positions for Rudolf II in the comparisons (Nos. 1108-1111 in <i>GW</i> 21, 2.2, pp. 394-396)</b>	<b>Chart positions for Rudolf II in extant chart diagrams (No. 547/No. 126 in <i>GW</i> 21, 2.2, pp. 250, 65)</b>
<i>Sun</i> 5° Leo	<i>Sun</i> 5° Leo; 4°55' Leo <sup>21</sup> / 5°9' Leo
<i>Moon</i> 2° Cancer	<i>Moon</i> 4°52' Cancer <sup>22</sup> / 2°0' Cancer
<i>Mercury</i> 18° Cancer	<i>Mercury</i> 20° Cancer st. dir.; 15°42' Cancer <sup>23</sup> / 20°18' Cancer
<i>Venus</i> 16° Cancer	<i>Venus</i> 15° Cancer / 15°17' Cancer
<i>Mars</i> 15° Gemini	<i>Mars</i> 15° Gemini / 14°36' Gemini
<i>Jupiter</i> 13° Leo	<i>Jupiter</i> 12° Leo / 11°53' Leo
<i>Saturn</i> 3° Pisces	<i>Saturn</i> 3° Pisces Retr. / 3°9' Pisces Retr.
<i>North Node</i> 21° Leo	<i>North Node</i> 18°44' Leo / 18°46' Leo
<i>Part of Fortune</i> 21° Sagittarius	<i>Part of Fortune</i> 8° Sagittarius / 17°51' Sagittarius
<i>Ascendant</i> 24° Capricorn	<i>Ascendant</i> 19° Capricorn / 19° Capricorn
<i>Midheaven</i> 25° Scorpio	<i>Midheaven</i> 20° Scorpio / 20° Scorpio

*In his analysis of Rudolf's directions, Kepler more or less consistently directs the Sun and Moon by solar arc (this is the same as the secondary progressed arc of the Sun). For the Midheaven, his normal practice is to*

<sup>21</sup> In margin.

<sup>22</sup> In margin.

<sup>23</sup> In margin.

*calculate it by solar arc in right ascension and then convert to longitude (there is one instance where I think he used a Midheaven directed by solar arc; see note 54). For the Ascendant, he uses oblique ascension based on the right ascension of the Midheaven (RAMC), converted to longitude. (These techniques are seen in his preliminary notes on Rudolf's directions. We reproduce part of these notes in the **Panel** at the end of this section.) For more on his statements regarding right ascension, oblique ascension and the equator, see 'On Directions' in **Part III.1** in this volume.*

And so on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of life, which was 25 July 1552, the Sun came to Jupiter in real motion, not fictitious.<sup>24</sup> This day signified the 8<sup>th</sup> year of life, namely the year 1559. Emperor Charles V [*Pulkovo XXII, 309v*] died in 1558 and resigned his reign shortly before; it was transferred to Ferdinand,<sup>25</sup> your uncle, only one year before this direction. Here, in your uncle and your father, is your first advance toward the Empire. For the natiivities of blood relatives harmonise with each other, and before that time the minds of men were inclined towards Philip,<sup>26</sup> Charles's remaining son.

In the year[s] 1561, 1562<sup>27</sup> [and] 1563 there were three very strong directions: the Sun to a sextile with Mars [*i.e. directed (by solar arc) Sun to natal Mars*],<sup>28</sup> the Sun to the setting place,<sup>29</sup> the Midheaven to a trine

<sup>24</sup> On the 25<sup>th</sup> of July, the Sun at midnight was at 11°14' Leo. During the day it would have reached 12° Leo, where natal Jupiter is located. This is a solar arc (and also the secondary progression of the Sun).

<sup>25</sup> Ferdinand I (10 March 1503 – 25 July 1564).

<sup>26</sup> Philip II of Spain (21 May 1527 – 13 September 1598).

<sup>27</sup> '1561, 1562, <156>3' in *GW*; only '1562' in *OO*. I wonder if each of the three directions Kepler mentions should not be taken consecutively for each year; i.e. the Sun to sextile Mars in 1561, the Sun to the Descendant in 1562 and the Midheaven to trine the Sun in 1563.

<sup>28</sup> By modern calculation the directed Sun will come to a sextile with natal Mars in December of 1561.

<sup>29</sup> I.e., the seventh house. It is the Descendant which is being directed, not the Sun here. The directed Ascendant, found based on the directed Midheaven (by solar arc in right ascension), is at 5°27' Aquarius on 1 January 1562, so the Descendant conjuncts the natal Sun.

with the Sun.<sup>30</sup> It is the case that your health was tested, but in the meantime there was a second and surer step toward the Empire, in [the form of] your father Maximilian, who in 1562 received the kingdoms of the Romans and the Hungarians, and in 1563 the kingdom of Bohemia, and in this way confirmed [them] for you, the first-born:<sup>31</sup> 3 kingdoms for 3 directions.

In the year 1564 a platic great conjunction occurred around 5° Leo, the place of your Sun.<sup>32</sup> Your uncle Ferdinand died, your father Maximilian succeeded to a solid rule, whose heir to a solid rule you were made. Not much later, the Moon came to Venus and Jupiter came to the setting place in a sextile with Mars.<sup>33</sup> These are good directions. The Ascendant to the North Node [I ], explained well by Tycho as a feverish disposition and a journey in the year 1571.<sup>34</sup>

*Here it will be helpful to insert a paragraph of preliminary notes written by Kepler for analysing Rudolf's nativity. It is found in Pulkovo XXI, 303r, GW 21, 2.2, p. 425:*

In the year 1571 when the journey to Spain was made in the month of May, he [*i.e. Rudolf*] experienced a fever-producing distemper for several days in a row. At the end of the year <15>80 and the beginning of the year <15>81 he was oppressed by a most dangerous kind of slow and lengthy illness. By the

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<sup>30</sup> Using calculations based on the 23°38' Scorpio MC, between July 1562 and July 1564 the Midheaven, directed by solar arc in right ascension (Kepler's usual method), moved from 3°55' Sagittarius to 4°49' Sagittarius, approaching but not reaching an exact trine with Rudolf's natal Sun. Using a 24°38' Scorpio MC, the MC reaches 5° Sagittarius in September 1563.

<sup>31</sup> Rudolf was the third child, but first surviving male (his elder sister was Anna, who married Philip II, and his elder brother Ferdinand died just before Rudolf's birth).

<sup>32</sup> The conjunction never became exact, which is why Kepler refers to it as 'platic'.

<sup>33</sup> In this chart, the solar-arc directed Moon came to conjoin natal Venus in January 1565. The directed Descendant came to natal Jupiter and sextile (natal) Mars, around August of 1566.

<sup>34</sup> On 1 January 1571, the directed Ascendant came to *oppose* the natal North Node and conjoin the natal South Node.

completion of his 23<sup>rd</sup> year he was chosen as king of the Romans. He was crowned as king of Hungary on 25 September 1572, of Bohemia on 22 September 1575, of the Romans on 1 November 1575.

*(Now continuing with the previous text)*

[*GW 21, 2.2., p. 431*] [*Pulkovo XXII, 310r*] The most learned and industrious author of a thick little book (the most reverend master Pistorius),<sup>35</sup> on page 152 of his book wishes to persuade [us of] another figure (*thema*) from this [time], which he thinks is in accord with [these events], the trine of Jupiter coming to the Midheaven in 1575, for the 3 kingdoms. But his evidence is not well argued. For the directions reveal themselves in a broad way; they do not aim at the years and months themselves, nor can they bring sublunar causes to order. The coronation is a mere celebration; preparations must first precede it. A kingdom is based on the winning over of minds; it is only announced by the coronation. When, therefore, Tycho Brahe corrected the rising place by means of the disease,<sup>36</sup> and the directions of the Midheaven accord beautifully with it, more than even Tycho himself saw, I therefore explain otherwise, and according to a natural explanation, this triangle of Jupiter to the Midheaven.

In the year 1572 a trine of Jupiter came to the Midheaven,<sup>37</sup> when you were declared King of Hungary, and in the assemblies of Speyer your father at any rate laid the foundations for leaving the Kingdom of Germany to you. This kingdom was the access to subsequent ones.

[*Pulkovo XXII, 310v*] In 1574 and 1575 the opposition of Mars came to the M.C.<sup>38</sup> Since, then, Mars is commonly held by popular astrologers as

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<sup>35</sup> *OO* gives, in parentheses, ‘the most reverend master Pistorius’; a note in *GW* (p. 431, n. 1) states that ‘the most learned and industrious author of a thick little book’ is corrected from ‘the most reverend master Pistorius’. Johann Pistorius (1546-1608) was a doctor, historian and theologian (Kepler cast his birthchart, which can be found in *GW 21, 2.2, No. 1076, p. 382.*)

<sup>36</sup> That is, rectified the chart, aligning the degree of the Ascendant to accord with the illness Rudolf had in 1571 (as mentioned in the previous paragraph).

<sup>37</sup> Kepler is directing the M.C., not Jupiter; in September 1572, the directed Midheaven by solar arc in right ascension is 12° Sagittarius. Rudolf was crowned king of Hungary on 25 September 1572.

<sup>38</sup> Directing the M.C. to natal Mars (see the **Panel** at the end of this section.)

a malefic, and the opposition as an unlucky aspect, perhaps, therefore, it happened that neither Tycho nor Master Pistorius dared to interpret this direction on behalf of the kingdoms of Germany and Bohemia. But it seems to me that it fits perfectly. For what can be more beautiful in this nativity than Mars and Jupiter in a friendly configuration?<sup>39</sup> If that is so, one will not be favourable and the other adverse; Mars will not destroy in 1575 what Jupiter had built up in 1572. For absolutely all the planets have their own good meanings, and the slower ones the greatest.

Nevertheless it is wonderful, and it is to be ascribed to the kindness of the best and highest God that thus far this governing has been so quiet.

However, in 1575 Jupiter transited through Cancer, the sign of the west,<sup>40</sup> and in 1576 through Leo, the sign of the Sun. And so in 1576, with your father's death, genuine rule followed.

In 1580 and 1581 two most horrible directions coincided: of the Sun to oppose Saturn [S♄] and of the Ascendant to the body of Saturn [♄] itself.<sup>41</sup> Here [your] nature showed her vigour, [OO 8, p. 341] because she was not beaten and defeated. In 1592 and 1593 there was a dangerous direction of the Sun [☉] to a square with Mars [♂], but this was in agreement with the meaning of command (*imperium*).<sup>42</sup> At the same time the great opposition [S] of Saturn [♄] and Jupiter [♃] took place across the rising and setting places [*Ascendant-Descendant*].<sup>43</sup> For in September

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<sup>39</sup> They are in sextile.

<sup>40</sup> Cancer is the sign on the Descendant, which represents the western side of the chart.

<sup>41</sup> The directed Sun in early Virgo will oppose, first, directed Saturn (it is retrograde natally, so will move backward by direction) and then natal Saturn in 1580 and 1581; the directed Ascendant (found from the Midheaven directed by solar arc in right ascension) will conjunct natal Saturn 'by body', though by January 1580 it is already almost at 4° Pisces. These are the directions Kepler used to experiment with the position of the natal Ascendant (see *GW* 21, 2.2, p. 425 [*Pulkovo XXII, 303v*]; see translation in the **Panel** following this section, pp. 102-103.

<sup>42</sup> In late 1592 and 1593, the directed Sun squares natal Mars.

<sup>43</sup> Now Kepler turns to transiting planets affecting Rudolf's natal chart. The opposition was exact in April of 1593 at 20° Cancer-Capricorn, across Rudolf's Ascendant-Descendant axis.

of 1592 and January of 1593, Saturn [♄] alone was in the setting place.<sup>44</sup> This signified great disputes, a serious war and treacheries. In April Mars [♂] approached<sup>45</sup> and the dangers increased. In May Saturn [♄] was also in the setting place [*Descendant*], and Jupiter [♃] in the rising place. Here fortunate and unfortunate events collided. In September Saturn was bearing down on the Sun; in December Jupiter [♃] rising gave benefits (*fortunavit*).

Then in January 1594 the third opposition [*of Jupiter and Saturn*] was in the place of the Sun, while the Sun was rising;<sup>46</sup> this could not point to you more clearly. In May Saturn [♄], and in July also Mars [♂], sprang onto the Sun [*by transit*]. So because you avoided the gravest dangers with the help of the best and highest God, you showed your affinity to the fiery trigon. At the same time, however, there were good directions: the Moon to Jupiter [♃ *ady*] and a sextile with Mars [♂],<sup>47</sup> of the Midheaven to opposition with the Moon [MC *ad* S♄] and sextile Saturn [♄],<sup>48</sup> and up to this time the Ascendant to the trine of the Sun, the sextile of Mars and others.<sup>49</sup>

In 1599 Mars [♂] moved through Cancer [♋] and Leo [♌] in slow motion; not before June 1600 did he depart from Leo [♌], which hurt [your] health, while the fiery sextile of Mars [♂] in the Ascendant by

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<sup>44</sup> Transiting Jupiter had not reached the degree of the Ascendant.

<sup>45</sup> Transiting Mars was in Cancer approaching the degree of transiting Jupiter.

<sup>46</sup> The opposition, which happened (for Saturn) on Rudolf's Sun, occurred around sunrise.

<sup>47</sup> The solar arc-directed Moon in June 1594 is conjunct natal Jupiter, and thus sextiles natal Mars (within orb).

<sup>48</sup> Using a natal M.C. of 24°38' Scorpio, the directed M.C. comes to 1°21' Capricorn in June 1594, opposing the natal Moon and approaching an exact sextile to natal Saturn. Using a natal M.C. of 23°38' Scorpio, the directed M.C. comes to 0° Capricorn in June 1594; in either case it will be within orb of aspect to an opposition to the natal Moon and sextile to natal Saturn.

<sup>49</sup> As the directed Ascendant moves through Aries, it will first trine the natal Sun and then sextile natal Mars.

direction was helping [the poor health].<sup>50</sup> Later, the Sun [☉] was afflicted by the square of Saturn [♄] in 1600 and 1601.<sup>51</sup> Hence the manifold difficulties.

In this year of 1602, in November [Saturn]<sup>52</sup> transited the Midheaven, signifying damage, which would have been more horrible if it were not for the singular vigour of this nativity.

And so, to finish up this portion, up to this point the agreement of this nativity with events has been so beautiful that there is no doubt that the time for the Ascendant was properly established by Master Tycho.<sup>53</sup>

[GW 21, 2.2., p. 432]

#### About the coming year

A good many directions will go by, both good and bad. The one coming next, which will arrive in the next three years, is the direction of the Midheaven [MC] to the opposition of Venus [r ],<sup>54</sup> which pertains to honour, cheerfulness and the amusements of beautiful things, and profit from women.

In the present, then, there is nothing great in any respect [for the directions]. So the entire governing of the nativity depends on the revolutions and the transits.

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<sup>50</sup> Using a natal M.C. of 24°38' Scorpio, in June 1600 the directed Ascendant (found from the M.C. by solar arc in right ascension) comes to 14°28' Aries, in sextile with natal Mars. Using a natal M.C. of 23°38' Scorpio, in June 1600 the directed Ascendant only reaches 12°20' Aries.

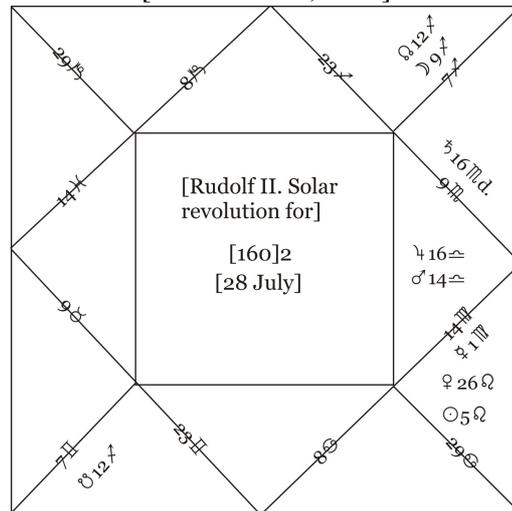
<sup>51</sup> Transiting Saturn was in early Scorpio in late 1600 and in 1601.

<sup>52</sup> In November of 1602, Saturn moved through both of Kepler's possible rectified positions of the Midheaven, 23° and 24° Scorpio.

<sup>53</sup> As Kepler said in his 1602 letter to Rudolf, he approved of Tycho's rectification of the emperor's chart (see **Part I.2.2**, p. 106, in this volume).

<sup>54</sup> This is a solar arc direction of the Midheaven (i.e., the solar arc in longitude is added to the natal MC position). This does not conform with Kepler's usual method of using solar arc only for directing the Sun and the Moon, but it was the only way I could reproduce Kepler's results.

**Figure 3. Drawing created from positions for Rudolf II's Solar Revolution for 1602, based on transcription in *GW*, 21, 2.2, p. 428<sup>55</sup> [Pulkovo XXII, 305r]**



The revolution of the past year is on 28 July 1602, and next year on 28 July 1603. Both are good on their own and signify something worthy of an Emperor, as much as revolutions can be. For in both of them Mars [♂] and Jupiter [♃] are configured, as in the radix chart;<sup>56</sup> in both the Moon [♁] is in trine with the Sun [☉]; in both Venus [♀] and Mercury [☿] are connected, as in the radix.<sup>57</sup> Yet Saturn [♄] in the Midheaven [MC] [*by transit*] threatens harm in the earlier part of the year, but the outcome will be better in the other part, for in the other revolution Saturn [♄] and Jupiter [♃] come to the square places [*loca quadrata*]<sup>58</sup> and

<sup>55</sup> I have not seen the actual manuscript, so cannot verify these positions. Bracketed text is not in original.

<sup>56</sup> Mars and Jupiter are in sextile in the radix; in 1602 they are conjunct, and in 1603 in trine.

<sup>57</sup> In the radix, Venus and Mercury are conjunct; in 1602 they are also conjunct, and in 1603 they are in sextile.

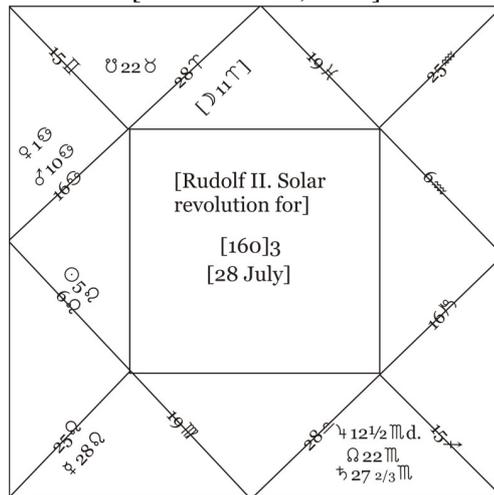
<sup>58</sup> I think this means that Jupiter and Saturn both in Scorpio square (by sign) to the Sun in Leo.

Mars [♂] accompanies the Sun [☉].<sup>59</sup> For the king of the Turks, however, Saturn [♄] is in square to the Sun [☉]. And so I hope for a victory, and have no hope for peace. Though if disturbances in the empire impose the necessity for peace, these can certainly be feared because of earthquakes, the eclipse and the great conjunction – even though politicians will rightly discuss whether the domestic disturbances impel peace abroad or follow it. Indeed, at one time inactivity from the enemy, now too much, and long-lasting taxations for the purpose of war and other things furnish opportunities for disturbances which do not have such clear indications (*significatio*) in the sky. The sky is nothing except tinder; terrestrial circumstances form different events such as that region's peace or war.

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<sup>59</sup> This appears to be a reference to spear-bearing, as Mars in Cancer rises ahead of the Sun in Leo in the 1603 Solar Return. The same verb, *stipo*, is used as in the earlier reference to spear-bearing in Kepler's interpretation of Rudolf's radix chart. In traditional spear-bearing, however, only planets of the same sect will be spear-bearers; in this case, Mars is a nocturnal planet spear-bearing for the diurnal Sun.

**Figure 4. Drawing created from positions for Rudolf II's Solar Revolution for 1603, based on transcription in *GW*, 21, 2.2, p. 428<sup>60</sup> [*Pulkovo XXII*, 305r]**



Yet those domestic dangers lie rather in the year 1604, when Saturn [♄] falls in the place which in the direction signifies kingships, i.e. 15° Sagittarius [♐].<sup>61</sup> What can be said in more detail will be explained in the following journal through the transits.

#### About Health in later years

Be it that you will grant, you who have learned through many experiences to detest unfavourable prophecies, or that I, fighting with all my powers, that the sky has no power for determination, and does not exceed the [higher] rank (*ordo*) of natural causes, by which it can be modified (*derogari*) in various ways. Whereby I am in neither [*Pulkovo XXII*, 311r] way prevented, so that I will direct myself less to those things

<sup>60</sup> I have not seen the actual manuscript, so cannot verify these positions. Bracketed text is not in original. The transcription lacks a position for the Moon; modern calculation places it at 11 Aries, which fits with Kepler's interpretation of the aspects.

<sup>61</sup> Kepler means that for Rudolf, 15° Sagittarius is a sensitive degree regarding his kingships. In 1575, when he was crowned king of Bohemia on 22 September 1575, and of the Romans on 1 November 1575, the directed Midheaven at 15° Sagittarius opposed Rudolf's natal Mars at 15° Gemini. See above, pp. 90-91.

which are less pleasing, if I may perhaps be of use in my admonitions for keeping a healthy lifestyle.

In 1605. On 21 March there will be a violent cold (*catarrhus*) from the square of Jupiter and Mars, when Jupiter is turning around the Ascendant.<sup>62</sup> At the end of June<sup>63</sup> of this year the Sun and Mars enter the place of the Moon. The summer will be intemperate and perhaps there will be an earthquake. This constitution [of aspects] may attack the brain with great force. In business matters luck (*felicitas*) will intervene. In July Jupiter and Mars are opposed on the rising and setting places: that will increase the humours again and attract inflammations to the brain. The revolution then beginning falls in this aspect and totally takes up power from it.<sup>64</sup> It promises great luck in business matters. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of October an eclipse of the Sun takes place, whose peak (*medium*) is in that moment itself in which 23° Capricorn rises,<sup>65</sup> and is itself in the degree of the zodiac which was the greatest (*altissimus*) in your nativity;<sup>66</sup> however it was [also] rising in the nativity of the king of France. From the Adriatic Sea to Rhetia,<sup>67</sup> Switzerland and France there will be deep night. – O the sorrowful state of Italy, Germany and France that this eclipse signifies, because of this relationship [*Pulkovo XXII, 311v*] of the eclipse with the Emperor of the Romans and the King of France. You, however, will be the instigator (*actor*) of this tragedy, since Jupiter is turning on your rising place in square to the eclipse. If the young French heir, exposed to treachery, dies, which the direction of the Ascendant (*oriens*) to the square of Saturn confirms, it is indeed a very bad omen for France.

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<sup>62</sup> These are transits.

<sup>63</sup> Wrongly 'Julii' (July) in *OO*.

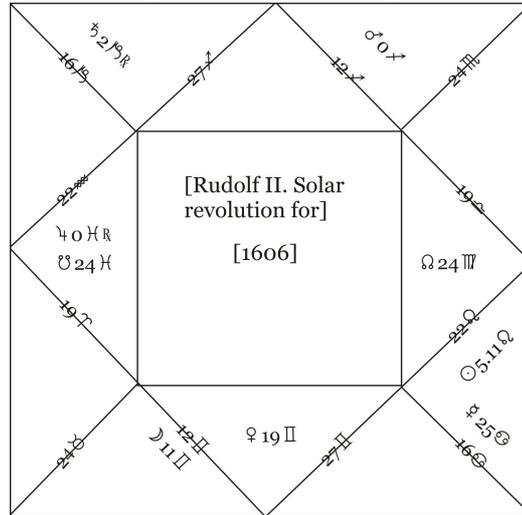
<sup>64</sup> The Solar Return for 1605 takes place on 28 July.

<sup>65</sup> The exact moment of the eclipse is at 19°13' Libra, when the 23<sup>rd</sup> degree of Capricorn is rising in Prague. This sentence implies that Kepler thinks Rudolf's Ascendant is 23° Capricorn.

<sup>66</sup> Though *altus* usually means 'high', it cannot have that connotation here, because 23° Capricorn can only refer to Rudolf's Ascendant, not his Midheaven or his zenith, the highest points in the chart. But this shows how Kepler values the Ascendant degree.

<sup>67</sup> An ancient province that today includes eastern Switzerland and western Austria.

**Figure 5. Drawing created from positions for Rudolf II's Solar Revolution for 1606, based on transcription in *GW*, 21, 2.2, p. 437<sup>68</sup> [Pulkovo XXII, 314v]**



In 1606. On 13 January, five planets act together to achieve something excellent, but they are harsher on health than in the previous year. [Transiting] Saturn in opposition to the [natal] Moon afflicts the brain and thickens the [evil] humours. [Transiting] Jupiter with Mercury in opposition to the Sun<sup>69</sup> increases the humours. Mars [in Scorpio] in square to both ignites the liver with heat; in this he is aided by the [transiting] Sun on the Ascendant.<sup>70</sup> I fear gout in the feet, or more, apoplexy: suitable remedies should be prepared, [GW 21, 2.2, p. 433] but

<sup>68</sup> I have not seen the actual manuscript, so cannot verify these positions. Bracketed text is not in original. An editorial note in *GW* states that there is no central square with data because of the way the chart was drawn, but we know that it is Rudolf's 1606 Solar Return because of a calculation of the Midheaven, labelled '1606', on the same page as the planetary and house positions.

<sup>69</sup> Transiting Jupiter and Mercury are in early Aquarius, opposing the natal Sun. (*OO* wrongly has '♃' for *GW*'s 'Mercurio'.)

<sup>70</sup> This is another clue that Kepler used a chart with a 23° Capricorn Ascendant for Rudolf; the transiting Sun on 13 January 1606 (NS) was in the 23<sup>rd</sup> degree of Capricorn.

in the meantime do not use them lest their harshness injure the brain further and your natural constitution become accustomed to them.

In the month of July, the beginning of the revolution again has the [*natal*] place of the Moon, which signifies the brain, afflicted by Saturn, and the [*revolution*] Moon herself is in opposition to Jupiter and squares Mars.<sup>71</sup> Since Mars and Jupiter are again configured, it signifies the continuation of disturbances. Saturn remains stationary there until October, and at the end of September the Sun by square, and Mars by [*Pulkovo XXII, 312r*] conjunction (*congressus*), are joined to him. And so again, also because of the time of the year, there is danger from suffocating colds and what goes along with them.

In 1607, at the beginning of May, Saturn comes very near the rising place (*ortus*), but does not reach it exactly. In July of this year Mars is joined to the Sun at the point of the revolution. Indeed it favours bravery and greatness of fame, but for health it is destructive; for it incites great heat.

In January 1608 Saturn goes onto the Ascendant, from consideration of which and along with the preceding placement (*comparatio*) I feel I can deduce much more correctly about the Hungarian fever, because those for whom the temperament of the body is clear will judge more correctly.

Also this fourth revolution, in July 1608, which has the Sun in opposition to Mars, is adverse to health. For Mars meets the place of the Sun three times, in May, August and September, in which month Saturn comes to be stationary in the Ascendant, lacking latitude. And in the following year, in February and October 1609, Saturn opposes the place of the Sun. Therefore even if there were no bad direction, nevertheless these continued adverse revolutions alone threaten [your] energy (*vis*): whereby this four-year period will be a time prone to illness. [*Pulkovo XXII, 312v*] In these circumstances, however, others are steered to directions, as they do not look down on these stronger transits which rely on a sounder fundamental in nature.

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<sup>71</sup> The revolution Moon in Gemini is actually in opposition to revolution Mars at 0° Sagittarius and in square to revolution Jupiter at 0° Pisces.

[Pulkovo XXII, 313r]

Aspects	Directions. Ptolemaic method of the author	Tycho's correction of the moment and places of the nativity, in conformity with Regiomontanus	Mixture of ancient and more recent methods which I myself follow in conformity with nature
Asc. to ☿♁	1601	1599	1598 1599
-- -- □ ♀	1601	1599	-- --
-- -- □ ♀	1602	1600	1599 1600
☉ -- F ♃	1602	1603	1641 1642 <sup>72</sup>
☉ -- F ♃	1602	1604	1642 1643 <sup>73</sup>
♃ <sup>74</sup> -- ♀	1602	1604	1614 1615
♃ <sup>75</sup> -- ♀	1602	1609	1615 1616

Here is an excellent example of the deception (*fallacia*) of directions. The author of the white book,<sup>76</sup> on page 92, has mentioned 7 directions coinciding in one year, and from these has prophesied some great [**OO 8.1, p. 343**] illness in 1601 and 1602. But by the grace of God, the event has disproved this. I admit that some of these directions are placed together in such a way that they would not have ended safely if they had coincided like this. But the author followed Ptolemy, whose method of directing Regiomontanus has already rejected before. In fact the method of the ancients, [directing] by equal degrees, which I follow wherever it is in agreement with nature, vastly disagrees with both of these. Tycho also brought out the more correct places of the planets, established the eastern

<sup>72</sup> Wrongly '1601 1602' in *OO*. The directed Sun will not trine the natal Moon until it reaches Scorpio in 1641.

<sup>73</sup> Wrongly '1602 1603' in *OO*. The directed Sun will not trine natal Saturn until 1642.

<sup>74</sup> The aspect happens when the Moon is directed by solar arc.

<sup>75</sup> The aspect happens when the Moon is directed by solar arc.

<sup>76</sup> I do not know who this is. Is it the same as the author of the 'thick little book' (i.e. Pistorius) mentioned above?

horizon (*oriens*) more exactly and measured the times themselves a little differently in his method, which comes closer to nature.<sup>77</sup>

*In the following Panel, square-bracketed numerals [1-3] correspond to commentary which appears after the Panel.*

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<sup>77</sup> Here Kepler states that he can come to more precise predictions, using directions, than others have been able to do. This is because Tycho's astronomical work with improving the calculation of planetary positions, rising times and establishing the Ascendant made the directions more accurate. Regiomontanus was also in conformity with Tycho's corrections.

**Excerpt from Kepler's Preliminary Notes on Rudolf's Directions**[GW 21, 2.2, pp. 425-426; *Pulkovo XXII*, 303v]**Investigating the direction of the Ascendant to oppose Saturn [S♄]****[1]**Ascension: Sun [opposed to] Saturn: 349.16.<sup>78</sup> 8° Pisces [8 n] rises.

An illness at the end of 1580, when he is exactly 28½ years old. The years correspond to 28½ days. But in as many days the motion of the Sun is 27.24 [degrees],

from 4.36 g	And with these the right ascension is 126.56
to <u>2. 0 h</u>	<u>154. 0</u>
27.24	27. 4

349.16

Therefore 28½ in years corresponds to  $\frac{27. 4}{322.12}$ <sup>79</sup>But with 3° Pisces [3n] 345.45 rises [*in oblique ascension*]<sup>80</sup> which clearly coincides with 28½. All the same, Tycho clearly rightly made a determination of 322. If the trine of Jupiter is for Hungary, the opposition of Mars is for the rest.

R.A.[M.C.] for trine of Jupiter [Fy ] 251

age 20Tycho's oblique ascension<sup>81</sup> 322 The difference is only 1 [degree].**[2]**

We may not clearly concede Saturn for the illness nor clearly Mars for empire, but the direction of Saturn may be at the end of &lt;15&gt;81, of Mars at the beginning of &lt;15&gt;75

<sup>78</sup> GW transcribes 'A: ☉ ♄ 349.16'. It is possible that 'A' is for 'Ascendant' rather than 'Ascension'. What Kepler is doing is trying to find a rectified natal Ascendant based on the directed Sun opposing natal Saturn at the end of 1580/beginning of 1581. 349.16 is the oblique ascension of the directed Ascendant on 1 January 1581, deriving from a possible natal Midheaven of 24°38' Scorpio (R.A.M.C. 232.12). The zodiacal degree corresponding to the oblique ascension of 349.16 is 8° Pisces.

<sup>79</sup> 322.12 is the oblique ascension of an Ascendant based on an R.A.M.C. of 232.12 (=24°38' Scorpio).

<sup>80</sup> Kepler experiments with another possible Ascendant, one whose direction in 1580 is to 3° Pisces. This would yield a natal Midheaven of about 21° Scorpio.

<sup>81</sup> GW transcribes: 'Tychonis a. ☉'; but I think it must be 'Tychonis a.o.' for 'Tycho's oblique ascension'.

[3]

R.A.[M.C.] for [trine] of Sun [☉] 243.15<sup>82</sup>

Father crowned King of Romans	10	☽ 13 r
Boh<emia>	13	16 ♀
Emperor	<u>12</u>	34 ☉
MC either	233.15	41 y
	or 232.15 }	
	or 231.15 }	Keep this

So that the opposition of the Sun [☉] may come to the Ascendant at age 9

[1] Kepler is trying to rectify the Ascendant retroactively, based on Rudolf's disease at age 28½. 349.16 is the oblique ascension of the Ascendant in December 1580/January 1581, when Rudolf was 28½. The motion of the Sun through 28½ days is 27.24 (the solar arc in longitude degrees). 126.56 is the right ascension for 4°36' Leo. 154.0 is the right ascension for 2° Virgo, so 27.4 is the solar arc in right ascension. Therefore the figure of 322.12 is the suggested oblique ascension of the natal Ascendant based on a R.A.M.C. of 232.12 (= 24°38' Scorpio in longitude, the suggested natal Midheaven).

Kepler's experimentation with another possible Ascendant, which directs to 3° Pisces, brings the oblique ascension of the Ascendant at 28½ days to 345.45. But Kepler rejects this idea because he thinks Tycho was 'clearly right' to propose an oblique ascension of 322. The final figure of 322.12 results in Kepler's rectified Midheaven of 24°38' Scorpio.

(The oblique ascension of the Ascendant is found by adding 90° to the R.A.M.C.)

[2] Kepler's reference to 'Saturn for the illness' means the opposition of Saturn and the Sun by direction at the end of 1581; 'Mars for empire' means the direction of the Midheaven to oppose natal Mars in 1575.

[3] Next, Kepler experiments with the position of the Midheaven, because the position of the Midheaven will determine the Ascendant. His calculations deal with directions concerning the advancements of Rudolf's father which, Kepler believes, contribute to Rudolf's eventual

<sup>82</sup> I think, even though the note is very opaque, that this is the R.A.M.C. necessary for the directed Midheaven, at 5°11' Sagittarius, to trine Rudolf's natal Sun (a R.A.M.C. of 243.15 = 5°11' Sagittarius in longitude). 5°11' Leo is the position given for the natal Sun on the previous page of calculations.

*succession. Therefore they can be used to rectify Rudolf's natal Midheaven which represents his 'career' as Emperor.*

*The figure 243.15 is the right ascension for the directed Midheaven (at about 5° Sagittarius in longitude) to trine Rudolf's natal Sun. The numbers 10, 11 and 12 are the ages Rudolf was when his father received his different advancements. Each of these ages is subtracted from 243.15 to give a possible R.A.M.C., which will produce a different Midheaven by longitude. 232.15 yields a longitude of 24°38' Scorpio; 231.15, which Kepler has marked 'keep this', yields a longitude of 23°38' Scorpio. The comment 'So that the opposition of the Sun may come to the Ascendant at age 9½' refers to 'keep this', and means that if the Midheaven = 23 38' Scorpio, at age 9½ (January 1581), the directed Ascendant will be 5° Aquarius, opposing Rudolf's natal Sun at 5° Leo.*

*The column on the right shows the Moon aspecting planets by solar arc at Rudolf's ages of 13, 16, 34 and 41.*