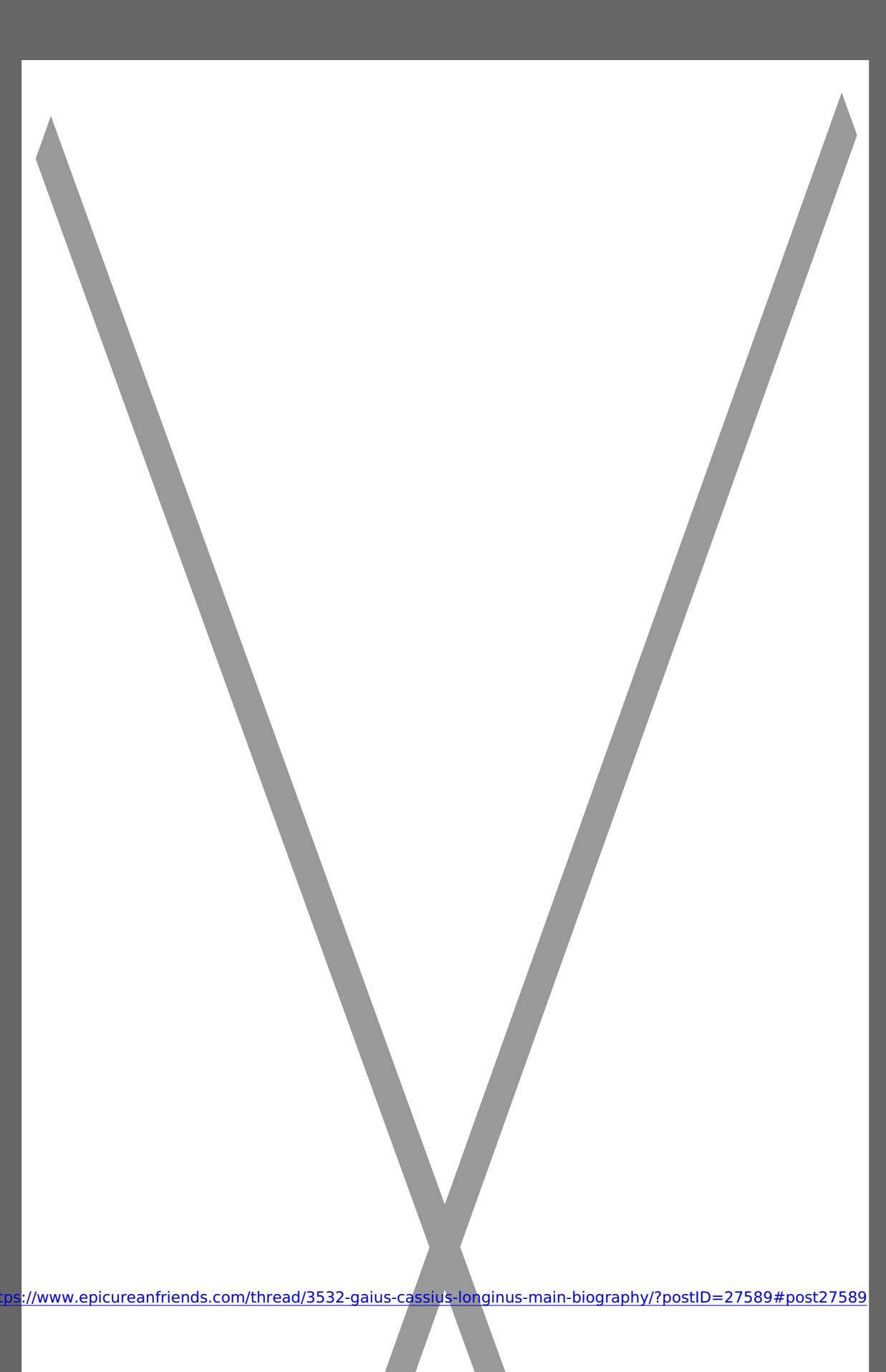


Gaius Cassius Longinus - Main Biography

Post by "Cassius" of November 20, 2023 at 3:25 PM

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Gaius Cassius Longinus ([Classical Latin](#): [ˈɡaːi.ʊs ˈkassi.ʊs ˈlɔŋɡɪnʊs]; c. 86 BC – 3 October 42 BC) was a [Roman senator](#) and general best known as a leading instigator of the plot to assassinate [Julius Caesar](#) on 15 March 44 BC.^{[4][5][6]} He was the brother-in-law of [Brutus](#), another leader of [the conspiracy](#). He commanded troops with Brutus during the [Battle of Philippi](#) against the combined forces of [Mark Antony](#) and [Octavian](#), Caesar's former supporters, and committed suicide after being defeated by Mark Antony.

Cassius was elected as [Tribune of the plebs](#) in 49 BC. He opposed Caesar, and eventually he commanded a fleet against him during [Caesar's Civil War](#): after Caesar defeated [Pompey](#) in the [Battle of Pharsalus](#), Caesar overtook Cassius and forced him to surrender. After Caesar's death, Cassius fled to the East, where he amassed an army of twelve legions. He was supported and made Governor by the Senate. Later he and Brutus marched west against the allies of the [Second Triumvirate](#).

He followed the teachings of the philosopher [Epicurus](#), although scholars debate whether or not these beliefs affected his political life. Cassius is a main character in [William Shakespeare](#)'s play [Julius Caesar](#) that depicts the [assassination of Caesar](#) and its aftermath. He is also shown in the lowest circle of [Hell](#) in [Dante's Inferno](#) as punishment for betraying and killing Caesar.^{[7][8]}

Biography[[edit](#)]

Early life[[edit](#)]



[Denarius](#) (42 BC) issued by Cassius Longinus and [Lentulus Spinther](#), depicting the crowned head of [Liberty](#) and on the reverse a sacrificial jug and [lituus](#). From the military mint in [Smyrna](#) Gaius Cassius Longinus came from a very old Roman family, [gens Cassia](#), which had been prominent in Rome since the 6th century BC. Little is known of his early life, apart from a story that he showed his dislike of despots while still at school, by quarreling with the son of the dictator [Sulla](#).^[9] He studied philosophy at [Rhodes](#) under Archelaus of Rhodes and became fluent in [Greek](#).^[10] He was married to [Junia Tertia](#), who was the daughter of [Servilia](#) and thus a half-sister of his co-conspirator [Brutus](#). They had one son, who was born in about 60 BC.^[11]

Carrhae and Syria[[edit](#)]

In 54 BC, Cassius joined [Marcus Licinius Crassus](#) in his eastern campaign against the [Parthian Empire](#). In 53 BC, Crassus suffered a decisive defeat at the [Battle of Carrhae](#) in Northern-[Mesopotamia](#) losing two-thirds of his army. Cassius led the remaining troops' retreat back into Syria, and organised an effective defence force for the province. Based on Plutarch's account, the defeat at Carrhae could have been avoided had Crassus acted as Cassius had advised. According to Dio, the Roman soldiers, as well as Crassus himself, were willing to give the overall command to Cassius after the initial disaster in the battle, which Cassius "very properly"

refused. The Parthians also considered Cassius as equal to Crassus in authority, and superior to him in skill.[12]

In 51 BC, Cassius was able to ambush and defeat an invading Parthian army under the command of prince [Pacorus](#) and general Osaces. He first refused to do battle with the Parthians, keeping his army behind the walls of [Antioch](#) (Syria's most important city) where he was besieged. When the Parthians gave up the siege and started to ravage the countryside, he followed them with his army harrying them as they went. The decisive encounter came on October 7 as the Parthians turned away from Antigonea. As they set about their return journey they were confronted by a detachment of Cassius' army, which faked a retreat and lured the Parthians into an ambush. The Parthians were suddenly surrounded by Cassius' main forces and defeated. Their general Osaces died from his wounds, and the rest of the Parthian army retreated back across the [Euphrates](#).[13]

Civil war[[edit](#)]

Cassius returned to Rome in 50 BC, when [civil war](#) was about to break out between [Julius Caesar](#) and [Pompey](#). Cassius was elected [tribune of the Plebs](#) for 49 BC, and threw in his lot with the [Optimates](#), although his brother [Lucius Cassius](#) supported Caesar. Cassius left Italy shortly after Caesar crossed the [Rubicon](#). He met Pompey in [Greece](#), and was appointed to command part of his fleet.

In 48 BC, Cassius sailed his ships to [Sicily](#), where he attacked and burned a large part of Caesar's navy.[14] He then proceeded to harass ships off the [Italian](#) coast. News of Pompey's defeat at the [Battle of Pharsalus](#) caused Cassius to head for the [Hellespont](#), with hopes of allying with the king of [Pontus](#), [Pharnaces II](#). Cassius was overtaken by Caesar en route, and was forced to surrender unconditionally.[15]

Caesar made Cassius a [legate](#), employing him in the [Alexandrian War](#) against the very same Pharnaces whom Cassius had hoped to join after Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus. However, Cassius refused to join in the fight against [Cato](#) and [Scipio](#) in [Africa](#), choosing instead to retire to Rome.

Cassius spent the next two years in office, and apparently tightened his friendship with [Cicero](#). [16] In 44 BC, he became [praetor peregrinus](#) with the promise of the [Syrian](#) province for the ensuing year. The appointment of his junior and brother-in-law, [Marcus Brutus](#), as [praetor urbanus](#) deeply offended him.[17]

Although Cassius was "the moving spirit" in the plot against Caesar, winning over the chief assassins to the cause of [tyrannicide](#), Brutus became their leader.[18] On the [Ides of March](#), 44 BC, Cassius urged on his fellow liberators and struck Caesar in the chest. Though they succeeded in [assassinating Caesar](#), the celebration was short-lived, as [Mark Antony](#) seized power and turned the public against them. In letters written during 44 BC, Cicero frequently complains that Rome was still subjected to tyranny, because the "Liberators" had failed to kill Antony.[19] According to some accounts, Cassius had wanted to kill Antony at the same time as Caesar, but Brutus dissuaded him.[20]