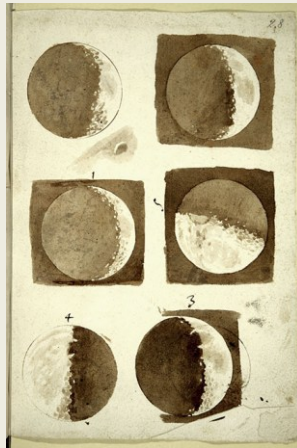




National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

**Department of Pedagogy and Primary
Education**

2nd European History Philosophy and Science Teaching Conference of the IHPST Group



Galileo's Pope

K. Gavroglu

Saturday 28th June, 21.00

Athens University History Museum, Atrium

Contributors

Dimitris Karasmailis – *Pope*

Mando Michaliou – *Narrator*

Kostis Ntoumpas – *Galileo*

Original Music and Performance

Iason Chrysostomides

Set design

Dorina Polizou.

Directorial supervision

Panagiotis (Takis) Tzamargias

Original play

Kostas Gavroglu

Dramaturgical adaptation – Coordination

Constantina Stefanidou

A Few Words about the Play

The Galileo' Pope by Kostas Gavroglou explores the possible content of the meetings between Galileo and Pope Urban VIII in 1624. Their discussions illuminate the complex relationship between science and theology, the conflict between astronomers and the Church, and the fragile boundaries of their friendship.

Although the play is set in the 17th century, it remains strikingly relevant. The profound social changes following the COVID-19 pandemic, the increasingly urgent climate crisis, and rapid developments in artificial intelligence are accompanied by a rise in irrationalism and growing skepticism toward scientific knowledge from conspiracy theorists and political actors.

These contemporary challenges underscore the urgent need for educators and citizens to understand not only scientific achievements but also how science is embedded in broader social and political contexts. Science has never been neutral: it interacts with power, shapes it, and is shaped by it.

Galileo's Pope highlights one of the enduring goals of science education: fostering understanding of the relationship between science and politics as a key aspect of democratic life. Such understanding contributes to social emancipation by empowering citizens to reject blind obedience to authority, think critically, demand reasoned arguments, and engage actively in public discourse.

This theatrical reading is presented in the context of the *2nd European Regional History, Philosophy and Science Teaching Conference*, closely aligning with its mission: to promote historically and philosophically informed science education that cultivates critical thinking, democratic engagement, and reflective citizenship. Through dramatization, the play offers a powerful way to explore how the history and philosophy of science can enrich science teaching and deepen our shared understanding of science as a human and social endeavor.

Constantina Stefanidou

Meet the Team

Dimitris Karasmailis is a senior undergraduate student at the Department of Primary Education, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA). He is involved in theatre, dance, and contemporary singing.

Mando Michaliou is a graduate of the “Neo Elliniko Theatro – Giorgos Armenis” Higher Drama School and a senior undergraduate student at the Department of Primary Education, NKUA. She works professionally in theatre and also engages in music, having studied classical guitar.

Kostis Ntoumpas is a senior undergraduate student at the Department of Primary Education, NKUA. He is active in theatre, creative writing, contemporary singing, and electric guitar performance.

Iason Chrysostomides is an undergraduate student at the Department of Music Studies, NKUA, and holds a Harmony diploma from the National Conservatory, where he is currently studying piano. He is involved in theatre and music production.

Dorina Polyzou is an undergraduate student at the Athens School of Fine Arts. She has worked with drawing and sculpture, and is knowledgeable in Art Design and Video Art.

Takis Tzamaris has directed numerous theatrical performances in both public and private theatres. He teaches as a Special Teaching Staff member at the Department of Pedagogy and Primary Education, NKUA, and has served as the Artistic Director of the Piraeus Municipal Theatre. He creatively combines the arts with pedagogical practice.

Constantina Stefanidou is a Laboratory Teaching Staff member at the Department of Pedagogy and Primary Education, NKUA. Her research focuses on the use of history and philosophy of science in formal and informal science education.

Kostas Gavroglu is Emeritus Professor of History of Science at NKUA. His research interests include the history of physics and chemistry in the 19th and 20th centuries. He served as Minister of Education, Research and Religious Affairs from 2016 to 2019.