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Institutional Transformations in Church-state Relations: the Personnel of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education and Their Duties According to the Royal Decrees Published in the Government Gazette (1833–1862)

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Abstract

According to existing literature, scholarly interest in the historical development of the Greek Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education has primarily focused on its ideological role and structural formation. As a result, royal decrees published in the Government Gazette regarding personnel changes and duties have largely been overlooked. Our research aims to fill this gap. By utilizing the digital archive “Doiaki, the Government Gazette”, we identified and analyzed the published royal decrees related to personnel changes, and duties within the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, including educators, clergy, and other personnel. Through this digital resource, we approached the study of the history of Greek administration —particularly the administration of education— from a new perspective. The quantitative and qualitative data extracted from the Government Gazette was analyzed using digital tools and serves as a reliable guide for highlighting and interpreting the institutional transformations of the Greek state. The outcome of this analysis challenges the commonly prevailing perception that the Greek state, within the framework of caesaropapism, severed its ties to the institutional legacy of the Ottoman Empire, thereby creating a discontinuity in the institutional trajectory of Hellenism. Contrary to this view, our research highlights the dual role of the Church —as both an administrative and financial partner of the State— within a system of institutional co-management. In this context, the gradual secularization of education was not achieved through a complete rupture from the Ottoman institutional traditions but rather through the coexistence of two distinct institutional legacies: the Ottoman administrative framework and the Western-type state.

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