

**A MEDAL SERIES WITH THE DEPICTION OF
THE GREEK REVOLUTION FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF
THE NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF ROMANIA**

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Abstract

This article presents a few medals related to the Greek Revolution from the collection of the National History Museum of Romania. All of them are the work of the Austrian engraver and medalist Konrad Lange, which, in 1836, was the author of a series, which comprised twelve medals created in honor of the Greek Independence.

Key words: medals, Greek War of Independence, Konrad Lange, collection.

This year the Hellenic Republic celebrated 200 years of Independence and as a tribute to this special anniversary we will present some medals, struck almost two centuries ago, depicting this exact topic. In 1836, on the occasion of the wedding of King Otho to Queen Amalia, the Viennese artist Konrad Lange (1809-1856) designed twelve medals dedicated to the Greek Revolution (1821). These medals depict symbolic representations of the struggle for Independence and significant people who led the national liberation movement like: Georgios Kountouriotis, Archbishop Germanos, Petros Mavromichalis, Alexander Mavrokordatos, Theodoros Kolokotronis, Markos Botsaris, Andreas Miaoulis, Ioannis Kolettis, Spiridon Trikoupis, Ioannis Kapodistrias, Nikitas Stamatopoulos, Prince Otto – the later King Otto, and his wife Amalia of Oldenburg.

In the Coin Room of the National History Museum of Romania from Bucharest, amongst a great collection of medals and coins, all of these twelve medals can be found and are presented in the following catalogue.

CATALOGUE

1. Inv. no. 323592 (Pl. 1, Fig. 1)

Bronze, 44.15 mm, 43.04 g

Archbishop Germanos

Ob. The archbishop Palaion Patron Germanos and the inscription “ΓΕΡΜΑΝΟΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΩΝ” (GERMANOS, ARCHBISHOP PATRAS’).

Rv. The inauguration in Ayia Lavra is illustrated along with the inscription “ΘΕΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΥΨΩΣΩ ΑΥΤΟΝ” (GOD OF MY FATHER AND ERECT HIM) and “ΚΑΛΑΒΡΥΤΑ 25 ΜΑΡΤ. 1821” (KALAVRYTA MARCH 25TH, 1821).

Palaion Patron Germanos (1771-1826) was an archbishop, the Metropolitan Bishop of Old Patras (Palaion Patron) and a leading personality of the Greek Revolution.

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In November of 1818 he also became a member of the Society of Friends (Filiki Eteria). He helped the preparation of the Revolution and firstly thought that it was too early to start the events on the beginning of 1821, but when he realized that the Ottomans suspected the preparations, he called a conference to gain some time. March 25th was about to be the first day of the Revolution but there were some incidents against Turks before that day. In that day, Palaion Patron Germanos raised the flag of the Revolution and he preached the beginning at the monastery of Ayia Lavra, which was a significant spot. That movement was the start of the attainment of Greek Independence.

The museum has another example of the medal: inv. no. 324076, gilt bronze, 44.1 mm, 40.07 g.

2. Inv. no. 323593 (Pl. 1, Fig. 2)

Bronze, 44.25 mm, 53.47 g

Petros Mavromichalis

Ob. Petros Mavromichalis, also known as Petrobey, is represented along with the inscription “ΠΕΤΡΟΣ ΜΑΥΡΟΜΙΧΑΛΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΣ” (PETROS MAVROMICHALIS GENERAL).

Rv. Symbolism for the deliverance of Tripoli; two Greek fighters help Greece to stand up again. On the upper part, there is the inscription “Ο ΔΕ ΘΕΟΣ ΕΓΕΙΤΟ ΑΥΤΩΝ” (GOD IS LEADING THEM) and on the lower part “ΤΡΙΠΟΛΙΣ 23 ΣΕΠΤΕΜΒΡ. 1821” (TRIPOLIS 23 SEPTEMBER. 1821).

Petros Mavromichalis (1765-1848) was a Greek general, politician, and the leader of the Maniot people during the first half of the 19th century. His family is well known for leading several revolts against the Ottoman Empire. He was the one who raised his war flag in Areopolis (city in Laconia), on March 17, 1821, signaling the start of the Greek War of Independence.

3. Inv. no. 323594 (Pl. 1, Fig.3)

Bronze, 44.65 mm, 51.3 g

Alexandros Mavrokordatos

Ob. Alexandros Mavrokordatos, member of the family of Phanariotes is depicted with the inscription of his name “ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΜΑΥΡΟΚΟΡΔΑΤΟΣ” (ALEXANDROS MAVROKORDATOS).

Rv. In memoriam of the assembly of Epidaurus, three figures (military, civilian, priest) are holding hands. Above them there is the inscription “ΚΑΙ ΕΣΕΣΘΕ ΜΟΙ ΕΙΣ ΛΑΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΣΟΜΑΙ ΥΜΙΝ ΕΙΣ ΘΕΟΝ” (AND YOU WILL BE MY PEOPLE, AND I WILL BE YOUR GOD) and on the bottom “ΕΠΙΔΑΥΡ. 1. ΙΑΝΝ. 1822” (EPIDAVR. 1. IANN. 1822).

Alexandros Mavrokordatos (1791-1865) was a Greek statesman, diplomat, and politician. He was a member of the Filiki Eteria and a leading figure of the War of Independence in 1821. At the moment of the outbreak, he was living in Pisa and immediately came back to Greece. In January 1822, he was elected as the “President of the Executive” by the First National Assembly at Epidaurus. He was also the author of the first Greek constitution and became the new national leader.

4. Inv. no. 3232595 (Pl. 1, Fig. 4)

Bronze, 44.3 mm, 49 g

Theodoros Kolokotronis and Nikitaras Stamatopoulos

Ob. Theodoros Kolokotronis and Nikitaras Stamatopoulos (Nikitaras) along with the inscription “ΘΕΟΔΩΡ. ΚΟΛΟΚΟΤΡΟΝΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΣ Κ. ΝΙΚΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΑΜΑΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ

ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΣ” (THEODOR. KOLOKOTRONIS SUPREME COMMANDER K. NIKITAS STAMATOPOULOS GENERAL).

Rv. A Greek fighter killing a Turk after getting him off his horse and the inscription “ΚΑΤΑΠΑΤΗΣΕΙ ΑΥΤΟΝ ΨΥΧΗ ΜΟΥ ΔΥΝΑΤΗ” (ENCROATCH HIM, MY STRONG SOUL) and “NEMEA ΑΥΓΟΥΣ. 1822” (NEMEA AUGUS. 1822).

Kolokotronis (1770-1843) and Nikitaras (c. 1784-1849) were two of the most important personalities of the Greek Revolution against the Ottoman Empire. The first was the commander in chief and leader of the Revolution. In 1818, he became a member of the Society of Friends (Filiki Eteria) and when the revolution started, he participated in several military operations, like the battles of Valtetsi, Tripolitsa and Thervernakia. The second was one of the leaders of the Revolution and he was a leading person from the first battle of Valtetsi. He was given the nickname the Turk-slayer because in the battle of Ano Tholiana, he led a small force of 450 Greek soldiers which killed thousands of Turks. He fought in lots of battles until Greece was independent.

The museum has another example of the medal: inv. no. 324074, gilt bronze, 44.1 mm, 43.11 g.

5. Inv. no. 323596 (Pl. 2; Fig. 5)

Bronze, 44.35 mm, 40.47 g

Markos Botzaris

Ob. Markos Botsaris along with the inscription of his name “ΜΑΡΚΟΣ ΒΟΤΖΑΡΗΣ” (MARKOS BOTZARIS).

Rv. Symbolism for the fight in Karpenisi; Greek soldier standing with a sword in his right hand, draws back curtain with left hand to reveal two Ottoman soldiers, one standing beside a table and the other hiding beneath it. Above them there is the inscription “ΛΟΓΟΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΜΟΙ ΠΡΟΣ ΣΕ” (THE WORD OF THE LORD FROM ME TO YOU) and beneath them “ΚΑΡΠΕΝΗΣΙ 12 ΑΥΓ. 1823” (KARPENISI 12 AUG. 1823).

Markos Botsaris (1788-1823) was a Greek general and hero of the Greek War of Independence and captain of the Souliotes. He also served in the Albanian Regiment of the French Army for eleven years and became one of the regiment's officers. In 1815, he returned to Epirus. Botsaris of course took part in the revolution against the Ottoman Empire, and he was a leading figure in the fighting in Western Greece. Recognizing his bravery, the Greek Government made him general of Western Greece. Although, this act angered the unranked Greek chiefs, to show that he did not care for ranks, he tore apart his military diploma. On the night of 21 August 1823, he led the attack on Karpenisi by 350 Souliotes, against approximately 4.000 Albanian troops but he was shot in the head and killed.

6. Inv. no. 323597 (Pl. 2, Fig. 6)

Bronze, 44.65 mm, 51.33 g

Andreas Miaoulis

Ob. Andreas Miaoulis with the inscription “ΑΝΔΡΕΑΣ ΜΙΑΟΥΛΗΣ ΝΑΥΑΡΧΟΣ” (ANDREAS MIAOULIS ADMIRAL).

Rv. A Greek, in national dress, stepping out of a boat holding a torch in his right hand and a sword on his left hand. In the background, ships are on fire, while one of them is sailing away. Legend “ΙΔΟΥ ΕΓΩ ΕΠΙ ΣΕ ΦΑΡΑΩ” (BEHOLD, I AM AGAINST THEE, PHARAOH) and on the bottom “ΜΟΘΩΝΗ 1 ΜΑΙ. 1825” (MODON, 1 MAY 1825).

Andreas Miaoulis (Andreas Vokos) (1765-1835) was a Greek admiral and politician who commanded the Greek naval forces during the Greek War of Independence. He was known as a wealthy corn trader and a merchant captain who was also chosen to lead the naval forces of the islands when they rose against the government of the Sultan. His contribution was extremely important for the fight, as he led the Greeks to victory over the Turks in skirmishes off Modon, Cape Matapan, Suda, and Cape Papas.

7. Inv. no. 323598 (Pl. 2, Fig. 7)

Bronze, 44.5 mm, 48.48 g

Georgios Kountouriotis

Ob. Georgios Kountouriotis is represented, who was the President of the Provisional Administration of Greece (December 31, 1823 - April 26, 1826). Above him, is the inscription “ΓΕΩΡΓ. ΚΟΥΝΤΟΥΡΙΩΤΗΣ ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΣ” (GEORG. ΚΟΥΝΤΟΥΡΙΩΤΗΣ PRESIDENT).

Rv. A sitting figure of a woman that represents Greece and the inscription “ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΕΞΕΛΕΙΤΑΙ ΜΕ ΕΚ ΧΕΙΡΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΛΛΟΦΥΛΟΥ” (THE LORD WHO RESCUED ME FROM THE HAND OF THIS PHILISTINE).

Georgios Kountouriotis (1782-1858) was a boat owner and afterwards the Prime Minister of Greece. During Kapodistrias' rule, he was a member of the Panhellenic, a senator, a counselor of the state and minister of the Department of the Navy. In 1848, he was appointed as Prime Minister and ten years later, 1858, he died in Athens.

The museum has another example of the medal: inv. no. 324077, gilt bronze, 44.2 mm, 42.69 mm.

8. Inv. no. 323599 (Pl. 2, Fig. 8)

Gilt bronze, 44.7 mm, 41.3 g

Spyridon Trikoupis

Ob. Spyridon Trikoupis is depicted and alongside the inscription of his name “ΣΠΥΡΙΔΩΝ ΤΡΙΚΟΥΠΗΣ”.

Rv. The embodiment of Greece is illustrated providing help to a Greek fighter and his child and the inscription “ΚΑΙ ΕΣΤΑΙ ΩΣ ΕΛΑΙΑ ΚΑΤΑΚΑΡΠΟΣ” (MAY BE LIKEWISE OLIVE TREES FULL OF FRUITS) and in the lower part “ΜΕΣΟΛΟΓΓΙΩΝ 10 ΑΠΡΙΛ 1826” (MESOLOGGION 12 APRIL 1826), the day of the Siege of Messolonghi.

Spyridon Trikoupis (1788-1873) entered the political path in 1824 when he was elected as the attorney of the National Assemblies of Messolonghi and afterwards he became a member of the Temporary Government during the Revolution. He served in the fight for the Greek independence and he led the movement for the foundation of political and social structures. He served as Prime Minister of Greece, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and as the Greek ambassador to London.

The museum has another example of the medal: inv. no. 324075, gilt bronze, 44 mm, 43.6 mm.

9. Inv. no. 323600 (Pl. 3, Fig. 9)

Bronze, 44.74 mm, 50.96 g

Ioannis Kolettis

Ob. Ioannis Kolettis alongside the inscription with his name “ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΚΩΛΕΤΤΗΣ” (IOANNIS KOLETTIS).

Rv. Ioannis Kolettis standing and holding a sword in his right hand raised above his head, between two Ottoman soldiers who are on the floor. It's a symbolism for the victory in the battle of Karystos in Euboea.

Ioannis Kolettis was a doctor and a politician who played a significant role in Greek affairs from the Greek War of Independence through the early years of the Greek Kingdom, including as ambassador to France and serving twice as Prime Minister. In 1813, he settled in Ioannina, where he served as a doctor and later became the personal doctor of Ali Pasa's son. He left Ioannina for Syrrako in March 1821 when he entered Filiki Eteria. Kolettis was the leader of the pro-French party and in January 1822 he became Minister of Internal Affairs, while in 1823 he managed to remove the Turkish troops off the island of Euboea.

10. Inv. no. 323601 (Pl. 3, Fig. 10)

Bronze, 44.7 mm, 47.91 g

Prince Otto of Bavaria

Ob. Prince Otto is illustrated and above him there is the inscription "ΟΘΩΝ ΠΡΙΓΚΗΨ ΤΗΣ ΒΑΥΑΡΙΑΣ" (OTHON PRINCE OF BAVARIA).

Rv. The handing of the crown from Miaoulis, Botsaris and Plapoutas. The inscription of the reverse is "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΣΑΛΗΜ Ο ΕΣΤΙ ΒΑΣΙΛ. ΕΙΡΗΝΗΣ" (KING SALEM THE KING OF PEACE) and on the lower part there is "ΜΟΝΑΧΟΝ 3 ΟΚΤ. 1832" (MUNICH 3 OCT. 1832).

In 1832, Prince Otto of Bavaria (1815-1867) was elected by the three Great Forces (England, French, Russia) as king of Greece. A year later, he arrived in Nafplio, the temporary capital of the newborn Greek state, alongside 3500 men of the Royal Bavarian Auxiliary Corps which would replace the French army that remained in Greece. Until he was 18, the Regency was in charge and even when he became an adult, he kept the Bavarian Generals which were members of the Regency. During his first years of rule, he followed an authoritarian practice, and this led to a general dissatisfaction. Consequently, on September 3, 1843 there was a military uprising against him led by Kallergis and Makriyianis, known as "The Revolution of September 3rd". After this event he appointed a political person as Prime Minister, he announced elections and made the Bavarian Generals leave. From that moment and until his dethroning (1862) he ruled according to the Constitution. After a series of events, like the Rebellion of October 1862, King Otto was exiled from the country. He died in exile at Bamberg, on July 26, 1867.

The museum has another example of the medal: inv. no. 324073, gilt bronze, 44.2 mm, 47.09 g.

11. Inv. no. 323602 (Pl. 3, Fig. 11)

Bronze, 44.1 mm, 50.26 g

King Otto and Queen Amalia

Ob. King Otto and Queen Amalia as bride with the inscription of their names "ΟΘΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΜΑΛΙΑ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑ" (OTHON KING AND AMALIA QUEEN)

Rv. Crowned mantle with the coat of arms of Greece and Oldenburg with the legend "ΕΝ ΔΕ ΕΙΡΗΝΕΙ ΚΕΚΛΗΚΕΝ ΗΜΑΣ Ο ΘΕΟΣ" (GOD GAVE US PEACE) and "ΟΛΔΕΝΒ. ΤΗ 10 ΝΟΕΜΒ. 1836" (OLDENB. THE 10 NOVEMB. 1836).

Amalia of Oldenburg (1818-1875) was queen of Greece from 1836 to 1862 as spouse of King Otto. She acted as Regent of Greece twice when Otto was out of the

country. She was born a Duchess of Oldenburg and she arrived in Greece in 1837 where at first, she was loved by the Greeks but when she got involved in politics, she became the target of harsh attacks. She was expelled from Greece, with Otto, in 1862, after an uprising and she spent the rest of her years in exile in Bavaria.

12. Inv. no. 324072 (Pl. 3, Fig. 12)

Gilt bronze, 44.3 mm, 43.01 g

Ioannis Kapodistrias

Ob. Ioannis Kapodistrias is depicted along with the inscription “Ι. Α. ΚΑΠΟΔΙΣΤΡΙΑΣ ΚΥΒΕΡΝΗΤΗΣ” (I. A. KAPODISTIRIAS GOVERNOR).

Rv. The embodiments of France, England and Russia helping Greece stand up from the ground. The inscription “Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΩΝ ΜΕΘ’ ΗΜΩΝ” (THE LORD OF THE FORCES WITH US) is above them.

When the Revolution started Kapodistrias (1776-1831) had to step down from being Minister of Foreign Affairs in Russia. In 1827, after the end of the Greek Revolution, the National Commission of Troizina elected him as the first governor of the Greek state and he made Nafplio the capital of the country. During his political career, he made important changes to the state machine and his aim was to create a legal framework and reinforce the armed forces under one general command. He also achieved to expand the countries' borders and to guarantee the Greek Independence. As a governor, Kapodistrias faced a number of problems with the local generals and consequently he was assassinated on October 9, 1831 by the brother and the son of Petrompeis Mavromichalis, as an answer to the latter's imprisonment.

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Explanation of the plates

Plate 1 – Medals dedicated to the Greek Revolution in 1821: Fig. 1 - Medal with the portrait of Archbishop Germanos; Fig. 2 - Medal with the portrait of Petros Mavromichalis; Fig. 3 - Medal with the portrait of Alexandros Mavrokordatos; Fig. 4 - Medal with the portraits of Theodoros Kolokotronis and Nikitaras Stamatopoulos.

Planșa 1 – Medalii dedicate Revoluției grecești din 1821: Fig. 1 - Medalie cu portretul Arhiepiscopului Germanos; Fig. 2 - Medalie cu portretul lui Petros Mavromichalis; Fig. 3 - Medalie cu portretul lui Alexandros Mavrokordatos; Fig. 4 - Medalie cu portretele lui Theodoros Kolokotronis și Nikitaras Stamatopoulos.

Plate 2 – Medals dedicated to the Greek Revolution in 1821: Fig. 5 - Medal with the portrait of Markos Botzaris; Fig. 6 - Medal with the portrait of Andreas Miaoulis; Fig. 7 - Medal with the portrait of Georgios Kountouriotis; Fig. 8 - Medal with the portrait of Spyridon Trikoupis.

Planșa 2 – Medalii dedicate Revoluției grecești din 1821: Fig. 5 - Medalie cu portretul lui Markos Botzaris; Fig. 6 - Medalie cu portretul lui Andreas Miaoulis; Fig. 7 - Medalie cu portretul lui Georgios Kountouriotis; Fig. 8 - Medalie cu portretul lui Spyridon Trikoupis.

Plate 3 – Medals dedicated to the Greek Revolution in 1821: Fig. 9 - Medal with the portrait of Ioannis Kolettis; Fig. 10 - Medal with the portrait of Prince Otto of Bavaria; Fig. 11 - Medal with the portraits of King Otto and Queen Amalia; Fig. 12 - Medal with the portrait of Ioannis Kapodistrias.

Planșa 3 – Medalii dedicate Revoluției grecești din 1821: Fig. 9 - Medalie cu portretul lui Ioannis Kolettis; Fig. 10 - Medalie cu portretul Prințului Otto of Bavaria; Fig. 11 - Medalie cu portretele Regelui Otto și al Reginei Amalia; Fig. 12 - Medalie cu portretul lui Ioannis Kapodistrias.



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Plate 1



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10.



11.



12.