

For as long as histories of astronomy have been written, heliocentrism has been regarded as the hallmark of modern astronomy. In accordance with this tradition, Nicholas Copernicus (1473-1543), as the effective originator of heliocentric doctrine, has been hailed as the founder of modern astronomy. In fact, however, except for the motion of the Earth, the revolutionary element in Copernicus's work is very small; in most respects his *De Revolutionibus* (1543) follows Ptolemy's *Almagest* so closely that he can equally well be regarded ... as the last great practitioner of ancient astronomy. On this view, it was the seventy-year period following Copernicus's death in 1543 that actually saw the transition to modern astronomy. And insofar as any such development can be attributed to the influence of one person, that transition was wrought by the ideas and efforts of the Danish astronomer, Tycho Brahe.

(Thoren, *Cambridge History*, p. 3)

NOVA MVNDANI SYSTEMATIS HYPOTYPOSIS AB  
AUTHORE NUPER ADINVENTA, QUA TUM VETUS ILLA  
PTOLEMAICA REDUNDANTIA & INCONCINNITAS,  
TUM ETIAM RECENS COPERNIANA IN MOTU  
TERRÆ PHYSICA ABSURDITAS, EXCLU-  
DUNTUR, OMNIAQUE APPAREN-  
TIIS CÆLESTIBUS APTISSIME  
CORRESPONDENT.

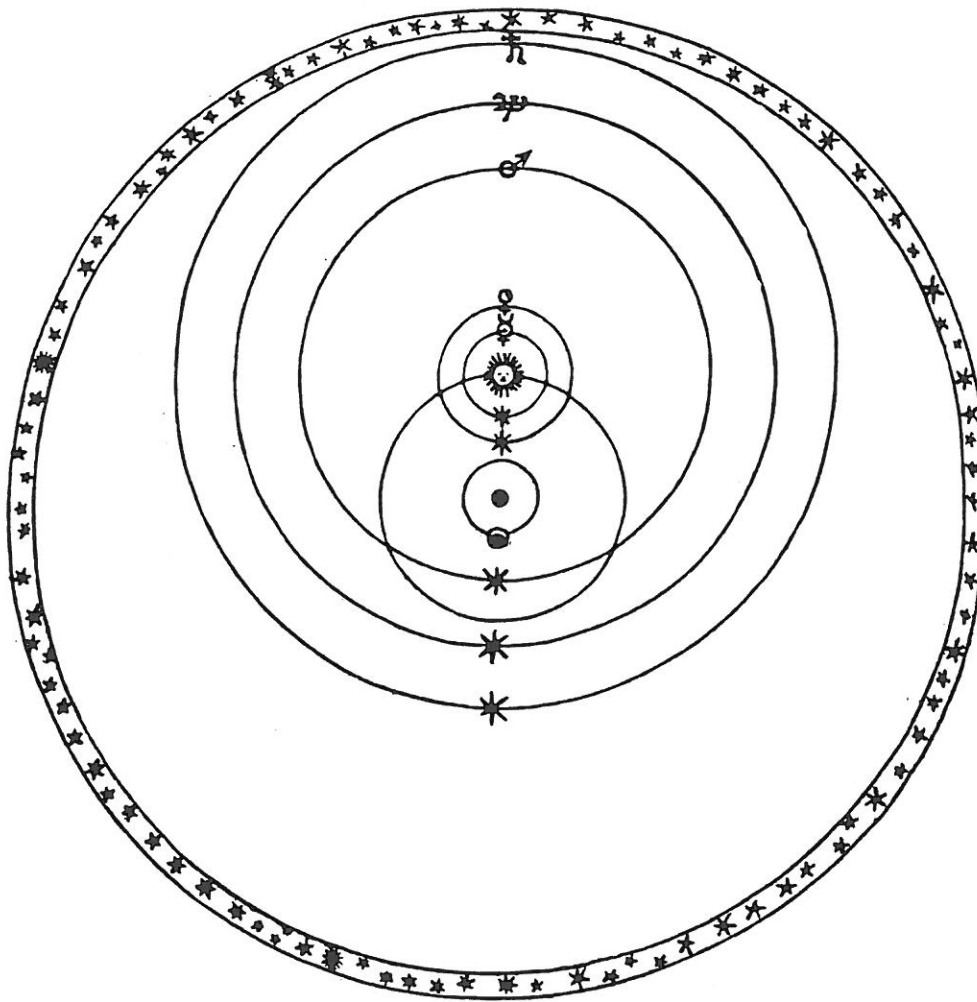
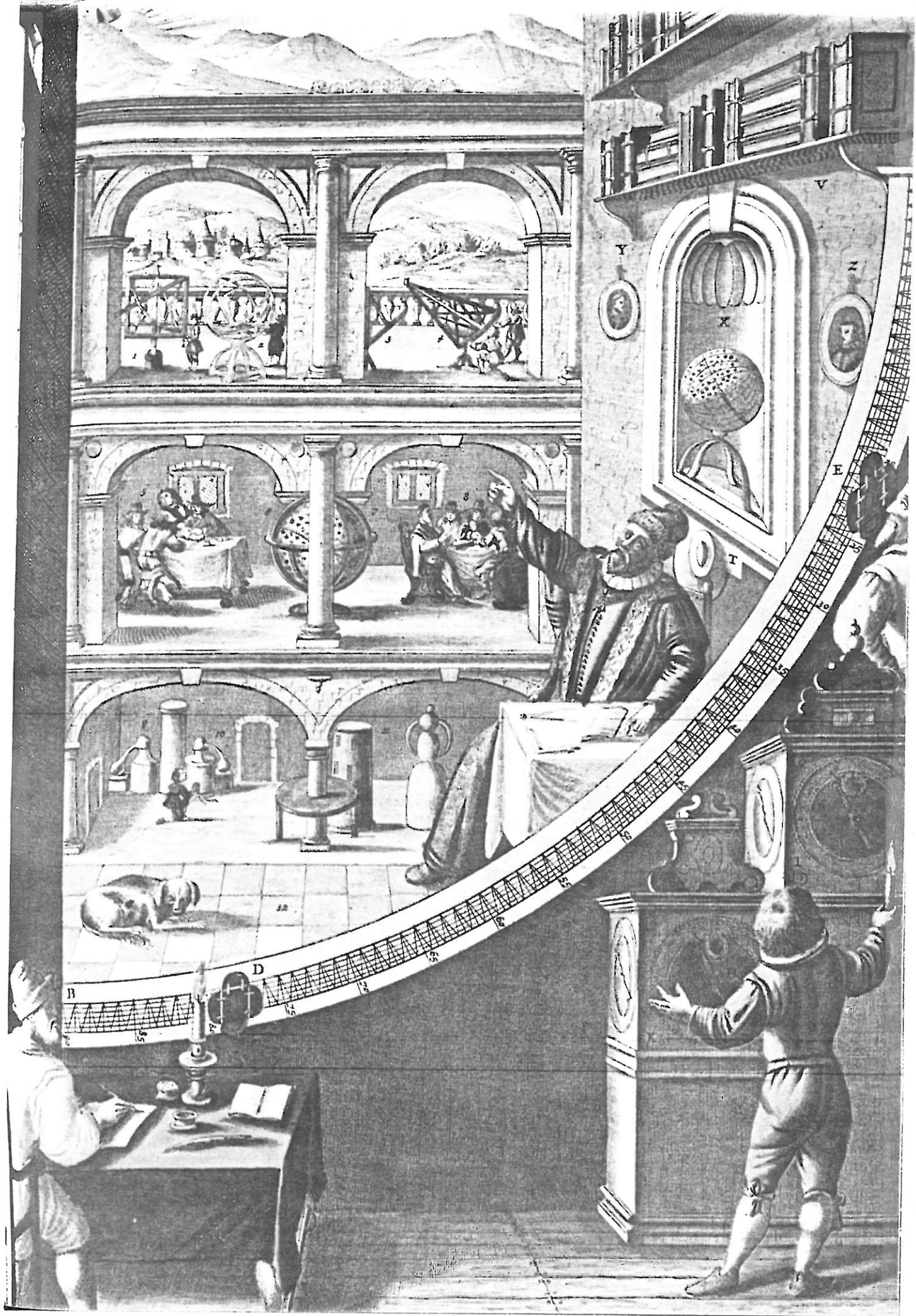


Figure 8.9. The Tychonic System of the world.



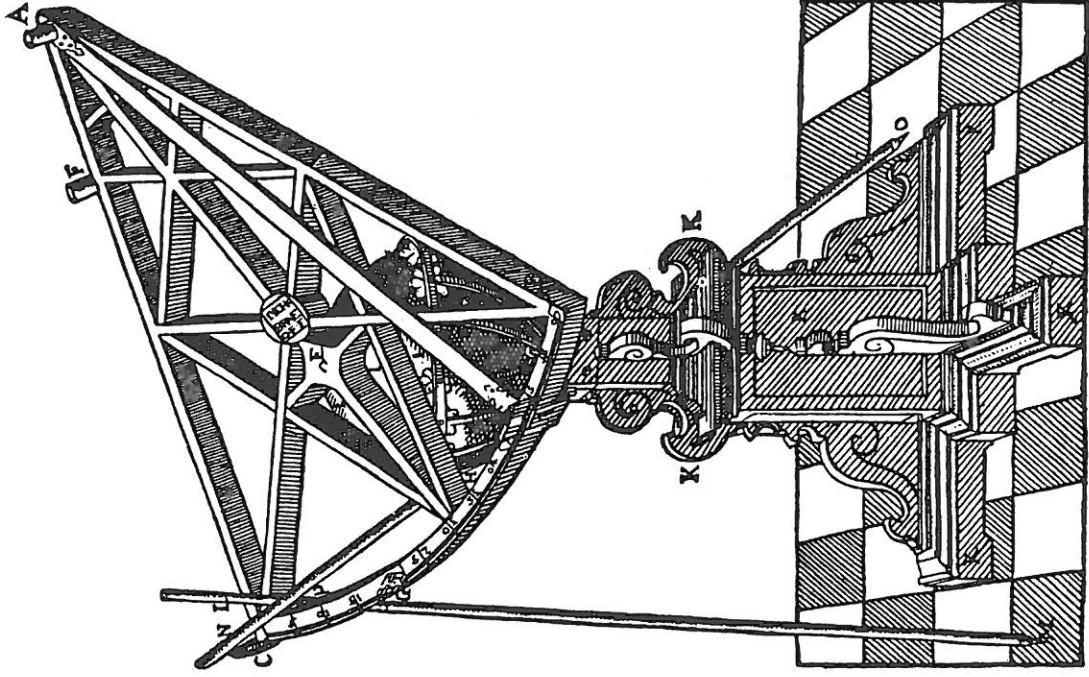


Figure 5.12. The mature Sextant (ca. 1582).

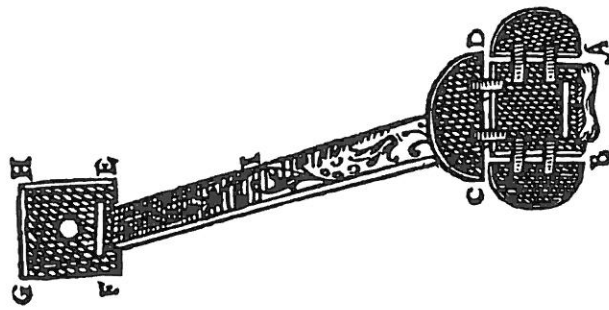
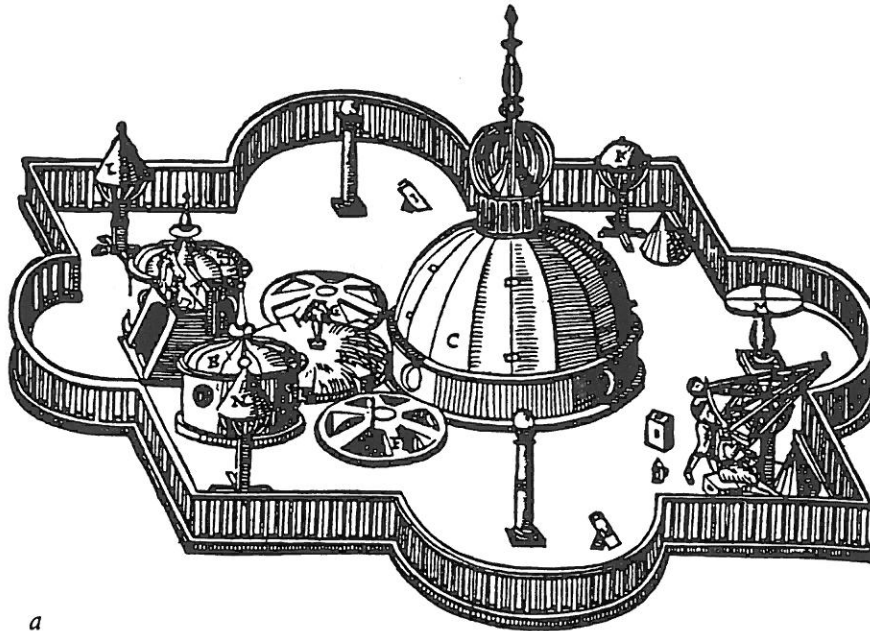


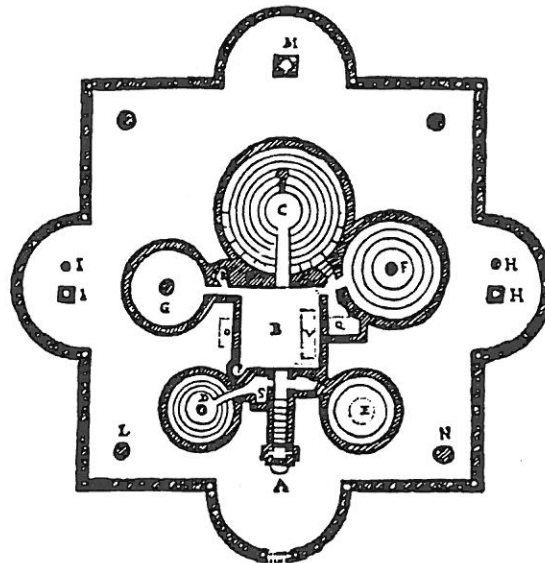
Figure 5.5. Detail of Tycho's sighting mechanism.

ORTHOGRAPHIA STELLÆBVRGI  
EXTRA ARCEM VRANIÆ SITI.



a

ICHTNOGRAPHIA STELLÆBVRGI.



b

Figure 5.18. Elevation (a) and plan (b) of Tycho's underground observatory, Stjerneborg; constructed 1584-6.