

***Mehmet Bengü Uluengin***

SECULARIZING ANATOLIA TICK BY TICK:  
CLOCK TOWERS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE  
AND THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

The last century of the Ottoman Empire saw an intense move to build clock towers in Anatolia. Among the reasons for this move were the central government's desire to advertise its sovereignty in the provinces, its desire to secularize the same periphery, and that clock towers were a means for Christians to erect church towers. Compounding this already complex layering of meanings, these towers were often erected under the pretext that they would help announce the daily times of prayer. After the proclamation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, this move continued in a new guise: clock towers were attached to modern-style buildings that advertised the republican project. Using documents from the Archives of the Prime Ministry and other primary sources, this paper attempts to trace the proliferation of clock towers in Anatolia and how the meanings attached to these edifices changed through time.