

T R A V E L S

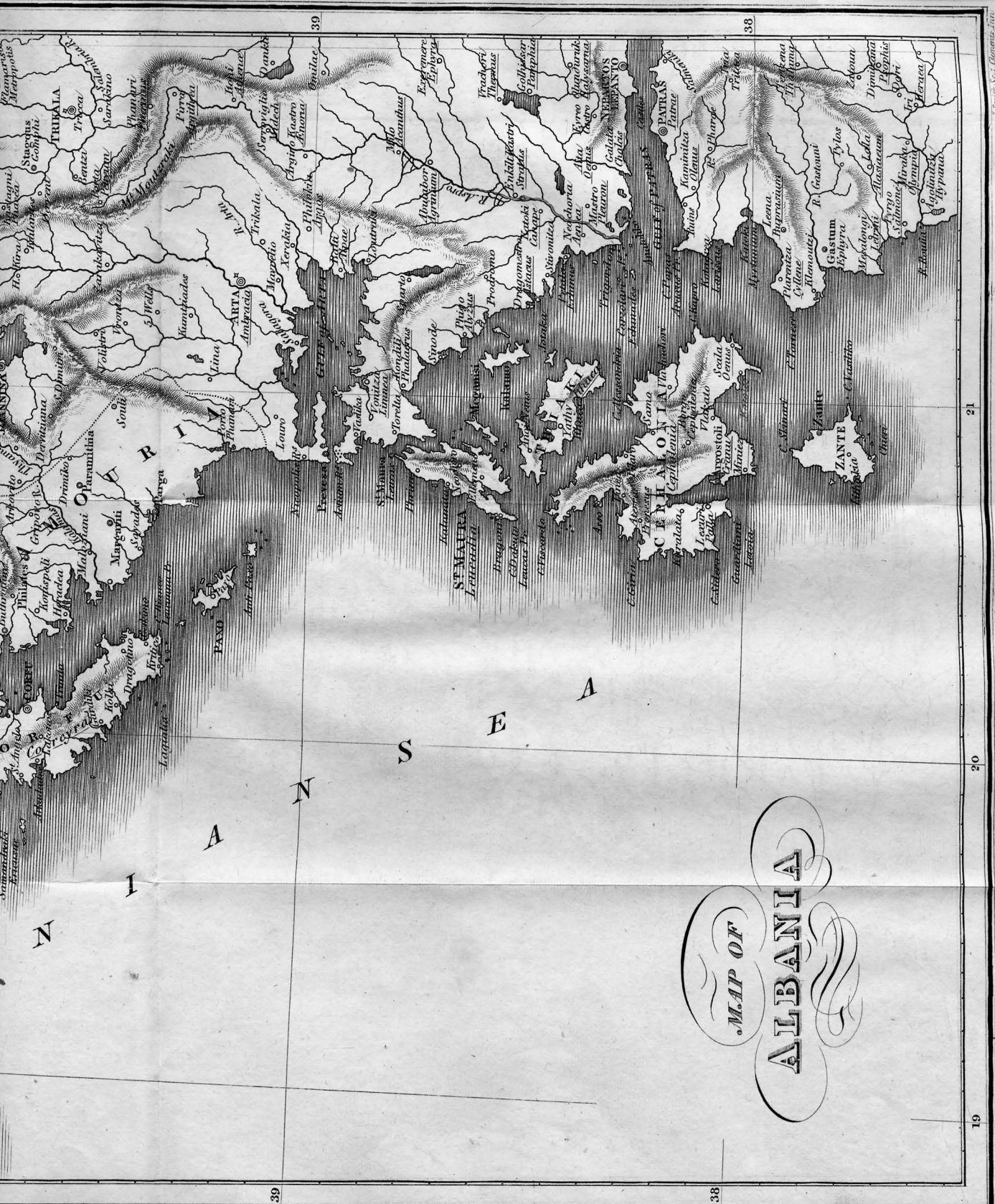
IN

G R E E C E A N D A L B A N I A

VOL. II.



ALBANIA



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TRAVELS

IN

GREECE AND ALBANIA

BY

THE REV. T. S. HUGHES, B.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION :

WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS.

LONDON :

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,

NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1830.

PRINTED BY A. J. VALPY, RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET

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TRAVELS,

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CHAPTER I.

THE difficulty of collecting any accurate information respecting the history of Ioannina has been acknowledged by all travellers who have endeavoured to investigate it. Neither in its origin, nor in its early progress towards grandeur, was it of consequence enough to engage the particular attention of historians ; who merely mention it casually, and in a very unsatisfactory manner. Many historical documents however are said to have once existed among the archives of the city ; but I was informed that all or greatest part of them had been destroyed by Mahomet Effendi, Ali's prime minister, to show his sovereign contempt for the literature of the Franks. I paid a visit to that extraordinary character for the purpose of rescuing, if possible, some of these records from destruction ; but he put me off with a declaration that he had none at all in his possession : the vizir himself had no better success, though he condescended to

make a personal application to the minister in my behalf. Just before we left Ioannina however I was fortunate enough to procure some extracts made at various times by a learned and respectable Greek gentleman, before the originals came into Mahomet's possession. To these and the Byzantine historians, after the classic authors fail, I am indebted for the following concise history.

In very early ages Epirus was inhabited by fourteen semibarbarous nations, intermingled with Grecian colonies. North of these lay the still more savage Illyrians, with whom the Epirotic tribes became insensibly intermingled.* They were long defended from invaders by their own valour and the lofty chains of mountains which intersect their rugged country, and which prevented the Greeks from subduing them. In process of time the Molossi first emerged from the state of surrounding barbarism; Tharyps, a patriotic prince, improving both their manners and language: Philip king of Macedonia raised them into notice by his union with Olympias, sister of Alexander their sovereign, and Pyrrhus spread around them the glory of martial exploits and military skill. Before this time however the Illyrian provinces had been united, though with no very firm bond, to the Macedonian dynasty, under which they remained till the defeat of Perseus: but the period approached when the Romans, those inveterate enemies of every thing great, and noble, and free in other nations, took a severe revenge for the invasion of Pyrrhus: after various and cruel ravages in the Illyrian, Ætolian, and Macedonian wars, the whole country was laid waste by the Consul Æmilius Paulus, whose fierce army sacked seventy cities, sold 150,000 of the wretched inhabitants into slavery, overthrew their

* 'Αναμέμικται δὲ τοῦτοις τὰ Ἰλλυρικὰ ἔθνη, &c. Strab. l. vii. p. 502.