

Critical analysis of life of galileo

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



The scene 14 in the play specifically depicts the dismal fate of those individuals who attempt to challenge the established status quo in the light of their own rational thinking and radical thoughts. The scene explores the vivid exchanges between Galileo and his “ visitor from the past” who strives to “ excite him” to such an extent that we see the old Galileo back. With an ardent conversation that follows as they discuss the secret manuscript, “ Discorsi”, we see that Galileo lurking from the dark shadows of his present dreary life, who was full of energy with his revolutionary ideas of logic and science. Here, the audience feels relieved and contented that their old Galileo is now back, the present version of him that was passive and subdued cease to satisfy their expectations from him. A man of his time who has guts to challenge not only the revered Ideas of Aristotle but also the sacred doctrine of the church regarding astronomy was no walk in the park. It had its dire implications and an impending destiny, but there is more what made Galileo completely lose hope from his own people. Despite being a “ faithful son of the church” Galileo had staunch belief that the church would never abandon him. However his confident came crashing down his feet when the church chose its own egoistical standing instead of a man who spoke the truth with well-founded evidence. From the trial to a threatening punishment of burning in flames if he doesn’t “ recant”, this scene explores the Galileo who suffered the severe repercussions of his mistake of speaking the truth and his attempt to revitalize human thinking regarding the working of the universe. By witnessing the miserable fate of the great man of his time, audience may cry their heart out, however Brecht had more in store for the audience. The latter part of the scene explores that Galileo who is his old

self again and here the playwright makes the audience optimistic by the fact in the light of determination and the idea that there is scope of human improvement, no authority can make the rational individual diminish his fiery desire of propagating change.

The exchanges between Galileo and his daughter Virginia depicts a submissive and a cowed Galileo. Virginia is seen contented that her father has at last chosen a life of a recluse. She has joined hands with the monk who sits as a guard outside Galileo dwelling and both control his visitors. This is the first betrayal Galileo receives and a dire punishment for speaking truth from his immediate family. These exchanges are short and impassive and here we feel pitied for a man who had suffered just because he chose truth above everything else.

At present, Galileo has forsaken his greatness and have descended in to the dark shadows of his. He has chosen a life of seclusion in order to escape punishment and a dire fate of a heresy. For such a great man, this approach is antithesis to his esteemed ideals and principles and that is exactly what Brecht serves to preach the audience. No one knows, even Virginia who hangs on Galileo like a sleuth that beyond the apparent picture there is more than that meets the eye.

Questioning the church's authority gave Galileo two options. With the sinister imagery of flames and burning that dominates the play and this scene in particular, execution which is so severe and cruel that it becomes an eye opener for those who dare to question the church. The second option is more than death could offer alone exactly what Galileo chose which made his

followers and audience shriek with disbelief. Andrea's anguish, " And we thought you had deserted" is totally relatable because he looks to Galileo with so much respect that his move to escape punishment was totally opposed to his greatness. However, the dramatic irony is prevalent in this scene when Andrea visits his esteemed teacher. The scene takes an U-turn from Galileo's passive writing that were in line with the church's demands to the ardent depiction of his secret manuscript. By bringing such contrasts, Brecht puts forth the claim that true believers of knowledge and truth would never recreate on the sidelines and will continue to challenge the proposed authority no matter what the consequences of these acts would be.

Galileo's radical thinking and hypothesis undermined the century old traditions and ideals that were revered and held sacred. People have blindly accepted them because the source was the church. The church had such an unprecedented influence upon people that it had curbed their ability to think beyond what was presented to them. Galileo was an ordinary man with intellect and logic; he seemed not to be satisfied with the church even though he was a staunch follower of it. By making Galileo life an example, Brecht reiterates the idea that in the face of logic and rationality, outdated ideas as no validity because there is always a room for human advancement discovery that has no bounds.

With Galileo's faltering situation, Brecht makes the audience see that church's imprisonment have broken him physically and emotionally. By renouncing his views, he lost comradeship with his close fellows and lost his enthusiasm in work. His harsh life seems to impair his eyesight and it was

emotionally difficult to work under threat of execution and surveillance. If church wanted Galileo's life as an example to those who challenge the authority, Brecht has a different lesson for audience. There is no doubt that Galileo's suffering was poignant and audience feel remorseful however with Galileo's exchanges with his student we see his underlying zeal amidst the physical impairment as he asks Andrea to steal his manuscript to the foreign country by " stuffing it in his coat"

Galileo's discoveries were revolutionary and grand but his manner of articulating them was simplistic. He used wooden objects and apples to teach his servant's son Andrea the real depiction of universe. Even the apple symbolism is present in this scene as Galileo asks Virginia to cook geese with apple. For Galileo apple reminds him of his methods of teachings and his flourishing phase of life when he was cherishing people's lives with a revitalized and a logical thinking. This is what made the playwright place Galileo on a pedestal. According to him this is the true greatness, and this greatness is further emphasized in this scene. By opting for a life that is even more painful and eminent than death, Galileo lived not only to escape severe execution but lived to make a difference in people's thinking. Even in the darkest nights when he worked and wrote his discoveries, the motive was solely to bring about change and revitalize people mindset. Andrea's dialogue, " they give you pen and paper to keep you quiet" is full of irony; his secret manuscript spoke more than his mouth could articulate alone. As his revolutionary ideas found their long awaited escape by getting stuffed in Andrea's coat and sneaked to the foreign country, church pen and paper could hardly keep him quiet. Brecht invites the audience to live like Galileo,

even when the lives are at their darkest phase, a determined individual like Galileo would make use of whatever appears before him to satisfy his quest of change and knowledge. Galileo's submission did not mean his renouncement from his work, rather he created for himself such conditions that helped him further his work.

Thus, by this scene, Brecht demonstrates before the audience the fact that church attempt to make Galileo's repressed life as an eye opener for others failed terribly. Galileo's utter determination was at odds with the life of total abandonment a repressive institution like church sought to teach. Brecht shows the audience that, Galileo, when challenging the church's teaching was not at rest himself. With his radical ideas propagated through science and logic, his religious views also got challenged. This situation was very traumatic given that he was a staunch Catholic. But for the sake of betterment of his people he was ready to compromise his religious views with open mindedness. However what he didn't realized that the church was still conservative and was deeply rooted in traditional thinking that it was not ready to compromise on whatever logic is presented to them. Such flexibility was not permitted by the church that controlled people's lives with their unwavering influence.