

GALILEO GALILEI

Galileo Galilei was born in Pisa in 1564, the same year of Shakespeare, and died in 1642. He was an Italian POLYMATH, a word which is referred to a man, the Renaissance Man, who is clever, good at many things, like Leonardo da Vinci or Michelangelo. Galileo was, in fact, a professor of mathematics and natural science, and through the telescope he discovered:

THE MILKY WAY was made by many stars;

THE FOUR MOONS of Jupiter: Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto, which are now called The Galilean Moons;

THE SUNSPOTS, the dark areas of the Sun;

That the planet VENUS has light and dark phases just like the Moon, so the Sun is the centre of the Solar System as Nicolaus Copernicus had said.

However the Church didn't like this new theory; the church creed was that the Earth stood still, as it was the centre of the universe and everything moved around it.

So Galileo was accused of heresy and arrested, after the publication of his "Dialogue concerning the two chief world systems". He was forced to recant and withdraw his works from publication; but he spent last ten years of his life under house arrest.

Questions :

- 1) Where and when was Galileo Galilei born?
- 2) Who is a polymath?
- 3) What did Galilei discover?
- 4) What was the Church creed?

- 5) Why was he accused of heresy?
- 6) What did he write?
- 7) What was he forced to do?
- 8) How did he spend last ten years of his life?