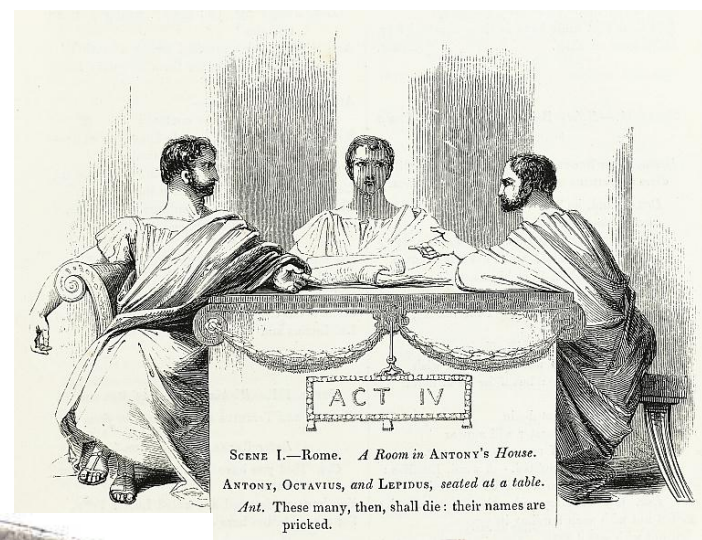




From Village to Empire.

Lecture 18

Caesar's legacy and the Rise of Octavian

Sources on this period

- Cicero (105-43 BC), *Philippics*, *Letters to Atticus*, *Letters to His Friends*
- Augustus (AD 14), *Res Gestae*
- Suetonius (ca. AD 63-after 120), *Life of Divus Augustus*
- Plutarch (ca. AD 46-120, *Life of Antony*
- Appian (c. AD 95-165), *The Civil Wars*, books 3-5
- Cassius Dio (AD 155-235?), *Roman History*, books 44-52.

Immediate consequences of Caesar's assassination

- Brief revival of the idea of Republican freedom (*libertas*)
- Political instability in Rome and Italy
- Struggle for the political legacy of Caesar
- Caesar adopts posthumously young M. Octavius



Competing factions

- Long-time associates of Caesar: Mark Antony, Lepidus
- Octavius – now Gaius Caesar Octavianus
- Senatorial elite – including Cicero
- The Caesaricides, led by M. Iunius Brutus and C. Crassus Longinus

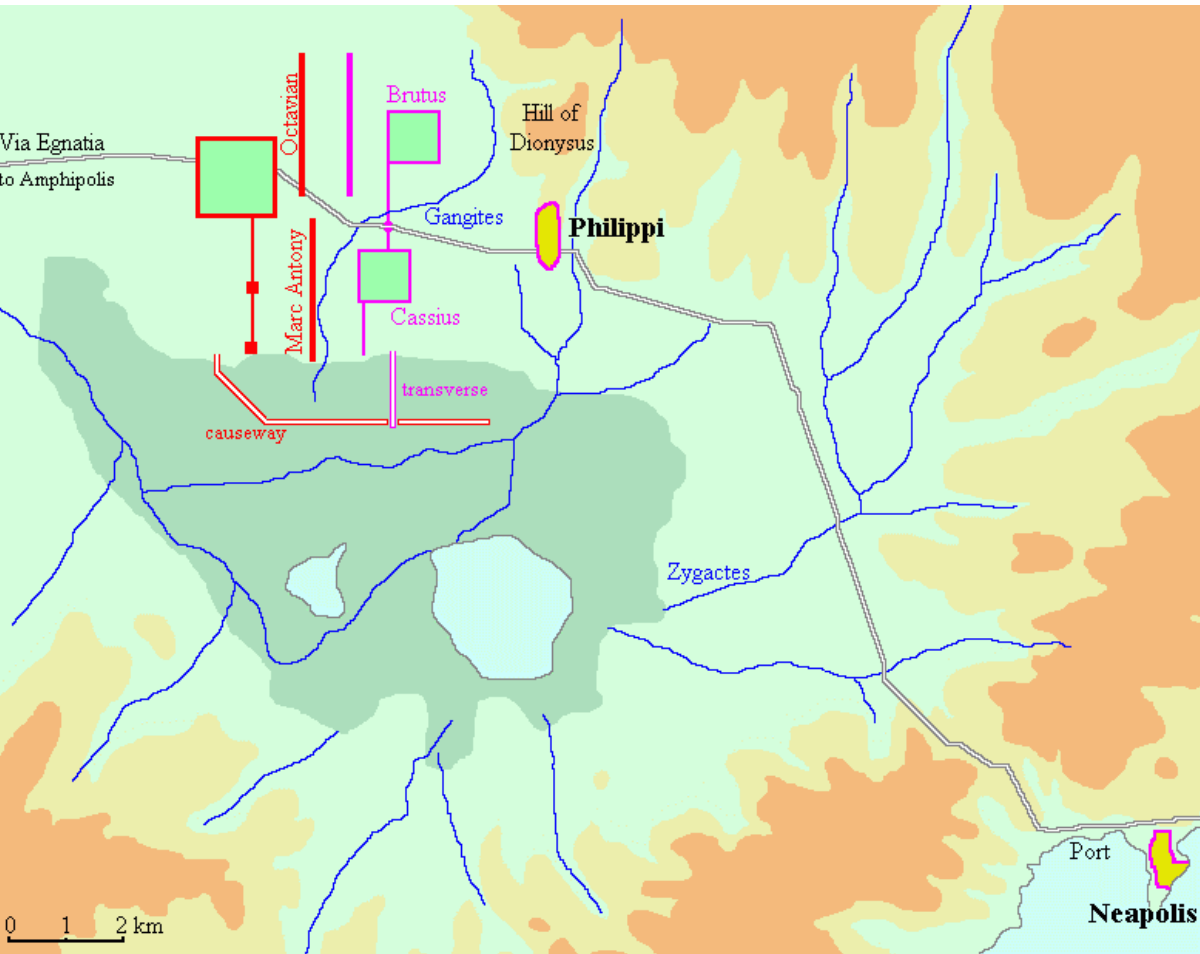
Coins of the Caesaricides before Philippi



Chronology of events

- 43 BC: The Second triumvirate (43 BC):**
Octavius-Antony-Lepidus. Proscriptions. Death of Cicero
- 42 BC: The Civil Wars (battle of Philippi)**
- 40 BC: Treaty of Brundisium** between the
Triumvirs: Octavian gets the West, Antony the East, Lepidus Africa.
- 38 BC:** Octavian fights with Sextus Pompeius and loses his fleets in storms; divorces Scribonia upon the birth of Julia and marries Livia. The Triumvirate's mandate runs out.

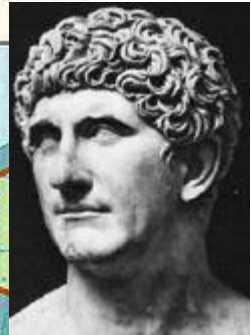
Battle of Philippi



The Second Triumvirate: Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus

- A temporary alliance, based on political convenience
- Formalised as a Republican magistracy
- The triumviri designate the key magistrates for several years to come
- Division of the empire
- Marginalisation of Lepidus after Philippi

A black and white photograph of a classical marble bust of a young man, likely a Roman emperor or noble, with short, wavy hair and a serious expression. The bust is shown from the chest up, with the head slightly turned to the left. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of the face and the texture of the marble. The background is dark and indistinct.



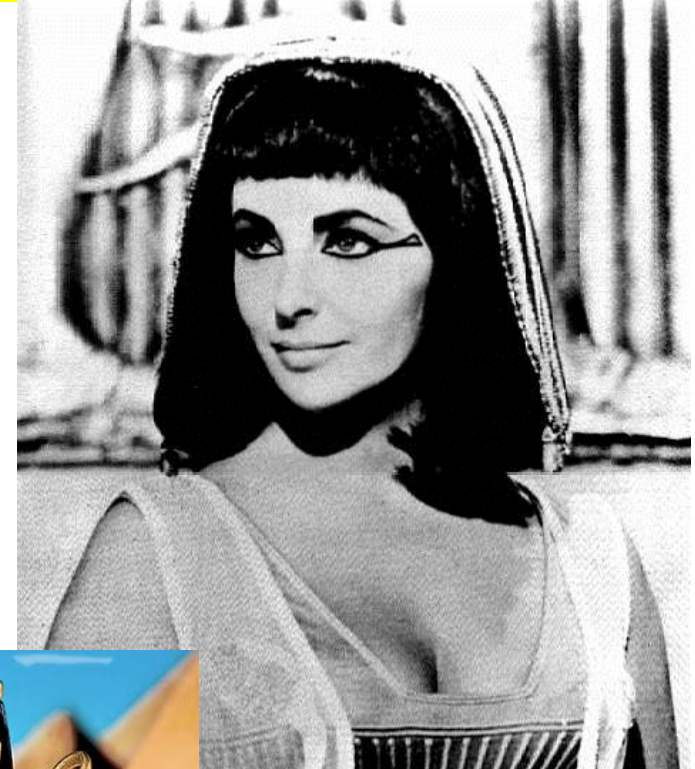
Chronology of the events

- 37 BC:** Triumvirate renewed (5 years). Agrippa trains a new fleet. Antony marries Cleopatra and starts his disastrous Parthian Campaign.
- 36 BC:** Octavian defeats Sextus Pompeius at Naulochus in Sicily; Lepidus attempts to take over Sicily but loses his army and is sent into exile. East and West are now in complete control of two men.
- 34 BC:** Antony breaks with Rome and Octavian. He divorces Octavia. Antony divides Rome's eastern empire among Cleopatra's children and declares Caesarion Caesar's rightful heir.

Cleopatra



© Alaa K. Ashmawy



Cleopatra and Antony



Plutarch, Life of Antony 27: “The attraction of her person, joining with the charm of her conversation, and the character that attended all she said or did, was something bewitching.”



Propaganda and Political Rivalry on Coins. Evolution



1. Antony and Octavian (41 BC);
2. Alliance between Antony and Octavian (39 BC);
3. Antony and Octavia (40? BC)

Propaganda and Political Rivalry on Coins. Evolution



Chronology of the events

32 BC: Octavian reads Antony's will in the Senate. The senate declares war on Egypt and Cleopatra.

Plutarch, Life of Antony. Octavian reads Antony's will

“It was deposited in the hands of the vestal virgins, who refused to deliver it up, and sent Caesar word, if he pleased, he should come and seize it himself, which he did. And, reading it over to himself, he noted those places that were most for his purpose, and, having summoned the senate, read them publicly. Many were scandalized at the proceeding, thinking it out of reason and equity to call a man to account for what was not to be until after his death. Caesar specially pressed what Antony said in his will about his burial; for he had ordered that even if he died in the city of Rome, his body, after being carried in state through the forum, should be sent to Cleopatra at Alexandria.”

Chronology of the events

31 BC: Octavian and Agrippa victorious over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium.

30 BC: battle of Alexandria. Death of Antony and Cleopatra.

Battle of Actium

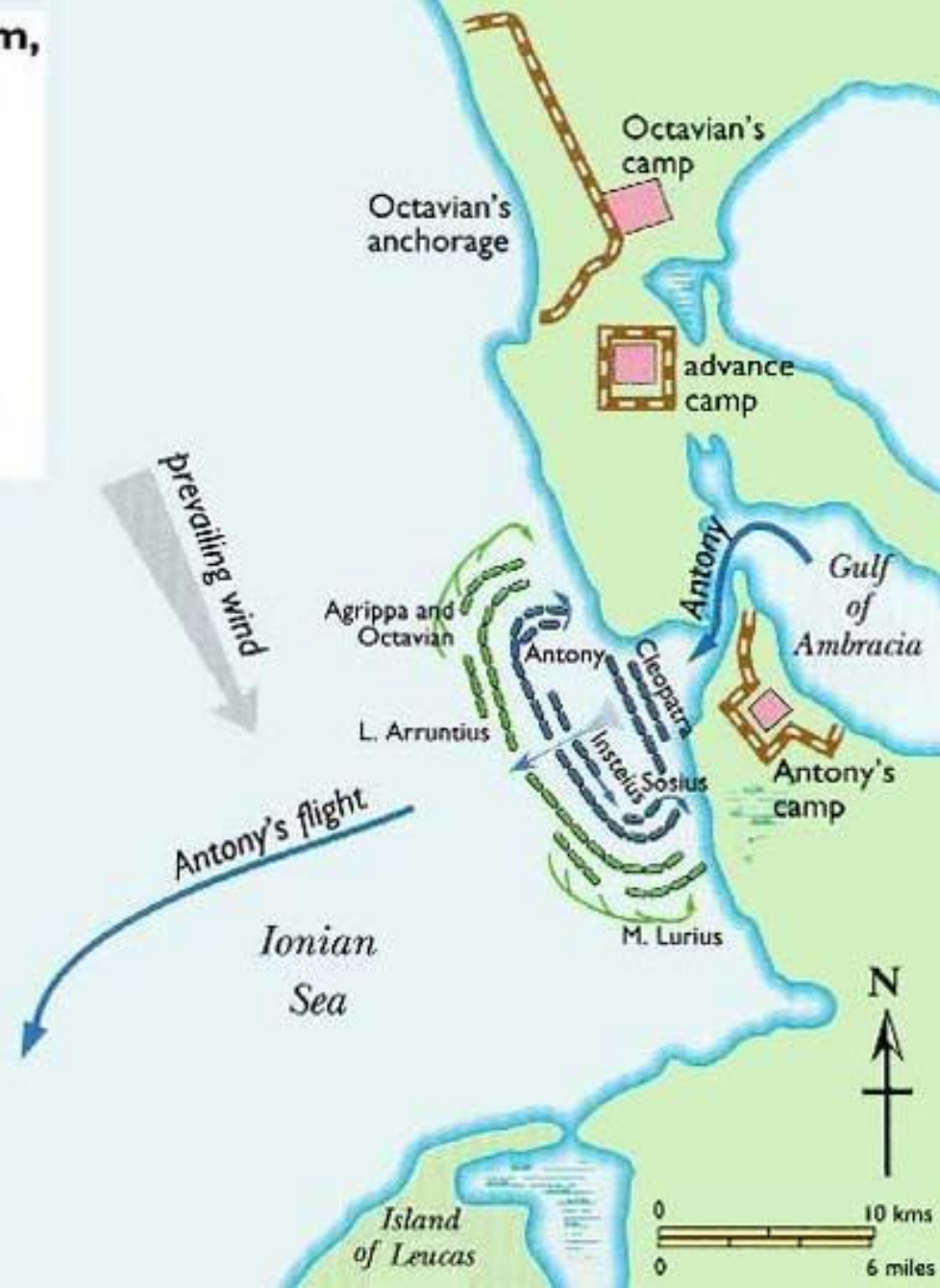
The Battle of Actium, 2 September 31 BC

 Octavian's fleet (400 warships)

 Antony's fleet (230 warships)

 salt marsh

 direction of wind



Actium: Suetonius' Life of Augustus, 17

“At last he broke off his alliance with Marcus Antonius, which was always doubtful and uncertain, and with difficulty kept alive by various reconciliations; and the better to show that his rival had fallen away from conduct becoming a citizen, he had the will which Antonius had left in Rome, naming his children by Cleopatra among his heirs, opened and read before the people. But when Antonius was declared a public enemy... Not long afterwards [31 B.C.] he won the sea-fight at Actium, where the contest continued to so late an hour that the victor passed the night on board. --and then went to Egypt by a roundabout way through Asia and Syria,...

The Death of Antony and Cleopatra: Suetonius' Life of Augustus, 17

“He laid siege to Alexandria, where Antonius had taken refuge with Cleopatra, and soon took the city. Although Antonius tried to make terms at the eleventh hour, Augustus forced him to commit suicide, and viewed his corpse. He greatly desired to save Cleopatra alive for his triumph, and even had Psylli brought to her, to suck the poison from her wound, since it was thought that she died from the bite of an asp. He allowed them both the honour of burial, and in the same tomb, giving orders that the mausoleum which they had begun should be finished...