

ANTONY (*MARCUS ANTONIUS*)



83 BCE

January 14: [Marcus Antonius](#) was born.

71 BCE

Death of Marcus Antonius Creticus, father of Marcus [Antonius](#). (His mother, Julia, a 2d cousin of [Julius Caesar](#), would remarry with Cornelius Lentulus Sura, consul in 71, who would in 63 be executed at the instigation of [Marcus Tullius Cicero](#) on account of his participation in the conspiracy of Catiline.)

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63 BCE

In about this year Mark [Antony](#) got married with his cousin Antonia (the first of several wives).

[Cato the Younger](#) was elected as tribune of the plebs for the following year. Lucius Sergius Catilina, a patrician, was leading a rebellion inside Rome with the purpose of making himself king. Cato assisted the consul, [Marcus Tullius Cicero](#), in dealing with the Catiline conspiracy. Cato proposed to set an example by executing all the conspirators, over the objection of Gaius [Julius Caesar](#), who advocated exile for the conspirators while their comrades were still in arms, possibly for the duration of their lives. The senate voted for execution and the rebellion was utterly crushed.



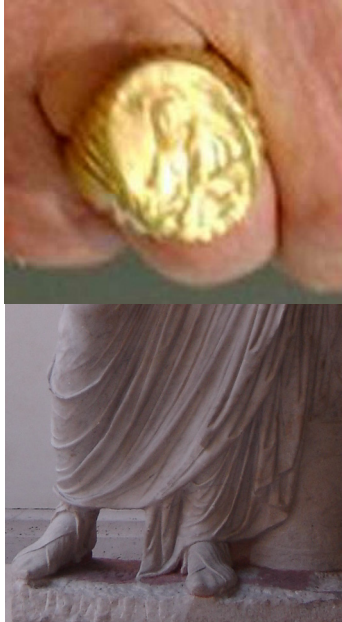
When Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius died, Caesar became *Pontifex Maximus* in charge of Roman religion. He was Papa Caesar, the Pope of [Rome](#), and you could kiss his ring, or perhaps his foot. (The head of the Roman Catholic religion would not be referred to as *Pontifex Maximus* until at least four additional centuries

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had passed, which is to say, at the very earliest the 4th Century of our Common Era.)

ITALY



60 BCE

The 1st Triumvirate (Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, Marcus Licinius Crassus, and [Gaius Julius Caesar](#)).

In this period Marcus [Antonius](#) and his intimate friends such as Scribonius Curio and Publius Clodius were preoccupied not by politics or by warfare but in having themselves expansively riotous good times.

[Cato the Younger](#) required Caesar to choose between consulship and triumph.

58 BCE

Marcus [Antonius](#) studied in Rhodes and Athens, where he met Aulus Gabinius, the new governor of Syria. He accompanied Gabinius as a cavalry commander for a period of service in Judaea and [Egypt](#).

Toward the end of this year, [Cato the Younger](#) left Rome to become governor of the island of Cyprus.

57 BCE

57 BCE: Marcus [Antonius](#) would serve with Aulus Gabinius in Judaea and [Egypt](#) until 54 BCE.



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53 BCE

Mark [Antony](#), who had been serving with Aulus Gabinius in Judaea and [Egypt](#), joined the legions of Gaius [Julius Cæsar](#) in Gaul.

52 BCE

During the Gallic War, the siege and massacre of the 40,000 residents of the Gallic *oppida* at Avaricum. Vercingetorix commented that “the Romans did not conquer by valor nor in the field, but by a kind of art and skill in assault, with which they [Gauls] themselves were unacquainted.”

Also, during this year, the broken siege of the Gallic *oppida* at Gergovia, and the circumvallation and battle of the Gallic *oppida* at Alesia, in which women and children were evicted from the encircled city to conserve food for its active defenders, only to die of starvation between the opposing walls of the defenders and the besiegers ([Vitruvius](#) offers us some information about these sieges).

Mark [Antony](#) was elected quaestor for 51, in which capacity he acted as one of Gaius [Julius Cæsar](#)'s quartermaster generals, with command over legions in the field.

269	The first coining of silver at Rome.
264	The first Punic war begins, and continues 23 years. The chronology of the Arundelian marbles composed.
260	The Romans first concern themselves in naval affairs, and defeat the Carthaginians at sea.
237	Hamilcar the Carthaginian causes his son Hannibal, at nine years old, to swear eternal enmity to the Romans.
218	The second Punic war begins, and continues 17 years. Hannibal passes the Alps, and defeats the Romans in several battles; but being amused by his women, does not improve his victories by the storming of Rome.
190	The first Roman army enters Asia, and from the spoils of Antiochus brings the Asiatic luxury first to Rome.
168	Perseus defeated by the Romans, which ends the Macedonian kingdom.
167	The first library erected at Rome, of books brought from Macedonia.
163	The Government of Judea under the Maccabees begins, and continues 126 years.
146	Carthage, the rival to Rome, is razed to the ground by the Romans.
135	The history of the Apocrypha ends.
52	Julius Cæsar makes his first expedition into Britain.
47	The battle of Pharsalia, between Cæsar and Pompey, in which the latter is defeated.
	The Alexandrian library, consisting of 400,000 valuable books, burnt by accident.
45	The war of Africa, in which Cato kills himself.
	The solar year introduced by Cæsar.

51 BCE

[Cato the Younger](#) made an unsuccessful run for consul.

During the Gallic War, the siege of the Gallic *oppida* at Uxellodunum ([Vitruvius](#) offers us some information about this siege).

Mark [Antony](#), left by Gaius [Julius Caesar](#) in the northern sector in charge of 15 cohorts, accepted the surrender of Commius, leader of the Atrebates.

Ptolemy Auletes died leaving his [Egyptian](#) kingdom to his teenage daughter, [Cleopatra](#), and her prepubescent brother Ptolemy XIII, with whom for reasons of tradition she would need to marry. She would become the only pharaoh of the Ptolemy family ever to familiarize herself with the language of her subjects. After the death of Ptolemy XIII and the birth of [Caesarion](#), she would marry another younger brother, Ptolemy XIV, again of course for pharaonic reasons.



50 BCE

At about this point, the Funeral Oration for [Octavian](#)'s grandmother Julia.

Curio, as tribune of the people, represented the interests of Gaius [Julius Caesar](#). Mark [Antony](#) was elected augur, and also was elected to function as tribune of the people for the following year.

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49 BCE

2d Period of the [Roman](#) Civil Wars (Caesar versus Pompey, until 45 BCE).



The siege of Massilia ([Vitruvius](#) offers us some information about this siege).

At the beginning of the civil war between the party of Gaius [Julius Cæsar](#) and the party of Gnaeus (Cneius) Pompeius Magnus, Iulius would drive Pompeius out of [Italy](#), conquering his forces in Spain and then passing into Greece, where Pompeius and the other aristocratic chiefs had assembled a large army. Iulius would give them a decisive defeat at the great battle of Pharsalia. Pompeius would flee for refuge to [Alexandria](#), where he would be assassinated. Iulius, who followed him there, would become involved in a war with the Egyptians, in which finally he would be victorious. [Cleopatra](#) would become Queen of [Egypt](#). Iulius would go into Pontus



and defeat the son of Mithridates, who had taken part in the war against him. He would then proceed to the Roman province of Africa, where some of the Pompeian chiefs had established themselves, aided by Juba, a native prince. He would overthrow them at the battle of Thapsus. He would again be obliged to lead an army into Spain, where the sons of Gnaeus (Cneius) Pompeius Magnus had collected the wrecks of their father's

party. He would crush the last of his enemies at the battle of Munda. Under the title of Dictator (which is amusing, because we don't ordinarily think highly of dictators), Iulius would make himself sole master of the Roman world, and would make his given name, Caesar, a synonym for "Emperor of the Romans."

Here three full centuries shall Hector's race
 have kingly power; till a priestess queen,
 by Mars conceiving, her twin offspring bear;
 then Romulus, wolf-nursed and proudly clad
 in tawny wolf-skin mantle, shall receive
 the sceptre of his race. He shall uprear
 and on his Romans his own name bestow.
 To these I give no bounded times or power,
 but empire without end. Yea, even my Queen,
 Juno, who now chastiseth land and sea
 with her dread frown, will find a wiser way,
 and at my sovereign side protect and bless
 the Romans, masters of the whole round world,
 who, clad in peaceful toga, judge mankind.
 Such my decree! In lapse of seasons due,
 the heirs of Ilium's kings shall bind in chains
 Mycenae's glory and Achilles' towers,
 and over prostrate Argos sit supreme.
 Of Trojan stock illustriously sprung,
 lo, Caesar comes! whose power the ocean bounds,
 whose fame, the skies. He shall receive the name
 Iulus nobly bore, great Julius, he.
 Him to the skies, in Orient trophies dress,
 thou shalt with smiles receive; and he, like us,
 shall hear at his own shrines the suppliant vow.
 Then will the world grow mild; the battle-sound
 will be forgot; for olden Honor then,
 with spotless Vesta, and the brothers twain,
 Remus and Romulus, at strife no more,
 will publish sacred laws. The dreadful gates
 whence issueth war, shall with close-jointed steel
 be barred impregnably; and prisoned there
 the heaven-offending Fury, throned on swords,
 and fettered by a hundred brazen chains,
 shall belch vain curses from his lips of gore.
 — Publius Vergilius Maro ([Virgil](#)), sucking up big time in 19 BCE
 in the *AENEID* (as translated here by Theodore C. Williams),
 would praise the carnage of this civil war as bringing forth [the Pax Romana](#)
 (while he was at it he should have praised [Mount Vesuvius](#) as
 the cat's pajamas of human population control)

January 10: When the tribune Mark [Antony](#) and a fellow tribune had vetoed a proposal of the [Roman](#) Senate that the army of the successful [Roman](#) general Gaius [Iulius Cæsar](#) be disbanded, the two of them had been ejected by the Senate. They escaped disguised as slaves and joined Caesar in his camp in Cisalpine Gaul, where Caesar exhibited them to his legions before giving them a chance to wash or change, as examples of how shabbily the Republic was treating we steadfast warrior servants who were merely sacrificing ourselves to protect the benefits of the folks back home. Then, disregarding his orders, the general brought his army down across the Rubicon River into the Italian peninsula proper — a hostile and definitive act. He would be Caesar, and a dictator, and a god.



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July/August: [Julius Caesar](#) was in Spain, having left Lepidus in charge of administrative matters in [Rome](#) and Mark [Antony](#) to command his troops remaining in Italy. When Caesar returned and led his legions in an advance down the east coast of Italy, Antony held Arretium for him. The Senate would be forced into flight.



[Cato the Younger](#) fled with Pompey and the Senate toward Greece.

48 BCE

April: Mark [Antony](#) sailed for Greece with four legions and the remainder of [Julius Caesar](#)'s cavalry, to play a role in some naval battles and then in the engagement at Dyrrachium.

August: Yet more battles involving our favorite pushy people: at [Dyrrachium](#) in what is now Albania the legions of Gnaeus (Cneius) Pompeius Magnus defeated the legions of Gaius [Julius Caesar](#) and at Pharsalus in Thessaly the legions of Caesar (Mark [Antony](#) commanding the army's left wing) defeated the legions of Pompey the Great, restoring [the Pax Romana](#) ([Vitruvius](#) offers us some information about these battles).



During the civil war [Marcus Terentius Varro](#) had been in command of one of Pompey's armies in the Ilerda campaign. He would escape the penalties of being on the losing side in a civil war through two pardons granted by Caesar, one prior to and the other subsequent to the Battle of Pharsalus.

When Pompey was defeated, [Cato the Younger](#) fled to Africa. Afterward, [Julius Caesar](#) would dispatch [Antony](#) back to [Rome](#) with the legions he did not immediately need, to look after his interests. When Caesar would be appointed *dictator* Antony would become his *magister equitum*.



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47 BCE

[Mark Antony](#)'s tactics and manner offended the senate. In his attempting to disperse a group of debtors who were protesting in the forum, unfortunately, some of the debtors had gotten themselves killed!

In this year Antony divorced Antonia in order to marry Fulvia (the widow of Clodius and, subsequently, of Curio).

[Gaius Julius Cæsar](#) uttered the telegraphic *Veni Vidi Veci* ("Came, Saw, Conquered") to commemorate his army's easy victory over King Pharnaces II of Pontus, a kingdom in Asia Minor. This slogan would later be incorporated into a sign mounted on a decorated wagon, that would be paraded through Rome to remind everyone of the promptness with which Caesar might bring dismay to any who attempted to interfere with his progress (there's no harm in reminding people).

Caesar appointed [Marcus Terentius Varro](#) to oversee the public library of Rome.

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45	The war of Africa, in which Cato kills himself. The solar year introduced by Cæsar.

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46 BCE

Mark [Antony](#) held no posts.

[Cleopatra](#) was in [Rome](#) with her toddler “[Caesarion](#),” residing at [Julius Caesar](#)’s villa outside the city.



45 BCE

As in the year before, Mark [Antony](#) held no posts, and [Cleopatra](#) was in [Rome](#) with her toddler “[Caesarion](#),” residing at [Julius Caesar](#)’s villa outside the city.



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March 17: Yet another battle involving our favorite pushy people, the [Romans](#): at the plain of Munda on the Iberian peninsula the legions of Gaius [Julius Caesar](#) defeated the legions of Titus Labienus and Gnaeus Pompeius (Pompey's oldest son), creating [the Pax Romana](#).



[Octavian](#) was with [Julius Caesar](#) during this battle. Later he would go to Apollonia to study and to await his uncle's expedition to Parthia.

Mark [Antony](#) would meet [Julius Caesar](#) on the latter's return from Spain, and traveled with him in his carriage.

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44 BCE

[Julius Caesar](#)'s charter for the settlement at Urso on the Iberian peninsula.

READ THE FULL TEXT

The Law of Caesar on Municipalities.

READ THE FULL TEXT

Mark [Antony](#) was co-consul with [Julius Caesar](#).

As had been the case for several years, [Cleopatra](#) was in [Rome](#) with her toddler "Caesarion," residing at [Julius](#).

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[Caesar](#)'s villa outside the city.



44 Cæsar, the greatest of the Roman conquerors, after having fought fifty pitched battles, and slain 1,192,000 men, and overturned the liberties of his country, is killed in the senate-house.

35 The battle of Actium fought, in which Mark Antony and Cleopatra are totally defeated by Octavius, nephew to Julius Cæsar.

30 Alexandria, in Egypt, is taken by Octavius, upon which Antony and Cleopatra put themselves to death, and Egypt is reduced to a Roman province.

27 Octavius by a decree of the senate, obtains the title of Augustus Cæsar, and absolute exemption from the laws, and is properly the first Roman emperor.

8 Rome at this time is fifty miles in circumference, and contains 463,000 men fit to bear arms.

The temple of Janus is shut by Augustus as an emblem of universal peace, and JESUS CHRIST is born.

A. C.

12 JESUS CHRIST disputes with the doctors in the temple ;

27 ————— is baptized in the Wilderness by John ;

33 ————— is crucified ;

His Resurrection and Ascension.

36 St. Paul converted.

39 St. Matthew writes his Gospel.

Pontius Pilate kills himself.

40 The name of Christians first given at Antioch to the followers of Christ.

43 Claudius Cæsar's expedition into Britain.

44 St. Mark writes his Gospel.

49 London is founded by the Romans ; 368, surrounded by ditto with a wall, some parts of which are still observable.

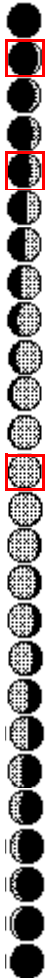
51 Caractacus, the British king, is carried in chains to Rome.

St. Luke writes his Gospel.

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February 15: In the name of the people, Mark [Antony](#) publicly offered Gaius [Julius Caesar](#) the *Dictator Perpetuus* a kingly crown, a stage gesture which was of course declined.



March 15: On the Ides of March, Gaius [Julius Caesar](#) the *Dictator Perpetuus* allegedly was assassinated by Brutus *et*



al in the Senate-house (or perhaps suffered a fatal epileptic fit). When Caesar's will is opened, it is discovered that he has adopted [Octavian](#) and designated him as his principal heir.

[Cleopatra](#) fled from [Rome](#) to [Alexandria](#) with her son by Caesar, [Caesarion](#). The civil wars would soon begin



again, with Brutus and Cassius at the head of the aristocratic party, and with the party of Caesar being led by Mark [Antony](#) and [Octavian](#) (afterwards [Augustus Caesar](#)):



We say this was 44 BCE although the [Romans](#) considered a year to have begun on the 18th birthday of Romulus, *circa* 750 BCE — so from their standpoint this was happening in the year 706 of the city of [Rome](#).

The Romans did not have a seven-day week and did not count the days of a month beginning with 1. Instead, the Roman monthly [calendar](#) was based on the first three phases of the moon, and three days of a month had unique names. Each month began with a day of the new moon referred to as the Kalends, the day on which



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bills were due for payment. (Romans were all about payment, and their KALENDARIUM was an account-book in which creditors entered the names of their debtors and the sums which they owed; this vital ledger was so called because interest on borrowed money was due on the Kalendae of each month.)

Then when the moon reached its first quarter that was the day of the Nones, this happening usually on the 5th or 7th of the month. A day referred to as the Ides would come on the 13th or 15th of the month, when the moon supposedly was full. (I say “supposedly” because the calendar in use was an accident waiting to happen, and kept drifting out of whack.)

They never counted in terms of days after, only in terms of days before. Their full phrase for “on the second of January” was “ante diem quartum nonas Januarias.” The phrase “ante diem,” commonly abbreviated as “ad,” might be omitted, the name of the day becoming “quartum nonas Januarias.” Thus:

- To refer to “March 1st,” in Latin, one says “the Kalends of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 2nd,” in Latin, one says “V Nonas Martius” or “5 days before the Nones of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 3rd,” in Latin, one says “IV Nonas Martius” or “4 days before the Nones of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 4th,” in Latin, one says “III Nonas Martius” or “3 days before the Nones of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 5th,” in Latin, one says “II Nonas Martius” or “2 days before the Nones of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 6th,” in Latin, one says “I Nonas Martius” or “the day before the Nones of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 7th,” in Latin, one says “the Nonas of Martius.” (The Nones was the 7th day in Martius, Maius, Quinctilis, and October, and the 5th in other months.)
- To refer to “March 8th,” in Latin, one says “VII Ides Martius” or “7 days before the Ides of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 9th,” in Latin, one says “VI Ides Martius” or “6 days before the Ides of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 10th,” in Latin, one says “V Ides Martius” or “5 days before the Ides of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 11th,” in Latin, one says “IV Ides Martius” or “4 days before the Ides of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 12th,” in Latin, one says “III Ides Martius” or “3 days before the Ides of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 13th,” in Latin, one says “II Ides Martius” or “2 days before the Ides of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 14th,” in Latin, one says “I Ides Martius” or “the day before the Ides of Martius.”
- To refer to “March 15th,” in Latin, one says “the Ides of Martius.” (The Ides was the 15th day in Martius, Maius, July, and Quinctilis, and the 13th in other months.)
- To refer to “March 16th,” in Latin, one says “XVI Kalends Aprilis” or “16 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 17th,” in Latin, one says “XV Kalends Aprilis” or “15 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 18th,” in Latin, one says “XIV Kalends Aprilis” or “14 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 19th,” in Latin, one says “XIII Kalends Aprilis” or “13 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 20th,” in Latin, one says “XII Kalends Aprilis” or “12 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”



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- To refer to “March 21st,” in Latin, one says “XI Kalends Aprilis” or “11 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 22nd,” in Latin, one says “X Kalends Aprilis” or “10 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 23rd,” in Latin, one says “IX Kalends Aprilis” or “9 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 24th,” in Latin, one says “VIII Kalends Aprilis” or “8 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 25th,” in Latin, one says “VII Kalends Aprilis” or “7 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 26th,” in Latin, one says “VI Kalends Aprilis” or “6 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 27th,” in Latin, one says “V Kalends Aprilis” or “5 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 28th,” in Latin, one says “IV Kalends Aprilis” or “4 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 29th,” in Latin, one says “III Kalends Aprilis” or “3 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 30th,” in Latin, one says “II Kalends Aprilis” or “2 days before the Kalends of Aprilis.”
- To refer to “March 31st,” in Latin, one says “I Kalends Aprilis” or “the day before the Kalends of Aprilis.”

I should mention, however, that I fancy that Caesar was not assassinated on the Ides of March. I think what happened was that unexpectedly the guy had one of his epileptic fits, and croaked, and then his political cronies had suddenly to figure out how they were going to spin this — and they decided they would make this perfectly ordinary death appear as if it had been a foul assassination by their political rivals. My reasons for inferring that this was what happened is that they got a bit too dramatic, and a bit too superstitious, in their playing out of the scenario. For instance, they claimed the corpse had the exact number of stab wounds as the number of political-rival assassins whom they were entitled to hunt down and summarily off, in spite of the fact that upon autopsy this corpse was found to have only one fatal stab-wound. They claimed that their leader had known that he was in special danger on this day and yet had dismissed his bodyguard, to approach his known enemies against whom he had been warned entirely unarmed and unguarded. They claimed to have found a piece of parchment clutched in the cold bloody fist, that provided them with the names of the assassins — but this of course is so preposterous that today it would be presumed to be direct evidence of a frame-up. Since Caesar had been proclaimed as a deity, we can understand that for him to have become understood to have died of one of his epileptic fits would have been for him to have been unmasked as no deity at all, but instead revealed as an impostor — with the most extreme of political consequences for his cronies. An immortal may not die of some disgustingly ordinary illness; however, a man proclaimed immortal may yet die due to the agency of evil-wishing others. Therefore the political colleagues of this tin hero, I suspect, made a list of all the problem people, senators whom otherwise they would have needed to neutralize, and solved their two problems at once by inserting this list into the bloody grip. They solved their immediate problem, of how an immortal can perish and still be allowed as a deity, and simultaneously they solved totally their grand problem, of how to maintain their control over the city and the empire.

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March 17: Mark [Antony](#), as surviving consul, convened the Roman Senate, and with Lepidus as *magister equitum*, established order. The senate confirmed the acts of Gaius [Julius Caesar](#), but offered amnesties to his murderers, and agreed to the terms of his will being read out, and to a public funeral, which would be spectacularly stage-managed by Antony. [Octavian](#), to everyone's surprise and to Antony's fury, was discovered to be Caesar's principal heir. Antony managed to get his appointment for the following year as governor of Macedonia switched to a 5-year tenure in Cisalpine Gaul, and appropriated four legions stationed in Macedonia. [Marcus Tullius Cicero](#) began his "Philippics," attacking Antony, who left for Cisalpine Gaul and besieged Decimus Brutus, the province's previous governor, in Mutina.

Early May: [Octavian](#) met with Mark [Antony](#) at the *Horti Pompei* (Pompey's Gardens) in Rome, to attempt to collect his legacy because Mark [Antony](#) had placed himself in actual possession of [Julius Caesar](#)'s papers and fortune.

In May and June, in [China](#) and in [Korea](#), a reddish-yellow [comet](#) had been observed, with its tail spanning some 12 degrees in the northwest. Within a few days it was near the constellation of Orion, and it had a 15-degree tail that had rotated toward the northeast. THE COMET OF 44 BC AND CAESAR'S FUNERAL GAMES was published by Scholars Press on the ides of March in 1997, the 2,040th anniversary of Caesar's demise. Written by John Ramsey of the Classics Department and Lewis Licht of the Physics Department at the University of Illinois at Chicago, this study draws upon the sources in the Orient, as well as the Greco-Roman world, to shed new light on the probable orbit of the great daylight comet seen in the north for three to seven days in July 44 BCE during the games that [Octavian](#) was holding in honor of the supposedly assassinated Gaius [Julius Caesar](#) (actually, he may merely have had one of his epileptic fits and died in a manner very much unlike what we imagine as the apotheosis of a deity, after which his political colleagues made it look like a political assassination in order to be able to legitimate their killing off of a good bunch of the opposition politicians), and on the factors that caused it in this case to be treated not as a baleful omen but as a sign of Caesar's apotheosis. For details, visit <http://www.uic.edu/las/clas/comet>; or send e-mail to comet@uic.edu.



ASTRONOMY

In this period of the earth's history, there was no "North Star" marking the direction of the North Pole.

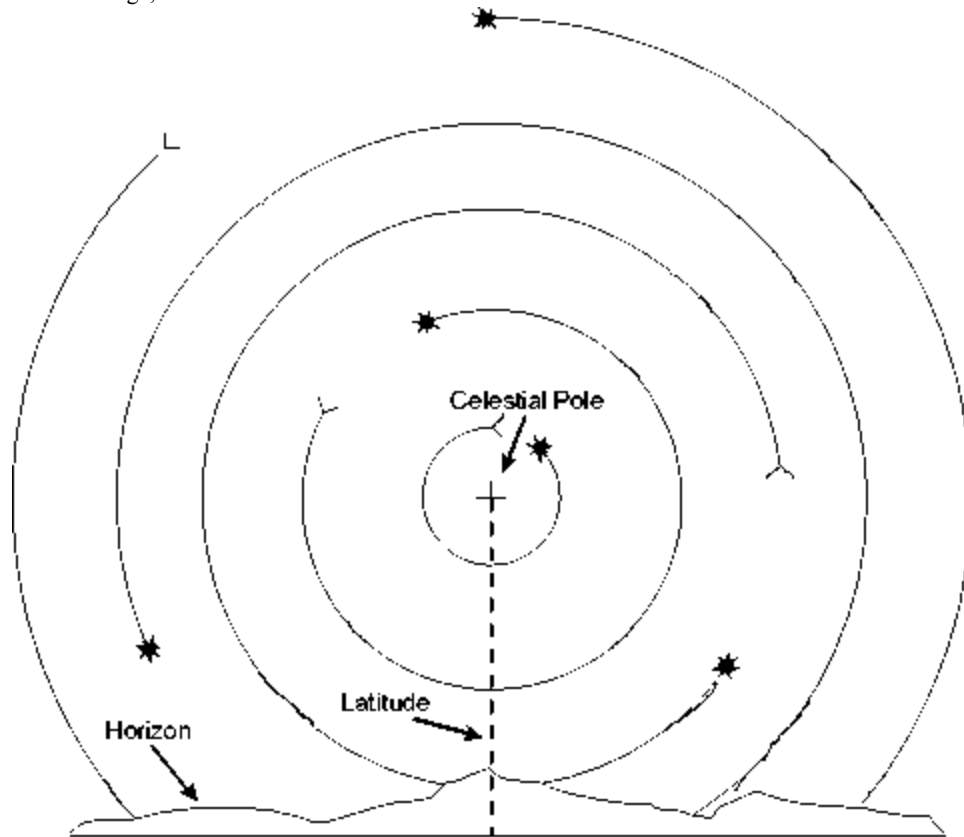
As constellations progress across the sky through the course of a single night, they change their orientation, but not their defining patterns, or their relative spacings. Waldo Emerson lauded this permanence:

"Teach me your mood, O patient stars!
 Who climb each night the ancient sky,
 Leaving no space, no shade, no scars,

MARCUS ANTONIUS

ANTONY

No trace of age, no fear to die.”



The changing appearance of the earth’s moon, however, has fascinated all cultures. Some have professed to be comforted by the faithful regularity of its gentle waxing and waning, fortnight by fortnight. Others, however, have been troubled by this as it is construed to be inconstancy in the heavens, which is exactly the wrong place for there to be inconstancy. Thus in William Shakespeare’s romance, when Romeo attempts a pledge on the moon, this is a wrong move as it does nothing but distress his Juliet:

Romeo:
 Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear
 That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops
 Juliet:
 O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
 That monthly changes in her circled orb,
 Lest that thy love prove likewise variable. (II.2.109-111)

Eclipses are not only changes, but because they bring darkness, they are an even worse sign of disaster. Having just murdered his wife Desdemona, Othello wonders how she can look so virtuous and wonders why no disruption in nature comes as a sign of the universe being so out of order:

...She’s dead...
 Still as the grave...
 I think she stirs again...
 My wife, my wife! I have no wife.
 O insupportable! O heavy hour!
 Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
 Of sun and moon, and that th’ affrighted globe



ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

Should yawn at alteration... (V.2.115-125)

Comets show up at unpredictable times, thus upsetting the invariance of the universe, and so they obviously also are omens of evil to come. In “Henry VI,” the Duke of Bedford remarks upon the death of the greatest English hero, Henry V:

Comets, importing change of times and states,
Brandish your crystal tresses in the sky,
And with them scourge the bad revolting stars
That have consented unto Henry’s death. (I.1.2-5)

The planets are wanderers, and wandering is considered to be inherently disorderly. Disorder, in the heavens where only the perfection of order ought to appear, produces uncertainty and foretells disaster here below. As Ulysses observes in “Troilus and Cressida”:

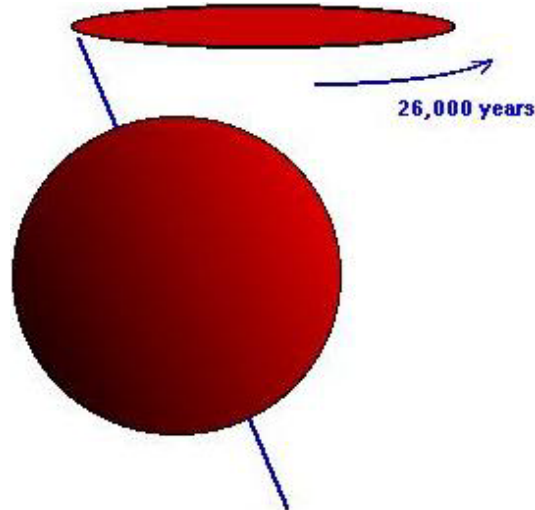
...when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander,
What plagues and what portents, what mutiny,
What raging of the sea, shaking of the earth,
Commotion in the winds, frights, changes, horrors,
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and married calm of states
Quite from their fixture! (I.3.94-101)

In contrast, the playwright has his main Roman, in his tragedy “Julius Caesar,” affirm himself to be “constant as the Northern Star, of whose true fixed and resting quality there is no fellow in the firmament.” How stalwart is this politician Julius! When the conspirators pretend to plea that Gaius [Julius Caesar](#) should pardon the exiled Publius Cimber, great Caesar is entirely unswayed:

Caesar: I could be well moved, if I were as you
But I am constant as the Northern Star,
Of whose true fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks;
They are all fire, and every one doth shine.
But there’s one in all doth hold his place.
So in the world: ’tis furnished well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive.
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds onto his rank,
Unshaked of motion; and that I am he
Let me a little show it, even in this:
That I was constant Cimber should be banished

And constant do remain to keep him so. (III.1.64-79)

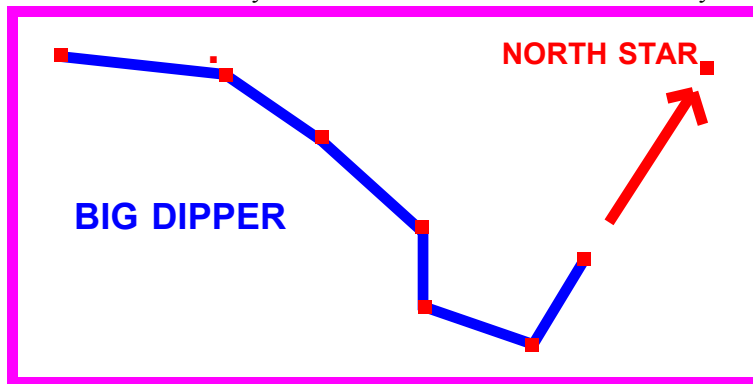
Shakespeare was, evidently, supposing the star Polaris, marking the earth's north pole, to be, as opposed to the planet's inconstant moon, some sort of gold standard of astronomical fixity — though in fact it is variable. Astronomers have known for some time that although this object 310 light years away from us now hangs in our sky roughly above the earth's North Pole, it has not always been in such a position, definitely will not in the remote future be in that position, and anyway, is a Cepheid variable the visibility of which can be expected to change markedly from time to time. The Earth's axis precesses (it is like a wobbling top), so in about 14,000 years, Vega (the brightest star in the constellation Lyra) will be the North Star, and then in another 5,000 years it will be Alpha Cephei (the brightest star in the constellation Cepheus), but at the completion of the entire cycle of 26,000 years — it will be Polaris again. This cycle known as precession is caused by the gravitational



attraction of the sun and the moon, acting on the fact that the planet Earth is not quite spherical. Back in the time of the Egyptian pharaohs, however it had another star, Thuban (the brightest star in the constellation Draco), that had functioned as this planet's North Star. Over time, as the axis of our planet has tipped, the constellation Draco had been moving along, and so by the 1st Century BCE, during the reign of Julius Caesar, there was no star at all in that polar position — only a pretend Caesar with the sensibilities of Shakespeare's era could have made such a remark about stellar constancy. For, by Shakespeare's era, Polaris had wandered into the region near the pole once occupied by Thuban — and Shakespeare, no astronomer, was presuming incorrectly that this had ever been so.

A "Cepheid variable" is a type of star that has almost exhausted its hydrogen fuel and is, consequently, caught in a cycle of bloating and collapsing. Polaris brightens or dims every four days or so, and over the period of time that we have been observing it, these pulsations have been slowing, with its period of oscillation between bright and dim lengthening by about eight seconds each year. Even on average, the brightness of Polaris has historically been unstable. For instance, over the past half a century it has now brightened on average by 10%, becoming a star of the 2d magnitude of brightness (magnitude is a scale devised by the Greek astronomer Hipparchus around 120 BCE ranking stars from 1st-magnitude bright, very bright and noticeable in the heavens, to 6th-magnitude dim, so dim as to be next to invisible — its change from 3d magnitude to 2d magnitude would indicate that Polaris has become about 2.5 times as bright as it had been a couple of millennia ago), but during Thoreau's 19th Century, it appears to have been on average about 20% dimmer even than before it began this current brightening trend. During the 16th Century, according to Tycho Brahe, it had been even dimmer. In 140 CE, when Ptolemy of Alexandria had made a star catalog, he had listed Polaris as a star of but the 3d magnitude, and in the 10th Century, when the Persian astronomer al-Sufi had checked Ptolemy's

evaluations, he had confirmed Ptolemy’s evaluation of Polaris as a star of merely the 3d magnitude.



Actually, it is incorrect to refer to the Big Dipper (in England this is known as “the plough,” to American slaves it was “the drinking gourd”) as a constellation. Among the 88 groups of stars that are officially recognized and listed as constellations, there is of course the constellation Ursa Major. The Big Dipper, however, is merely a conspicuous portion of that constellation. Such a star pattern as the Big Dipper is referred to as an asterism, rather than as a constellation. This asterism is presently helpful, for it presently helps us to identify Polaris, the North Star. Two bright stars mark the outer edge of the bowl of the Big Dipper. These two stars –Dubhe and Merak– we term the Pointer Stars, due to the fact that they direct our eyes toward Polaris. Draw a line across the night sky, in your imagination, between these two stars, and then prolong this line about 5 times, and your eyes will arrive at a moderately bright star. Polaris. –But that is merely for the present, as, of the seven stars that make up this asterism, five of the closer ones (78 to 84 light years from Earth) are swarming through space at roughly the same speed and in the same direction, but two of the farther away ones (Alkaid, 101 light years from Earth, and Dubhe, 124 light years from Earth) are moving at a different speed in an opposite direction. Due to these differing motions, the asterism now known as the Big Dipper will eventually tear itself apart. The bent handle will bend even more, while the spreading bowl will spread even more. In 50,000 years there will no longer be a recognizable dipper shape.

There remains an unanswered question, however. Why would it have been that, in [WALDEN](#), Thoreau identified the pole star as having the name Kalpa? –For, in Hindu cosmology, “Kalpa” is not the name assigned to any object, but instead is the name assigned to a very lengthy period of time.



WALDEN: There was an artist in the city of Kouroo who was disposed to strive after perfection. One day it came into his mind to make a staff. Having considered that in an imperfect work time is an ingredient, but into a perfect work time does not enter, he said to himself, It shall be perfect in all respects, though I should do nothing else in my life. He proceeded instantly to the forest for wood, being resolved that it should not be made of unsuitable material; and as he searched for and rejected stick after stick, his friends gradually deserted him, for they grew old in their works and died, but he grew not older by a moment. His singleness of purpose and resolution, and his elevated piety, endowed him, without his knowledge, with perennial youth. As he made no compromise with Time, Time kept out of his way, and only sighed at a distance because he could not overcome him. Before he had found a stock in all respects suitable the city of Kouroo was a hoary ruin, and he sat on one of its mounds to peel the stick. Before he had given it the proper shape the dynasty of the Candahars was at an end, and with the point of the stick he wrote the name of the last of that race in the sand, and then resumed his work. By the time he had smoothed and polished the staff Kalpa was no longer the pole-star; and ere he had put on the ferule and the head adorned with precious stones, Brahma had awoke and slumbered many times. But why do I stay to mention these things? When the finishing stroke was put to his work, it suddenly expanded before the eyes of the astonished artist into the fairest of all the creations of Brahma. He had made a new system in making a staff, a world with full and fair proportions; in which, though the old cities and dynasties had passed away, fairer and more glorious ones had taken their places. And now he saw by the heap of shavings still fresh at his feet, that, for him and his work, the former lapse of time had been an illusion, and that no more time had elapsed than is required for a single scintillation from the brain of Brahma to fall on and inflame the tinder of a mortal brain. The material was pure, and his art was pure; how could the result be other than wonderful?

**PEOPLE OF
WALDEN**

ARTIST OF KOUROO

ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

September 2: At the age of 3, [Caesarion](#) (Ptolemy XV Philopator Philometor [Caesar](#), acclaimed to the Egyptian people as a child not of a visiting Roman general but as a child of Amon-Re) was designated by his mother [Cleopatra VII](#) as her co-ruler over [Egypt](#). (She would have no more of this little-brotherly love.)



43 BCE

Following the death of Julius Caesar, many Romans had been proscribed by [Mark Antony](#). For instance, [Marcus Terentius Varro](#) had been proscribed, resulting in the loss of much of his property, including his library. We describe this as the 3d Period of Civil Wars ([Octavian Caesar](#), M. Junius Brutus, [Mark Antony](#), C. Cassius Longinus). As the Republic would give way to Empire, [Varro](#) would gain the favour of [Augustus](#), under whose protection he would find the security and quiet to devote himself to study and writing.¹

THE PAX ROMANA

April 14: At Forum Gallorum, the forces of Mark [Antony](#) were defeated.

April 14-27: [Octavian](#), invested with *propraetorian imperium*, led legions in battle at Mutina against the legions of Mark [Antony](#). Octavian's generalship was in conjunction with the consuls Hirtius and Pansa, both of whom would get killed in the struggle, leaving him as the sole surviving leader and therefore, the usual sort of thing, able by default to assume the credit for his side's victory.

April 21: The forces of [Mark Antony](#) were defeated.

MARCUS ANTONIUS

ANTONY

May 24: Mark [Antony](#) and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus agreed to join their forces.



1. [Varro](#)'s writings would be extensive, and have been estimated to have consisted of some 74 works in some 620 books — Quintilian would characterize him as “the most learned of the Romans.” Only one of these 74 works survives complete, the others existing only in fragments, mostly recovered from Gellius’s *NOCTES ATTICAE*. His compilation of a “Varronian chronology,” an attempt to establish a detailed year-by-year timeline of Roman history based on the traditional sequence of the consuls of the Roman Republic, would be of use to historians. He eked out his consular framework, where details did not fit, through the insertion of dictatorial and anarchic years. This is what would be inscribed on the Arch of Augustus in Rome, and although that arch no longer stands its substance is perpetuated under the rubric “Fasti Capitolini.” His NINE BOOKS OF DISCIPLINES, in which he wrote on grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, musical theory, medicine, and architecture, would be a model for later encyclopedists such as Pliny the Elder.

Still extant works:

DE LINGUA LATINA LIBRI XXV (ON THE LATIN LANGUAGE IN 25 BOOKS; of which six survive, partly mutilated)

RERUM RUSTICARUM LIBRI III (AGRICULTURAL TOPICS IN THREE BOOKS)

Known lost works:

SATURARUM MENIPPEARUM LIBRI CL or Menippean Satires in 150 books

Antiquitates rerum humanarum et divinarum libri XLI

Logistoricon libri LXXVI

Hebdomades vel de imaginibus

DISCIPLINARUM LIBRI IX (An encyclopedia on the liberal arts, of which the first book dealt with grammar)

De rebus urbanis libri III

DE GENTE POPULI ROMANI LIBRI IIII (cf. Augustine, “De civitate dei” xxi. 8.)

De sua vita libri III

De familiis troianis

DE ANTIQUITATE LITTERARUM LIBRI II (addressed to the tragic poet Lucius Accius; it’s therefore one of his earliest writings)

DE ORIGINE LINGVAE LATINAE LIBRI III (addressed to Pompey; cf. Augustine, “De civitate dei” xxii. 28.)

Περὶ Χαράκτῆρων (in at least three books, on the formation of words)

QUAESTIONES PLAUTINAE LIBRI V (containing interpretations of rare words found in the comedies of Plautus)

DE SIMILITUDINE VERBORUM LIBRI III (on regularity in forms and words)

DE UTILITATE SERMONIS LIBRI IIII (on the principle of anomaly or irregularity)

DE SERMONE LATINO LIBRI V (?) (addressed to Marcellus, on orthography and the metres of poetry)

DE PHILOSOPHIA (cf. Augustine, “De civitate dei” xix. 1.)

ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

October: [Octavian](#) Caesar met with Mark [Antony](#) and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus on the island of Reni near Bononia.

42 BCE

[Herod the Great](#) took the line, in presenting himself before Mark [Antony](#) and [Octavian](#), that although his father had indeed helped [Julius Caesar](#)'s murderers, this had been done only under duress. Evidently they were sufficiently persuaded, or were willing to pretend that they were sufficiently persuaded, for they would appoint him tetrarch of Galilee. This would of course bring a potful of trouble, as many Jews still considered this Herodian family, recent converts and good friends of the Roman intrusives, despite the undeniable fact of the rebuilding of the holy temple in Jerusalem, to be what you might term fake Jews.



Yet more altercations involving our favorite pushy people, the [Romans](#): 1st Philippi battle, fought to a draw between Mark [Antony](#) and incidentally [Octavian](#) Caesar, versus M. Junius Brutus and C. Cassius Longinus, and then the 2nd Philippi battle, fought by M. Antonius and Octavian Caesar versus M. Junius Brutus (C. Cassius Longinus having committed suicide) — restoring [the Pax Romana](#). Death of M. Junius Brutus. (Dissension would soon break out between Octavian Caesar and Mark Antony, rupturing [the Pax Romana](#).)

Spring-Winter: Preparations were made for a campaign against the forces of M. Junius Brutus and C. Cassius Longinus, known as the “Liberators.” Mark [Antony](#) would be awarded the governorships of Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, as well as responsibility for the eastern regions of the empire. He would winter in Athens.

October 23: In a battle at Philippi, the forces of Mark [Antony](#) and [Octavian](#) destroyed the Romans proscribed for having assassinated [Julius Caesar](#), and after this defeat C. Cassius Longinus committed suicide.

[Horace](#) had served as a staff officer (*tribunus militum*) for Brutus during this battle. He fled and, when an amnesty was declared, found that although his estate had been forfeited enough funds remained for him to purchase a lifetime sinecure as a *scriba quaestorius* at the Treasury. He would join a literary circle that included Virgil and Lucius Varius Rufus and get himself introduced to Maecenas, a friend and confidant of Augustus, who would become his patron and close friend while he devoted himself to his poetry. Maecenas would present him with an estate near Tibur in the Sabine Hills (our Tivoli), which upon his death he would bequeath to the emperor.

41 BCE

As a teenager [Albius Tibullus](#) seems to have lost much of his property during the confiscations by Mark [Antony](#) and [Octavian](#) (as has recently been so aptly described in the HBO television series “Rome”).



During this year and the following one there would be an extended conflict in Perusia between the legions of [Octavian](#), on the one side, and those of Lucius Antonius (a brother of Mark [Antony](#)) and his wife Fulvia.

Mark [Antony](#) met [Cleopatra](#) at Tarsus and followed her to [Egypt](#), where he would spend the winter. Cleopatra would become again pregnant.



At [Cleopatra](#)'s insistence, [Antony](#) ordered the execution of her younger sister Arsinoe, who had sought sanctuary at Ephesus.

Finally [Octavian](#) defeated Antony's brother Lucius Antonius and his wife Fulvia, at Perusia.



ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

40 BCE

Fulvia died. Presumably, therefore, by this time [Octavian](#) had written the six lines mentioning her that have been preserved for us by Martial, a little poem that presents us with four uses of the Latin verb *futuo*, to fuck. It is to be noted that one of these lines presents the verb as coming from the mouth of Fulvia, a woman — which must have made this little poem even more problematic:

Quod futuit Glaphyran Antonius, hanc mihi poenam
Fulvia constituit, se quoque uti futuam.
Fulviam ego ut futuam? quid si me Manius oret
pedicem? faciam? non, puto, si sapiam.
"aut futue aut pugnemus" ait. quid quod mihi vita
carior est ipsa mentula? signa canant!

A LITERAL TRANSLATION, DEVOID OF ANY ATTEMPT AT POETRY: "Because Antony is fucking Glaphyra, Fulvia decrees the following penalty for me, that I should fuck her too. I fuck Fulvia? What if Manius begged me to bugger him? Should I do it? Not, I think, if I had any sense. 'Either fuck or fight,' she says. What of the fact that my penis is dearer to me than life itself? Let the trumpets sound!"

MARCUS ANTONIUS

ANTONY

Antigonus attempted again to seize the throne, this time with the help of the Parthians. This time he was more successful and [Herod the Great](#) was forced to flee to Rome and ask the [Romans](#) to intercede with their legions. The Roman Senate appointed Herod as “King of the Jews.”

Mark [Antony](#) returned to Italy.

At Brundisium a treaty was forged between the Triumvirs Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus: [Octavian](#) was to focus his operations in the West (Spain, Sardinia, Sicily, Transalpine Gaul, Narbonne), [Antony](#) in the East (Macedonia, Asia, Bithynia, Cilicia, Syria), and Lepidus in Africa (Tunisia, Algeria). To seal this deal, Antony was given Octavian’s sister Octavia as his wife, this of course meaning that he was somehow being expected to set not [Egypt](#) but [Cleopatra](#) aside. However, six months after [Antony](#) left [Alexandria](#), [Cleopatra](#) gave birth to fraternal twins, first Alexander Helios (“Sun”) and then Cleopatra Selene (“Moon”).



39 BCE

It seemed like a good idea at the time in [Rome](#), so Mark [Antony](#) and [Octavian](#) Caesar appointed their friend [Herod the Great](#) to be king of Judea.



At Tarentum a treaty was forged in which Mark [Antony](#) and [Octavian](#) Caesar ceded the major islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica in the Mediterranean Sea to Sextus Pompeius as a “protectorate.” Octavian Caesar took as his wife Scribonia, a relative of Sextus Pompeius, with whom he would have one daughter who would be called Julia.

Mark [Antony](#) returned to Athens with Octavia. His legate Ventidius restored order in Syria and Asia Minor.

Octavia gave birth to Antonia Major, grandmother of the emperor [Nero](#).

38 BCE

After [Octavian Caesar](#) had engaged the ships of Sextus Pompey in two indecisive sea battles, Sextus Pompey lost his fleet to storms.



After [Octavian](#) Caesar's wife Scribonia had given birth to a daughter, Julia, he divorced her in order to marry Livia.

[Octavian](#) Caesar charged [Mark Antony](#) to meet him at Brundisium, but when the forces of Mark Antony arrived at Brundisium the forces of Octavian Caesar was not there. Mark Antony then led his men in a return toward the east.

The mandate of the 2d Triumvirate, which had been for five years, came to its close.

Mark [Antony](#)'s legate Ventidius celebrated a triumph in Rome, but soon afterward died.

ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

37 BCE

The mandate of the 2d Triumvirate ([Octavian](#) Caesar, Mark [Antony](#), and Lepidus, although this third member was no longer around) was renewed by the Senate of [Rome](#) for an additional 5 years.

Romans legions subdued Judaea and Antigonus was executed, ending the Hasmonean Dynasty. [Herod the Great](#), who had been named by the Roman Senate as King of the Jews, took up his duties as sole ruler in Judaea and assumed for himself the title *basileus*, beginning a Herodian Dynasty. He would rule there for 34 years.



Mark [Antony](#) sent Octavia, pregnant with their 2d child, back to [Italy](#), and [Cleopatra](#) joined him in Antioch.



At the naval base of [Naples](#) Marcus Vispanius Agrippa was training a great new fleet.

36 BCE

Yet further battles involving our favorite pushy people: at Naulochus in Sicily, [Octavian](#) Caesar, with the help of Marcus Vispanius Agrippa and Lepidus, defeated Sextus Pompey, and at Phraaspano, a battle was fought to a draw between the legions of Mark [Antony](#) and the Parthians under Phraates IV — these of course constituting attempts to restore [the Pax Romana](#).

When the Triumvir Lepidus then attempted to take over the island of Sicily, he and his army and his navy were forced into exile. What this meant was that henceforth any struggle would pit the East under Mark Antony against the [Romans](#) in the West under Octavian Caesar. In any such struggle Octavian Caesar would have access to considerably more military resources than Mark [Antony](#). By the elimination of Lepidus, that is, Octavian Caesar came into control of Africa and thus became the effective sole ruler in [Rome](#).

Failure of Mark [Antony](#)'s Parthian expedition.

Birth, to Mark [Antony](#) and Octavia, of Antonia Minor, mother of the emperor [Claudius](#) and grandmother of the emperor [Caligula](#).

Mark [Antony](#) and [Cleopatra](#) had some sort of marriage ceremony. She gave birth to another son, Ptolemaeus Philadelphos (meaning that during this singular year Mark Antony acquired a daughter by an occidental wife and a son by an oriental wife).



ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

35 BCE

Sallust died.

Mark [Antony](#) returned to [Alexandria](#) with [Cleopatra](#).



Octavia, [Octavian](#) Caesar's sister, brought to Athens troops, money, and supplies for Mark [Antony](#) — but he sent her home without coming to meet her.



Q. HORATII FLACCI SERMONUM LIBER PRIMUS or SATIRAE I (SATIRES, VOLUME I):

HORACE'S SATIRAE I
LONG LATIN DOWNLOAD
DONE INTO ENGLISH

44 Cæsar, the greatest of the Roman conquerors, after having fought fifty pitched battles, and slain 1,192,000 men, and overturned the liberties of his country, is killed in the senate-house.

35 The battle of Actium fought, in which Mark Antony and Cleopatra are totally defeated by Octavius, nephew to Julius Cæsar.

30 Alexandria, in Egypt, is taken by Octavius, upon which Antony and Cleopatra put themselves to death, and Egypt is reduced to a Roman province.

27 Octavius by a decree of the senate, obtains the title of Augustus Cæsar, and absolute exemption from the laws, and is properly the first Roman emperor.

8 Rome at this time is fifty miles in circumference, and contains 463,000 men fit to bear arms.

The temple of Janus is shut by Augustus as an emblem of universal peace, and JESUS CHRIST is born.

A. C.

12 JESUS CHRIST disputes with the doctors in the temple ;

27 ----- is baptized in the Wilderness by John ;

33 ----- is crucified ;

His Resurrection and Ascension.

36 St. Paul converted.

39 St. Matthew writes his Gospel.

Pontius Pilate kills himself.

40 The name of Christians first given at Antioch to the followers of Christ.

43 Claudius Cæsar's expedition into Britain.

44 St. Mark writes his Gospel.

49 London is founded by the Romans ; 368, surrounded by ditto with a wall, some parts of which are still observable.

51 Caractacus, the British king, is carried in chains to Rome.

St. Luke writes his Gospel.

ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

34 BCE

Mark [Antony](#) succeeded in his military campaign in Armenia, and annexed it to [Rome](#). He then decisively broke off his alliance with [Octavian](#) Caesar by staging a “triumph” in [Alexandria](#) to celebrate this victory of his and by officially divorcing Octavian’s sister Octavia. He announced that he was dividing much of Rome’s eastern provinces among the children of [Cleopatra](#) ([Caesarion](#), and three more whom he had himself since fathered), declaring Octavian to be a usurper of Caesar’s rightful heir Caesarion, his wife’s son by [Julius Caesar](#).



He was flipping [Octavian](#) off, right and left. Hey dude, you don’t got the real Caesar moxie, it’s me, I got the real Caesar moxie!

33 BCE

The clock ran out on the 2d 5-year period of the 2d Triumvirate (from which Lepidus had already been ousted) while [Octavian](#) Caesar was campaigning in Illyria. Octavian Caesar began making nasty remarks about Mark [Antony](#).

MARCUS ANTONIUS

ANTONY

32 BCE

Mark [Antony](#) divorced Octavia. There was a “war of words” between him and her brother [Octavian](#) Caesar. Octavian Caesar acquired and proclaimed in the Senate of [Rome](#) the contents of Mark [Antony](#)’s will, which had declared [Caesarion](#) as [Julius Caesar](#)’s lawful heir. The Senate, alarmed at this evidence of Mark [Antony](#)’s preferring the East over the West, his willingness to advance the interests of [Cleopatra](#)’s [Egypt](#) over those of Rome, declared war on Egypt and assigned Octavian Caesar the title of “Dux” or leader of this war effort. Some of the senators, however, defected to Mark Antony.



ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

31 BCE

September 2: Yet another altercation involving our favorite pushy people, the [Romans](#):



Off Cape Actium on the coast of western Greece, the fleet of Mark [Antony](#) was completely defeated by the fleet of [Octavian](#) (who had for the 3d time become a consul of [Rome](#)) commanded by Marcus Vispanius Agrippa, after which Antony fled to [Egypt](#) with his ally [Cleopatra](#) toward [Alexandria](#).



ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS

August 12: [Cleopatra](#) VII, queen of denial, failing to make an acceptable deal with [Octavian](#), used a poisonous snake to follow her husband Mark [Antony](#) to the grave. They had sent [Caesarion](#), then 17, from the palace in



[Alexandria](#) toward the Red Sea port of Berenice, possibly with a plan to escape to India (since Octavian is said to have remarked that two Caesars was one too many, it is possible that he had him killed, but, first in the Asterix comic book and then in the HBO special, with great dramatic interest, the lad is allowed to survive since this makes for so much more pleasant a children's story). Cleopatra's three younger children would be taken to Rome and would grow up in the household of Octavia Minor, Octavian's second eldest sister. Cleopatra's daughter would marry the king of Numidia and Mauritania, Juba II:



Cleopatra's sons must somehow have died because had they remained alive they would have been reasonably important — and we have turned up no trace whatever of them.

29 BCE

August 13-15: [Egypt](#) was a Roman province. On these three successive days [Rome](#) celebrated three separate triumphs (those of Illyria, Actium, and [Alexandria](#)), attributing this success to the god Apollo since [Octavian](#)'s modesty had no limits.

During the celebration the three orphans of [Antony](#) and [Cleopatra](#) were paraded draped in gold chains of such weight that not only the 6-year-old Ptolemaeus Philadelphus but also the older twins Alexander Helios and Cleopatra Selene would turn out to be quite unable to walk. This influx of money and booty brought about a sharp decrease in interest rates which made Octavian exceedingly popular among the people.

24 BCE

The TV series “I, [Claudius](#)” opens with a bunch of dancers shaking their naked stuff for the benefit of a dinner party being held in celebration of the 7th anniversary of the Battle of Actium. A cake has been prepared in the shape of Marcus Vispanius Agrippa’s ship. Aristarchus, a Greek orator, performs a “prose hymn” about the virtues of dinner guests [Augustus Caesar](#) and Marcus Vispanius Agrippa over Mark [Antony](#) and [Cleopatra](#).



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ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS



in writing from the "Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project, 833 Berkeley St., Durham NC 27705. Please contact the project at <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.

"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: December 7, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT
GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.



COPIED FROM THE INTERNET



Popular etymologies agree, unfortunately incorrectly, that this is an acronym meaning either Fornication Under Consent of the King or For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge. The latter usually accompanying a story about how medieval prisoners were forced to wear this word on their clothing. Deriving the etymology of this word is difficult, as it has been under a taboo for most of its existence and citations are rare. The earliest known use, according to American Heritage and Lighter, predates 1500 and is from a poem written in a mix of Latin and English and entitled "Flen flyys." The relevant line reads:

"Non sunt in celi quia fuccant uuiuys of heli."

Translated:

"They [the monks] are not in heaven because they fuck the wives of Ely [a town near Cambridge]."

Fuccant is a pseudo-Latin word and in the original it is written in cipher to further disguise it.

Ayto mentions the word's use in 1278 as a personal name, John le Fucker, but fails to provide a citation. The earliest usage cite in the OED2 dates from 1503 and is in the form 'fukkit.' The earliest cite of the current spelling is from 1535.

The word was not in common (published) use prior to the 1960s. Shakespeare did not use it, although he did hint at it for comic effect. In Merry Wives of Windsor (IV.i) he gives us the pun "focative case." In Henry V (IV.iv), the character Pistol threatens to "firk" a French soldier, a word meaning "to strike," but commonly used as an Elizabethan euphemism for fuck. In the same play (III.iv), Princess Katherine confuses the English words "foot" and "gown" for the French "foutre" and "coun" (fuck and cunt, respectively) with comic results. Other poets did use the word, although it was far from common. Robert Burns, for example, used it in an unpublished manuscript.

The taboo was so strong that for 170 years, from 1795 to 1965, fuck did not appear in a single dictionary of the English language. In 1948, the publishers of The Naked and the Dead persuaded Norman Mailer to use the euphemism "fug" instead, resulting in Dorothy Parker's comment upon meeting Mailer: "So you're the man who can't spell fuck."

The root is undoubtedly Germanic, as it has cognates in other Northern European languages: Middle Dutch fokken meaning to thrust, to copulate with; dialectical Norwegian fukka meaning to copulate; and dialectical Swedish focka meaning to strike, push, copulate, and fock meaning penis. Both French and Italian have similar words, foutre and fottare respectively. These derive from the Latin futuere.

While these cognates exist, they are probably not the source of fuck, rather they probably come from a common root. Most of the



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early known usages of the English word come from Scotland, leading some scholars to believe that the word comes from Scandinavian sources. Others disagree, believing that the number or northern cites reflects that the taboo was weaker in Scotland and the north, resulting in more surviving usages. The fact that there are citations, albeit fewer of them, from southern England dating from the same period seems to bear out this latter theory.



FROM: ALISON PARKER <APARKER@STATESMAN.COM>

On Classics-L not long ago, during a discussion of a certain four-letter word, a list member asked for a full copy of the poem "Flen Flyys," described below. No such copy appeared, and I had little luck with my Web searches. Even my direct request to Indiana University's fabulous John Dyson turned up nothing. Could the English scholars in Phil-Lit point to the best place to find the poem in question? It's gotta be quick - in three weeks, I'll be hidden away in the Ozarks, far from a decent library.

WARNING: Language below may wound tender eyes.

<http://www.wilton.net/wordorf.htm>

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<http://www.netmonkey.com/magazine/9805/matters/matters980515.html>

"Flen flyys" written sometime before 1500, is in code, illustrating its offensive clout even then. The line that contains 'fuck' reads "Non sunt in coeli, quia gxddbfov xxkxzt pg ifmk."

The Latin words "Non sunt in coeli, quia" mean "they [the friars] are not in heaven, since." The code "gxddbfov xxkxzt pg ifmk" is easily broken by simply writing the preceding letter in the alphabet. This yields (in Latin) "fvccant [a fake Latin form] vvivys of heli." The whole thus reads in translation: "They are not in heaven because they fuck wives of Ely [a town near Cambridge]."



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THE DIRTIEST LIMERICK EVER

In such a context it might be appropriate to quote Isaac Asimov, a lifelong lover of the lubricious limerick:

It appears that a young couple were trying to outdo each other in coming up with dirty limericks. However, they had a problem: dirty words embarrassed them. Since they felt tender toward each other, they had reason to be concerned that certain types of language might wound tender eyes. One day Sally runs over to Jim's apartment and blurts out breathlessly, "Wow, have I found a super dirty limerick! It's just incredibly full of, you know, language." And Jim goes, "OK, tell it to me." Sally blushes: "I can't." So Jim goes, "Tell you what. Whenever you come to a dirty word, just say "ta-da" and I'll just try to fill it in and that way neither of us will be embarrassed." "Great," says Sally, "here goes.":

Ta-da, ta-da-da, ta-da-dah,
Ta-da, ta-da-da, ta-da-dah,
Ta-da, ta-da-dah,
Ta-da, ta-da-dah,
Ta-da, ta-da-da, ta-da fuck.



MY COMMENTARY

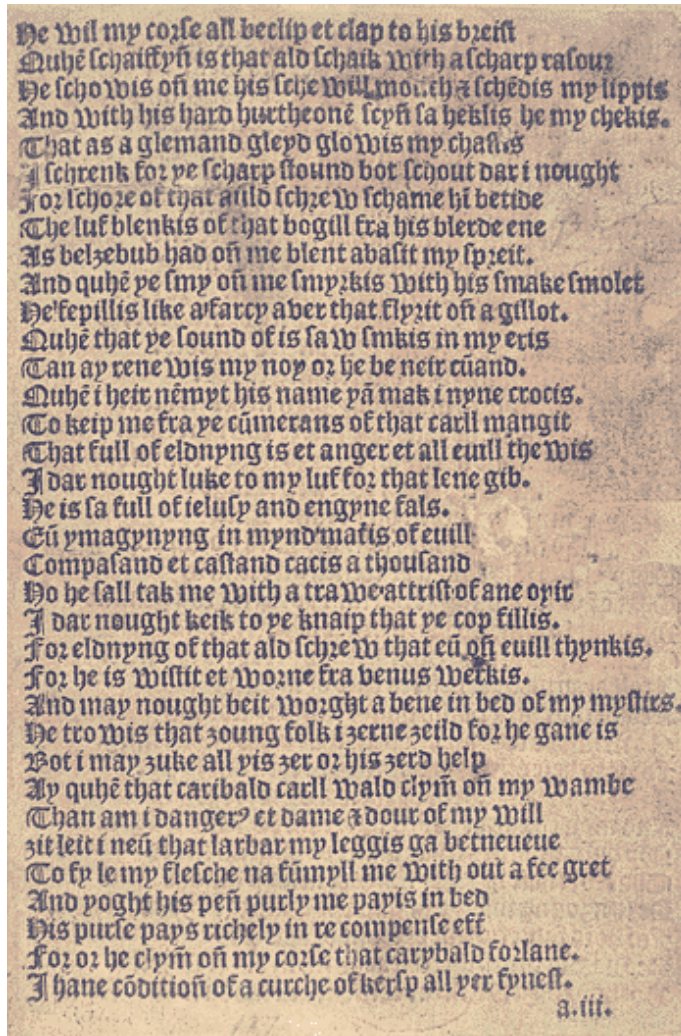
Presumably, by the time Fulvia died in 40 BCE, [Octavian](#) had written the six lines mentioning her that have been preserved for us by Martial, a little poem that presents us with four uses of the Latin verb *futuo*, to fuck. It is to be noted that one of these lines presents the verb as coming from the mouth of Fulvia, a woman – which must have made this little poem even more problematic:

Quod futuit Glaphyran Antonius, hanc mihi poenam
Fulvia constituit, se quoque uti futuam.
Fulviam ego ut futuam? quid si me Manius oret
pedicem? faciam? non, puto, si sapiam.
“aut futue aut pugnemus” ait. quid quod mihi vita
carior est ipsa mentula? signa canant!

A literal translation, devoid of any attempt at poetry, would be as follows: “Because Antony is fucking Glaphyra, Fulvia decrees the following penalty for me, that I should fuck her too. I fuck Fulvia? What if Manius begged me to bugger him? Should I do it? Not, I think, if I had any sense. ‘Either fuck or fight,’ she says. What of the fact that my penis is dearer to me than life itself? Let the trumpets sound!”

I have no knowledge of any poetic use of the term predating the 16th Century in any language approximating English. I had thought that the first use of the word “fuck” in poetry in any language approximating English occurred in a poem dating to 1503 or earlier, by [Henry David Thoreau](#)’s remote ancestor [William Dunbar](#). If you do establish some use prior to William Dunbar’s of 1503 or thereabouts, please do let me know!

That first literary appearance of the term in any language approximating English is in Dunbar's poem that begins "In secreit place....," that presumably was composed by that year at the latest since by 1504 he would have taken holy orders.



The other early recorded uses of the word are also by Scots authors – possibly in its day this reference was hardly more questionable than Chaucer's "swive." Beginning with a "y" character that looks sorta like a backward script numeral three, Line 13 reads as follows:

[Y]it be his feiris he wald haif fukkit:

In the notes this line translates out more or less as "were this per his longing, he would be fucking her." The rhyme scheme is croppit / bedroppit / gukkit / chukkit / ourgane / fukkit / ane:

croppit, kemd and = combed and trimmed

bedroppit = dewed

gukkit, peirt and = impulsive and foolish behavior he chukkit = he diddled her



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ourgane, with the glaikkis he wer = with sexual desire he was overcome

fukkit, he wald haif = he would be in sexual congress

ane, my bony = my bonny one

Here in full are the first two stanzas of the poem:

In secreit place this hindir nycht

I hard ane bern say till a bricht:

My hunny, my houp, my hairt, my heill,

I haif bene lang [y]our lufar leill

And can of [y]ow gett confort nane;

How lang will [y]e with denger deill?

[Y]e brek my hart, my bony ane.

His bony berd wes kemd and croppit

Bot all with kaill it wes bedroppit

And he wes townsyche, peirt and gukkit.

He clappit fast, he kist, he chukkit

As with the glaikkis he wer ourgane-

[Y]it be his feiris he wald haif fukkit:

[Y]e brek my hairt, my bony ane.

As the poem continues, the town lad's need is never satisfied by the country maid, so the deployment of "fukkit" is in regard to intent rather than accomplishment. -But now we know that Thoreau inherited his scatological sense of humor from his mom's Dunbar side of the family!