

# **Rewards of the Fighters of the Greek Revolution 1828-1844**

## **[Ανταμοιβές των Αγωνιστών της Ελληνικής Επανάστασης, 1828-1844]**

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This book by Soteroula Vassiliou focuses on the ‘workshop’ of political rewards during, the first post- revolutionary period 1828-1844, thoroughly presenting the main means of material and moral rewards offered by the Greek state to the fighters. At the same time, it explains how those policies became a qualification for state rewards in later wars of the nation too, until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The rewards game had two sides: the demands of contributors and the ideology of state policies.

Foreign factors, personal likes and dislikes, selfish interests, social differences, and, finally, national aspirations, are interposed between them.

The book is based on primary sources from a variety of archives, mainly the Archives of Excellence, which is part of the Military Archives of the General Archives of the State of Greece. The research also extended to include other files of the General Archives of the State, mainly the endowments of Philanthropists.

Special mention should also be made of the finding, in the Manuscripts and Holographs section of the National Library of Greece, of minutes of the last evaluation committee of the fighters works.

The second important source of the author was the press of the period examined in the research.

The author made use of the fruits of archival research, used widely published archives, correspondence, diaries, accounts of local and foreign observers and memoirs of fighters.

The choice of chronological structure was dictated by the interaction of reward policies with wider political, social and economic developments.

The six chapters correspond to an equal number of reward cycles. Vassiliou’s starting point is always the presentation of the political coordinates and the thorough

negotiation is the core of the theory and implementation of the laws, decrees and resolutions that promoted restoration.

The first chapter traces the evolution of the restoration of the fighters during the Kapodistrian period, the period of anarchy, but also the prehistory of the issue.

In the second chapter the discussion focuses on the measures by which the regency tries to co-opt the local leaders and pacify the young men. The third chapter is crucial, and traces the full unfolding of reward policies from June 1835 to February 1837.

The main theme of the fourth chapter is the first reform of the rewards system, with the aim of fiscal consolidation. The chapter starting with the assumption of the prime ministership by Alexandros Mavrokordatos.

The fifth chapter explores the chain developments, which gave birth to the September 3<sup>rd</sup> Movement. In the sixth chapter, the reward debates, the laws and resolutions of the Assembly and the parallel, unprecedented distributions of excellence, are thoroughly examined.

As the author notes, the purpose of the epimetre is to highlight the course of implementation of the resolutions of the National Assembly and the role of the overall institutional framework and the experience of the period 1828-1844 in the rehabilitation of the fighters until the end of the century.

The conclusions attempt to reconstitute the society of the fighters, as it was shaped by the fighting action, the request of rewards, compensation and care and the state policy.

The complex role of excellence is analysed and dialogue between hopes, denials, traumas, glory, anguish and pride, is highlighted.

Finally, in the appendix, the chronological table of the institutional framework of the restoration can also read as a map of the study.

All in all, the multifaceted story of the rewards emerges from a multitude of sources, as they combine in a way that highlights the interactions of fighters and governments, visionary and public discourse, glory and agony, recognition and denials, that always characterise the transition from the escalation of national struggles to compromises and next day pragmatism.

**Savvas Stavrou**