

Is This The True Image of Gaius Cassius Longinus?

Post by "Cassius" of September 9, 2021 at 10:19 AM

I just came across on the Wikipedia page that this bust is being suggested as the true image of Cassius Longinus, rather than "Corbulo" as previously identified. The reasoning for this is contained in the book by Sheldon Nodelman: "[Ancient Portraits In the J Paul Getty Museum](#)" which can be downloaded [here](#).



Figure 14a. Front view of bust of a man: C. Cassius Longinus? ("Pseudo-Corbulo"). Rome, Palazzo dei Conservatori 561. Photo: Courtesy DAI, Rome.

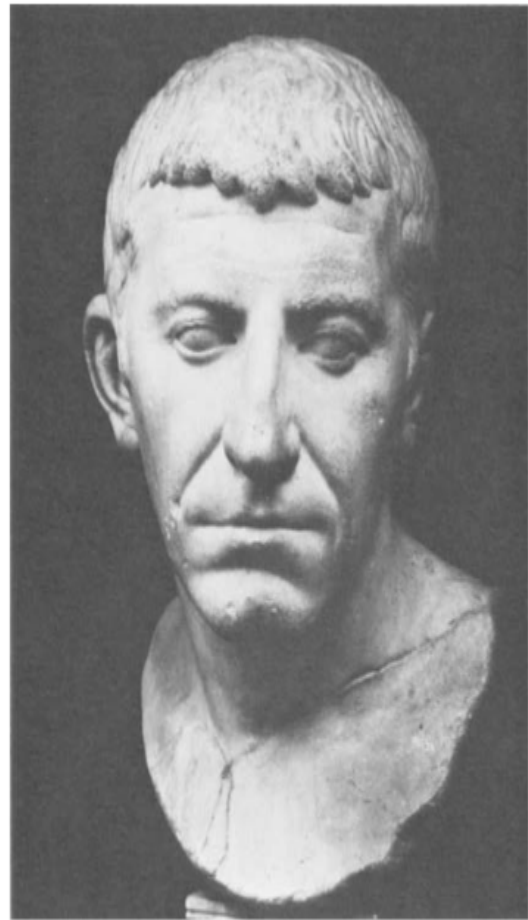


Figure 14b. Three-quarter view of bust, figure 14a. Photo: Courtesy Musei Capitolini, Barbara Malter.

Much of the reasoning for assigning this to Cassius is contained in footnote 59 on page 59:

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2187-is-this-the-true-image-of-gaius-cassius-longinus/?postID=13869#post13869>

attempt to identify a bronze portrait in the Louvre as a further replica of the type [p. 19, with n. 111, pls. 8a, 10f] is unconvincing.)

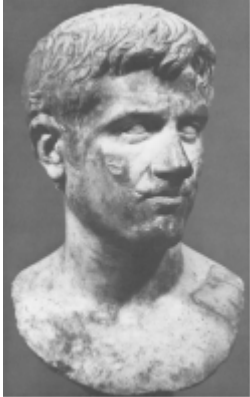
59. Schmidt ([supra, note 20], pp. 15ff.) pointed out in 1944 that the "Corbulo" type could not be Flavian, as the traditional identification required, but must on grounds of style represent a personality of the late Republic. At least one and perhaps two replicas of the type were found at Gabii in a commemorative chapel dedicated in A.D. 140 to Domitia Longina, daughter of Corbulo and widow of the emperor Domitian. With Corbulo excluded, the type ought to represent another, earlier ancestor of Domitia. Jucker ([supra, note 20], pp. 355f.) has suggested two candidates as appropriate in date and of suitable renown: Cassius the tyrannicide and L. Domitius Ahenobarbus (cos. 54 B.C.), who died at Pharsalus in 48. If it is he, as seems likely, who is represented in the older of the two portraits upon the obverse of coins struck in 40 by his son Gnaeus (Sydenham, p. 191, no. 1176; Toynbee, p. 60, fig. 83; the commemoration of Pompey on the contemporary coins of the latter's sons Gnaeus and Sextus affords an obvious parallel; cf. G. Lahusen, "Das Bildnis des Konsuls Cn. Lentulus Marcellinus," AA, 1985, pp. 113–117, who shows that the obverse portraits on late Republican coins usually commemorate the moneyers' fathers rather than more remote ancestors), then the identification can be excluded. In any case Ahenobarbus' end was hardly a glorious one, and he does not seem to have enjoyed such posthumous renown outside his own family as would motivate such a replica series as has survived. Cassius, however, fits very well the criteria of posthumous fame, appropriate age, and date of original. The physical type (lean!) of the portrait also suits the literary accounts of Cassius' appearance. Balty, p. 199, has objected that the angle of head to neck in the surviving replicas of the

pseudo-Corbulo type indicates a seated statue, and that this ought to connote a man of letters rather than a political figure. This objection does not seem compelling. The *sella curulis* was of course one of the chief insignia of a Roman magistrate. Aside from the frequent instances of seated Imperial statues (see, e.g., H.G. Niemeyer, *Studien zur statuarischen Darstellung der römischen Kaiser* [Berlin, 1968], pp. 59ff.; also the representation of a seated togate statue of Trajan on one of the *Anaglypha Traiani*: M. Hammond, "A Statue of Trajan Represented on the 'Anaglypha Traiani,'" *MAAR* 21 [1953], pp. 127–183), a relevant Republican example is the statue of Sulla on the Bocchus Monument. The coins show him seated: Carson, p. 54, no. 186; Kent-Hirmer [supra, note 23], pl. 18, no. 69, p. 270; cf. T. Hölscher, "Römische Siegesdenkmäler der späten Republik," in H.A. Cahn, ed., *Taenia. Festschrift Roland Hampe* (Mainz, 1980), pp. 357ff.; T. Schäfer, "Das Siegesdenkmal von Kapitol," in H.G. Horn and C.B. Rügner, eds., *Die Numider: Reiter und Könige nördlich der Sahara* (Cologne and Bonn, 1979), pp. 247ff. Quite apart from this, the characterization of the portrait subject is hardly that typical for a poet or philosopher.

60. E. G. C. Michalowski, *Les portraits hellénistiques et romains*, vol. 13, *Exploration archéologique de Délos* (Paris, 1932), pls. 9–10, 23; Stewart, pls. 18b–c, 19b, 22a–b.

61. Naples, Museo Nazionale 6141: *Guida Reusch*, no. 1087; Hekler, pl. 73b, p. 316; Zanker, p. 37, pl. 31; Hafner, pp. 31f., no. MK3, pl. 11. The most famous example of this sort—if one concedes to Hafner's opinion that it is indeed a portrait—is none other than the Borghese Warrior of the Louvre: Hafner, p. 30, no. MK1, pl. 10.

I note that the book contains lots of interesting material, not the least of which is this
the bust of Cassius' collaborator, Brutus:



Open to show view of face of a man, here identified as Gaius Cassius Longinus, Roman, 1st century B.C. Photo: Museum of Art, University of Michigan

