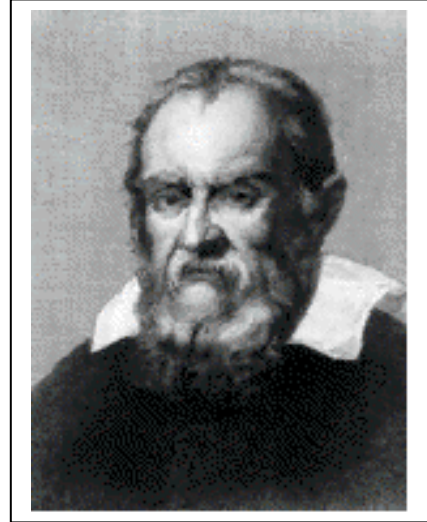


Galileo Galilei (1564 – 1642)

He was an Italian mathematician; physicist and astronomer who discovered the laws of falling bodies and the parabolic trajectories of projectiles. Perfected the telescope and showed men the new worlds of the heavens.

Galileo was born at Pisa in Italy in February 18, 1564. His father was a philosopher of some attainments.

First educated privately at home in Pisa, when later the family moved to Florence, Galileo was sent away to school at the age of fourteen at the Jesuit Monastery in Vallombrosa, but his father strongly objected and immediately moved his son back to Florence.



The young student was intended to devote his time to medicine, but a study of the works of Euclid turned his mind into other channels. In spite of parental opposition, Galileo had private tuition in mathematics and made rapid progress.

One of his first discoveries, in 1583, he watched the oscillation of a lamp suspended from the cathedral roof by timing the swings against pulse. He discovered that a pendulum have same time period.

And it was while at the University that he also earned himself the nickname 'The Wrangler', this because he would argue with his lecturers, questioning their blind acceptance of the opinions of Aristotle and Galen.

By dropping two different sized rocks from the top of the 'Leaning Tower' in Pisa he showed that all falling objects take same time to fall to the ground. In doing so, the followers of Aristotelian philosophy and the members of the university were so outraged that he lost his job.

Some of Galileo's enemies even refuse to look through his telescope. They thought it was bewitched.