DIALOGUE CONCERNING THE TWO CHIEF WORLD SYSTEMS, PTOLEMAIC AND COPERNICAN	Translated by Stillman Drake; Foreword by Albert Einstein Published - Univ. Calif. Press	1964	1964	Un.Pgh.

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Galileo Galilei's

DIALOGUE CONCERNING THE TWO CHIEF WORLD SYSTEMS, PTOLEMAIC AND COPERNICAN

Translated by Stillman Drake
Foreword by Albert Einstein

Completely unabridged, augmented by Galileo's handwritten additions in his own copy of the first edition, this classic in the history of science is presented in a new translation from the definitive Italian text. The translation conveys in modern English the fiery spirit of the original *Dialogue.*

This is the book which three centuries ago assaulted tradition and authority and opened the way for freedom of scientific thought. It was a capital crime in Galileo's day, as Professor Einstein writes, "merely to doubt the truth of opinions which had no basis but authority . . . Actually we are by no means so far removed from such a situation even today as many of us would like to flatter ourselves." It would indeed be difficult to find a more timely occasion for restoring Galileo's great polemic to the thinking public.

Written in colloquial Italian instead of the customary Latin, the *Dialogue* was designed to reach and awaken the public rather than to soothe the complacent scholar. For his audacity Galileo

was punished by lifetime imprisonment; characteristically he employed part of this time in adding passages to the *Dialogue*. All those which he keyed directly to the text are included in full, most of this material appearing here for the first time in English.

Primarily the book is astronomical and philosophical in content, being concerned with the arguments for and against the motion of the earth. Galileo's discoveries and researches in astronomy—the phases of Venus, the satellites of Jupiter, and the motion of sunspots—share the main scenes with his cogent and derisive attacks upon Aristotle and his followers. The discussion of the Second Day contains many of Galileo's fundamental contributions to physics—inertia, the laws of falling bodies, centrifugal force, and the pendulum—as well as important historical steps in mathematics toward analytic geometry and the calculus. Galileo's explanations, written in the infancy of modern science, can hardly fail to be understood today by both layman and scientist. Few celebrated thinkers have equaled him in combining vigor and clarity of expression with the common touch.

Professor Einstein has contributed a Foreword which relates Galileo's work to that of his predecessors and to our own scientific age. Supplemental notes, making the work as nearly self-contained as possible, are supplied by the translator in an appendix.

About This New Translation of Galileo's *Dialogue*

"It requires the reading of Galileo's own words to appreciate the extraordinary lucidity with which he was able to describe the problems of physical science. Mr. Drake's translation of the original Italian text and his many careful commentaries will be of the utmost importance to all scientists."

OTTO STRUVE, Director of the Leuschner Observatory,
Chairman of the Department of Astronomy, University of California

"I congratulate the University of California Press upon this edition of Galileo's great work, and I am sure that its publication will be of the greatest interest to philosophers and scientists, as well as to the general public.

"The text of the notes indicates Mr. Drake's extensive knowledge of the history of science as well as his ability to put his ideas into clear and simple words. . . . By the addition of Professor Einstein's Foreword, this edition of Galileo's work will acquire a unique value."

HANS REICHENBACH
Professor of Philosophy, University of California

About the Language and Style of the Original

Galileo abandoned Latin in favor of Italian as early as 1612; in that year, writing to a friend about an earlier book, he said:

"I wrote the book in the vernacular because I want everybody to be able to read it . . . What inspires me to do this is seeing how students in the universities, sent indiscriminately to become doctors, philosophers, etc., apply themselves in many cases to such professions when unsuited to them, while others who would be apt are occupied with family cares or other pursuits remote from literature. Although furnished with horse sense, as Ruzzante would say, such men become convinced (being unable to understand things written in jargon) that these huge tomes containing the latest discoveries of logic and philosophy must remain forever over their heads. Now I want them to see that just as Nature has given them as well as the philosophers eyes to see her works, so has she also given them brains capable of perceiving and understanding them."

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