



The Life Of Galileo (Student Editions)

By Bertolt Brecht

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This Student Edition of Brecht's classic dramatisation of the conflict between free enquiry and official ideology features an extensive introduction and commentary that includes a plot summary, discussion of the context, themes, characters, style and language as well as questions for further study and notes on words and phrases in the text. It is the perfect edition for students of theatre and literature.

Along with *Mother Courage*, the character of Galileo is one of Brecht's greatest creations, immensely live, human and complex. Unable to resist his appetite for scientific investigation, Galileo's heretical discoveries about the solar system bring him to the attention of the Inquisition. He is scared into publicly abjuring his theories but, despite his self-contempt, goes on working in private, eventually helping to smuggle his writings out of the country.

As an examination of the problems that face not only the scientist but also the whole spirit of free inquiry when brought into conflict with the requirements of government or official ideology, *Life of Galileo* has few equals. Written in exile in 1937-9 and first performed in Zurich in 1943, Galileo was first staged in English in 1947 by Joseph Losey in a version jointly prepared by Brecht and Charles Laughton, who played the title role. Printed here is the complete translation by John Willett.

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About the Author

A major dramatist of the twentieth century, **Bertolt Brecht** (1898-1956) was the founder of one of the most influential theatre companies, the Berliner Ensemble, and the creator of some of the landmark plays of the twentieth century: *The Threepenny Opera*, *Life of Galileo*, *Mother Courage and Her Children* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. His plays and dramatic theory are central to the study of modern theatre.

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