

## TRAJAN\*

TRAJAN's family originally came from Tuder in Umbria,<sup>1</sup> but his ancestors settled at Italica in Spain.<sup>2</sup> His father Ulpius Traianus was made consul by Vespasian, having commanded a legion in the Jewish war, and was later made a patrician and given triumphal honours.<sup>3</sup> His mother was Marcia and his sister Ulpia Marciana,<sup>4</sup> who married Matidius Patruinus<sup>5</sup> and had a daughter Matidia.<sup>6</sup> Matidia married Vibius Sabinus<sup>7</sup> and her daughter Sabina married Hadrian, the son of Trajan's cousin through his mother.<sup>8</sup> Trajan's wife was Pompeia Plotina.<sup>9</sup>

Trajan was born at Italica on the fourteenth day before the Kalends of October<sup>10</sup> when Torquatus and Antoninus were the consuls [18 September A.D. 53],<sup>11</sup> although others say it was in a different year.<sup>12</sup> As a young man he served for a long time

\* The best modern account of Trajan will be found in Syme, *Tacitus*, pp. 10ff., 86ff., 217ff.

1. *Epitome*, 13.1.

2. Victor, *de Caes.*, 13.1; Eutropius, 8.2.1; Appian, *Iberica*, 38.

3. *ILS*, no. 263; Josephus, *Jewish War* 3. pp. 289ff., etc.

4. Inscriptions and coins attest the names of his sister; that of his mother is deduced.

5. *CIL*, VI, no. 2056.

6. Inscriptions and coins.

7. *CIL*, XI, nos. 5383, 8020.

8. *HA, Hadrian*, 1.2, 2.10, pp. 57, 58 below.

9. *Epitome*, 42.41.

10. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 92.4; *epist.* 10.17.2, etc.

11. Eutropius, 8.5.2.

12. Dio, 68.6.3.

as a military tribune and was in the Syrian army when his father was governor of that province.<sup>13</sup> Later, after his praetorship, he commanded the legion VII Gemina in Tarraconensis and led the legion with great speed against Antonius Saturninus, when Saturninus rebelled against Domitian. However, he arrived after the rebellion had been crushed.<sup>14</sup> Then he served in other expeditions of Domitian.<sup>15</sup> He was consul for the first time with Acilius Glabrio [A.D. 91].<sup>16</sup> When Nerva became emperor he appointed Trajan governor of Upper Germany, and soon afterwards adopted him. While he was in Germany, according to some he seized the imperial power, with the encouragement of Licinius Sura, and others say that all were agreed that he would have become emperor even if he had not been adopted by Nerva. At any rate, he was adopted by Nerva as his son and took the name of Nerva, but not Cocceius, so that he was known as Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus Caesar and received the *imperium* and the tribunician power.<sup>17</sup>

Before he became emperor, he had a dream of the following kind. He thought that an old man in a purple-bordered toga and clothing and with a crown on his head, as the Senate is portrayed in pictures, impressed a seal upon him with a signet ring, first on the left side of his neck and then on the right.<sup>18</sup> He received the news of Nerva's death at Colonia Agrippinensis [Cologne] from his kinsman Hadrian, and at once was made emperor.<sup>19</sup> He sent a letter to the Senate, written in his own hand, in which he declared that he would not slay or disfranchise any good man and confirmed this by oaths not only at this time but later as well.<sup>20</sup> But he sent for Casperius Aelianus

13. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 14.1, 15.1-3.

14. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 14.2-4.

15. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 14.5.

16. Degrassi, p. 27.

17. p. 36 above.

18. Dio, 68.5.1.

19. *HA, Hadrian*, 2.6, p. 58 below; *Epitome*, 13.3.

20. Dio, 68.5.2.

and the praetorians who had mutinied against Nerva, pretending that he was going to employ them for some purpose, and then made away with them.<sup>21</sup> When he first handed to the man who was to be his prefect of the guard the sword which the prefect was required to wear at his side, he bared the blade and holding it up said: 'Take this sword, in order that, if I rule well, you may use it for me, but if ill, against me.'<sup>22</sup> Some say that this prefect was Attius Suburanus, whom he later made a senator and consul twice.<sup>23</sup> Marius Maximus says that prefects of the guard were replaced by sending a freedman to them with the broad stripe of senatorial rank.<sup>24</sup>

He did not return to Rome at first, but remained with the armies, and travelled through Pannonia to Moesia.<sup>25</sup> On his route back to Rome he conducted himself like a private citizen, and walked on foot.<sup>26</sup> At Rome he greeted the senators who awaited him with a kiss.<sup>27</sup> Then he walked to the palace, with the same modest demeanour as if it had been a private house.<sup>28</sup> When his wife Plotina first entered the palace, she turned around to face the steps and the people and said: 'I enter here such a woman as I would wish to be when I leave.'<sup>29</sup> He gave largess to the people and a donative to the soldiers.<sup>30</sup> His father Nerva, he deified.<sup>31</sup>

But after a short stay at Rome he began his first expedition, against the Dacians.<sup>32</sup> For Decebalus the Dacian king had

21. Dio, 68.5.4.

22. Dio, 68.16.1<sup>2</sup>; Victor, *de Caes.*, 13.9; Pliny, *Paneg.*, 67.8.

23. Victor, *de Caes.*, 13.9; *ILS*, no. 5035.

24. *HA*, *Severus Alexander*, 21.4.

25. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 12ff.

26. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 20.

27. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 23.1.

28. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 23.6.

29. Dio, 68.5.5.

30. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 25.2.

31. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 11.1-3; Eutropius, 8.1.2.

32. Dio, 68.6.1.

defeated Domitian previously<sup>33</sup> and Trajan saw that the power and pride of the Dacians were increasing.<sup>34</sup> There were various battles in which many Romans were killed, but when Trajan was approaching the Dacian king's residence, Decebalus sent envoys, called cap-bearers, who were to request that Trajan meet Decebalus and were to say that Decebalus would do all that Trajan commanded. Instead, Trajan sent his friend Licinius Sura, and Claudius Livianus, the prefect of the guard, to meet Decebalus. But the king was afraid and would not meet them. Then Laberius Maximus captured Decebalus' sister and Trajan recovered the standard of the legion lost under Domitian when Cornelius Fuscus the prefect of the guard had been slain by the Dacians. Decebalus came to Trajan, therefore, and fell on the ground before him, threw away his arms and did obeisance. He agreed to surrender his arms, engines and engine-makers, demolish the forts, give back the deserters and withdraw from captured territory, and become an ally of the Roman people. Trajan left garrisons all over Dacia and returned to Rome, where he held a triumph and was given the title Dacicus.<sup>35</sup>

But when it was announced to Trajan that Decebalus was breaking the treaty in various ways, the Senate again declared him a public enemy and Trajan once more conducted the war against him in person instead of entrusting it to legates.<sup>36</sup> At first Decebalus sued for peace again, but he could not be persuaded to surrender both his arms and himself, and openly collected troops and summoned the surrounding peoples to his aid.<sup>37</sup> He sent deserters into Moesia to see if they could make away with Trajan, but one of them was arrested and revealed the entire plot under torture. Then Decebalus seized the general

33. Dio, 67.6.1-4.

34. Dio, 68.6.1.

35. Dio, 68.9.1-10.2 (abbreviated); Maximus: *PIR*<sup>2</sup>, I 9.

36. Dio, 68.10.3-4 (abbreviated).

37. Dio, 68.11.1.

Longinus who was sent as an envoy, after Decebalus had pretended that he wanted to offer submission. But Longinus drank poison and died.<sup>38</sup> Trajan now built a bridge over the Danube, with twenty piers of dressed stone, each one hundred and fifty feet in height and sixty feet wide.<sup>39</sup> Having crossed the Danube by this bridge he conducted the war with prudence and safety rather than with haste, and after a hard struggle defeated the Dacians.<sup>40</sup> Decebalus committed suicide and his head was cut off and brought to Trajan at Ranisstorum. Trajan sent the head to Rome,<sup>41</sup> where it was hurled down the Gemonian Steps.<sup>42</sup> Decebalus' treasures were discovered too, although he had hidden them beneath the river Sargetia. For Bicilis, a Dacian noble, who was captured, revealed where they were hidden.<sup>43</sup> Dacia was made into a Roman province, and Trajan brought into it, to cultivate the fields and inhabit the cities, countless settlers from all over the Roman world, for Dacia had been drained of its manpower during the long war.<sup>44</sup> When Trajan returned to Rome he gave spectacles lasting for one hundred and twenty-three days, during which eleven thousand animals, both wild and tame, were slain, and ten thousand gladiators fought.<sup>45</sup>

At this same time Cornelius Palma the governor of Syria subdued the part of Arabia around Petra and made it a Roman province.<sup>46</sup> Trajan honoured Palma with a second consulship and a statue, and he gave like honours to Sosius Senecio and Publilius Celsus, for he esteemed these three men above the

38. Dio, 68.11.3-12.4 (abbreviated).

39. Dio, 68.13.1.

40. Dio, 68.14.1.

41. Dio, 68.14.3; Ranisstorum: M. Speidel, *JRS* 1970, 142ff., for the remarkable funerary inscription of Decebalus' captor.

42. Smallwood, no. 20, A.D.106.

43. Dio, 68.14.4-5.

44. Eutropius, 8.2.2, 8.6.2.

45. Dio, 68.15.1.

46. Dio, 68.14.5.

rest.<sup>47</sup> But no one was so close a friend of him as Lucius Sura, to whom he gave a third consulship.<sup>48</sup> Sura used to compose Trajan's speeches for him.<sup>49</sup> When Sura died, Trajan bestowed upon him a public funeral and a statue. He had attained to such a degree of wealth and pride that he had built a gymnasium for the people of Rome.<sup>50</sup> And Trajan built baths in his honour.<sup>51</sup> So great was the friendship and confidence which he showed towards Trajan and Trajan towards him that, although he was often slandered, as naturally happens in the case of all those who possess any influence with the emperors, Trajan never felt any suspicion or hatred towards him. On the contrary, when those who envied Sura became very insistent, the emperor went uninvited to his house to dinner and having dismissed all his bodyguards, first called Sura's doctor and caused him to anoint his eyes, and then his barber, whom he caused to shave his chin, and after doing this he next took a bath and had dinner. Then on the following day he said to his friends who were in the habit of constantly disparaging Sura: 'If Sura had wanted to kill me, he would have killed me yesterday.' Thus his confidence was strengthened by his knowledge of Sura's conduct rather than by the conjectures of others.<sup>52</sup>

He often went to call on his friends, to greet them, when they were sick or were celebrating festivals, and accepted their invitations to dinner and invited them back in return. Often he would ride in their carriages.<sup>53</sup> His association with the people was marked by affability and his relations with the Senate by dignity, so that he was loved by all and feared by no one, except the enemy. He joined others in the hunt and in banquets, as well as in their labours and plans and jokes. Often he would

47. Dio, 68.16.2; see Smallwood, pp. 5ff., A.D.109, 107 and 113.

48. Smallwood, no. 5, A.D.107.

49. Julian, *Caesares*, 327A.

50. Dio, 68.15.3<sup>2</sup>.

51. *Epitome*, 13.6.

52. Dio, 68.15.4-6 (abbreviated).

53. Eutropius, 8.4.

take three others into his carriage and he would enter the houses of citizens, sometimes even without a guard, and enjoy himself there.<sup>54</sup> His friends blamed him for being too accessible, but he replied that, as emperor, he behaved towards private citizens in the manner in which, as a private citizen, he had wanted emperors to behave towards him.<sup>55</sup>

Those who conspired against him he brought before the Senate and had punished, including Calpurnius Crassus and Laberius Maximus, of whom the latter had commanded armies for him. But he only sent them into exile on islands and did not kill them.<sup>56</sup> He had taken an oath that he would not shed blood and he made good his promise by his actions in spite of the plots formed against him. For by nature he was not at all inclined to duplicity or guile or harshness, but he loved, greeted and honoured the good, and the others he ignored. Moreover he became milder as he grew older.<sup>57</sup>

He is said to have chosen as his procurators the sort of men whom most of his subjects chose to try their cases in preference to anyone else, although free to take them to any court they wished.<sup>58</sup> But when certain of his procurators were causing trouble in the provinces by their unjust conduct, to the extent that one was said to ask every rich man: 'Why are you rich?'; another: 'Where do you get it from?'; and a third: 'Put down what you have got', his wife Plotina tackled him and reproached him for neglecting his own good name. As a result she made him detest unjust exactions, and he used to call the fisc a spleen, because when it grows the other parts of the body waste away.<sup>59</sup> But as for the city magistrates and the governors of provinces, he was less diligent in keeping check on them than Domitian

54. Dio, 68.7.3.

55. Eutropius, 8.5.1.

56. Dio, 68.16.2; *HA, Hadrian*, 5.5-6, p. 62 below.

57. Dio, 68.5.3.

58. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 36.5.

59. *Epitome*, 42.21.

had been, with the result that a great number of them were charged with crimes of every kind.<sup>60</sup>

He spent vast sums of money both on war and on the works of peace. While making very many urgently needed repairs to roads and harbours and public buildings he drained no one's blood for any of these undertakings. He was so high-minded and generous that after embellishing the Circus, which had crumbled away in many places, he merely inscribed on it a statement that he had made it adequate for the Roman people.<sup>61</sup> However, his name was inscribed on so many buildings that he was called a creeper that grows on walls.<sup>62</sup> For he also built libraries and, in the Forum named after himself, he erected an enormous column to serve both as a monument to himself and as a record of his work in the Forum. For the whole of that area had been hilly and he had had it excavated to a depth equal to the height of the column, thus making the Forum level.<sup>63</sup> During his reign there was a flood of the Tiber, much more destructive than the one under Nerva, with great damage to the adjacent buildings. He gave assistance to deal with all this and laid down that no buildings should be constructed to a height greater than sixty feet, since they might easily collapse and the expense in such cases would be damaging.<sup>64</sup> He also cut a canal to drain the Tiber.<sup>65</sup> Such was his concern for the corn-supply that he made a new harbour at Ostia,<sup>66</sup> and he was said to have let the sea into the shore and moved the shore out to sea.<sup>67</sup> And he made new harbours at Centumcellae<sup>68</sup> and at Ancona too.<sup>69</sup>

60. Suetonius, *Domitian*, 8.2 (adapted).

61. Dio, 68.7.1-2.

62. *Epitome*, 41.13.

63. Dio, 68.16.3; cf. Smallwood, no. 378a.

64. *Epitome*, 13.12-13.

65. Pliny, *epist.*, 8.17.2.

66. Smallwood, nos. 384-5.

67. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 29.2.

68. Pliny, *epist.*, 6.31.15.

69. Smallwood, no. 387.

Besides this, he built new baths at Rome, on the Oppian Hill, a new aqueduct, and a *naumachia*, which were all opened when Palma, for the second time, and Calvisius Tullus were the consuls [A.D. 109].<sup>70</sup> He built a new road too, from Beneventum to Brundisium, which was named the *via Traiana* in his honour.<sup>71</sup> In the provinces he constructed a great many buildings as well.<sup>72</sup>

He instituted the post of prefect of vehicles, to take charge of the imperial post, so that imperial messages might be carried more rapidly.<sup>73</sup> He made a number of improvements in the law. Anonymous accusations were prohibited.<sup>74</sup> Fathers who maltreated their sons were obliged to emancipate them and lose their rights over their inheritance.<sup>75</sup> Free-born children who had been exposed at birth and brought up by their finders were permitted to claim their freedom without having to pay the cost of their maintenance.<sup>76</sup> He also tightened up the regulations concerning guardians.<sup>77</sup> He laid down that public holidays did not apply to the army.<sup>78</sup> Where soldiers' wills were technically invalid because of ignorance on the part of the testators, he ruled that the wishes of the soldiers must be paramount.<sup>79</sup> He laid down punishments for those who mutilated their sons in an attempt to prevent them from being conscripted into the army.<sup>80</sup> He did in fact raise two new

70. Smallwood, no. 22. The *naumachia* was an artificial lake on which mock naval battles were held.

71. Smallwood, no. 400a.

72. Victor, *de Caes.*, 13.4; Eutropius, 8.2.2; Smallwood, nos. 389, 392, 394ff.

73. Victor, *de Caes.*, 13.5; Smallwood, no. 267a.

74. Pliny, *epist.*, 10.97.

75. *Digest*, 37.12.5.

76. Pliny, *epist.*, 10.66.

77. *Digest*, 26.7.12.1, 27.1.17, 41.4.2.8.

78. *Digest*, 2.12.9.

79. *Digest*, 29.1.1. preface and 24; 29.1.24.

80. *Digest*, 49.16.4.12.

legions, at Trajana and XXX Ulpia. ~~He also~~ ~~was~~ ~~concerned~~ ~~in~~ ~~auspices~~ ~~was~~ ~~given~~ ~~to~~ ~~organize~~ ~~a~~ ~~road~~. He made further exemptions from the five per cent tax on inheritances<sup>81</sup> and he completed the child-welfare programme initiated by Nerva.<sup>82</sup> He compelled candidates for office at Rome to invest one third of their estate in Italian land, thinking it unseemly that they should treat Rome and Italy not as their native country but as a mere inn or lodging-house for them on their visits. As a result of this the price of land in Italy increased.<sup>83</sup>

It was a fault in him that he was a heavy drinker and also a pederast. But he did not incur censure, for he never committed any wicked deed because of this. He drank all the wine that he wanted and yet remained sober, and in his relations with boys he harmed no one.<sup>84</sup> It is reported that he tempered his wine-bibbing by ordering that his requests for drink should be ignored after long banquets.<sup>85</sup>

Both his wife Plotina and his sister Marciana received the title Augusta<sup>86</sup> and when Marciana died she was deified. Her daughter Matidia was then made Augusta also.<sup>87</sup> His grand-niece Vibia Sabina, the daughter of Matidia, he gave in marriage to Hadrian, his kinsman, although not very eager for the match, at the urging of Plotina, according to Marius Maximus.<sup>88</sup> His real father Traianus he deified.<sup>89</sup> He himself held four

81. Dio, 55.24.4.

82. *Digest*, 48.19.5.

83. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 37ff.

84. Smallwood, nos. 435-8: this is the *alimenta* system (see e.g. *Cambridge Ancient History XI*, 1936, pp. 210ff.).

85. Pliny, *epist.*, 6.19.4.

86. Dio, 68.7.4.

87. Victor, *de Caes.*, 13.10.

88. Smallwood, no. 106.

89. Smallwood, nos. 22, 108, 134 (A.D. 112).

90. *HA, Hadrian*, 1.2, 2.10, pp. 57, 61f. below.

91. Smallwood, no. 133.

consulships as emperor.<sup>92</sup> The title of 'Father of the Fatherland' he accepted after a short interval.<sup>93</sup>

After he had ruled for fifteen years, he made another expedition, against the Armenians and the Parthians. His pretext was that the Armenian king had not obtained his crown from Trajan but from the Parthian king. But his real reason was desire for glory. After he had set off and had got as far as Athens an embassy from the king of the Parthians, Osroës, met him and asked for peace, proffering gifts. For the king had become terrified when he learned of Trajan's advance, because Trajan was accustomed to make good his threats by his deeds. So he implored him not to make war and at the same time he asked that Armenia be given to Parthamasiris. For he too was a son of Pacorus, like Axidares, whom Osroës had deposed on the grounds that he was not satisfactory either to the Romans or to the Parthians. Trajan did not accept the presents and did not give any reply except to say that friendship was determined by deeds and not by words, and that he would do what was fitting when he reached Syria. This being his intention, he proceeded through Asia and Lycia, into Syria. When he reached Antioch, Abgarus of Osrhoëne sent gifts and a message of friendship, but he did not come himself, for he feared both Trajan and the Parthians alike.<sup>94</sup>

After spending the winter at Antioch,<sup>95</sup> Trajan set out for Armenia. The satraps and princes came to meet him with gifts, one of which was a horse that had been taught to do obeisance, kneeling on its forelegs and placing its head beneath the feet of whoever stood near.<sup>96</sup> Parthamasiris wrote to Trajan, calling himself king, but when there was no reply he wrote again,

92. Smallwood, pp. 3ff., A.D. 100, 101, 103, 112.

93. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 21.1-4.

94. Dio, 68.17.1-18.1 (abbreviated).

95. John Malalas (sixth-century chronicler from Antioch in Syria), p. 272.

96. Dio, 68.18.2.

~~omitting this title and asking that Trajan should be~~  
governor of Cappadocia, he sent to him, as if he wished to make some request through him. Trajan therefore sent the son of Homullus to him and he himself captured Arsamosata, without a battle. Then he came to Satala and rewarded Anchialus, king of the Heniochi and Machelones, with gifts. At Elegeia he received Parthamasiris, seated upon a tribunal in the camp. Parthamasiris saluted him, took his crown off and laid it at Trajan's feet, and then stood in silence, expecting to receive it back. At this the soldiers shouted aloud and acclaimed Trajan as *imperator*. This terrified the king, who thought it was meant as an insult and was a sign of impending doom. He turned as if to flee but as he was surrounded he begged that he might speak to Trajan in private. But he obtained nothing there, and left the camp in a rage. Trajan summoned him back and ordered him to say what he wanted in the hearing of all. Then Parthamasiris declared that he had not been defeated but had come of his own accord, believing that he should not be wronged and that he should receive back the kingdom, as Tiridates had from Nero. But Trajan replied that he would surrender Armenia to no one, for it belonged to the Romans and would have a Roman governor. He allowed Parthamasiris to depart, together with his Parthian companions,<sup>97</sup> and appointed Catilius Severus to govern Armenia together with Cappadocia.<sup>98</sup> But Parthamasiris was killed on his journey, even though Trajan had given him an escort of cavalry.<sup>99</sup>

When Trajan had conquered the whole country of the Armenians and had won over many of the kings too, some of whom he treated as friends, since they submitted of their own accord, and others of whom he subdued without a battle, the Senate bestowed upon him the title of *Optimus*, 'best of

97. Dio, 68.19.1-20.4 (abbreviated).

98. Smallwood, no. 197.

99. Arrian, *Parthica*, fr. 39 (Roos); Fronto, *Principia Historiae*, p. 15 = Haines, II, pp. 212f.; Dio, 68.20.4.

emperors'.<sup>100</sup> This title, which had been given to him before because of his excellence and the love which all had for him, he now consented to accept.<sup>101</sup> He always marched on foot with the infantry and he dealt with the ordering and disposition of the soldiers throughout the whole campaign, leading them sometimes in one order and sometimes in another; and he forded all the rivers that they did. Sometimes he even caused his scouts to circulate false reports, so that the soldiers might at the same time practise military manoeuvres and become fearless and prepared for any dangers. From Armenia he moved into Mesopotamia and captured Nisibis and Batnae, after which he was given the title Parthicus.<sup>102</sup> Then, leaving garrisons behind him, he came to Edessa and met Abgarus, who had failed to meet him before. Now, partly through fear of Trajan and partly through the persuasions of his son Arbandes, a handsome youth who was in favour with Trajan, Abgarus came to meet him on the road. He entertained Trajan at a banquet and during the dinner brought in his son to perform a barbarian dance.<sup>103</sup>

Then Trajan returned to Antioch for the winter, and during the winter there was a very serious earthquake there and countless numbers perished in the destruction. He himself escaped through the window of the room in which he was staying, and the consul Pedo was killed.<sup>104</sup> But in spite of this, at the beginning of spring<sup>105</sup> he hastened into the enemy's country again, bringing the boats which had been constructed in the forests around Nisibis to the Tigris on wagons. The Romans crossed over the Tigris as well, and conquered the whole of Adiabene.<sup>106</sup> Then they advanced as far as Babylon, without

100. Dio, 68.18.3<sup>2</sup>; 23.1.

101. Pliny, *Paneg.*, 2.7, 88.4-10; Smallwood, nos. 99-101.

102. Dio, 68.23.1-2.

103. Dio, 68.21.1-2 (abbreviated: A.D.115).

104. Dio, 68.24.1-25.5 (abbreviated).

105. A.D.116, evidently.

106. Dio, 68.26.1-4 (abbreviated).

meeting any resistance.<sup>107</sup> After this he entered Ctesiphon and when he had taken possession of the place he accepted the title Parthicus, which had already been offered to him. He wanted to go down to the mouth of the Tigris and see the ocean, and when he got there and saw a ship sailing to India, he said: 'I should certainly have crossed over to the Indians too, if I were still young.' For he was very interested in the Indians and regarded Alexander as having been fortunate. Yet he himself used to say that he had advanced further than Alexander and wrote this to the Senate, even though he was unable to retain all the territory which he had conquered.<sup>108</sup> For he made two new provinces, Mesopotamia and Assyria,<sup>109</sup> and he was granted the honour of celebrating a triumph over as many peoples as he pleased, since on account of the large number of peoples which he named in his frequent letters, they were unable always to understand or even use the names correctly.<sup>110</sup>

But he was destined never to return to Rome and even to lose what he had conquered previously. For while he was sailing down to the ocean and returning from there, all the districts that had been conquered were thrown into upheaval and rebelled, and the garrisons that he had left there were either expelled or slain. Trajan learned of this when he was at Babylon, where he had gone to sacrifice to the spirit of Alexander, and because of its fame. He sent Maximus and Lusius Quietus against the rebels; Maximus was killed but Lusius recovered Nisibis and sacked Edessa, in addition to other successes. Then Erucius Clarus and Julius Alexander captured and burned Seleucia too. In the meantime, the Jews also, in Egypt, Cyrenaica and Cyprus, rose in rebellion, and Lusius was

107. Dio, 68.26.4<sup>2</sup>.

108. Dio, 68.28.2-29.1.

109. Eutropius, 8.3.2, 8.6.2 (Armenia had already been declared a province).

110. Dio, 68.29.2.

sent to subdue them as well. Trajan now feared that the Parthians would rebel as well, and decided to give them a king. So he came to Ctesiphon and summoning everyone together appointed Parthaspates king over the Parthians and placed the crown upon his head.<sup>111</sup> On his way back to Syria, Trajan attempted to capture Hatra, but the place was too difficult to besiege, because it lies in such barren country.<sup>112</sup> So Trajan desisted and departed, and soon after his health began to fail.<sup>113</sup>

He had intended to make another expedition into Mesopotamia, but his disease was afflicting him sorely and he set out to sail back to Italy.<sup>114</sup> Trajan himself thought that he had been poisoned, but others say that he had suffered a stroke and that part of his body was paralysed. When he reached Selinus in Cilicia, which was afterwards called Traianopolis, he suddenly expired, having reigned nineteen years, six months and fifteen days.<sup>115</sup> It was given out that he had adopted his kinsman Hadrian, then governor of Syria, as his son and made him Caesar, although some say that Plotina's party concealed his death and got an actor to impersonate him, speaking in a tired voice.<sup>116</sup> Certainly, one of Trajan's freedmen, Phaedimus, who had been in close attendance on him, died only a few days after him, although he was young, and his remains were not brought to Rome for thirteen years: hence it might be thought that he had been put to death because he knew too much.<sup>117</sup> After his death Trajan was deified and a triumph was celebrated for him

111. Dio, 68.29.3-30.3.

112. Dio, 68.31.1-4 (abbreviated).

113. Dio, 68.32.1.

114. Dio, 68.33.1.

115. Dio, 68.33.2-3.

116. *HA, Hadrian*, 4.10, p. 61f below.

117. Smallwood, no. 176: see Syme, *Tacitus*, p. 240, n. 7 for the interpretation of the inscription.

by Hadrian, who conducted an effigy of Trajan through the streets of Rome.<sup>118</sup> His ashes were placed in an urn at the foot of his column.<sup>119</sup>

118. *HA, Hadrian*, 6.1 and 3, p. 63 below.

119. Dio, 69.2.3; *Epitome*, 13.11; Eutropius, 8.5.2.