

## Nostradamus Decoded

### Overview

Michel de Nostredame—better known as Nostradamus—was a 16th-century French astrologer, physician, and reputed seer. His famed work *\*Les Prophéties\**, first published in 1555, consists of 942 poetic quatrains arranged into ten “Centuries” (groups of 100 quatrains each), with Century VII only preserving 42 quatrains, likely due to lost manuscripts.

### Why 942 Quatrains?

- Nostradamus structured his work into neat sets: ten centuries of 100 each.
- However, Century VII is incomplete—only 42 quatrains remain, possibly due to missing pages or publication loss.

### Use of Repeats, Obscure Language, and Cryptic Structure

- Nostradamus employed a deliberate mix of languages (French, Provençal, Latin, Greek, Italian), anagrams, and symbolic wordplay.
- The structure itself isn’t chronological—quatrains are shuffled and often disconnected, making interpretation more complex.
- He referenced the phrase *\*raboutier obscurément\** (“to mix in order to make them obscure”), highlighting his aim to conceal prophecies from authorities.

### Impact of Secrecy: Why He Did It

- In the 16th century, being perceived as a prophet could be dangerous. He risked being charged with sorcery, tortured, or executed by religious or civil authorities.
- To protect himself, he encoded his writings in cryptic language, layering metaphor, multilingual puns, and anagrams—ensuring only the attentive, educated reader might piece together his meaning.

### What We’ve Written (Summary)

1. Total Quatrains: 942 in ten centuries (Century VII only has 42 quatrains).
2. Obscuration Techniques: Use of multiple languages, anagrams, metaphors, and cryptic syntax.
3. Structural Complexity: Nonlinear order of quatrains, repeats, and rearranged verses to further mask meaning.
4. Reason for Obscurity: Shield against accusations of sorcery or heresy—provide vague, coded messages rather than overt predictions.