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Building a Republican Navy in Turkey: 1924-1939

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Introduction

Turkish Navy was shaped under the influence of a set of domestic and internal factors including internal power struggle, Turkish military culture, interservice relations and lack of funds, rivalry with Greece and international power configuration and arms trade system of the interwar years in general. Building a navy in Turkey in the interwar years signified a process far more significant than just creating an instrument of national defense. A key issue was to design and create a military institution loyal to the republic and to its founder, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Unlike the Army, the Navy at the time was regarded as a service with questionable pro-republican credentials. Moreover, the international naval disarmament movement also provided an interesting background against which Turkish naval building had to take place. It played an indirect but mostly restraining role on Turkish armament attempts. Owing to the urgent need for domestic political consolidation and the state of uncertainty in the interwar world, these factors produced two different sets of results in the 1920s and 1930s. In the 1920s, domestic factors such as military culture and interservice relations favored a coastal navy operating as an extension of the army in territorial defense. On the other hand, in the 1930s, the pursuit of military and naval cooperation with the great powers against emerging revisionism entailed a change in Turkish naval strategy and building priorities that emphasized missions to keep sea lines of communication open in case of war. This paper aims to compare these two phases of navy building in the early republican Turkey and its changing domestic and international significance, based primarily on diplomatic archival material researched in Britain, France and Italy and supplemented with official Turkish naval publications.

First Phase in Navy Building: 1923-1930

The political struggle that followed the proclamation of the republic in 1923 was decisively concluded when Mustafa Kemal, the founder and the first President of the republic, enlisted the support of the armed forces against his opponents. The political control of the navy as a military institution was also important in for this power

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struggle. At the beginning, the navy was seen by new Turkish rulers as an institution with questionable pro-republican credentials.

Although a large number of naval officers in junior ranks either fought in land campaigns with army units or involved in smuggling arms to the nationalist forces in Anatolia, the bulk of senior navy officer corps remained in Istanbul^[1]. The most prominent naval figure of the War of Independence was Huseyin Rauf [Orbay], a retired captain and a former Ottoman Minister of Marine, who became a hero for the daring raids of the cruiser under his command, Hamidiye, in the Aegean against the Greek Navy during the Balkan Wars. In 1919, he joined the Turkish nationalists in Anatolia and later he served as the prime minister until 1923^[2].

After the proclamation of the republic, there was a serious split in the Turkish nationalists' ranks over the future shape and direction of new Turkey. Rauf Orbay's comments in press in Istanbul about the republic and his visit to the Caliph were seen as open challenges to the new regime.^[3] Two other veterans of the War of Independence, Generals Kazim [Karabekir] and Ali Fuat [Cebesoy], also sided with Rauf Orbay. President Mustafa Kemal enjoyed the support of Chief of Staff Marshal Fevzi [Cakmak], Defense Minister General Kazim [Ozalp] and Prime Minister Ismet [Inonu].

In 1924 the President and his supporters successfully implemented a series of legislative measures to strengthen armed forces' loyalty to the republic. First, serving military officers were barred from engaging in politics. Until 1924, officers could be elected as deputies and involved in the Turkish Grand National Assembly's (TGNA) activities in uniform. They were now asked to make a choice between their uniforms and seats in the TGNA. Second, in March 1924, the Ministry of War, headed by the Chief of Staff was abolished and replaced by a civilian-headed Ministry of National Defense. Chief of Staff was placed on a purely military-footing. These measures did not remove military from politics but were indeed aimed to secure its loyalty to Mustafa Kemal and the Republic.^[4]

The Navy presented a challenge in the achievement of that objective. Large-scale purge of the officers who did not participate in the War of Independence hit naval officer corps seriously, particularly higher ranks.^[5] Even the purge did not fully restore confidence in the Navy and its officer corps. Examples of the navy's questionable loyalty can be found in Ataturk's cruise on board Hamidiye in the Black Sea in September 1924. Published accounts of this cruise reveal that some in Mustafa Kemal's entourage raised openly the question of Rauf Orbay's influence in the navy and asked if the navy identified itself with him. Many junior officers on board flatly rejected such personal identification and vocally dissociated themselves from Rauf Orbay and other "older generation" officers.^[6]

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In 1924 the TGNA adopted a bill that authorized funds for repair of naval units, including famous battlecruiser, Yavuz Sultan Selim (ex-German Navy Goeben). The prospects for Turkish naval development prompted a campaign in the press calling on the Government to institute a ministry of marine. It was argued that a giant project like Yavuz's reconditioning warranted the supervision of a politically empowered and accountable office. An earlier bill on the issue had been left to hibernate back in March 1924. In December 1924, that bill found a new lease of life. The chain of political events suggests a link between its revival and the formation of an opposition party, Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Firkasi, in November that year in addition to technical and administrative requirements of the naval program. During the debates in the TGNA, some opposition party deputies questioned the government's change of heart about the Ministry of Marine which had been considered unnecessary a few months ago. In the end, the bill was adopted and the Ministry of Marine was instituted as government post with the votes of the ruling Cumhuriyet Halk Firkasi. The opposition party deputies, including Rauf Orbay himself, cast their votes against creation of the Ministry of Marine.^[7]

Ali Ihsan [Eryavuz] was appointed the first Minister of Marine of the republic. He was retired artillery major with no previous experience in naval affairs and a former Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Union and Progress) hardliner. He then became an ardent supporter of President Mustafa Kemal. His appointment lends further credence to the claim that the Ministry was devised to consolidate political control over the armed forces and to eliminate Rauf Orbay's influence on the Navy. This was the obvious conclusion for many foreign eyes in Turkey as well.^[8]

In the interwar years, the army-dominated Turkish General Staff enjoyed an unchallenged monopoly in setting the military strategy and priorities. In the early 1920s, the Turkish military mind was preoccupied with the gap caused in Turkish defenses by the de-militarization requirement for the Turkish Straits. This situation was thought to have exposed Turkey more to the Italian threat in the West. The main strategic objectives were thus to fill this defense gap and counter a possible sea borne assault by Italy on Anatolia. For both objectives, the Navy was relegated to an auxiliary role. The way Turkish defense was organized reflected the prevailing culture of the officer corps. The first generation of the republican military leaders had been involved in overwhelmingly defensive land battles from the War of Tripoli in 1911 and the Gallipoli Wars in 1915 to the end of the War of Independence in 1922. In all these conflicts, friendly naval forces performed peripheral roles. As a result, the early republican military mind saw a coastal defense function for the navy at best. In practical terms, the navy was treated as a natural extension of the army.^[9] Hence submarines and sea mines were weapons of choice and offered an affordable alternative^[10] to the expensive surface vessels that the naval officer corps long desired.^[11]

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The republic could spare only limited funds for the naval program. However, in the 1920s, even these funds had to be diverted to other venues of national defense.^[12] The Mousul crisis with Britain and the Seyh Said rebellion in 1925 presented serious threats to the republic's survival. Security of the eastern borders and provinces become top military priority for Turkey. The Turkish General Staff quickly discovered the utility of airpower in dealing with insurgencies in remote areas as the Royal Air Force had experienced earlier in the neighboring regions of Iraq.^[13]

Hence, if submarine was one weapon of choice for the Turkish General Staff, the aircraft became other weapon of choice. Airpower enjoyed a distinct advantage over the sea power. Its popular appeal in Turkey was no less than its appeal to the Turkish military mind. Aircraft and aviator offered useful symbols of progress and power for the new republican identity in Turkey. This helped Turkish government overcome funding problem for at least one aspect of its armament program. A countrywide fund-raising drive translated aviation's popular appeal into finances to buy 200 aircraft in the 1920s. Only the battlecruiser Yavuz could rival the aircraft in capturing the hearts and minds of the Turkish public.^[14]

For the problems encountered in the east, the government depended on the Army and air power. In the west, both also offered the primary means of defense against a possible Italian assault. On the other hand, Turkey's troubled relations with Greece in the Aegean in the 1920s required a fleet to match the Greek fleet in the Aegean. The Turks and Greeks had a long tradition of naval rivalry since the late 19th century.^[15] Greek naval superiority in the Aegean could be seriously challenged if Yavuz could be restored to operational status and supported by destroyers. To meet both objectives in the west, Turkey adopted a two-track naval plan. The plan called for acquisition of submarines and sea mines, and the repairs to Yavuz and destroyer orders were pursued concurrently.

When the Turks went shopping for submarines, the interwar international arms trade system presented them additional difficulties in building a republican navy. The new arms trade system mirrored the post-First World War political order. In Europe, Britain and France retained their arms-production capabilities. Another European arms producer and trader, Germany, was kept out of the system until 1934. An extra-European power, the United States, also emerged as a major supplier of arms. However, there was a strong public aversion to arms production and trade after the First World War, particularly in Britain and the United States. Consequently, the temporary absence of Germany, coupled with British and American policies of self-restraint, resulted in a supplier vacuum in international arms trade system. Major arms suppliers' reluctance to spend even on their own armed services produced two significant consequences^[16]. First, the private arms producers turned to foreign markets in a world of shrinking domestic procurement bases. Second, the pro-disarmament producers also stopped providing government guarantees or subventions

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for foreign sales. This situation accentuated the supplier vacuum and restricted for Turkey the choice of naval arms suppliers. Given the poor state of its economy, foreign credits and government guarantees were imperative for building the Turkish Navy. Only European powers unsatisfied by the status quo could provide such facilities for political purposes. Italy already embarked on ambitious arms projects to fill in the supplier vacuum, whereas Germany was seeking a way around the Versailles restrictions. Consequently both countries figured prominently in Turkish naval programs in the 1920s.^[17]

The first Turkish naval order was placed in The Netherlands for two German-designed boats in 1924. The Dutch shipyard building these boats was indeed set up by three German shipbuilders. For these submarines were built with subventions from an unbudgeted German fund, they were to help the German submarine service skills and expertise survive the Versailles restrictions.^[18] This Turkish order manifested the resilience of the German influence in Turkish military and navy. Inevitably, the Turkish submarines were to be used in training of new generation of German submariners particularly during the trials at Rotterdam. Turkish order for German-designed submarines from the Netherlands in 1925 more or less defined the choice of foreign advisors in favor of retired German Navy officers in Turkish Navy.

As the repairs to Yavuz, contracted to a French company, technical problems and fraud charges led to a significant delay in that project. The fraud charges indeed led not only to the impeachment of the Minister himself but also to the abolition of the Ministry of Marine in 1927 all together. By that time, the regime was domestically consolidated and the political opposition was neutralized.

In September 1928, a large-scale Greek naval exercise off the Dardanelles set the seal on the fate of naval modernization in Turkey. The Turkish Navy responded by a similar exercise personally commanded by President Atatürk. In view of the pending disputes with Greece and the Greek naval superiority, the naval modernization became imperative. Hence Yavuz's reconditioning gained momentum and the shipbuilding program was revived.^[19] However, the funding remained a key issue in the program.

In this juncture another politically unsatisfied European power, Italy, began to loom large. The process witnessed Italy's transformation from a source of threat into a major supplier of arms to Turkey. The French-Italian rivalry in the Mediterranean after 1927 provided Turkey an unexpected opportunity for financing its modest naval program.^[20] Fascist Italy began to entertain with the idea of establishing an Aegean bloc between Italy, Turkey and Greece to counter the French influence in the Mediterranean and the Balkans. Here arms supplies presented themselves as the best instruments of gaining influence in and over Turkey and Greece. It was no surprise that the Italian government offered a financial guarantee up to 70 percent of the value

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of possible Turkish naval order in Italian shipbuilders.^[21] Many disarmament-oriented foreign governments were not able to match this guarantee. Although only the French shipbuilders provided comparable bids, Turkey's worsening relations with France over the Ottoman debts ruled out the French option. In May 1929, the new naval orders went to Italian shipbuilders. The order included two destroyers, two submarines and three submarine chasers. The newly-emerging Italian connection with Turkish Navy led some foreign observers to believe that "an Italian mission is about to take over [from the Germans] the supervision of rejuvenation of Turkish fleet."^[22]

Turkey's neighbors moved to adjust their shipbuilding and deployment plans in response. Interestingly, Ankara's most trusted partner, the Soviet Union, was concerned about the Black Sea naval balance after the Turkish naval modernization. Hence, they deployed one battleship and one cruiser from the Baltic Sea to augment the fleet in the Black Sea in December 1929/January 1930.^[23] The prospective Turkish fleet expansion worried the Greeks most. The Greek government decided to order two destroyers, also from Italy, as an urgent measure to preserve the naval balance in the Aegean. Although Turkish and Greek orders tended to add fuel to the Turkish-Greek naval arms race, they in one sense helped Italy realize one of its major strategic goals. The Italian strategic plans for 1929-1931 assumed Turkish and Greek neutrality in case of war against Yugoslavia or against Yugoslavia and France.^[24]

In March 1930, the Undersecretary of the Turkish Navy, Captain Mehmet Ali, visited Italy. Mehmet Ali's visit coincided interestingly with the London Naval Conference. While the delegates from the major naval nations were discussing the extension of naval limitations to lighter units such as cruisers, submarines and destroyers, Turkey ordered two more destroyers from Italy.^[25] In hindsight, the timing of the Turkish 1930 order for destroyers suggests a link with the London Naval Conference and with Turkish-Greek diplomatic negotiations on freezing naval arms in the Aegean. It may be argued that Ankara rushed to secure these destroyers before the London Naval Conference placed restrictions on the production and trade of lighter naval units, including destroyers. Second, there had been proposals and counter-proposals by Ankara and Athens for naval arms limitations in the Aegean since January 1928. In 1930, the Turkish-Greek negotiations looked promising in resolving the post-Lausanne problems. It is possible that Ankara wanted to complete its fleet modernization before a Turkish-Greek agreement froze naval force levels. Two factors support this argument. First, in spite of vocally expressed dissatisfaction with the first two destroyers ordered in Italy, Ankara decided to stick with Italian shipbuilders without going through a lengthy tender process for new units. Second, the new Turkish contract demanded an extremely short delivery period of 12 months.^[26] Shortly afterwards Turkey concluded naval protocols with its two neighbors, Greece and the Soviet Union in 1930 and 1931 respectively. These protocols marked a naval holiday in the Aegean^[27] and the Black Sea^[28] until 1934.

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Interestingly, in the early 1930s, the navy building re-gained its domestic political significance. Turkey's short-lived experiment in multi-party politics in 1930 with Serbest Firka added a new dimension to the idea of naval modernization. The pro-government press, particularly Cumhuriyet, began to praise Ismet Inonu as the mastermind behind Turkish naval revival.^[29] Obviously, the ruling party and its leader aimed at translating new navy's appeal to the hearts and minds of Turkish electorate into votes. Even though competitive elections never took place, the Navy maintained its significance for domestic political purposes in the eyes of Ismet Inonu. The Italians for instance were notified that Prime Minister Inonu was keen to introduce the new destroyers to the public on the Bosphorous in May 1931, shortly after general elections.^[30] Kocatepe and Adatepe, the two destroyers, could only be delivered in October 1931. Even at that time, they were not completed. The British Ambassador in Istanbul observed:

In order to get here in time to meet Ismet Pasha on his return from his visits to Greece and Hungary, the two destroyers left Italy without their fire control installation... Prime Minister decided to take delivery of these vessels for political reasons, notwithstanding strong opposition from the Turkish naval experts in view of the vessels' unsatisfactory behavior at trials.^[31]

Second Phase: Into the Second World War

Until Mussolini's speech on the future Italian expansion into Asia and Africa in 1934, Turkey adhered to naval holiday with Greece and the Soviets. Italy's return to the threat number one status in Turkish perceptions defined the contours of Turkish naval strategy which was gradually re-oriented beyond coastal defense missions.^[32] However, the initial response to the perceived Italian threat was to augment the submarine fleet. The demilitarization of the Straits retained its decisive nature is setting the type and scope of the naval measures Turkey devised initially against the Italian threat.

Differently from the first phase, Turkey was not to stand alone against the threat this time. Ankara sought to augment its submarine fleet not unilaterally, but in coordination with Athens. The two capitals went so far as to make a joint request from London for financial assistance to acquire new units against the Italian threat. However, their joint plea for British credits to strengthen their fleets was not received enthusiastically in London on two accounts. The lack of funds was a restraining factor. London was still reluctant even to spend on its own naval programs. The British were also the champions of worldwide disarmament. Viewed through the double prism of economics and disarmament, it was difficult to justify financing armament efforts of two foreign countries. In sum, the British position found its outmost expression in the following: "the prospect of a race between Italy and her

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nervous little neighbors conducted on borrowed money is a nightmare.”^[33] Thus, Turkey had to look elsewhere for the second phase of their naval building.

Meanwhile, the international disarmament that focused on naval arms lost much of its momentum. After the initial success in the Washington Conference in 1921-1922^[34], the naval disarmament was characterized by a lack of progress and disagreements in subsequent conferences. Although Britain was the chief protagonist of worldwide disarmament, it finally consented on the revision of the Versailles restrictions on German naval building in 1935. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement in 1935 hence re-introduced German naval power into the interwar strategic equilibrium.^[35] In this context, Britain was prone to see Rome as a potential partner in checking the German power. This was the primary reason for mismatch between Turkish and British views of Italy.

Economically, Turkey was in no better shape than in the 1920s to arm itself particularly after the 1929 World Economic Crisis. Foreign credits were again necessary to launch the second phase of the naval building efforts. Britain already declared its lack of interest in Turkish naval building with government subsidies to private shipyards. France was not considered a politically reliable supplier due to the Ottoman debts and the Hatay issues. Consequently, Turkey turned once again to Germany which was willing and able to supply submarines to Turkey at affordable prices under favorable credit terms. As Berlin already ridded itself of the Versailles restrictions, the Turkish submarine order in 1936 was placed directly in shipyards in Germany. In the meantime, Turkish Navy had the opportunity to add to its fleet another German-designed submarine originally built for Spain in 1936. The Italian assault on Abyssinia in 1935 accentuated Turkish fear of Italy. Although in 1935 British Ambassador in Turkey wrote, “the Turks habitually exaggerated this [Italian] danger,”^[36] this view was bound to change soon.

In the second phase, there were two new important parameters added to Turkish naval strategy: the need to re-militarize the Straits^[37] and the alliance with Greece. After 1935, Turkish diplomacy was geared towards securing revision of the status of Turkish Straits, not by force or fait accompli but by negotiation. Within a year, the Straits no longer stood as a defense gap in Turkish military plans as their demilitarized status was terminated under the Montreaux Convention of 1936.

With the Balkan Pact of 1934, Turkey made regional allies in the Peninsula. None was seen as more crucial strategically than Greece. Turkish Foreign Minister Tevfik Rustu Aras stated, “Greece was absolutely indispensable to Turkey. Without Greece as an outpost, Turkey would strategically be much more vulnerable and it was necessary for Turkey to retain as an ally at all costs.”^[38] These two new parameters entailed a navy to perform new missions beyond coastal defense. As a result of

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Greece's position, keeping the sea lines of communication in the Northern Aegean became important consideration in Turkish naval strategy.

It should be added airplane retained its top priority as a weapon of defense and offense against Italy. Another interesting indicator of Turkish military's pursuit of offensive capabilities was the acquisition of 36 Martin bomber aircraft from the United States. Reportedly, these aircraft offered the range and payload required to launch an air raid to Rome from Turkey.^[39] For the defense of Turkish mainland opposite to the Dodecanese Islands, Turkey was to rely on its air force supported by mobile heavy artillery. As for the Straits, the primary means of defense were the mines, guns and torpedoes. However it was granted that in case of emergency both Turkey and Greece "would be interested in having sufficient naval force to protect commerce from molestation in the northern waters of the Aegean Sea."^[40]

After 1936, London changed its mind about both disarmament and Italy with a more positive approach to Turkey as pro-status quo country. The new mood was reflected in Anglo-Turkish naval relations. The Republican Navy made its first overseas visit to Malta in November 1936.^[41] Although London tried to downplay the political significance of this unprecedented Turkish naval visit, Ankara was aiming to giving out a clear political message by sending almost the entire fleet.^[42] Beyond its symbolic significance, the Malta visit provided another indication of Turkish opening up to Britain militarily. The Italian-built destroyers of the visiting Turkish squadron were of great interest to the British naval intelligence in view of the conflict potential in the Mediterranean as the Italian Navy possessed similar destroyers. Normally reserved at best towards foreigners, the Turks were surprisingly accommodating to the British and allowed them to board and examine particularly two Turbine class destroyers, Zafer and Tinaztepe, built in Italy.^[43]

In 1937, new Turkish naval building program reflected the shift of focus in Turkish naval strategy. In addition to submarines, the new program called for expansion of surface fleet with two cruisers and a large number of destroyers. By envisaging cruisers under its new naval building program, Turkey risked involvement in "the cruiser controversy" an issue that undermined naval disarmament and became a major preoccupation for Britain.^[44] Indeed to enhance its pro-status credentials, Ankara was seeking to become a party to naval disarmament process. In spite of the new improved climate between Ankara and London, the British stood firmly against the idea of building two cruisers for Turkey. Such a development would violate the naval disarmament treaties. London tried to persuade Turkey to modify its naval program to include one battleship instead of two cruisers.^[45]

The cruisers were to be built in the final stages of the ten-year naval program. However, the quick succession of events in Europe rendered all cruiser discussions with Turkey irrelevant very soon. The pirate submarine activity in the Mediterranean

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during the Spanish Civil War propelled Ankara more towards Britain and even France. Turkish government agreed to cooperate with other Mediterranean powers against the pirate submarine activity. However, the extent of cooperation became a divisive issue in the government and concluded with Ataturk's parting company with Ismet Inonu. During the Nyon Conference, the disagreement between the two figures on the Turkish policy was sharp. Ataturk was favoring a closer cooperation with Britain and France than Inonu was ready to accept. Their assessment of the risks associated differed substantially.^[46] As reported in Turkish naval publications, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk considered naval cooperation with Britain and France a beneficial policy even though it could run the risk of losing one or two destroyers.^[47] Such cooperation was likely to be rewarded with British and French support against Italy. However, in practice Turkish contribution to the joint naval activity in the Mediterranean remained modest and short of involvement beyond Turkish coastal waters.

The naval policy advocated by Ataturk during the Nyon Conference points to a significant degree of continuity in his line of thinking. If we were to believe what was reported in British diplomatic archives, he was quoted to have said, "Turkey would do her best to stay out of any future war, but if she did have to go to it would be on the side which held the command of the sea."^[48]

The ten-year naval building program adapted in 1937^[49] could never materialize. Indeed, the units ordered under earlier programs could not be delivered completely. Germany did not deliver one Turkish submarine built in Germany and supply required parts and equipment for the ones under assembly in Turkey. The subsequent orders for destroyers and submarines in Britain shared a similar fate. Some of them were withheld for Britain's own war efforts.

In conclusion, the process of building a navy in Turkey followed a trajectory, which perfectly mirrored the state of relations with major European powers. Although Turkey managed to break its international isolation in the 1930s, its naval building was less successful than in the first phase. The main reason was the suppliers cared about their own war-fighting capabilities and efforts more than those of their clients'. Ironically, the naval units received from Italy in the early 1930s represent the largest and most significant material contribution to Turkish naval efforts. This could not be paralleled in the second phase even though domestic political conditions and military thinking were more permissive to expanding the Navy.

^[1] Afif Buyuktugrul, *Cumhuriyet Donanmasi*, 1923–1960 (Istanbul: Deniz Basimevi, 1967): 13

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^[2] See Rauf Orbay, Cehennem Degirmeni: Siyasi Hatiralar I, 2nd Ed. (Istanbul: Emre Yayıncılık, 2001).

^[3] In his six-day marathon speech, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk devoted a large section to Rauf Orbay's anti-republican stand and acts. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Speech (Ankara: Basbakanlık Basimevi, 1981): 676–679.

^[4] William Hale, Turkish Politics and the Military (London: Routledge, 1994): 76; Andrew Mango, Ataturk (London: John Murray, 1999): 415–417.

^[5] Fahri Coker, Bahriyemizin Yakın Tarihinden Kesitler (Ankara: Dz. K.K. Karargah Basimevi, 1994): 179–183.

^[6] Rasit Metel, Ataturk ve Donanma (Istanbul: Deniz Basimevi, 1966): 52; M. Celaleddin Orhan, Bir Bahriyelinin Anilari: 1918–1981 (Istanbul: Kastayayinlari, 2001): 259.

^[7] Turkiye Buyuk Millet Meclisi (TBMM) Zabıt Ceridesi (25 December 1924): 287–304.

^[8] Public Record Office (PRO) FO 371 10870 E3338/3338/44 (1 June 1925); Ministère de Affaires Étrangères (MAE), Serie E Levant/Turquie, Vol 76/II, no. 305 (24 December 1924).

^[9] When it was inaugurated in 1929 the Naval Staff College curriculum included infantry tactics at company and battalion levels in light of lessons of the Gallipoli Wars and the War of Independence. Afif Buyuktugrul, Osmanlı Deniz Harp Tarihi ve Cumhuriyet Donanması, Vol. IV (Istanbul: Deniz Kuvvetleri Basimevi, 1984): 641. Several navy officers challenged this idea in the naval and military journals in the 1930s. See for instance, Sait Talat [Halman], “Deniz ve Kara Tabiyeleri Arasında Bir Mukayese ve Deniz Tabiyesinin Temeli,” Deniz Mecmuası 44(324), (April 1932): 470–477; Ruhi Develilioglu, “Deniz ve Kara Muharebe Sevk ve Idareleri Arasındaki Farklar,” Deniz Mecmuası 48(342) (October 1936): 769–778; Ridvan Korman, “Kara ve Deniz Harplerinin Sevk ve Idaresindeki Ilgiler,” Askeri Mecmua 12(101), (June 1936): 257–274.

^[10] Osman Nuri, “Tahtelbahir ve Gorecegi Isler,” Deniz Mecmuası 41(312) (March 1929): 83

^[11] Afif Buyuktugrul, Buyuk Atamiz ve Turk Denizciligi (Ankara: Turkiye Is Bankasi Kultur Yayinlari, 1969): 92. An informed observer was to claim years later that the certain strand in Turkish military advocated abolishing navy altogether. Abidin Daver, “Donanmamizin Ihyasi Ismet Pasanin Muvaffak Oldugu En Buyuk Eserlerden Biridir,” Cumhuriyet (25 August 1930).

^[12] PRO FO 371/11544 E2050/523/44 (29 March 1926).

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[13] Robert W. Olson, The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880–1925 (Texas: University of Texas Press, 1989): 120–123 and 161–163.

[14] See Hasan Ersel, “Yavuz Geliyor Yavuz,” Toplumsal Tarih (76/4), (April 2000): 28–39.

[15] Afif Buyuktugrul, “Osmanli (Turk)–Yunan Deniz Silahlanma Yarisi” Belleten 39(156) (October 1975): 725–774.

[16] For an account of British naval policy, see David MacGregor, “Former Naval Cheapskate: Chancellor of the Exchequer Winston Churchill and the Royal Navy, 1924–1929,” Armed Forces and Society 19(3) (Spring 1993): 319–333.

[17] Keith Krause, Arms and the State: Patterns of Military Production and Trade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 72–78.

[18] Holger Herwig, “Innovation Ignored: The Submarine Problem, Germany, Britain and the United States – 1919–1939,” in Military Innovation in the Interwar Period, (eds.) W. Murray and A. R. Millet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 232

[19] Buyuktugrul, Cumhuriyet Donanmasi, 46–47.

[20] On French–Italian naval rivalry in the Mediterranean see Paul G. Halpern, “French and Italian Naval Policy in the Mediterranean,” in John B. Hattendorf (ed.) Naval Strategy and Policy in the Mediterranean: Past, Present and Future (London: Frank Cass, 2000): 78–106.

[21] Archivio Storico della Ministerio Affari Esteri (ASMAE), Pacco 1727/7948, Turchia 1927 (21 July 1927).

[22] “Turks Order More Ships,” The Evening News (29 May 1929), newspaper cutting in the Venizelos Archives, Athens, Folder 173/53, 1929, VI–VII.

[23] Jurgen Rohwer and Mikhail Monakov, “The Soviet Union’s Ocean–Going Fleet, 1935–1956,” International History Review 18(4) (November 1996): 843.

[24] Marco Rimanelli, Italy between Europe and the Mediterranean: Diplomacy and Naval Strategy from Unification to NATO, 1800–2000 (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1997): 528. Inevitably, in the French naval assessments, Turkey was considered a potentially hostile naval power in the Mediterranean in 1932. See “Memorandum du Ministère de la Marine” (21 October 1932) in Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1932–1939, Vol. I 1st Series (1932–1935) (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1964): 536.

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[251] “Deniz Mustesari Italya’dan Geldi,” Cumhuriyet (19 March 1939); PRO FO 371 14567 E1017/206/44 (27 February 1930).

[261] PRO FO 371 14567 E1792/206/44 (7 April 1930).

[271] Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, “The 1930 Greek–Turkish Naval Protocol,” Diplomacy and Statecraft 9(1) (March 1998): 89–111.

[281] Cable claims that the Soviet–Turkish naval protocol resulted from Moscow’s practice of gunboat diplomacy on Ankara by detaching two warships from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea in 1929/1930. James Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy: 1919–1991, 3rd Edition (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994): 168.

[291] Daver “Donanmamizin Ihyasi...” Cumhuriyet (25 August 1939) and Daver, “Turk Donanmasi,” Cumhuriyet (25 May 1931). This view was not shared by many naval officers. They tend to see Inonu as the figure behind the abolition of the Ministry of Marine in 1927. See for instance, Orhan, Bir Bahriyelinin..., 283.

[301] ASMAE Busta 3/6, Turchia 1931 (7 March 1931).

[311] PRO FO 371 15366 E5325/7/44 (21 October 1931).

[321] In the early 1930s, naval officers began to raise the question of future shape and missions of the Turkish Navy. For example, see Sermet Fuat, “Donanmamiz ve Deniz Ticaretimiz,” Deniz Mecmuasi 45(330) (November 1933): 409–434; Osman Nuri, Deniz Kuvveti (annex to Deniz Mecmuasi no. 333) (Istanbul: Deniz Matbaasi, 1934): 38.

[331] PRO FO 371 17964 E7047/2462/44 (23 November 1934)

[341] For a comprehensive study on the Washington Conference, see E. Goldstein, J. Maurer and E. R. May (eds.), The Washington Conference, 1921–22: Naval Rivalry, East Asian Stability and the Road to Pearl Harbor (Essex: Frank Cass, 1994).

[351] Clare M. Scammell, “The Royal Navy and the Strategic Origins of the Anglo–German Naval Agreement of 1935,” Journal of Strategic Studies 20(2) (June 1997): 92–118.

[361] PRO FO 371 19039 E1213/1213/44 (10 February 1935).

[371] Turkey was more concerned about the defense of the Dardanelles than the Bosphorus’. In 1935, German naval advisors in Turkey were asked to help the government devise new naval program for the defense of the Dardanells. Cemil Kocak, Turk–Alman Iliskileri (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu, 1991): 188–189. Turkish General Staff later admitted to the British that until 1939 “no offensive plans had been made against the Russians as their attitude had been friendly.” PRO ADM1/9992 NID 02286/MO87/40 (15 December 1939).

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[38] PRO FO 371 20860 E2918/188/44 (14 May 1937).

[39] [Hulusi Kaymakli], Havacilik Tarihinde Turkler 2 (Ankara: Kultur Ofset Ltd. Sti., 1997): 224

[40] PRO FO 371 17966 E6915/3652/44 (11 November 1934)

[41] Coker, Bahriyemizin Yakin Tarihinden, 132–157.

[42] PRO FO 371 20029 E5702/1373/44 (9 September 1936).

[43] Interview with Semsettin Bargut, Captain (Ret.), Turkish Navy on 13 April 2001, Ankara, Turkey. Captain Bargut served as the radio officer on board Zafer during Turkish fleet's Malta visit in 1936. For these destroyers see, Jane's Fighting Ships of World War II (New York: Crescent Books, 1998): 250–253; Cumhuriyet Donanmasi–Fleet of the Republic: 1923–2000 (Istanbul: Seyir Hidrografi ve Osinografi Daire Baskanligi, 2000): 21.

[44] Ernest Andrade Jr., “The Cruiser Contraversy in Naval Limitations Negotiations, 1922–1936,” Military Affairs 48(3) (July 1984): 113–120.

[45] PRO FO 371 20657 A169/169/45 (12 January 1937).

[46] See Hasan Riza Soyak, Ataturk'ten Hatiralar, Vol. 2 (n.p.p.: Yapi Kredi Bankasi Yayinlari, 1973): 657–682

[47] Metel, Ataturk ve Donanma, 150–151; Buyuktugrul, Buyuk Atamiz, 161.

[48] PRO FO 371 16987 E6297/6297/44 (21 October 1933).

[49] PRO ADM 116/4198 M02082/38 (12 March 1938).