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978-1-107-45867-3 - Epirus: A Study in Greek Constitutional Development

Geoffrey Neale Cross

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**EPIRUS**  
A STUDY  
IN GREEK CONSTITUTIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

BY  
GEOFFREY NEALE CROSS  
*Former Fellow of Trinity College  
Barrister-at-Law*

PRINCE CONSORT PRIZE ESSAY  
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## INTRODUCTION

THE land of Epirus lay remote from the centres of Greek culture, entered late into its circle and contributed little or nothing to its achievements. One Epirot was indeed famous in antiquity, but if the name of King Pyrrhus is still remembered it is on account of his war in Italy against the Roman Republic rather than for his rule over his own countrymen, whose history has never at any period aroused much interest. Yet Epirot history has, I think, some claim to be studied, and in this essay I have tried to set out what is known of it from the time of the Persian Wars down to the Roman Conquest, with special reference to the constitutional development which was its most individual feature. The mere fact that no such account exists in English would not of itself justify this attempt, for there can be few who are at once interested in the subject and unable to read the work of Dr Klotzsch<sup>1</sup>—but Klotzsch and equally with him those who have dealt with the Epirot constitution in the standard text-books of Greek antiquities<sup>2</sup> seem to me to have misread the evidence afforded by the Dodona inscriptions and so to have left room for a further treatment of the subject.

To make a readable story out of the scattered references and the handful of inscriptions on which our knowledge of Epirus in antiquity depends has proved a task beyond my powers—and even such coherence as I have been able to impart to my narrative has only been achieved by a liberal use of conjecture based upon the course of contemporary events in parts of Greece the history of which is better preserved to us. It may be asked, perhaps, whether it was worth while to make so many guesses which must be suspect to the specialist where there was no compensating

<sup>1</sup> C. Klotzsch, *Epeirotische Geschichte bis zum Jahre 280 v. Chr.*

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Heinrich Swoboda in Hermann and Georg Busolt in Müller.

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## INTRODUCTION

hope of attracting the general reader, and whether it would not have been better to have abandoned any attempt at continuity in favour of a series of separate articles. There is, however, a certain advantage in a continuous presentation, for Epirot history as a whole illustrates the truth, which still needs to be emphasised, that the Macedonian Conquest is no proper stopping-place in Greek history. So long no doubt as that subject is regarded chiefly as a useful accompaniment to an appreciation of the various achievements of the Greek genius there are plausible grounds for limiting the study of it to what is known as the "Great Age" of Greece, but if Greek history is to stand on its own legs as an independent enquiry the third and second centuries must be held to be as worthy of attention as the fourth or the fifth.

It remains for me to mention the names of some to whose writings or assistance I am particularly indebted. At every turn I have relied upon the work of the late Karl Julius Beloch—the rock upon which so much of our knowledge of hellenistic history is based. In the following pages I have emphasised—no doubt beyond their importance—a few points on which I have ventured to differ from him; it is, therefore, the more necessary for me to acknowledge here how often I have silently accepted his conclusions. To Dr W. W. Tarn I owe a double debt. His *Antigonos Gonatas* and the chapters which he has contributed to the *Cambridge Ancient History* have been of the greatest assistance to me, and he has himself taken the kindest interest in my work. Professor F. E. Adcock, who first suggested this line of research to me, has aided me throughout with his advice. Finally, I wish to thank the staff of the University Press for the help which they have given me in this my first experience of authorship.

G. N. C.

*Lincoln's Inn,*  
*April 1932.*



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Beloch = K. J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*, vol. IV, ed. 2. Berlin-Leipzig, 1925–7.
- Busolt = G. Busolt, “Griechische Staatskunde” in Ivan von Müller’s *Handbuch*, IV. 1. 1, ed. 3. Munich, 1926.
- C.A.H. = *Cambridge Ancient History*. Cambridge, vol. VI, 1927; vol. VII, 1928; vol. VIII, 1930.
- I.G. = *Inscriptiones Graecae*.
- Kaerst = J. Kaerst, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*; vol. I, ed. 3, 1927; vol. II, ed. 2, 1926.
- Klotzsch = C. Klotzsch, *Epeirische Geschichte bis zum Jahre 280 v. Chr.* Berlin, 1911.
- Meyer = E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, vols. III, IV and V. Stuttgart.
- Nilsson = M. P. Nilsson, “Studien zur Geschichte des alten Epeiros”, *Lunds Universitets Årsskrift*, N.F. Afd. 1, Bd. 6, No. 4 (1909).
- S.G.D.I. = *Sammlung der Griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften* (ed. Collitz), vol. II. Göttingen, 1899.
- Scala = R. von Scala, *Der Pyrrhische Krieg*. Berlin, 1884.
- Schmidt = H. Schmidt, *Epeirika*. Marburg, 1894.
- Schubert = R. Schubert, *Geschichte des Pyrrhus*. Königsberg, 1894.
- Syll.<sup>3</sup> = Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, ed. 3. Leipzig, 1915.

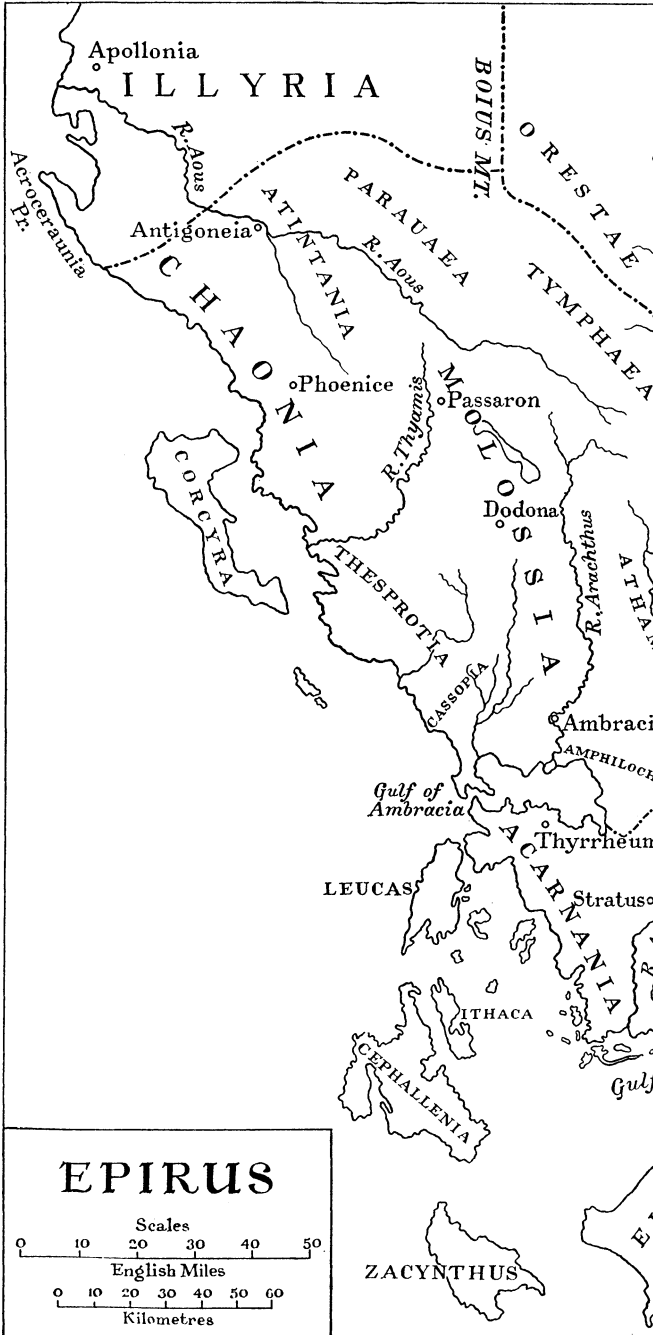
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