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Translations of Kepler's Astrological Writings

Part III, Section 2. David Fabricius and Kepler on Astrological Theory and Doctrine, 1602

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

This section contains portions of letters between Kepler and Fabricius which concern astrological theory. As not all parts of the letters are relevant to this topic, we excerpt only those parts which pertain to it, following Frisch's lead in the Opera Omnia. This correspondence took place in the latter part of 1602.

Taken from Opera Omnia 1, pp. 313-320, 322-323 (excerpts of the letters of Kepler in Prague to Fabricius in Esens on 2 December 1602 and Fabricius in Resterhaave to Kepler in Prague on 1-5 August 1602); Gesammelte Werke 14, pp. 317-37 (Kepler, 2 December 1602); and GW 14, pp. 246-255 (Fabricius, 1-5 August 1602; 'De astrologicis rebus' on pp. 247-251; the whole letter is contained on pp. 239-256)

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

[OO 1, p. 313; GW 14, p. 318]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 38r*] On account of Urania I also nourish my private concern for you, my Fabricius, which you strengthen so much the more as I see with how much diligence you set out your questions.

[OO 1, p. 313; GW 14, p. 246]

Cornelia Linde (trans.) and Dorian Greenbaum (ed., trans. and annotated), 'David Fabricius and Kepler on Astrological Theory and Doctrine, 1602', *Culture and Cosmos*, Vol. 14 no 1 and 2, Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter 2010 pp. 271-295.

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FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 13v*] /3./ It is asked whether the celestial signs, or the magnitude of the 12 signs, has to be established rather in respect to mean or true motion. Just as the whole year is divided into 12 equal parts, the /whole/ sky should also have to be divided into 12 parts, which are called signs. If the sky is divided into equal parts, then it is necessary that this must be made due to mean motion and not apparent motion, which sometimes is slower in an equal space of time, and therefore makes longer signs, and other times is faster and therefore makes shorter signs.¹ Do not think this a pointless (*vana*) question.

[*OO 1, pp. 313-314; GW 14, pp. 322-323*]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 40v*] /7./ You say that you are not asking a pointless question about the division (*distributio*)² of the heavenly signs. Let's consider its uses. If it is evident that it [*i.e. the division*] must be equal on account of numeration, [*GW 14, p. 323*] without any regard to movement but only the division of beautiful, articulated, harmonious numbers, as it were, within the boundaries of a path; if [it is] on account of these rulerships and the limits of the planetary jurisdictions, [then] do as you please. I consider this whole business to be pointless, if we cannot calculate how far away something is from the fixed stars and the altitude of the orbits. Why bother? Every year, the Sun would describe new tables for the planets, and new limits; would not the Moon also do the same thing? And the other planets? If, on account of the aspects, we again require that the division be equal, then they also have to be counted unequally in these unequal ones, so that from 21 Gemini to 21 Leo will not be a sextile, but maybe from 21 Gemini to 22 Leo will be.³ Finally if, on account of the directions, here I certainly feel I am with you in my manner of directing. For the arcs of the ecliptic, begun by the significators,⁴ are divided into equal spaces by the diurnal motions of the Sun for that month in which

¹ The rising times of signs, which are dependent on latitude, are not uniform, thus creating signs of long and short ascension.

² *Distributio* can mean 'division' or 'apportionment'. Though we always translate it 'division' for consistency, its meaning of 'apportionment' should be kept in mind as well.

³ Depending on the sign, what might be a sextile *in zodiaco* would not be a sextile *in mundo*.

⁴ I.e., the planets and points providing the beginning points for the directions.

the nativity is. But in the Ascendant and Midheaven, the equatorial arcs are divided into equal spaces in right ascensions of the diurnal [motions] of the Sun. But remember: this is directing, not dividing, the zodiac. It is fitting that the former is a variable cause, the latter a perpetual one.

/8./ What I wrote to you about astrology, take seriously; for if I remember correctly, I have shown from teachings and examples that I am not dismantling the whole [of it]. If you [can] give evidence of anything in this [business], you will gain so much greater praise than I, for how much closer astrology comes to human uses, how much more subtle it is than astronomy. But know, though at first you will have surpassed the goals of precision (ἀκριβεία) and the powers of human nature, [OO 1, p. 314] by which you will be carried further in your conviction, I will suspect you all the more of too much credulity. But, hey! [If] I have sinned, don't hit me, [for] I am here unarmed. For when you say that you will spare nobody,⁵ I have to be [Pulkovo X, 41r] careful that you do not also select me as your enemy. I believe that these new and inharmonious (*absurdus*)⁶ things also led me in meteorological matters; also, that many physical fundamentals seemed to have distant theological implications. Therefore, you would do all these things with me being not only a most impartial spectator, but also one who leads the way in some things.

The next section discusses the aphetas, the releasing points in a nativity that are signifiers for the length of life. Traditionally, the usual points considered for being the apheta are the Sun, the Moon, the Ascendant, the Midheaven and the Part of Fortune. In Medieval astrology, the apheta is equivalent to the hyleg, or giver of life. Here Kepler and Fabricius use the term 'radical moisture' in regard to sustaining human life; the hyleg must have enough radical moisture to sustain life. When they refer to 'radical moisture' and 'innate heat', they hark back to Greek ideas explained by Hippocrates, Aristotle and Galen, among others, which

⁵ Here Frisch refers to a letter from Fabricius dated 23 June 1601 (in OO 1, p. 306).

⁶ The first meaning for *absurdus* in Lewis and Short is 'out of tune', meaning inharmonious or discordant; the later connotation of 'absurd' arose from this meaning of not being in harmony as 'irrational, incongruent, absurd' (C. T. Lewis and C. Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1996), p. 13). I think that Kepler is referring to his new aspects which, by Greek rules of aspect theory, would not be harmonious. His discovery of the worth of the quintile, biquintile and sesquiquadrate came in his work on weather prediction. See also **Part III.4** and **Part I.4.1**, pp. 166-168 in this volume.

assign life-giving properties to heat and moisture (and make it possible for life to begin).

[OO 1, p. 314; GW 14, pp. 247-248]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.):⁷ [*Pulkovo X, 14r*] [*In this section Fabricius begins a new numbering series for his questions.*] /1./ You concede no *aphetas* except for radical moisture; what is true with respect to the lower and concurrent cause, I concede in part. Radical moisture is driven⁸ by innate heat, and when the proportion of both is the best, then a /naturally/ long life is presumed, if violent circumstances do not cut it short. But where, please, does that moisture and vital heat come from; where /if I may say so/ does it have its soul? /Are they not from the sky and stars, which have become the cause of lower things?/ Therefore God established two principal directors (*rectores*) /and life givers/ of radical moisture and heat: Jupiter [y] for moisture and the Sun [☉] for innate heat. These two arouse the soul,⁹ /invigorate/ and give life to those which I have called the radical naturals, and this is according to its virtue (*virtus*) and its stronger or weaker position in the nativity. Thus the two natural causes of our life come together: the corporeal and the astral. The corporeal is as if dead without the astral, in fact is brought to life from it. Do you not say that the soul is the life of the body? What, therefore, prohibits calling the Sun [☉] and Jupiter [y] the signifiers of natural life, since they signify and determine (*judicant*) the weakness or strength of the natural life? Therefore I think that for the constitution of these two, one has to judge astrologically about life. The Sun [☉] is not equally powerful in its light¹⁰ and external heat everywhere in the ecliptic and poles (*verticales*), because of the horizon. Therefore its astral power (*vis*) for directing life, for invigorating and strengthening innate heat will not be equal everywhere in the chart (*thema*). **[GW 14, p. 248]** Certainly the 4 angles are of the greatest strength, most of all the tenth house, after that the 1st house; the latter because of the first emergence [of light] and dissipation of the dark, the former because of the light and greatest heat.

⁷ This section of the letter is entitled 'On astrological matters' (*De astrologicis rebus*).

⁸ 'vehitur' in OO; 'regitur', 'is governed' in GW.

⁹ OO has 'excitant animam'; GW has 'excitant, animant'.

¹⁰ ...*lumine...aeque potens*. The wording recalls antiscia, which are called 'equipollent' or signs of equal light.

[OO 1, pp. 314-315; GW 14, pp. 323-324]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 41r*] /9./ I remember about the releasers (*aphetae*), that I looked up the name ‘releaser’, ‘to release’ (ἀφέτην, ἀφίεσθαι).¹¹ The opinion was that it is an astrological term which entraps the unreflecting, as if the astrologers, because the genuine causes of things have been thrust away, flee to these strange ones (ἀλλότρια),¹² and deduce life not from the immanence of the soul, but from the movement of the sky. I think you are not about to attack this. But nevertheless, as if attacking what I have said here, you were taught by argument that the genuine *apheta* was radical moisture, that the stars give vigour (*vigor*) to radical moisture. This I concede to you, my Fabricius, who are speaking philosophically from the same [position] as Pico,¹³ but it does little good for you in astrology. For the stars do not become *aphetae* in this way, so that they cease to animate and encourage radical moisture through themselves; rather, if this should suffice, they would awaken (*pergerent*) those things, which is why it is necessary that this whole aphetic action must be not customary (*ordinarius*) but accidental.¹⁴ They are the cause of death, as the Sun is the cause [**GW 14, p. 324**] of the eclipse of the Moon, just as you certainly oppose me already from the aforesaid philosophical foundation. For I am speaking within limits. In what follows, clearly I will advocate for myself, but in your case, with less authority.

The aphetic material, radical moisture, its formal work [coming] into matter, native heat, the stars helping these causes, and certainly (this rings splendidly in my ears) stimulating and arousing the soul: you would very

¹¹ OO has ‘ἀφεζω, ἀφίεσθαι’.

¹² All of the ‘fleeing’, ‘pushing away’ words used here are a play on words with the Greek word from which *apheta* comes, ἀφίημι, literally, ‘send away from’.

¹³ Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494); Italian humanist and Platonist, and a student of Marsilio Ficino. For astrologers, Pico’s most important work is his polemic against astrology, *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem*, Bologna, 1495. For more on Kepler’s engagement with Pico’s work, see Patrick J. Boner’s translation of Chapters 7-9 of *De stella nova*, **Part II** in this volume.

¹⁴ The astrological ability of the stars to be *aphetae* is accidental, as they are not the cause of radical moisture, but they can awaken it. For Kepler, the natural cause always trumps the astrological.

nearly have said, as I did, that the stars sing [and] the soul dances, so that this stimulus is not in the stars themselves per se, but rather in the spirit (*animus*) of a human, just as the rose, itself unaware,¹⁵ animates the child. I order you to beware of one thing, that you not confuse the astrological with the physical; as when you said that native heat is aided by the stars. It is not weakened by the /varying/ placement (*situs*) of the stars, since they do this not based on placement but, like the Sun, Moon, /Jupiter etc./ also have it from themselves. Virtue (*virtus*) emanates from the Sun onto the entire world, just as heat, just as motion. But the way they stimulate souls through certain places, persons and times comes to be by reason of their placement, which happens to them and indeed is in the spirit which is moved by those placements (but they are the aspects and mediations of heaven, etc.). Do not confuse these; for you see what follows. For if that prior virtue depends on the placement of the Sun, certainly since the Sun, with regard both to sight and to its true magnitude, [OO 1, p. 315] and to its hidden virtues, is measuring more than a hundred stars (*stella*),¹⁶ it would be altogether reasonable that the fewest or maybe even none survive for those who have the Sun in the 12th or 6th, etc.¹⁷ Nor do the weighting [among these factors] and different aids help you; for I said that the whole army of the heavens cannot be compared with one Sun because of its philosophical virtue.

Although, in fact, the same may be also imparted to the situation. You see, I am actually wary that men would [still] live as formerly, even if the sky were not plainly observed.¹⁸ Conception (*informatio*)¹⁹ and imagination are actually quite different. You do one thing, when you

¹⁵ *OO* has 'ignara ipsa'; *GW* has 'ignaro ipso'. We have chosen to use the text of *OO* here, since it seems more plausible that the rose is unaware of its effect on the child (the rose parallels the stars in the previous phrase).

¹⁶ *OO* has 'est dimidium plus centum totis', 'is only more than half of a hundred wholes', but *GW*'s 'est dimetiens plus centum stellis' makes more sense.

¹⁷ The Sun sends heat onto the world all the time, and its power to provide heat is not diminished even though it may be in a cadent house like the 12th (just after rising) and the 6th (just after setting). People with Suns in the 12th or 6th are not necessarily at a disadvantage when it comes to the ability to survive.

¹⁸ 'salvaretur' in *OO*; 'situaretur' ('were placed') in *GW*. We think 'salvaretur' is more plausible.

¹⁹ Literally, 'bringing into form'.

impregnate a woman, and she does another when she conceives your image and transfers it onto the foetus. For if for 100 years she should imagine I don't know what forms and pleasures for herself, they would all be null and void if she were without you, from whom as soon as she conceived she surely would, by no imagination for 100 other years, make a horse foetus from a human one; nevertheless imagination performs some things, but of extremely monstrous kinds. In my opinion, you have an example which in both parts is most apt.

[OO 1, p. 315; GW 14, p. 248]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 14v*] /2./ I think that no tendencies, good or bad, are to be attributed to the planets and stars, nor any other qualities except for light alone, save only that the Sun, in addition to light, also has heat, as it is both a source of light and heat, and arranged by God especially for this, as it also heats in addition to the light. I don't think that the remaining stars (*astra*) have heat /by this argument. If the remaining stars (*stellae*) also were hot and heated with their rays like the Sun, then the earth would be set on fire or surely everything would become exhausted. No such thing has happened. Therefore etc. To the second point. If they were to heat or be hot through themselves and were to be effective with this quality, then in winter, even in the greatest retreat of the Sun, there would be no cold, because what the Sun maintains with its magnitude, the remaining stars would produce by their great number, especially since many bright stars lie on our pole (*vertex*) or stand nearby. But no such thing is observed in winter; on the contrary, though clearer, it is thereby colder. Therefore the stars are not hot; moreover/ by so much less are they believed to be cold, /nor/ by so much less should one believe that some are hot [and] others cold, for thus one would impede the work of the other, /or would seem therefore to be in vain/. I desire to know what you think about this.

[OO 1, p. 315; GW 14, p. 324]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 41v*] /10./ As for the qualities of the planets, I believe I have anticipated all your questions in the Meteorology.²⁰ You should read it!

[OO 1, p. 315; GW 14, p. 248]

²⁰ Frisch adds in parentheses here: 'Fundamentals of Astrology'. See the translation of this text in J. V. Field, 'A Lutheran Astrologer: Johannes Kepler', *Archive for History of Exact Sciences* (1984), vol. 31, pp. 189-272.

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 14v*] [*Continuation of point 2.*] Just as to the stars and planets, Frischlin²¹ thus also concedes no quality to the Sun, except for light alone. He says that heat is not in the Sun but in the air, and that the rarefaction of air, made by the Sun, arouses the heat which is inborn in the air by nature. If this opinion is in agreement with truth and reason, you will easily discuss it.

Frisch's commentary (OO 1, p. 315):

(In a letter of Fabricius from 28 April 1602 Old Style, we read these things about Frischlin:²² I am sending you the definite birthchart (*genesin certam*) of Frischlin. Born 22 September 1547 at 4 o'clock; in the year [15]90, at the beginning of April, he was captured in Mayence. In the year [15]65 he was made a Master from the direction of the Midheaven to the trine of Mars [F♃]. In the year [15]78 on 3 October he made a speech to the nobles, from which came an extremely great connection of the nobles to him. This was the direction of the Midheaven to the square [□] of the Sun. In the year [15]77 he received a yearly salary from the Prince due to the direction of the Sun to the trine of Jupiter [♃ ad Fy]. In the year [15]90 on the night following 29 November he ended his life miserably in a fall; Saturn transited the place of the yearly profecion. Mocking the astrologers, he wrote somewhere: 'they are the most trifling men who tie the births of men to the stars, etc.; but his violent death confirmed those trifles.)²³

[*OO 1, p. 315; GW 14, p. 324*]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 41v*] /11./ You and Frischlin attribute heat and I don't know what [other] qualities to air; I

²¹ Philipp Nicodemus Frischlin (1547-1590), German philologist, poet and astronomer. Frisch adds regarding Frischlin's treatise: '*On the Agreement of the Astronomical Art with Heavenly Doctrine and Natural Philosophy*, 5 books, Frankfurt 1601. In Book 4, p. 237 he affirms: "Those who believe that heat and a heating power are in the Sun are ridiculous." Then: "Star differs from star in brightness, not in sensible and tactile qualities, I mean hot and cold, wet and dry, etc."'

²² See his birthchart in *GW 21, 2.2, No. 209, p. 90 (Pulkovo XXI, 466r)*.

²³ It is ironic that Fabricius himself died a violent death: after preaching a sermon in which he denounced a goose thief, the man accused hit Fabricius on the head with a shovel and killed him.

attribute cold,²⁴ that is, the absence of heat and alterability, which consists in rarity and flux or humidity. I don't know for what reason or fear the philosophers have denied that the Sun is hot; for, does it not dry out the elementary things and destroy them? But that heat is a clear, pure conservator, not [GW 14, p. 325] a destroyer; in the end it is nothing but light itself. You will certainly concede that the Sun is bright, if you want to adduce the emitted light as a proof from the light of things shining at night, from the kind of light in the eye after gazing at the Sun, from the brightness of walls. /You conclude certain things from this sublunar heat²⁵, which is the transitory image of the heat of light and, as it were, its impression in air./

[OO 1, p. 315; GW 14, p. 248]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [Pulkovo X, 14v] /3./ The inclinations do not come from the stars, but from the mixtures (*temperamenta*) of the humours or internal qualities themselves, which God placed in them at the first creation, just as he attributed its powers (*vires*) and natural inclinations to all²⁶ created things.

[OO 1, pp. 315-316; GW 14, p. 325]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [Pulkovo X, 41v-42r] /12./ I think that the inclinations are confirmed in the spirit (*animus*) itself, from analogy and a certain symmetry of the birth-star, out of which humours and temperaments are formed in the soul (*anima*). At other times they could be exchanged with their contraries.

Malice, in fact, comes from elsewhere; weakness and strength come from heaven. For a good and bad morality (*ethicum*) are not in heaven, but one that is harmonious, inharmonious,²⁷ well-proportioned (εὐρυθμόν), strong, weak, beautiful, [OO 1, p. 316] ugly (*abjectus*). But as the eye to light, the ear to sound, so the spirit is formed to these heavenly conditions (πάθη), as if its own projections (*objecta*). Nevertheless, the birth is a naked and empty form (*forma*); when the

²⁴ This is actually a Stoic, not Aristotelian, position on the quality of air. Stoics assigned only one quality to each of the four elements. They considered air to be only cold; the Aristotelians considered it to be warm and moist (like breath).

²⁵ Reading 'calore' for 'calori'.

²⁶ 'omnibus' in GW; 'aliis' in OO.

²⁷ 'ἀρμόζον' in OO; 'ἀναρμωστον' in GW. It seems that Kepler is making contrasts here, so the latter is more plausible.

spirit is poured into it, that is, when a human is born, all of it does not immediately accept the form; it is stubborn and retains many things from its imaginings, and indeed it retains things from the dispositions (*affectio*) of the mother, and blends them in the chart. Thus the chart forms and shapes the spirit, but it does not beget a new one, it does not change the whole; but it does shape the baby through this, with the mother being thus disposed, while she carries the foetus. Then the disposition (*institutio*) follows, which brings a new alteration to both of the former, yet it can take neither away, but finally becomes a proper mixture (*contemperatio*). [*Pulkovo X, 42r*] The mother, the sky and the teacher alter a human via the liver, heart and brain, before, during and after birth, in time and in a moment of time.²⁸

[OO 1, p. 316; GW 14, p. 248]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 14v*] /4./ By means of their astral power, planets arouse, invigorate, bring to life and, as it were, animate the humours and qualities appropriated to them by God, or under their dominion.

[OO 1, p. 316; GW 14, p. 325]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 42r*] /13./ Even if I do not doubt that Mars was made red so that he could frighten by virtue of his condition, and so the stars have in themselves the origin (*principium*) of their activity, nevertheless a most potent power (*vis*) in nativities exists in the spirit, which in hidden agreement considers (just as rustic ears understand the skilful joining of a tune in notes) Mars as redness, Saturn as paleness, etc., and forms an impression for itself according to the position of these [in the nativities]: so that the hand suffers nothing from the brightness of the Sun, but the eye does.

[OO 1, p. 316; GW 14, pp. 248-249]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 15r*] /5./ You just about totally reject astrological profections, because their movement does not have a real basis. Rather, yearly directions do not have a real [**GW 14, p. 249**] basis, if not the beginning of movement itself and the cause of movement. Indeed there is a certain flowing (*fluxus*) of astral virtue springing from a first cause as if from its spring. And as the movement is continuous, so the flowing of virtue is continuous, /even if it is not always at the same time and in the same proportion, because the

²⁸ Similar thoughts are expressed in Kepler's *Tertius Interveniens*, Thesis 65.

first place and the radix imprints the greatest possible power (*vis*) on the newborn, the place being effectual either in nothing or too little by this reason, namely, that also the flowing of virtue in astrological matters is not set in motion with the planet, with respect to this and that principle, but respects the principle itself and is moved by reason of it. And it is as if the power of the radix is severed or shared. Also, if the flowing of astral virtue were always to occur with the movement of a planet, then all places would affect us, which however does not happen. But a planet about to transit, either by profection or its direction, arouses its power, which is showered once more on the radix places in principle. Therefore by reason of some particular principle, because at some time or other the movement had a real foundation or planet moving (for thus I understand your words),/ the astral virtue imposed on the radix is moved by its own motion and as if separated from /its/ planet /now/, just as a magnet imparts its power to iron separately, and does not draw the power back with it, but leaves it as if it were detached from the iron. As indeed the movements of the planets are manifold, thus the movement of the astral virtue of the planets is accomplished through the manifold movements of directions and profections, both the yearly, and the monthly and daily. If you have any objections to this, I would like you to express them clearly, and do not instead make the matter obscure rather than clear through too many subtleties. /For the things which are entangled by philosophers in too many subtleties outside the matter expose the weakness of the argument. Moreover, the matters true and in agreement with reason (*ratio*) are easily demonstrated and explained./ I have always put effort into explaining /the good,/ true and rational matters most simply, /and so establish a greater faith in them/. However, my Kepler, please do not take this wrongly, but in fact I am only proposing to your friendly mind (*animus*) not to get caught up too much in these subtleties, because the simplicity of our intellect (*ingenium*) does not grasp them /and it may occasionally render your arguments suspect/.

[OO 1, p. 316; GW 14, pp. 325-326]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 42r*] /14./ Sweat, sweat over profections and directions, for I also sweated over them. The nativity has its power (*vis*) from placement (*situs*), and it is perpetual, because the impression is permanent. The transit and revolution²⁹ have their power from real movement to the places of the nativity; I have

²⁹ E.g., the solar return, a chart cast for the moment each year when the Sun returns to its natal position.

bequeathed what services they do from the accordance with their foundations.³⁰ The directions have power as though from [real] movement; and as a matter of fact, any such movement, as the *aphetae* are directed, is both real and truly happens, beginning immediately after the moment of birth. Yet there is a dissimilarity in it from the start, because the effect is not joined to movement and cause by reason of time, but separates from it and multiplies the times proportionally, again by means of a proportion which is found in nature and is proper to this movement; certainly that is the way I direct, with a day to a year, and [GW 14, p. 326] whatever time after birth multiplied by 365 indefinitely. A profection is neither a placement nor a movement /having an effect in the present, nor a movement/ having an effect in the future, of which, in the nature of things, there is nothing either similar or proportional.³¹

In what follows you pass from a defence to an attack of my directions for the reason that I am obscure about them. I think I am already being clearer here. /But/ how is it pertinent that you want to hold onto an obscure matter, and one [that is] not [even] new, but one which we have both discussed before? You want, as it were, to hold onto a paradox (*παράδοξον*), rather than for it to be proven more obscure, and you will not allow anything whatsoever to be said, even though nothing better can be said. Help us to speak clearly, rather than to conceal these things.

Nevertheless, this is clear enough: in all things which come from a divine origin, there is some [OO 1, p. 317] multiplication of the same into any likeness of itself in that measure which it uses [as] the measure of the essence. The image of it is a power which is in the hand, is left in the stone and bears it [*the power*] up, and becomes an impression due to matter and time, because each of these is required for the essence of movement. The image of light flows out from light because of the place alone, because light lacks matter and time. Therefore also the image of this time which was nearest after birth flows out, is prolonged [*elongatur*]

³⁰ Their effects depend on their relationship with the natal planetary positions.

³¹ Because the technique of profections is not based on a natural phenomenon like movement through the sky, even symbolic movement through the sky which coordinates to time. Profections advance the houses and planets of the birthchart by one sign per year (this can also be broken down into monthly and daily profections). So if one is born with Virgo rising, at age 1 the profected Ascendant will be Libra, and so on. The usual profected points in ancient astrology were the Ascendant, Midheaven, Sun, Moon and Part of Fortune, although theoretically any planet or point could be profected.

from that time in the proportion of those times, and is prolonged in space by reason of time, because its original, or foundation, [*Pulkovo X, 42v*] and its essence, is time. So the thirtieth day with its preceding [days] is extended (*prorogatur*) onto 30 years, and whatever was in the sky on the thirtieth day, makes an effect on a human in the thirtieth year, in the same manner as if it were then exactly existing in the sky; plainly just as the heat which is in the Sun has an effect on heating on earth, just as if the Sun itself were on earth. Here acting and suffering are different due to place; there due to time. Here the intervening space (*medium*) is connected together by a ray; there by proportion, because the latter is light, the former is movement in a certain number and proportion of time.³²

[*OO 1, p. 317; GW 14, p. 249*]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 15r*] /6./ Besides the /4/ cardines of heaven, you acknowledge no other houses. I am amazed. Besides the cardinal aspects, you introduce other aspects; also surely, /for the same purpose,/ you will construct new houses /for us/. For the aspects arrange the intervals of the houses, /so that if the 10th house is the beginning, then the 1st is in square [□] to that, the 12th in sextile [♁], the second in trine [F]. By grounds of the first house the 11th and third are in sextile [♁]. If there is a certainty and any strength of aspects, why will the division of houses being supported by them not also be true, and reasonable? .../

[*OO 1, p. 317; GW 14, p. 326*]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 42v*] /15./ You are amazed that I lessen the number of houses, but increase the number of aspects. [It is] because men establish the former, nature the latter. So demonstrate the old houses to me, and I will demonstrate the new aspects to you. Give the reason for their number, prove that more or less are not possible, derive the cause, from the archetype itself of the world, from geometry, genuine in its principles, show undoubted and splendid examples of that apportionment (*distributio*) /in the nature of things./ Finally, show that it is easy to get experience, and that it does not deceive the one who easily gets it, nor that uncertainties occur in the experiencing.

I have done all these things with my aspects. It is easy for you, or whomever else, to fabricate new houses also from new aspects, because

³² See similar thoughts in *Tertius Interveniens*, Thesis 66.

by God, how few of them there are for answering all questions. You, however, demonstrate either the twelve-fold system employed by Ptolemy, or others introduced on the occasion of interrogations by the Arabs. Because you admit a rationale (*ratio*) from the aspects, I concede houses to you with this stipulation, that they are passive insofar as the planets are active (*ut sint in patiando quod planetae in agendo*). Nevertheless, I prefer to say that Saturn is in sextile to the M.C., rather than that it is in the twelfth, save that [such] a division is a memory aid. I am not fighting, /my Fabricius,/ to destroy these things, but I do resist building them up or repairing them.

[OO 1, p. 317; GW 14, pp. 249-250]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 15v*] /7./ It is asked whether a planet must be directed along with latitude to the Ascendant or the Sun, or without latitude. The matter is of great import, and in directions [**GW 14, p. 250**] it makes not a small difference. I see, rather, that directions respond without latitude, because the power (*vis*) of latitude is in the degree of longitude, and the planet by reason of longitude acquires the power (*vis*) of the zodiac, which of course exists in it.

[OO 1, p. 317; GW 14, p. 327]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 42v*] /16./ I direct the stars as they rise, to the Ascendant and the Midheaven, therefore through the latitudes. Regiomontanus inculcated this [technique].³³ When the Sun must be directed to Venus [r], and she is at 9 degrees of latitude /(do you believe this?)/, I say the direction is foolish because, when they have come closest, they are 9 degrees distant. You say I don't know what fairy story,³⁴ that a planet acquires the power of the zodiac by reason of longitude. The zodiac does not confer power on planets, but [the other way around:] these confer power on the zodiac. For the planets are [powerful] in themselves.

³³ For information on Regiomontanus and latitudes, see Claudia Kren, 'Planetary Latitudes, the Theorica Gerardi, and Regiomontanus', *Isis* (1977), vol. 68/2, pp. 194-205.

³⁴ *GW* has 'τερατεύη', *OO* has 'τερατοεις'. Neither is grammatically correct. Perhaps 'τερατεία' was meant.

[*OO* 1, p. 317; *GW* 14, p. 250]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 15v] /8. Whether/ Eclipses happening below the earth /also work. Most astrologers want to make their effects nothing for us living in the upper hemisphere. I, on the contrary, say they/ are not to be disregarded. /For if the powers of the rest of the planets existing below the earth work in nativities, and clearly they show themselves not otherwise than if they were above the earth, why not also the powers of Eclipses, which seem to be greater and more universal?/

[*OO* 1, pp. 317-318; *GW* 14, p. 327]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 42v-43r] /17./ I would suppose, at least, that eclipses below the earth must be considered in nativities; but in no other way than as a bodily conjunction. For no rationale allows considering the sudden privation of light except for the place where it was observed. Your argumentation is of no account [in going] from the powers of the planets to the powers of the eclipses. A planet is a substance, an eclipse a privation, determined by the location (*situs*) of a certain place. Therefore nothing prevents there being powers for the former. [*OO* 1, p. 318] The latter has no powers (as for example, an eclipse). And so the principle of signification consists in the imagination of the soul [43r] or sublunar souls bound to those places where the eclipsing is observed.

[*OO* 1, p. 318; *GW* 14, p. 250]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 15v] /9. Whether/ the vernal revolution has any signification /over the whole year. You do not concede this. To me, it seems [to have] the greatest [import], with the help of reason and experience./ For that entrance of the Sun [☉] at the first point of Aries [♈] is nearly a kind of nativity of the whole year, and without a doubt, at the beginning of the world the Sun possessed that dominion (*principium*) and had nearly the root of its motion. .../ I do not approve that many establish from the aspects of the entrance chart a kind of universal condition of the year, crops, /war/ etc., but I think individual places /of the chart/ are to be examined for individual times etc etc.

[*OO* 1, p. 318; *GW* 14, pp. 327-328]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 43r] /18./ In order to voice my opinion plainly in clear words: I believe the chart of the revolution of the world [is] a Sisyphean rock for tormenting the minds of astrologers, by which nothing is advanced. For even if I were to concede that the world came into existence (*extitisse*) at 0° Aries [0♈], what does

[this mean for] plague, war, /yearly produce, weather etc./? What happens to southern, to equatorial inhabitants, for whom it is summer then? Is our plague the world's plague? Or is it possible in war to aim at the throat of the world itself through humankind?³⁵ And when, I ask, did the crops of the lands on the whole globe fail universally? This year in Leuven the harvest was lost, crushed by snow and wars, but in Bohemia there was abundance. The grape harvest in the Rhineland was meagre, in the Neckar region non-existent, in Austria scanty, but plentiful and praiseworthy in neighbouring Styria. Concede that this is the earth's nativity, the places of the planets at the time of creation, [and] see what follows. Your profections will have to be set up at the place of the planets of the radix. Or, if you assume this technique (*labor*) also in the chart of a human nativity, so that you also set up profections for the revolution as for the radix, already your assessment (*ratio*) of the experience is disordered (*confusa*), because there are two series of profections, and in addition the aspects are happening at the same time. And so the business depends on the most defenseless opinion. But you think that with the Sun [☉] going into 0° Aries [0 a] in individual years, the year is newly born.³⁶ What therefore is born in that moment? When a human is born, I see what may be born. He begins to live from within himself. Before he was living through his mother. There is no such thing in annual fertility. For in many places, before there are crops, moisture already begins to be collected once more [beginning] from 0° Capricorn [0 v], and little by little enters into the watercourses, and builds itself up with [the ascent of] the Sun. I concede some things to you, but they pertain to aspects. [GW 14, p. 328] I.e., if Saturn [♄], Jupiter [♃], or Mars in Aries [♂ in a],³⁷ especially Mars [♂], will be separated slowly from the Sun [☉], and will produce a dry and summery spring. However, you yourself overthrow the permanent power of the chart, you yourself condemn the revolution, and nevertheless you have written³⁸ as if it were permanent: thus for you, the ascendant of the revolution proceeds (*proficiscitur*) to the places of the planets at the time of the entrance (you perceive the places of the entrance

³⁵ *OO* has 'per hominem'; *GW* 'per hominum latus'.

³⁶ Kepler's argument here is similarly reproduced in *Tertius Interveniens*, Thesis 39.

³⁷ *OO* has 's'.

³⁸ *OO* has 'scripsisti', *GW* has 'substituit'.

as permanent). Insofar as you also add particulars, you administer the best pepper to be sure, but that was erstwhile mouse dung:³⁹ what kind of mixture comes, therefore, from that, I pray? Much incompatibility in bringing judgement, all experience abolished and more than disordered (*confusa*), [the fact that] elsewhere you take hard what I say.

It is just as if you said that you wished to mix the true and the false, and if there is a preponderance of true you would call them [all] true, but if a preponderance of false, you would call them false.

[*OO* 1, p. 318; *GW* 14, p. 250-51]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 16r*] /10./ You think that experience in astrological matters is more disordered and accidental, than true. However I think, my /most/ learned Kepler,⁴⁰ that experience is by no means accidental, but corresponds by means of a sure reason. Just as it is seen in nativities, in which the places of the planets are known through sure⁴¹ observation, [*GW* 14, p. 251] /where a series of events and accidents corresponds exactly to a series of directions, profections and transits,/ even if we cannot always predict for sure, /before they happen,/ what will happen and what will not come into being. /The cause is that the astrologer should not only consider the stars as one cause, but also the constitution of the subject, /his disposition, and faculty disposed to receiving the influence or not/. For these two joined together through [their] combination give the effect. ...

[*OO* 1, pp. 318-319; *GW* 14, p. 328]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 43v*] /19./ In order for you to deny that experience in astrological matters is disordered, in objection you bring forward examples where you say events by a sure reason correspond to directions, profections and transits. Now

³⁹ *OO* has 'sed illud prius miscendum erit' ('but it had to be mixed in earlier'); *GW* has 'sed illud prius muscerda erat', which we have chosen as our translation, because Kepler makes a similar comparison in *Tertius Interveniens*, Thesis 101: '...dann ist der Pfeffer unter den Mäußkoth gemischt, und [die vernunfft] ist sehr blindt, das sie es nicht wol untereinander erkennen kan'. ('Then the pepper has become mixed with the mouse droppings, and reason is very blind that it cannot tell the difference.' [trans. Kenneth Negus, in *Kepler's Astrology: The Baby, the Bath Water, and the Third Man in the Middle* (Amherst, MA, 2008), p. 164].)

⁴⁰ *OO* has 'mi erudite Keplere'; *GW* has 'mi Eruditissime Keplere'.

⁴¹ 'Certiss.[imam]', 'surest', in *GW*.

immediately you have revealed yourself as a shrewmouse, as long as you count all three. I am certain that nothing in an entire life can turn out altogether by chance, that will not attach itself to this, that or the other, because these three [techniques] amass a certain multitude of causes. And nevertheless in such a multitude it suffices that you make an exception; [effects] can not always be predicted, and the reason [OO 1, p. 319] for it is this, that the sky is a unit, but disordered only so much,⁴² for which, if anything is missing from the associated causes, the effect may become lost. What to do, my Fabricius? Could I show with any better argument that experience is disordered? Know, for that reason, that I plainly agree with you in this argument.

[OO 1, p. 319; GW 14, p. 251]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 16r*] /11./ You attribute many things to transits on account of their real foundation, or [on account of] a planet itself present and stimulating; you give nothing to profections on account of the same cause. I say: a transit is of no virtue, unless some kind of profection happens at the same time.

[OO 1, p. 319; GW 14, p. 328]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 43v*] /20./ You say I attribute many things to transits, and nothing to profections because there is a real cause for the former, but an imaginary one for the latter. You continue: on the contrary, you remove the foundations from profections, without which transits are nothing. My Fabricius, I have said the cause /that you have demanded anew./ You assert the opposite by no said cause. Know this for certain: for me, Mercury never transits through my rising or setting place without my being attacked by colds (*catarrhus*) or intestinal upsets; never Mars without my being furnished with disputes, and for myself, a choleric disposition.

[OO 1, p. 319; GW 14, p. 251]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 16r*] /12./ It is asked whether the Sun transiting astrological aphetic places or the degrees of directions can bring on diseases, /as a transit of Saturn and Mars not infrequently does. And it seems that [the answer is] yes, since/ I have often noticed such. /But you say if the Sun is the *apheta*, as very

⁴² ‘quod coelum unio tantum confusa sit’ in *OO*; ‘quod caelum unica tantum confusa sit’ in *GW*. We have chosen the version in *OO*.

often [is the case], how can it bring diseases? I would hear your judgement, and your experience./

[*OO* 1, p. 319; *GW* 14, p. 328]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 43v] /21. Does a transit of the Sun bring on diseases?/ No planet is built for this. Therefore just as this comes about by accident for the rest, so also for the Sun, so that in its kind of excess, it inflicts injury by inflammation. But lest you forget the proportion, the Sun returns in a year, Saturn in 30 years. Nevertheless, experience of this is not in my power, and I don't know whether it will be.

[*OO* 1, p. 319; *GW* 14, p. 251]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 16r] /13./ I would like to know what you think about the intelligences of the stars. I think it is nonsense. /Nature or innate virtue cannot claim intelligence since they are inanimate creatures or things, even though very noble./ I /also/ feel likewise about genii, whether good or evil. If you say angels and devils, I approve and understand, otherwise, not in the least. /'Let's call a spade a spade.' This comes from the heathens,⁴³ who have experienced the protection of the angels, but they did not understand that. Therefore they thought up the genii, [and] I don't know what [other] kinds of familiars./

[*OO* 1, p. 319; *GW* 14, pp. 328-329]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 43v] /22./ Some virtue of geometry presides over the stars, fit for the globe, powerful for movement, enumerating time. If, insofar as you command, I ought to call a spade a spade, I cannot call this other than an intelligence or mind. Let me know if another name presents itself to you.⁴⁴ In the meantime this distinction remains, that they do not use ratiocination.... .

⁴³ *Scapha scapha dicatur* in Fabricius's rendition. The original phrase comes from Plutarch, *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata*, 178b: τὴν σκάφην σκάφην λέγοντας, 'those who call a trough a trough'. (In his Latin translation of Plutarch's work in 1531, Erasmus confused σκάφη, 'trough', with σκαφεῖον, spade or hoe, and translated it as *ligo*, spade or hoe. Nicolas Udall's 1542 translation of Erasmus is the origin of the phrase in English.)

⁴⁴ *GW* has 'praesentaverit'; *OO* has 'praeplacuerit', 'pleases you better'.

[**GW 14, p. 329**] [*Pulkovo X, 44r*] I'm not fighting fiercely with you about genii.⁴⁵ The matter is slippery. What I cannot attribute to lifeless things on account of a lack of reason, I cannot attribute to angels on account of their unlimited reason. The governance of a human's fortune to the prescription of the heavens; I attribute that, I say, to genii. For how do you bind the protection of the angels to the heavens?

[**OO 1, p. 319; GW 14, p. 251**]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 16r*] /14./ I reckon that the Sun has a power for giving life and invigorating; the planets in fact /have a special power, that is, [they]/ do not have all the same conditions as the Sun, but only those which are subject to their own command give life /and invigorate. Erastus,⁴⁶ in fact, attributes the same general power to all the stars (*astra*), with no difference. I long to know what you recommend.

[**OO 1, p. 319; GW 14, p. 329**]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X, 44r*] /23./ I think there is nothing on earth for which any planet is set up separately in the sky; but [I think that] so many of those have existed and [they were] such from their own origins (*principia*), and even without respect to earthly things; [I believe that] things, composed separately, do not agree with the planets, but all with all, by reason of an element diffused through them with Saturn, by reason of another [element] with Jupiter, etc. For you will find nearly all things in all things. Nevertheless [there will be] more of a certain element or quantity in one than in another.

[**OO 1, p. 319; GW 14, p. 251**]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X, 16r*] /15./ What is your opinion, I would like to know,⁴⁷ about the antiscia of the planets, /whether they have certain powers or not?/

⁴⁵ See also Kepler's discussion of genii in *Harmonices Mundi (The Harmony of the World)*, Book IV, ch. 7 (English translation in ADF, pp. 380-382).

⁴⁶ Thomas Erastus (1524-1583), Swiss physician and theologian, who also wrote on astrology.

⁴⁷ 'I would like to know' (*scire velim*) only in *OO*.

[*OO* 1, p. 319; *GW* 14, p. 329]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 44r] /24./ I acknowledge the power of antiscia⁴⁸ there where the antiscia are. By reason of primary motion, antiscia are parts of the zodiac, not by reason of the moving stars (*sidera*). Therefore in the direction of the Ascendant and Midheaven, I think their power is great, but not in the direction of the Sun [☉] and Moon [☾].⁴⁹

[*OO* 1, pp. 319-320; *GW* 14, p. 251]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 16r] /16./ It is asked⁵⁰ whether Eclipses of the Sun [☉] and Moon [☾] in fact make the general mutations of the air [*OO* 1, p. 320] and how /and when the effects of Eclipses in fact reveal themselves./ The reasoning of Ptolemy does not /entirely/ satisfy me, that an hour designates a year for the Sun [☉], a month for the Moon [☾]. A matter truly most worthy of investigation.

[*OO* 1, p. 320; *GW* 14, p. 329]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 44r] /25./ You will find out about the effect of eclipses in my Meteorological Theses.⁵¹ Of course I search for a natural cause in Ptolemy; why the effect differs by so many months for the Sun [☉] and Moon [☾], by how many hours an eclipse is absent from an angle, and yet actually the duration of individual [eclipses] signifies, through its hours, months for the Moon [☾], years for the Sun [☉]. For which reason I once followed such a method by the same freedom as Ptolemy (namely, not a small one). For how many hours a luminary remained above the horizon, so many months for the Moon and years for the Sun are presupposed, from which those were feeling the effect, which corresponded to the hours determined⁵² from the rising place of the disappearance [*i.e. eclipse*]. Still, when this method was corroborated to the Ptolemaic one, the beginning of the operation of the

⁴⁸ 'I acknowledge their power' (*Eorum vim*) in *OO*.

⁴⁹ Instead of '☾', *OO* has 'Veneris'!

⁵⁰ 'Quaeritur' in *OO*, missing in *GW*.

⁵¹ Probably 'On the More Certain Fundamentals of Astrology', see sections LXIII and LXIV (in Field, 'A Lutheran Astrologer', pp. 261-263 [see n. 20 for full citation]).

⁵² *GW* has 'detentis'; *OO* has 'determinatis'. We are following the *OO* version.

solar eclipse fell before the start of the eclipse. I don't think the disappearance undergoes so meticulous a calculation; nor is it necessary, since for each day its significance is in the stars from aspects and transits, /etc./ Moreover, since Ephemerides did not yet exist, profections were introduced by the Chaldaeans to lighten the work of calculating the stars.

[*OO* 1, p. 320; *GW* 14, p. 251]

FABRICIUS (letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 16r] /17./ Whether the chart of conception has more influence on the birth, or the opposite? I attribute more to the birth, because at that time it drinks in the powers of the sky with the air, not in conception, where there is not a human but undeveloped matter. /That is all./

[*OO* 1, p. 320; *GW* 14, pp. 329-330]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 44r] /26./ I attribute something to conception, on account of agreement (*consensus*). For nothing great (however a fertile conception is a great thing) comes to be without the agreement of the natal sky, [*GW* 14, p. 330] and 'things which agree with a third thing agree with each other'.⁵³ Conception agrees with the parents, birth with the same, therefore conception agrees with birth. For me the natal chart suffices for the nativity being plainly perceived. But your cause (*causa*) is good but not philosophical, 'when it draws up the powers of the sky with the air'. So you have spoken well as an orator, but not as a philosopher. The powers of the sky are certainly not drunk in because of the vehicle of air.⁵⁴ For they take place in the imagination of sublunar things.

The discussion now veers into lightning and winds, which we omit here. But Fabricius adds a postscript to his letter (written on 5 August 1602), in which he again brings up some astrological matters. His first question concerns aspects, and this part will appear as Part III.4, 'On Aspects'. Other questions concern temperament, the Part of Fortune, astrological talismans, interrogations and elections:

⁵³ The first of Euclid's 'Common Notions' (in his *Elements*). 'Consentiunt' missing in *GW*.

⁵⁴ 'Virium coeli non vehiculum aer nec imbibuntur' in *GW* ('Air is not the vehicle of the sky's powers, nor are they drunk in'); 'Vires nempe coeli propter vehiculum aeris non imbibuntur' in *OO*; we follow *OO* here.

[*OO* 1, p. 322; *GW* 14, p. 254]

FABRICIUS (Postscript to letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.) Since contrary to expectation, my earlier letter remained here /for one day and the next,/ I wanted /also/ to add my later thoughts to the earlier ones, /so that the number of questions would be greater and the exercising of the intellect more fruitful on both sides.'): ... [*Pulkovo X*, 18r] /2./ It is asked whether the planets constitute the Temperament of the native (*hominis nati*), as the popular astrologers write. I deny [this], /and I think it is only affected by the planets, but by no means constituted. If it were constituted by the planets, the same temperament necessarily would always persist, which we nevertheless see to be varied in the progress of aging. Moreover, the inclinations of the native's temperament constituted and formed totally by the planets would conform with respect to intellect and character, but the contrary is not rarely noticed, so that cholericus are peaceful and the reverse. Therefore it is not constituted by the planets.

[*OO* 1, p. 322; *GW* 14, p. 332]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 45v]

/3./ On the temperament question, I think it was discussed above, and in the previous letter I answered. The nature of man is like molten metal, the sky like the form into which it is poured. Unless the metal is insubordinate, it takes up the whole form exactly. But really, the nature of man is insubordinate on account of the preceding imaginings of the mother, and the power of the subsequent regulation, which is like the sky or⁵⁵ a chisel, and so these three are mixed together. So I agree with you.

[*OO* 1, p. 322; *GW* 14, pp. 254-255]

FABRICIUS (Postscript to letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 18r]

/3./ It is asked how you feel about the commonly used Part of Fortune.⁵⁶ I reckon it is nonsense, /since it is neither an antiscion, nor has any plausible cause, nor do I think it responds to Experience./

/4./ It is asked what one should think about interrogations and judgements resulting from them. Many attribute very much [to them], /and Master

⁵⁵ *GW* has 'vel'; *OO* has 'et'.

⁵⁶ The questions Fabricius asks here appear in truncated and/or conflated form in *OO* (for example, to this question in *OO* is added the one 'about astrological elections', which is a separate question in *GW*). We present them one at a time in their entirety as in *GW*.

Ernfridus [GW 14, p. 255] Minquitz⁵⁷ reported to me that in Livonia⁵⁸ he got a true answer from a certain pastor on questions about the end of the Turkish war and the present state./ I judge the matter to be superstitious, /since such interrogations proceed from mere choice or free will, often also by chance, thus with words produced by no stimulated influence of the sky./

[OO 1, p. 322; GW 14, p. 332]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 45v]

/31./ On the part of fortune, just as on the houses, I judge that it is fabricated for creating answers to every type of question.

Now, then, you have my judgement about these questions, in agreement with yours. But see what you are doing. Believe me, both from your questions⁵⁹ and profections, results (*experimenta*) and disappointments (*frustrationes*) stand equal on both sides. For on both sides fortune is master. /In refuting your questions I do not drag the results into suspicion by chance, unless the astrological causes are assumed to be as few as possible, so that they may be able to be perceived because of number./

[OO 1, p. 322; GW 14, p. 255]

FABRICIUS (Postscript to letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 18r]

/5. Whether/ there is some power of the images engraved /(as I will say)/ under a certain position of the sky in expelling diseases /or bringing about other things?⁶⁰ It seems so. For if the beginnings of cities and other things are allotted some power from the sky, why not other things as well? For plants, metals, stones and trees obtain power and a greater virtue at certain times./

[OO 1, p. 322; GW 14, p. 332]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 45v]

⁵⁷ Ehrenfried von Minckwitz, Baron of Minckwitzburg.

⁵⁸ The historical region of Livonia is on the shores of the Baltic Sea, encompassing parts of present-day Estonia and Latvia.

⁵⁹ We think he means questions in general, not the specific astrological technique of interrogations.

⁶⁰ Fabricius means astrological talismans, which are engraved at astrologically auspicious times.

/32./ You defend the images by the argument of cities and regions. I deny you both. Belief procures power for the images. I have heard from experienced doctors, who are often inducing trust in the doctor with words, that a constitution (*natura*) already almost collapsed is restored with a magic act. And so if, on account of an image seen in a gem, a credulous patient derives trust, we will be delighted. Wherefore I do not think of arguing against it publicly. But you are adducing proof from plants and natural things, which derive a greater power from the sky at a certain time. Either that is a certain time of year, when the cause is in the humour, dryness [or] maturity, or you do not know if [it is] another period of that time. And the argument is not adequate from nature to [OO 1, p. 323] art; go, and put together a living infant, otherwise than by that natural chisel, and I will believe you also will be able to transplant by art the power of the sky into that work of art.

[OO 1, pp. 322-323; GW 14, p. 255]

FABRICIUS (Postscript to letter of 1-5 August 1602, O.S.): [*Pulkovo X*, 18v]

/7.⁶¹ How do you feel about astrological elections, /although it may also be covered under question 5/.

[OO 1, p. 323] /8./ Whether a rain of blood is natural. In addition, [rains] of stones, frogs, fish and the like, although I will scarcely believe [rains] of fish [and] frogs. ...

[OO 1, p. 323; GW 14, p. 333]

KEPLER (letter of 2 December 1602): [*Pulkovo X*, 45v]

/34./ The variety of elections is great and many take place beneficially, many superstitiously. Once a genuine cause (*ratio*) of the celestial working is known, this doctrine can be built up utterly beyond that. I still have some political elections in my prognostications, as you will find. Expect the rest from the superior [planets] [*i.e. Mars, Jupiter and Saturn*]. From drops of blood you ask much too much, just as from an oracle; nevertheless by asking here you have helped me more than I might help you by answering. Nevertheless, pay attention that around the 12th of December Old Style 1601 [the sky] was configured with the three superior planets. At this point the winter was mild and easy.

⁶¹ Question no. 6, omitted here, asks about the blue colour of the sky and does not particularly pertain to astrology.