Atatürk’s Navy: 
Determinants of Turkish Naval Policy, 
1923–38

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Turkish naval policy between the establishment of the Turkish Republic and the Second World War was influenced by a set of institutional, domestic and international factors. Until the mid-1930s domestic political rivalry and Turkish military culture relegated the navy to a secondary role in support of the army for territorial defence. Because of the new republic’s international isolation, naval policy was shaped largely in a diplomatic vacuum. Ankara gradually tried to take advantage of emerging great power rivalries in Europe to secure affordably priced naval arms. In the process, politically unsatisfied powers such as Germany and Italy figured prominently as suppliers of naval arms to Turkey. After 1934 changing international political and economic conditions weighed more heavily than domestic factors in setting the parameters of Turkish naval policy. The armaments programme adopted in 1934 provided for naval expansion to counter the Italian threat in the Aegean. This shift of emphasis is in naval policy also reflected Turkey’s changing international status from an ‘outcast’ to a pro-status quo power. However, the coming of the Second World War denied Turkey the chance to build the fleet envisaged under its new naval programme.

Among the military institutions of modern Turkey, the navy is probably the most understudied. Traditionally, other services have received far more scholarly attention than the navy either as political actors or as instruments of national defence. The army is usually identified with the entire Turkish military establishment. From the civil-military relations perspective this is justifiable, as the army has always enjoyed a higher standing in the institutional hierarchy and played a more prominent role in politics than other services.¹ The popularity of studies on the air force, on the other hand, is probably related to the unprecedented degree of foreign involvement in various stages of its development. Foreign involvement thus accounts for the availability of reliable and accurate records in the foreign archives that have made the study of the air force a relatively easy venture for scholars.²

In Turkish naval historiography there are a limited number of works devoted to the Turkish Navy in the early republican period. Such works deal with the Turkish naval building process in relation to the most prominent personal figure of the period, President Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk].³

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Moreover, this literature has developed largely in the form of a narrative based on personal accounts; the same narrative has been reiterated in subsequent works without any questioning or substantial revisions. Overall, this approach, in its original or reiterated version, misses to a great extent the significance of the complex set of institutional, political and international factors that influenced the Turkish naval policy in the inter-war years.

The process of building a navy in Turkey between the two world wars offers an interesting case study in terms of the political reliability of the navy and the mismatch between the demands of classical theories of sea power and thin financial resources. Most strikingly, the process echoed the general inter-war debate between the advocates of naval supremacy based on large surface units and those who argued for a fleet of lighter units, submarines and aircraft. The land-warfare oriented Turkish military culture weighed in heavily in the naval policy debate and helped the latter to prevail into the 1940s.

The international naval disarmament movement of the inter-war years provided the background against which Turkish naval building had to take place. Turkish naval policy seemed to defy the general tendency towards naval limitations in the 1920s. By any standards Turkey was a minor naval power. Ankara’s naval programmes were modest in magnitude and had little, if any, impact on the overall naval power configuration in the inter-war years. Turkey’s two neighbours, Greece in the Aegean and the Soviet Union in the Black Sea, followed them most attentively in the context of the regional naval balance. However, two factors accounted for the wider foreign interest in Turkish naval programmes.

First, naval disarmament enhanced the value of overseas markets for private shipbuilders as a result of shrinking domestic procurement bases in many arms-producing nations. Inevitably, Turkey’s significance grew disproportionately as a potential market for naval arms.

Second, drawing on the Ottoman experience, many European capitals viewed Turkish naval contracts as offering opportunities to gain or maintain a stronghold of political influence in the new Turkish state. As a geographical successor to the Ottoman Empire, Turkey owed its significance in the wider Mediterranean naval balance more to its control of the Anatolian land mass (and later the Straits) than to its modest fleet. Thus, Turkish naval policy and naval arms trade consistently fluctuated with the changes and shifts in Turkey’s inter-war foreign policies.

The interplay of domestic and international factors produced two different sets of results in the 1920s and 1930s. In the 1920s domestic factors such as political struggle, military culture and inter-service relations favoured a small coastal navy operating as an extension of the army in
territorial defence. In the 1930s, on the other hand, the pursuit of military and naval cooperation with regional and great powers against emerging revisionism entailed building a fleet with larger surface units, as the Turkish Navy’s mission repertoire included tasks beyond coastal waters. Even then the fleet was regarded as ‘the infantry’ of naval warfare.

This article will first examine the process through which the new ruling elite attempted to transform the navy into a loyal Republican institution. Then, it will address the decisive impact of Turkish military culture on the shape of the navy and naval policy. This will be followed by a discussion of external factors that influenced the naval building process in Turkey.

Finally, the change in Turkish naval policy will be examined in the context of Turkey’s alignment with the pro-status quo powers in the Balkans and the Mediterranean in the mid-1930s. The article draws primarily on diplomatic archives in Britain, France and Italy, supplemented by much more limited and less accessible archives and official publications in Turkey.

**Domestic Power Struggle and its Impact on the Navy**

In 1923 the new rulers of Turkey embarked on an ambitious task of creating a modern republic. This task inevitably required transforming the society and institutions inherited from the Ottoman Empire into a society and institutions loyal to the republic. However, the march for reform met with opposition. The proclamation of the republic on 29 October 1923 sharpened the rivalry between the proponents and opponents of reforms, which eventually organised into two political parties in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM). The Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası (The Republican People’s Party) led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder and first president of the republic, was formed by the ruling group, whereas the opposition was organised in the Terrakipperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Progressive Republican Party). The struggle was decisively concluded when Mustafa Kemal secured the support of the armed forces against his political opponents.

Initially, the new Turkish ruling elite saw the navy as an institution with questionable pro-republican credentials. The whole process of transformation thus involved conversion of the navy into a republican institution. The Ministry of Marine was created to serve this end in December 1924. This office was the first (and shortly to become the last) of its kind in modern Turkey. Although it had been a standard practice for the governments in the late Ottoman era to have a ministry of marine, particularly after 1867, the new regime of Turkey did not immediately adopt the Ottoman model.
The Turkish War of Independence (1919–22) was overwhelmingly a land war on which naval operations had at best peripheral influence. The volume of work devoted to naval operations in the War of Independence is illustrative of the extent of naval contributions to the nationalist effort in the official military history of the War of Independence. Air and naval operations combined account for only a single volume in the 20-volume series published by the General Staff History service. Although a large number of naval officers in junior ranks either fought in land campaigns, mostly with infantry units, or were involved in smuggling arms to the nationalist forces in Anatolia, the bulk of the senior navy officer corps remained by choice or by order in Istanbul. The most prominent naval figure of the War of Independence was Huseyin Rauf [Orbay], a retired captain and former Ottoman Minister of Marine, who was hailed 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 then returned to Istanbul to serve as a deputy in the last Ottoman Assembly. The British subsequently exiled him to Malta in 1920 for his pro-nationalist stand in the Assembly. When finally released, he went to Ankara to serve first as minister of public works and then as prime minister until 1923.

After the proclamation of the republic, there was a serious split in the Turkish nationalists’ ranks. Former comrades in the War of Independence parted company and began to engage in a political struggle over the future shape and direction of the new Turkey. Rauf Orbay gradually emerged as the key figure opposing Mustafa Kemal and his intended reforms. Orbay’s comments to the press in Istanbul about the republic and his visit to the Caliph were seen as open challenges to the new regime. To expand their support bases, both personalities tried to recruit political allies. Orbay was joined by two prominent military leaders of the War of Independence, Generals Kazim [Karabekir] and Ali Fuat [Cebesoy]. President Mustafa Kemal enlisted Chief of Staff Marshal Fevzi [Çakmak] and Prime Minister İsmet [Inönü] to his side. The latter group decided to press on with the reforms, including the abolition of the Caliphate to consolidate the regime in January 1924.

The president and his supporters also successfully implemented a series of legislative measures related to the military. First, serving military officers were barred from engaging in politics. Until 1924 officers could be elected as deputies and be involved in the Assembly’s activities in uniform. During and in the immediate aftermath of the War of Independence, this was an acceptable practice. After 1924 they were asked to make a choice between their uniforms and seats in the Assembly.
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 Defence. The Chief of Staff was then placed on a purely military footing. Such measures excluded the Turkish military only nominally from politics. The ultimate aim was not to remove the military from politics, but to secure its loyalty to Mustafa Kemal and the republic. To this end, Mustafa Kemal had a dependable Chief of Staff, Marshal Fevzi Çakmak, who was granted exclusive authority over military matters. When the two generals in opposition, Karabekir and Cebesoy, decided to engage in politics, they were asked to relinquish their military commands before joining the Assembly. Both resigned in October 1924. Their resignation reinforced Mustafa Kemal’s control over the armed forces. According to İsmet İnönü it was a decisive event that revealed unmistakably who controlled the Turkish military.

In March 1924 the TBMM adopted a bill that authorised funds for the repair of naval units left over from the Ottoman Empire, including the battlecruiser Yavuz Sultan Selim (ex-German Navy Goeben). The prospects for Turkish naval development sparked a campaign in the press calling on the government to institute a Ministry of Marine. It was argued that such a giant project warranted the supervision of a politically empowered and accountable office. Hence the creation of a Ministry of Marine was also brought to the agenda of the National Defence Commission in the Assembly. Captain Ali Riza, the former Chief of Staff in the Ottoman Ministry of Marine, had already tabled a bill to this end. However, the National Defence Commission initially saw no reason to institute a ministry to replace the Navy Department that had stood at the apex of naval organisation since the War of Independence. Captain Ali Riza’s bill then was left to hibernate until the formation of an opposition party under former Ottoman Minister of Marine Rauf Orbay in November 1924.

In a sense, the War of Independence experience enabled the Ottoman army officer corps to acquire pro-Republican credentials. The majority in the naval officer corps did not, or could not, go through a similar ‘mass transformation’ or ‘conversion’. The large-scale purge of the officers who did not participate in the War of Independence hit the senior-ranking naval officers particularly. The navy was reduced to a service of largely junior officers, as opposed to the top-heavy army officer corps whose ranks were filled with War of Independence veterans.

Even the purge of a large number of naval officers did not fully restore confidence in the navy and its officer corps. The most striking examples of the navy’s questionable loyalty can be found in Mustafa Kemal’s well-publicised voyage on the cruiser Hamidiye in the Black Sea in September 1924. The published accounts of this cruise point to the ruling elite’s
doubts about the navy’s loyalty and Rauf Orbay’s influence on the naval officer corps. Aware of such doubts, the commander of the cruiser and his staff decided to remove Rauf Orbay’s photo from the officers’ quarters before Mustafa Kemal arrived on board ship, as the former legendary commander of the Hamidiye had become an opponent of Mustafa Kemal.  

Some in Mustafa Kemal’s entourage also asked if the navy identified itself with Rauf Orbay. Many junior officers on board flatly rejected such personal identification and vocally dissociated themselves from Rauf Orbay and other ‘old generation’ officers.  

In December 1924 Captain Ali Rıza’s earlier bill on the Ministry of Marine found a new lease of life. The chain of political events suggests a link between its revival and the formation of Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası as the opposition party. This link was obvious to party members. They justifiably questioned the ruling Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası’s sudden change of heart about the Ministry of Marine which had been considered unnecessary a few months ago. The debates about the revived bill basically centred on the issue of an independent staff for the Ministry of Marine. The opposition party deputies did not stand against the idea of a Ministry of Marine per se. However, they argued for an independent staff for the Ministry. On the other hand, the Ministry itself could be seen as a challenge the exclusive authority of Chief of Staff Marshal Çakmak, a key ally of President Atatürk. An independent staff for the Ministry would certainly prejudice his authority over the armed forces. For the ruling political elite, therefore, the Ministry of Marine without an independent staff was the best option to consolidate political control over the navy without alienating the General Staff. In the end, the bill was adopted and the Ministry of Marine was instituted as a government post with the votes of the ruling Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası. The opposition party deputies, including Rauf Orbay himself, cast their votes against the creation of the Ministry of Marine without an independent staff.  

Ali İhsan [Eryavuz] was appointed the first Minister of Marine of the republic. He was a retired artillery officer and a former İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Committee of Union and Progress) hardliner. After the War of Independence, he became an ardent supporter of President Mustafa Kemal. He was among the most vocal members of the ruling Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası in the TBMM. 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 organisational change served well the overall objective of political control over armed services. It also marked an institutional gain in the interservice rivalry for the navy against the army-dominated General Staff. Chief of General Staff Marshal Fevzi was an advocate of unity of command in the
armed services and scorned the idea of an independent Ministry of Marine even with significantly crippled powers. At any rate, the ministry provided the navy with a semblance (or a false sense) of parity with the army. In reality, the General Staff retained its key military decision-making status in strategy and procurement issues.

**Turkish Military Culture and Naval Policy**

In the 1920s Turkey was in a state of flux. This situation was reflected in Turkish naval policy. Coupled with the impact of the inter-service competition for limited funds, the poor and deteriorating state of Turkey’s relations with potential suppliers of naval arms restricted its freedom of action. However, there was one given in all naval programmes devised: the reconditioning of the battlecruiser *Yavuz Sultan Selim* (renamed *Yavuz*). This battlecruiser became the symbol of the Turkish naval revival, a symbol around which the republican fleet was to take shape. She also became the focus of international attention that remained mostly sceptical about her fate until her re-commissioning in 1930.20

*Yavuz* was by no means an uncontested symbol. The army and navy had substantially diverging conceptions of sea power. The navy was clearly in favour of a big surface fleet with dreadnoughts and destroyers for superiority over other Balkan nations, including Greece.21 Apparently not very much influenced by the naval advocates of a large surface fleet, President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk stated that the initial focus of the Turkish naval programmes would be limited to training.22 In the same frame of mind, Prime Minister Fethi [Okyar] reiterated that the government had no intention of placing new naval orders before the existing fleet was refurbished to operational status.23

The Turkish General Staff’s weight was felt in two crucial institutional matters. The first was the fate of naval aviation in Turkey and the second the naval strategy for the new republic. Both issues perfectly echoed the contours of the debate in several other navies of the inter-war years. However, the way these two issues were handled also exposed unique features of Turkish military culture. The Turkish Navy inherited a relatively established naval aviation tradition from the Ottoman era. Even during the War of Independence the nationalist forces maintained a detachment of naval aircraft at Amasra on the Black Sea, under the jurisdiction of the Navy Department. After the War of Independence, this detachment was relocated to İzmir as a naval aircraft company in 1924. Soon the General Staff decided to integrate both army and naval air services under a single command. In spite of opposition from the navy, which wanted to keep its wings under its
own jurisdiction, the sole naval aviation company in İzmir was amalgamated into the army aviation corps.24

The Turkish case is not really an exception in light of the Italian and British experiences of the time. For instance, in Britain when the Royal Air Force (RAF) was established in 1918, the Royal Navy lost its aviators to this service.25 Around the same time, the Italian Navy also lost its wings to the air force.26 However, the Turkish case differed from both British and Italian experiences in one major institutional respect: an independent air force did not exist in Turkey at the time. The Turkish Navy had to give away its wings to the General Staff. Interestingly, the Turkish General Staff continued to purchase dedicated naval aircraft and recruit naval officers for flight duties until the mid-1930s.27

The inter-war years offer interesting cases for the study of strategy and doctrinal debates in many aspects of warfare.28 Sea power debates of the time usually formed largely around the submarine-battleship axis. The crucial question was whether navies had to stick to the concept of command of the sea with large surface fleets or develop new strategies around lighter forces in view of technological advances in submarines and aviation.29

This was the crux of the naval strategy debate in Turkey. Broadly speaking, the navy was arguing for large surface units, whereas the General Staff and army officer corps were in favour of lighter and therefore cheaper units. The latter’s idea was justifiable because of lack of funds. A navy equipped with large surface units was an expensive investment likely to absorb a substantial portion of the defence budget. For the General Staff, this would mean allocation of scarce resources on a low-return service, as they could not see any decisive role for a navy in the defence of the republic.30

Hence the budget argument worked in tandem with Turkish military culture in shaping the republican navy. Williamson Murray describes military culture:

as the sum of intellectual, professional, and traditional values of an officer corps; it plays a central role in how that officer corps assesses the external environment and how it analyzes the possible response that it might make to ‘the threat’ … The past weighs in with a leaden hand of tradition that can often block innovation. And not without reason. The approaches that succeeded on earlier battlefields were often worked out at a considerable cost in blood. Consequently, military cultures tend to change slowly, particularly in peacetime.31

In the above context, Turkish military culture of the inter-war period offers a textbook case. The army-dominated Turkish General Staff enjoyed an unchallenged monopoly in setting military strategy and priorities. In the
early 1920s the Turkish military mind was preoccupied with the gap in Turkish defences caused by the demilitarisation requirement of the Turkish Straits. This situation was thought to expose Turkey to the Italian threat in the West. The main strategic objectives were thus to fill this defence gap and counter a possible seaborne assault by Italy from the Dodecanese in the Aegean. For both objectives, the navy was relegated to an auxiliary role.

The organisation of the Turkish defence reflected the prevailing culture of the officer corps. The first generation of 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, at best, a coastal defence function for the navy. In practical terms, the navy was treated as a natural extension of the army. Hence, submarines and sea mines were weapons of choice and offered an affordable alternative to the expensive surface vessels that the naval officer corps had long yearned for.

If the submarine was one weapon of choice for the Turkish General Staff, the other was aircraft. Throughout the inter-war period, submarines and aircraft topped the arms shopping lists. It is no coincidence that two military commissions were touring Europe around the same time in 1924; one visited Britain, France, Germany and Italy to buy aircraft while the other toured France, the Netherlands and Sweden to buy submarines. Their missions clearly reflected the military priorities of the new republic.

However, air power enjoyed a distinct advantage over sea power. Its appeal to the Turkish public was no less than its appeal to the Turkish military mind. Aircraft and the aviator offered useful symbols of progress and power for the new republican identity in Turkey. This helped the Turkish government to overcome funding problems for at least one aspect of its armament programme. A countrywide fund-raising drive translated aviation’s popular appeal into resources to create a 200-aircraft air arm in the 1920s. Only the Yavuz could compete with the aircraft in capturing the hearts and minds of the Turkish public.

The republic could spare only limited funds for the naval programme. In the 1920s, however, even these funds had to be diverted to other venues of national defence. The Mosul crisis with Britain and the Sheik Said rebellion in 1925 presented serious threats to the republic’s survival. Security of the eastern borders and provinces became the top military priority for Turkey. The Turkish General Staff quickly discovered the utility of air power in dealing with insurgencies in remote areas, as the RAF had experienced earlier in the neighbouring regions of Iraq. For the problems encountered in the east, the government depended on the army backed with air power. In the west, both also offered the primary means of defence
against a possible Italian assault. Hence, a surface fleet for the navy was relegated to the bottom of the arms procurement priorities of the new republic.

**The Impact of Naval Disarmament**

A few years before the new Turkish state placed its first naval orders, international disarmament culminated in the major naval powers’ first agreement on limitations on capital ships under the Washington Treaty in 1922. This early success was overoptimistically taken as the harbinger for world-wide disarmament in the inter-war period. Although only the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan were signatories of the Washington Treaty, other nations were also invited to adhere to its limitations. In June 1924 Athens declared its willingness to accept a 35,000-ton limit for capital ships with two conditions: First, Turkey’s tonnage would not exceed the same figure. Second, Greece would reserve the right to acquire or build a cruiser in place of the Salamis in case she could not be completed.

In the 1920s the better-trained and equipped Greek Navy enjoyed an unchallenged edge over the Turkish Navy, which was a motley collection of antiquated vessels inherited from the Ottoman era. Greek naval supremacy in the Aegean clearly hinged on the status of the Yavuz. Prospects for her return to service prompted the Greek government to seek a ten-year ‘naval holiday’ with Turkey modelled on the Washington Treaty. However, Athens attached new strings to its proposal. It would reserve the right to build two cruisers to replace two pre-dreadnought battleships, Lemnos and Kilkis. In that case, the naval balance in the Aegean would be preserved for Greece even if Turkey re-commissioned the battlecruiser Yavuz.

In reply, Ankara justified its naval programme by pointing to the growing Soviet naval power in the Black Sea. In hindsight, it appears that the Soviet naval programmes provided Ankara with an excuse to continue with their own naval programme in disregard of the proposals for naval limitations in the Aegean. It is questionable whether the Turks had ever considered the Soviet Navy a potentially hostile power. Indeed, the Turkish General Staff confided to the British Admiralty that they had seen no need for offensive plans or measures against the Soviets until 1939.

Geographic focus was an element of ambiguity in Turkish naval strategy. Another one was related to the scope of naval programmes, as there is no definite account of the original scope of the Turkish naval programme in the 1920s. Foreign archives indicate that the Turkish government had advertised largely inflated numbers for its naval orders. Whatever the scope, it is clear that submarines always remained the priority, the favourite naval weapon of the Turkish General Staff.
When the Turks went shopping for submarines, the inter-war international arms trade system presented them with additional difficulties. The new arms trade system mirrored the post-First World War political order. In Europe, Britain and France retained their arms-production capabilities. While London considered the arms production and trade issue in the context of disarmament, Paris continued to pursue traditional balance of power objectives in the arms trade. 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. The temporary absence of Germany, coupled with British and American policies of self-restraint, resulted in a supplier vacuum in the international arms trade system.

Major arms suppliers' reluctance to spend even on their own armed services produced two significant consequences. First, the private arms producers turned to foreign markets in a world of shrinking domestic procurement bases. Second, the pro-disarmament nations stopped providing government guarantees or subventions for foreign sales. This situation restricted Turkey's choice of naval arms suppliers. Given the poor state of its economy, foreign credits and government guarantees were imperative for building new naval units. Only the European powers unsatisfied by the status quo could provide such facilities for political purposes. Italy had already embarked on ambitious arms projects to fill the supplier vacuum, whereas Germany was seeking a way around the Versailles restrictions. Consequently both countries figured prominently in Turkish naval programmes of the 1920s. France was also a potentially strong supplier in the Turkish arms market, although the deterioration of political relations soon ruled out the French option.

By August 1924 British, American, French and Italian shipyards had already offered to supply submarines to the Turkish Navy. According to a French naval attaché report, British shipbuilder Vickers-Armstrong's offer of five submarines was conditional on the scrapping of the Yavuz in five years. Schneider was singled out as the strongest contender among the French shipyards. The report speculated that the Italian shipbuilder Ansaldo could also be preferred by the Turks because of its outstanding obligations to Turkey for a cruiser that had been ordered by the Ottoman Empire but commandeered by the Italian Navy after the War of Tripoli in 1911.

The British-Turkish rift over the status of Mosul in September 1924 had an immediate impact on the submarine deal. During the crisis, Italy supported Britain and was poised to stake a claim in Western Turkey if the crisis led to a British-Turkish war and the collapse of the fragile regime in Turkey. Hence, when the Turkish government invited bids for one submarine, Vickers-Armstrong's bid was eliminated par principe, whereas
Ansaldo’s bid was rejected on the grounds that its submarines were of outdated designs. In December 1924 the strongest contenders for the Turkish submarine contract were two French, one Dutch (offering German designs) and one Swedish shipbuilder.

The Turkish Navy decided to place an order with the Dutch shipyard. The decision disappointed the French, who had been almost sure that their shipyards would receive the contract. The order was taken justifiably as a clear indication of the German influence on the Turkish Navy. Of the three officers that evaluated the designs offered, two had trained on German U-boats during the First World War; thus they were certainly predisposed toward the German designs. The disappointed French also mentioned the possibility of bribery in view of reportedly higher Dutch unit prices.

All these factors might have contributed to the outcome. The decisive factor, however, was the secret funds Germany pledged to the building of these submarines. The Dutch shipyard of Ingenieurskantoor voor Scheepsbouw (IVS) was indeed set up by three German shipbuilders, Krupp Germaniawerft (Kiel), A.G. Weser (Bremen) and Vulkanwerft (Hamburg and Stettin), seeking a way around the Versailles restrictions on German submarine building.

**Foreign Influence in the Navy**

The hiring of foreign instructors or advisors in reforming the military along the European (or Western) model had been a common practice in the Ottoman Empire since the early nineteenth century. On the eve of the First World War, the foreign advisors’ authority had grown immensely in the empire. At that time, the German military mission was practically in command of the Ottoman Army whereas the British naval mission ran the navy. When the empire entered the war in 1914 a German naval mission took over the navy from the British. Although their competence and even their authority were questioned and occasionally challenged by the Ottoman officers, the foreign advisors had a lasting influence on Turkish military culture, a fact not missed by foreign observers. For instance, while evaluating the state of the Turkish Navy for its annual report of 1924, the British Embassy in Turkey concluded that “from the British point of view, any weakening of the navy is to be regretted, as it is an important stronghold of the ancient traditional Anglophile sentiment in Turkey”.

Foreign influence in the armed services manifested itself in procurement decisions, and in operational, organisational and training procedures in the republican Turkey. In 1924 the Turkish Navy was marred by a lack of uniform operating rules and drill procedures for the ships. When the British
and German naval missions left the country, they took with them the manuals they had prepared for the Ottoman Navy. This caused a great degree of discontinuity in Turkish naval development. The officers had to rely on their memories in reconstructing procedures the foreign missions had devised and the ships initially adapted mixed procedures that reflected the diversity of training the Ottoman Navy had gone through in the hands of the British and then German instructors. Because of this experience, the new rulers of Turkey were determined not to repeat the Ottoman dependence on foreign military and naval missions.

Before hiring naval advisors, the Turkish government considered a variety of options. London was one possibility, but Anglo-Turkish relations were far from cordial after the Mosul debacle and strained relations as well as high rates of pay ruled out hiring British advisors. To remedy the latter problem, London discussed the possibility of sending retired officers at lower rates, but by the time this alternative was offered, Ankara had chosen the Germans to advise and train Turkish naval officers in 1926. In hindsight, it can be argued that the Turkish order for German-designed submarines from the Netherlands in 1925 more or less defined the choice of foreign naval advisors. The submarine order and the decision to recruit German naval advisors intensified international interest in Turkish naval programmes. London considered the hiring of retired German naval officers in violation of Article 179 of the Treaty of Versailles and was poised to file a protest note to the Turkish government. It never did so, admitting that it did not possess any lever to induce Ankara to reverse its decision.

From the outset, the Turkish government and the General Staff were very sensitive to how the German naval advisors' role and status could be perceived by foreign governments. Unlike in the Ottoman period, foreign advisors were kept out of the chain of command. The body of German naval advisors was designated as an ‘advisory group’ rather than a ‘naval mission’ to avoid any resemblance to the British or German naval missions of the Ottoman era. From time to time, the Turks vocally expressed their disappointment with the German naval advisors’ ‘unsatisfactory’ performance. There was a certain degree of truth in such statements, but they could also be taken as political statements aimed to appease foreign governments that attentively followed their activities. In spite of official ‘disappointment’, Ankara continued to hire retired German naval officers as advisors or instructors until 1939. The German advisors’ presence also illuminated the split between adherents of either ‘the British school’ or ‘the German school’ in the Turkish Navy. For the former group, the new German advisors were not in the same league as the British Naval Mission of the Ottoman Navy.

Foreign military and naval attachés received their first impression of the naval advisors’ view on the future Turkish Navy through a retired German
naval officer in Istanbul. The senior member of the advisory group, Admiral von Gagern, reportedly had in mind a naval force very much in line with the General Staff’s concept of sea power. He was quoted as having advised that the existing fleet of leftover Ottoman units be scrapped and the navy built from scratch with motorboats and aeroplanes. However, the German advisory group eventually devised an order of battle that included a battleship squadron of eight units supplemented by a flotilla of eight destroyers for the Turkish Navy.

In 1926 the Germans figured prominently in another significant naval affair. The contract for the Yavuz’s repair and reconditioning was split between German and French contractors. The German company, Flanders, was to build a floating dock to hold the Yavuz, after which the French company, Penhoët, was to undertake repairs and reconditioning. French diplomatic archives indicate that it was President Mustafa Kemal’s own political choice to involve the French in spite of strong lobbying by German naval advisors in favour of German bidders. He was probably motivated by a desire to avoid sole naval dependence on Germany. Paris also viewed the Yavuz’s reconditioning as a politically significant venture. The French Embassy strongly encouraged Penhoët to proceed with the contract, although the contracted work looked financially and technically risky for the French company. However, the official French support of the private contractor was devoid of any financial commitment.

The Yavuz’s reconditioning did not proceed smoothly as a result of technical problems with the floating dock and later with corruption charges against Minister of Marine Ali İhsan Eryavuz. The realisation of the project was significantly delayed. The corruption charges not only caused the impeachment of the Minister himself, but also resulted in the abolition of the Ministry of Marine in December 1927. The demise of the Ministry of Marine can be linked to several factors.

The first was the personal rivalry between Minister of Marine Ali İhsan and Prime Minister İsmet İnönü.

Second, Chief of Staff Marshal Fevzi Çakmak never approved of the idea of an independent Ministry of Marine. The corruption case thus provided these strong figures with a pretext to get rid of the Minister and his Ministry.

Third, by 1927 the Republican regime could afford politically to dispense with the Ministry of Marine because it had consolidated its rule domestically and achieved complete control of the Turkish military. The ruling elite’s consolidation of power marked the beginning of single-party rule in Turkey that lasted until 1946.
Italy as a Supplier of Naval Arms to Turkey

The demise of the Ministry of Marine marked a decisive institutional victory for the General Staff. The Ministry of Defence and the General Staff took over the functions of the defunct Ministry of Marine, the latter’s army-dominated ranks retaining the ultimate jurisdiction over the navy and naval strategy. Chief of Staff Marshal Fevzi Çakmak had long been noted by foreign observers as a formidable opponent of expensive naval programmes.\(^\text{70}\) Now that Marshal Fevzi Çakmak had recovered his full authority over the navy, a loss of momentum in naval programmes seemed unavoidable.\(^\text{71}\)

However, events proved otherwise. First, in April 1928 the TBMM adopted a bill authorising a TL30-million appropriation for the first ten-year naval programme.\(^\text{72}\) Second, in September 1928 the Greek Navy conducted an exercise off the Dardanelles that was perceived as a provocation. Ankara reciprocated with a similar exercise personally commanded by President Atatürk.

The 1928 incident in a sense defined the parameters of Turkish naval policy. The aim was to secure naval superiority over Greece in the Aegean. Consequently, \textit{Yavuz}’s reconditioning gained momentum and, although a modest shipbuilding programme was revived, funding remained a central issue for the procurement of new naval units.\(^\text{73}\) Later in the year, Marshal Çakmak confirmed that the new Turkish naval order was to include two destroyers, two submarines and a number of light units.\(^\text{74}\) The destroyers were to become the first major surface combatants ordered by the republican navy.

In the new Turkish programme, another politically unsatisfied European power, Italy, began to loom large. The process witnessed Italy’s transformation from a potential threat into a major supplier of arms to Turkey. The French-Italian rivalry in the Mediterranean after 1927 provided Turkey with an unexpected opportunity to finance its modest naval programme.\(^\text{75}\) Fascist Italy began to entertain the idea of establishing an Aegean bloc between Italy, Turkey and Greece to counter French influence in the Adriatic and the Balkans. Consequently, Rome not only sought to improve its bilateral relations with Turkey and Greece, but also encouraged them to reconcile their differences. In May 1928 Turkish-Italian negotiations resulted in the conclusion of the Italian-Turkish Treaty of Neutrality and Reconciliation. The treaty marked a drastic change in Fascist Italy’s view of Turkey. It was no longer seen as a potential colony, but as a sovereign state that had to be won to the Italian side through political, economic and military penetration. Here arms supplies stood as the appropriate instruments for such a policy.\(^\text{76}\)
Italy was also intent on taking advantage of the supplier vacuum in the international arms trade. Italy’s ‘infant’ shipbuilding industry needed a steady flow of domestic and international contracts to survive. The aggressive marketing efforts of the private Italian shipyards had the government’s political and economic backing. Italian naval pragmatism was so great that the Fascist government saw no problem in assisting the ideologically hostile Soviets in building their navy. In the same frame of mind, the Italian government offered a financial guarantee to cover up to 70 per cent of the value of a possible Turkish naval order with Italian shipbuilders.

Many disarmament-oriented governments were unable to match Italy’s backing of private shipyards. French shipbuilders provided bids comparable to those of the government-backed Italian shipbuilders, however Turkey’s worsening relations with France over the Ottoman debts turned France into a politically unreliable supplier, a development not missed by its competitors. In May 1929 the new naval orders went to Italian shipbuilders. The orders included two destroyers, two submarines and three submarine chasers. The newly-emerging Italian connection with the Turkish Navy led some foreign observers to believe that ‘an Italian mission is about to take over [from the Germans] the supervision of the rejuvenation of the Turkish fleet’. This issue had already been brought up by the Italians who saw it as second in significance to the supply of naval arms in breaking the German and French influence in Turkish military and naval circles.

The contract awarded to the Italian shipbuilders was not a commercially attractive venture. The ten-year payment schedule proposed by the Turkish government was not found acceptable by British bidders such as Vickers-Armstrong, who had asked for 50 per cent of the contract price to be paid on delivery; the Turkish government was prepared to pay only 40 per cent. However, the Italian shipyards, who enjoyed government support for foreign contracts, could afford to build naval units for Turkey under a more relaxed payment schedule. For instance, two submarines, Sakarya and Dumulpin, built by Manfalcone, cost £672,220 sterling. Of this amount, £85,000 was paid up front and the balance paid with Turkish treasury bonds in annual instalments of £90,000 sterling (except the final instalment of £51,220, which was paid on 31 March 1938). In sum, larger political and strategic objectives coupled with government backing for the Italian shipbuilding industry earned Italy the most significant Turkish naval contract of the era.

Turkey’s neighbours moved to adjust their naval policies. Interestingly, Ankara’s most trusted partner, the Soviet Union, was concerned about the Black Sea naval balance after the Turkish naval modernisation. Hence, it deployed one battleship and one cruiser from the Baltic Sea to augment its
fleets in the Black Sea in December 1929/January 1930. The prospective Turkish naval expansion worried the Greeks even more. The Greek government decided to order two destroyers, also from Italy, as an urgent measure to preserve the naval balance in the Aegean. While the Turkish and Greek orders added momentum to the naval arms race in the Aegean, they also helped Italy to realise a major foreign policy goal in the Aegean. Turkey and Greece were no longer assumed hostile powers, rather neutrals in case of war against Yugoslavia or against Yugoslavia and France in Italian strategic plans for 1929–31.

In March 1930 the Under-Secretary of the Turkish Navy, Captain Mehmet Ali [Dalay], visited Italy. Interestingly, his visit coincided 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. In hindsight, the timing of Turkey’s order suggests a link with the London Naval Conference and with Turkish-Greek diplomatic negotiations on freezing naval arms in the Aegean. 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 like resolving the post-Lausanne problems. It is possible that Ankara wanted to complete its naval modernisation before a Turkish-Greek agreement froze naval forces. It is also possible that Ankara rushed to secure destroyers from Italy before the London Naval Conference placed restrictions on the production and trade of lighter naval units, including destroyers.

Two factors support these arguments.

First, in spite of vocally expressed dissatisfaction with the first two destroyers ordered from Italy, Ankara decided to stick with Italian shipbuilders rather than go through a lengthy tender process for the new units.

Second, the new Turkish contract demanded an extremely short delivery period of 12 months.

Shortly afterwards Turkey concluded naval protocols with its two neighbours, Greece and the Soviet Union, in 1930 and 1931 respectively. These protocols marked a naval holiday in the Aegean and the Black Sea that lasted until 1934.

Navy in the Making: New Officer Corps and New Ships

The Turkish Navy’s officer corps moved gradually to maturity amid the senior ranks in the 1930s. In the 1920s their peers in the navies of other nations, including several German instructors attached to the Turkish Navy,
had not rated the naval officer corps very highly. For instance, the question
of who would be in charge of navigating the two Dutch-built German-

funded submarines to Turkey became a source of friction between the
Turkish officers and the German submariners who were attached to these
submarines in 1926. The matter was only resolved with the Turkish
government’s intervention, which granted command to the German
submariners for delivery. However, the German crew refused to relinquish the command to the
Turkish submariners after arrival in Turkey, claiming that the Turkish crew
was not competent enough to submerge the boats without German
submariners aboard. To test the skills of the Turkish submariners, Marshal
Fevzi Çakmak boarded one of the submarines and ordered them both to
submerge without the Germans on board. Thus these boats made their first
successful dive with an all-Turkish crew on 25 July 1928. Thereafter, the
German submariners were detached from the boats.

In the late 1920s the emphasis on training culminated in two significant
ventures. One was the attachment of naval officers to various foreign navies
for training. The idea was probably motivated by a desire to avoid sole
dependence on German naval advisors and to diversify sources for naval
training. Through officers trained abroad, the Turkish Navy was seeking to
keep abreast with international progress in naval affairs. Not surprisingly,
Turkish requests for naval training are a recurring issue in the diplomatic
archives of the period. To get the most out of such arrangements, the
Turkish Navy always asked for training with operational squadrons.
Between 1928 and 1934 19 junior officers were sent abroad for training in
France, Italy, Britain, Germany, Japan and the United States. While foreign
diplomatic services considered such training arrangements as opportunities
to acquire influence in Turkish naval matters, this enthusiasm was not
usually shared by their naval authorities.

The second important development was the inauguration of the Naval
War College for staff training in 1930. Again, retired German officers were
recruited to train and instruct the first generation of staff officers for the
Turkish Navy. The inevitable result was the consolidation of German
influence in Turkish naval matters as the German naval instructors designed
the curriculum after the German model. The ‘German school’ hence
dominated Turkish naval staff training until 1939.

The cumulative impact of training in the first decade of the republic was
the emergence of a new breed of naval officers who aired their views on
naval policy and strategy more vocally than in the 1920s. The growing
number of original articles devoted to the future shape and strategy of the
Turkish Navy in the Deniz Mecmuası (naval journal) can be taken as an
indication of the increasing self-confidence of the naval officer corps. Some
articles proposed new strategies and building programmes for missions beyond coastal waters. A frequent theme in such works was the need for fast cruisers. Some authors even dared to contest the Turkish General Staff's idea that the navy and army were governed by identical strategic, operational and tactical principles.

On the materiel side, the Turkish naval programmes came to fruition by the late 1920s and early 1930s. The two submarines ordered from the Netherlands were delivered in 1928. Their arrival marked the beginning of the growth of the Turkish fleet. The battlecruiser Yavuz was finally recommissioned in 1930. The French naval attaché admitted that the cruiser's performance in speed trials surpassed even the most optimistic expectations. The contractor, Penhoët, completed the work satisfactorily but incurred substantial financial loss. In August 1930 the Yavuz also passed gunnery and fire control trials with flying colours.

To be considered of combat value, however, the Yavuz needed destroyers to protect her. In 1931 the Turkish Navy was anxiously waiting on the delivery of these destroyers and other units built in Italy under the 1929 order.

The three submarine chasers were first to arrive although they had been delayed because of speed problems. The Societa Veneziana Automobili Navali-built boats failed to reach the contract speed of 34 knots during the trials in Venice under the attentive eyes of the British. Due to this failure, the Turkish Navy was able justifiably to reject the boats. In that case, Turkey would also be entitled to claim the guarantee furnished by Banca Commerciale. To avoid such a consequence, the Italian government was expected to pressure Ankara to accept the three submarine chasers. Apparently, the Italians were able to convince Turkish government, either by persuasion or pressure, since the Turkish Navy never made an issue of these boats' failure to reach the contract speed. They were commissioned in September 1931 at Istanbul.

The first two destroyers were originally due for delivery in the spring of 1931, but they were afflicted with even worse design problems than the submarine chasers. A Turkish naval architect, Lieutenant Ata Nutku, attached to the Ansaldo shipyard identified serious stability problems in the two Turkish destroyers, Kocatepe and Adatepe. The attempts to rectify these problems delayed their delivery until October 1931. The two submarines, Sakarya and Dumlupinar, were delivered in November 1931. The last Italian-built units were the two additional destroyers, Züfer and Tinaztepe. They were supposed to be delivered within 12 months after the order, but the 1929 world economic crisis inevitably took its toll on the entire Italian economy. The builder of the destroyers, Del Tirreno, therefore asked for adjustment of the payment basis for these two outstanding units. When they finally arrived in Istanbul in June 1932, the delivery term had
been exceeded by more than a year. A month earlier, Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü had visited Rome to renew the Italian-Turkish Treaty of 1928. İnönü’s visit and the destroyers’ arrival constituted the high watermark in Italian-Turkish relations of the inter-war years.

Coupled with Italy’s financial limitations, poor Italian naval technology no doubt undermined Rome’s pursuit of political, economic and military influence in Turkey. However, the sharp deterioration in Italian-Turkish relations resulted principally from their diverging policies in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Rome never approved of Ankara’s policies promoting regional economic and political cooperation. The Turkish efforts were geared towards preserving the status quo on the Balkan Peninsula. The supply of naval arms from Italy failed to bring Turkey into the Italian orbit to serve as a proxy to Rome’s revisionist policies in these two regions.

Finally, Mussolini’s opposition to Turkey’s admission to the League of Nations revived the Turkish fear of Italy’s ulterior motives. By 1933 Italy had begun to appear as a potential threat to Turkey in the Aegean and the Mediterranean.109

The Italian connection with the Turkish Navy was already in decline. Italian naval arms suppliers had begun to face bureaucratic troubles with their deliveries to Turkey. Turkish authorities insisted, for example, on charging customs fees on the ammunition and fire control devices for the Italian-built destroyers.110 The Italian naval attaché confirmed that the last Italian engineer assigned to help the Turkish Navy put the Zafer (Turbine) class destroyers into operational status had returned home in January 1934.111 His departure ended the Italian connection with the Turkish Navy.

**The Italian Threat in the Mediterranean**

Until the mid-1930s Turkish naval policy developed mostly as a function of institutional and domestic political considerations. Preoccupied with internal security and regime consolidation, the Turkish political and military elite devised a strategy for territorial defence that relied mostly on manpower. Turkey’s international isolation accentuated this introverted orientation. As Turkey had no allies to count on, military strategy was shaped largely in a diplomatic vacuum until 1930. After 1930, however, the international system began to weigh more heavily than institutional or domestic factors. The changing international power configuration in Europe and the Mediterranean compelled a major strategic adjustment for Turkey.112 Turkey’s admission to the League of Nations in 1932 symbolised the end of its isolation or ‘outcast’ status in the international system.

Politically, Turkey was more inclined towards pro-status quo powers. Nonetheless, its economic dependence on Germany gradually increased,
The adverse effects of the 1929 world economic crisis brought German domination of Turkish external trade. The near monopoly status that Germany enjoyed in Turkey’s trade relations was formalised under the Clearing Agreement signed in August 1933. This pattern was subsequently repeated in Germany’s trade with other Balkan countries.

The 1929 world economic crisis also gave economic impetus to regional cooperation efforts in the Balkans. Ankara and Athens both promoted initiatives to this end. In February 1934 Turkey, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia signed the Balkan Entente to preserve the status quo in the Peninsula, which was moving under the economic domination of a revisionist Germany. However, the Entente was not directed against powers such as Germany that were external to the region, but against revisionism from within (that is, Bulgaria).113

In March 1934 Mussolini’s speech on future Italian expansion into Asia and Africa reinstated Italy’s status as ‘enemy number one’ in Turkish assessments. The Italian threat was perceived to be greater in the mid-1930s than in the early 1920s due to the increased strength of the Italian Navy.114 Turkey had adhered to the ‘naval holiday’ with Greece in the Aegean and with the Soviets in the Black Sea until 1934. After four years without ordering any new units, Ankara decided to embark on a new armament programme with a strong naval component directed against the Italian threat. The required funding was approved by the TBMM under a secret law adopted in May 1934, only two months after Mussolini’s speech. The law authorised funds up to TL49.5 million to be spent in eight years from the 1936 fiscal year.115

Turkey’s new armament programme featured a strong emphasis on the development of indigenous military and naval production capabilities. The growing self-confidence of the new naval officer corps was reflected also in the issue of indigenous shipbuilding capability. In 1934 the small cadre of Turkish naval architects was convinced that it would be possible to build a fleet oiler at the Gölcük naval yard. They were confident that they had acquired the necessary know-how and skills through their involvement in the Yavuz’s reconditioning and the building of naval units ordered from the Netherlands and Italy. Frustrated at the delay in obtaining Ministry of Defence approval for the oiler project, Lieutenant Ata Nutku sent a strongly worded letter to the Minister. For a junior officer to address a minister critically and directly was a bold move.116 The Ministry and General Staff preferred to overlook Lieutenant Nutku’s letter, which would normally have warranted court-martial. In any case, the fleet oiler was laid on the slipway at the Gölcük yard a month later and became the first naval unit built in Turkey under Lieutenant Nutku’s supervision.117

As for combat units, priority was again placed on submarines. The decision to acquire submarines first clearly points to the degree of
continuity in Turkish strategic thinking that emphasised coastal defence as the main mission for the navy. For the Turks, a British document noted that 'the defense of the Straits ... was not a question of battleships, but rather of mines, guns and torpedoes'. The growing Italian naval and military strength in the Dodecanese increased Turkish sensitivity regarding the demilitarised status of the Straits. According to the French naval attaché in Turkey, the new naval programme was also likely to include also one or two cruisers, two destroyers and a hospital ship. The inclusion of cruisers was a long-awaited element of change in Turkish naval programmes.

Another element of change was that Turkey had a regional partner to coordinate its naval policy with. In compliance with the Turkish-Greek Naval Protocol of 1930, Ankara notified Athens of its intention to increase its submarine fleet from four units to ten. In return, Athens notified Ankara of its plans to order two new destroyers. The two capitals then made a joint appeal to London for financial assistance to acquire new units against the Italian threat. Their joint plea for British credits, however, was not received enthusiastically in London on two counts. The lack of funds was a first restraining factor. London was still reluctant to spend even on its own naval programmes. Second, the British were the champions of world-wide disarmament. Viewed through the double prism of economics and disarmament, it would be difficult to justify financing the armament efforts of two foreign countries. British scepticism about the whole endeavour was best expressed in the following observation: 'the prospect of a race between Italy and her nervous little neighbors conducted on borrowed money is a nightmare.'

The Turkish economy, meanwhile, was in no better shape for financing armaments than in the 1920s. Four submarines were the first units to be ordered under the new Turkish naval policy. When it came to financing the new effort, the government devised new sources of revenue in the form of a 'national defence tax' on tobacco and spirits. Without foreign credits, however, fleet expansion ran little chance of realisation. Britain was not interested in providing government subsidies to private shipyards for Turkish naval building. France was not considered a politically reliable supplier due to the disputes on the Ottoman debts and the Sanjak of Alexandretta (Hatay). Thus, Turkey had to look elsewhere for naval units at affordable prices under favourable credit terms. In April 1935 Foreign Minister Aras reiterated to the visiting British naval attaché the Turkish government's changing view on the need for, and the utility of, a surface fleet:

Turkey must increase her navy to firstly to have a fleet in the proper sense of the word and secondly for the protection of her merchant
vessels. A fleet [is] on sea what the infantry [are] on the land. It [is] the fleet and infantry which in the last resort decide wars. Undoubtedly the roles of submarines and of aircraft [have] become of great importance but on sea a fleet [has] the last word.\textsuperscript{123}

In the meantime, the Italian Navy proved to be a real nuisance for Greece and Turkey in the Aegean. President Atatürk, irritated by Italian muscle-flexing off Crete, asked Prime Minister İnönü about the measures his government was contemplating to deter similar Italian behaviour towards Turkey.\textsuperscript{124} But the Turks were alone in their uneasiness regarding Italian policy in the Mediterranean. In February 1935 the British Ambassador in Turkey wrote that ‘the Turks habitually exaggerated this [Italian] danger’.\textsuperscript{125}

The gulf between Turkish and British assessments of the Italian aims, however, was soon to narrow. In the summer of 1935 Turkey monitored with concern the intensified Italian naval activity in and around the Dodecanese. The Italian Navy was preparing for an overseas campaign whose target could not as yet be identified. The Turkish Navy was dispersed to its designated forward areas in the Marmara Sea in anticipation of an Italian landing in Turkey.\textsuperscript{126}

Around the same time Britain was busy contemplating a way to check the German Navy after Hitler’s rise to power in 1933. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935 removed the Versailles restrictions on the German Navy, but limited its size to 35 per cent of the British fleet.\textsuperscript{127} At the time, London still viewed Italy as a power which could be useful in checking Germany in Europe.\textsuperscript{128}

The Italian attack on Abyssinia in October 1935 ruled out this British assumption and compelled Britain to seek new partners to counter the Italian Navy in the Mediterranean. When the League of Nations imposed sanctions on Italy, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia agreed to implement them. In return, following the implementation of the sanctions, Britain furnished guarantees to these three countries against the Italian threat.

**Beyond Coastal Defence**

This turn of events reinforced the Turkish conviction of the need to rectify the defence gap caused by the demilitarised status of the Straits. The remilitarisation of the Straits now became a military imperative and Turkey’s foremost short-term foreign policy objective. On 5 December 1935 Turkish political and military leaders discussed with a German naval advisor the details of a new naval strategy and armament programme for the defence of the Straits. Ankara was more concerned about the defence of the
Dardanelles than the Bosphorus. The emphasis on the former reflected the
primacy of the Italian threat in determining Turkish strategy.  

Another new parameter in Turkish naval strategy was Greece's
significance as an ally. With the Balkan Pact of 1934 Turkey made regional
allies in the Peninsula. Turkish Foreign Minister Aras singled out Greece as
strategically the most crucial ally for Turkey. As a result, the British
concluded, keeping open the sea lines of communication in the Northern
Aegean became an important objective in Turkish naval strategy.

In 1936 Turkish diplomacy was geared towards securing revision of the
status of the Turkish Straits, not by force or fait accompli but by negotiation.
The Manchurian and Abyssinian episodes revealed the futility of the
collective security the League of Nations was supposed to provide.
Disarmament had lost much of its impetus. With Hitler's decision to move
his troops into the demilitarised Rhineland in March 1936, re-armament
became the order of the day. In view of the new international situation,
Ankara now demanded the right to militarise the Straits for its own security.
The only significant opposition to this demand came from Italy.

The Montreux Convention on the Turkish Straits, signed on 20 July
1936, terminated the demilitarised status of the Straits and signalled
Turkey's successful achievement of its number one foreign and security
policy objective. With this achievement, its attention turned to acquiring the
military and naval instruments for defence.

Aircraft retained their priority as weapons in the defensive and offensive
staff plans against Italy. An interesting indicator of the Turkish military's
pursuit of offensive capabilities was the acquisition of 36 Martin 139WT
bomber aircraft from the United States. Reportedly, these aircraft were
ordered because they offered the range and payload required to launch an
air raid to mainland Italy from Turkish territory. For the defence of the
Turkish mainland opposite the Dodecanese Islands, Turkey was to rely on
its air force supported by mobile heavy artillery. According to British
Admiralty assessments, the Turkish Navy was also tasked with launching
offensive raids from the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus with the cruisers
included in the new naval programme. These cruisers had to match the
Italian 8-inch gun cruisers and the Soviet 7.1-inch gun cruisers in firepower
and speed.

Germany had already won the submarine contract for the Turkish Navy
in June 1936. Although the initial bid was submitted by the Dutch IVS, the
contract was signed with German shipbuilders as Germany finally rid itself
of the Versailles restrictions on submarine building. Under the contract, the
first two boats were to be built in Germany and the last two in Turkey.
While the last Turkish order was a consequence of the German influence in
the Turkish Navy, several other factors worked in Germany's favour.
German U-boats were cheaper than French submarines.\textsuperscript{136} Germany also dominated Turkey’s economic relations after the 1933 Clearing Agreement and the German demand for Turkish chrome increased in line with the requirements of its four-year armament programme. The order for submarines therefore offered Turkey a way to liquidate the surplus of TL45 million accrued from its trade with Germany.\textsuperscript{137}

In 1936 the Turkish Navy made an unexpected acquisition of another IVS-built submarine. The boat had originally been ordered for Spain, which was unable to acquire her because of the civil war. The submarine was offered to the Turkish Navy instead, which commissioned her as \textit{Gür} in December 1936.\textsuperscript{138}

The Anglo-Turkish rapprochement came about because of Turkey’s strategic value to Britain not only in the Eastern Mediterranean but also in the Balkans. According to the Admiralty, Turkey could serve as bulwark against Italian action and ambitions in the Eastern Mediterranean. In the Balkans, keeping Turkey out of the German orbit was crucial in preventing the ‘domino effect’ which could result in German control of the Balkan Peninsula. The Admiralty suggested that Britain should not allow German domination of Turkish foreign trade to turn into political influence in Turkey.\textsuperscript{139}

After 1936 London displayed a more positive approach to Turkey as a pro-status quo country. The new mood was immediately reflected in Anglo-Turkish naval relations. The Turkish Navy made its first visit to Malta in November 1936.\textsuperscript{140} Although London tried to downplay the political significance of this unprecedented Turkish naval visit, Ankara’s intention was to provide a clear political message by dispatching the entire fleet.\textsuperscript{141} The Malta visit also pronounced the growing Turkish military and naval openness to relations with Britain. The Italian-built destroyers of the visiting Turkish squadron were of great interest to British naval intelligence since the Italian fleet included destroyers of the same class. Normally reserved at best towards foreigners, the Turks were surprisingly accommodating to the British and allowed them to board and carefully examine two \textit{Turbine}-class destroyers, \textit{Zafer} and \textit{Tinaztepe}, built in Italy.\textsuperscript{142}

In 1937 the Turkish General Staff hired RAF instructors to set up the Air War College. This was a clear challenge to the German instructors’ domination of Turkish staff training since 1926.\textsuperscript{143} The impact of rapprochement was more salient in naval matters. In 1937 Ankara decided to become a party to the naval disarmament treaties, probably to enhance its pro-status quo credentials. The Anglo-Turkish discussions to this end revealed to the Admiralty the contours of the Turkish fleet’s expansion plans. The discussions centred on the Turkish intention to build two cruisers (8,000 or 10,000-ton) with 8-inch guns. By including such cruisers under its
new naval building programme, Turkey risked involvement in ‘the cruiser controversy’, an issue that undermined the entire naval disarmament process and had become a major preoccupation of Britain.134

Other details of the new Turkish naval strategy and programme also emerged from the discussions. British officers realised that coastal defence retained its priority in the new Turkish naval strategy. The navy was tasked with:

1. Keeping open coastwise communication from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean;
2. Cooperating with other services in preventing enemy landings from the Aegean islands; and

To perform these tasks, Turkey would need two 10,000-ton cruisers that mounted at least 8-inch guns and were compatible with a speed of 35 knots. The Turkish General Staff stated speed as an essential requirement for the task of preventing enemy landings. In addition, the fleet would also include eight destroyers and 20 submarines.135 In response to informal Turkish inquiries, London declared its willingness to consider the Turkish requirements for naval building, providing that no urgent deliveries were asked. London preferred that Turkey consider 8,000-ton cruisers with 6.1-inch guns in lieu of 10,000-ton cruisers.136

The quick succession of events in Europe rendered all cruiser discussions with Turkey irrelevant. The pirate submarine activity in the Mediterranean during the Spanish Civil War propelled Ankara towards Britain and France. An unidentified submarine managed to sneak into the Straits and torpedoed two Spanish vessels in 1937. It soon became embarrassingly evident that the Turkish Navy did not have the necessary means to defend even Turkey’s territorial waters against the submarine menace.147 As a result, the Turkish government agreed to cooperate with other Mediterranean powers against pirate submarine activity.

The extent of cooperation, however, became a divisive issue in the government. During the Nyon Conference in September 1937 the Turkish leaders had sharply divided opinions on the possible Turkish contribution against pirate submarine activity.148 President Atatürk favoured a closer cooperation with Britain and France than Prime Minister İnönü was prepared to accept. Chief of Staff Marshal Çakmak endorsed İnönü’s position on the issue. Atatürk and İnönü had different assessments of the risks associated with such cooperation.149 Atatürk seriously considered a positive response to the British request for a Turkish destroyer to patrol with the British fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean and even discussed the issue
with the fleet commander in Gölcük. For him, naval cooperation with Britain and France would be a beneficial policy even though it could run the risk of losing one or two destroyers in the Mediterranean. Such cooperation was likely to be rewarded with British and French support against Italy.150

The disagreement cost İnönü his premiership. In the end, the guarded approach advocated by İnönü and Marshal Çakmak prevailed. In practice, the Turkish contribution to the joint naval activity in the Mediterranean remained modest and short of involvement beyond Turkish territorial waters.151

Regardless of its modesty, Turkish involvement in the Nyon arrangement moved Turkey closer to Britain. In early 1938 British Ambassador Percy Lorraine was convinced that Turkey would prefer British assistance in completing its naval and air armament programmes.152 Accordingly, in February 1938, Turkish Foreign Minister Aras officially notified the British Embassy of the new naval programme’s requirements. The programme devised by the Turkish General Staff called for two ships (cruisers) of 10,000 tons, 12 destroyers of 1,200 tons and 30 submarines (15 coastal type and 15 medium type). This force would be divided into two groups, each with 1 cruiser, 4 destroyers and 12 submarines. Four destroyers and six submarines would be kept in reserve or undergoing maintenance. One group would be assigned to the Mediterranean and the other to the Black Sea.

The recent wargames in the War Academy had clearly demonstrated the indispensability of the cruisers, the first of which was to be commissioned in 1942 and the second by 1945. The Yavuz would serve as a stopgap until the second cruiser was commissioned. The Turkish Navy also expected to build a 23,000-ton ship between 1950 and 1960. Four destroyers and ten submarines would be built urgently in Britain. Four more destroyers would follow.153

Of course, Turkey would need credit with favourable terms to order these new units; Britain agreed to provide a £6 million sterling credit for Turkish armaments, including naval orders. The Admiralty viewed these Turkish orders as of such vital importance that it stated its willingness to accept even a reasonable delay in its own armament programme in order to fulfil them.154 On the eve of the Second World War, Turkey was again able to find affordable naval arms, this time from a politically satisfied great power in Europe.

Conclusion

In March 1938 Ankara submitted its first naval requirements to Britain. The orders included two destroyers, eight submarines and four motorboats. In
July the requirements were modified to include four ‘H’-class destroyers, eight ‘H’-class submarines, four motor torpedo boats, three escort ships and four submarine chasers. However, the new naval building programme could never materialise. Indeed, even the submarines ordered earlier were not all delivered. Germany did not deliver one Turkish submarine, nor did it supply parts and equipment needed for those under assembly in Turkey. The subsequent orders for destroyers and submarines in Britain shared a similar fate. Some of the naval units ordered by Turkey were withheld as suppliers gave priority to their own war-fighting capabilities and efforts over those of their clients.

Turkish naval programmes and contracts proved to be commercially unprofitable ventures for foreign naval arms suppliers. What made them profitable and what played a decisive role in the conclusion of most naval contracts was financial support from foreign governments that were pursuing political and strategic objectives. The two Turkish submarines built in the Netherlands received secret German subsidies. Similarly, Italian shipyards depended on their government’s financial guarantee for Turkish orders in 1929 and 1930. Without a similar arrangement or government support, the French contractor Penhoët suffered a substantial loss in reconditioning the Yavuz.

However, contrary to expectations, naval contracts never resulted in any foreign government’s gaining or maintaining political or military (or naval) influence with the independent-minded Turkish rulers. Although the Germans enjoyed by far the most influential status in Turkish military and naval circles, their political influence could not match that of their forerunners in the Ottoman service.

While France was in fierce competition with Germany in military and naval matters, French attempts to break German influence failed due to the political problems that plagued Turkish-French relations well into the late 1930s.

The Italian influence on the Turkish Navy was negligible. Ironically, the naval units received from Italy in the early 1930s represent the largest and most significant material contribution to Turkish naval efforts.

In the second half of the 1930s Germany’s own rearming effort in a sense denied it the opportunity to reinforce its existing influence in Turkey. The German inability or unwillingness to meet Turkey’s requirements led gradually to Germany’s replacement by Britain as the leading supplier of naval arms to Ankara. Meanwhile, Italian expansionism in the Mediterranean was already propelling Ankara politically towards Britain by the mid-1930s. The process of building a navy in Turkey thus followed a trajectory which perfectly mirrored the changes in Turkey’s foreign relations with major European powers.
Throughout the inter-war period, Turkish naval policy was shaped under the decisive influence of the army-dominated General Staff. The navy was seen as an extension of the army and considered relevant only in the context of its potential contribution to land campaigns. There was no naval policy or strategy to speak of other than coastal defence. Prevailing domestic and institutional conditions militated against the acquisition of naval arms until the second half of the 1930s.

In the late 1930s, however, the growing revisionist threat was instrumental in convincing the Turkish General Staff of the need for surface units, including large big-gun ships that the naval officer corps had longed for since 1923. The second naval programme of the Turkish Republic provided for two cruisers of 10,000 or 8,000 tons. The need for cruisers and additional destroyers was nonetheless contextualised in terms of land warfare. The surface fleet was expected to play a role at sea similar to that played by the infantry on land. To foreign observers the views that Turkish General Staff's expressed on naval power were 'crude in the extreme'.

Because the naval programme never materialised, Turkish naval policy of the period failed to achieve its principal objective of building a fleet for the purpose of functioning as 'infantry at sea'. Nonetheless, it continued to haunt Turkish naval thinking for a long time. Similarly, the big surface ships, examples of which Turkish Navy never commissioned, retained their appeal for the naval officer corps even after they faced obsolescence or extinction. These aspects of inter-war naval policy left such a deep imprint on Turkish naval minds that the concept of 'naval programme' was still associated with building a fleet of 2 cruisers, 12 destroyers and 24 submarines even in 1954, two years after Turkey's admission to NATO.

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NOTES


8. See Rauf Orbay, *Cehennem Değirmeni: Sıvısı Hatralar I* [Mills of hell; political memoirs] (İstanbul: Emre Yayınları 2nd ed. 2001).


15. Metel (note 3) p.52.


27. In this respect the organisation of Turkish military aviation represents a hybrid approach...


32. When it was inaugurated in 1930 the Naval War College curriculum included infantry tactics at company and battalion levels drawing on experiences from the Gallipoli War and the War of Independence. See Afif Büyükdağ, *Osmanlı Deniz Harp Tarihi ve Cumhuriyet Donanması* [The Ottoman naval history and the republic fleet] Vol.IV (İstanbul: Deniz Kuvvetleri Basimevi 1984) p.641.


35. For an argument that the *Yavuz* had enjoyed an undeserved popularity, see Hasan Ersel, ‘Yavuz Geliyor Yavuz’ [Here comes Yavuz], *Toplumsal Tarih* 76/4 (April 2000) pp.28–39.

36. PRO FO 371/11544 E2050/523/44 (29 March 1926).


40. For an interesting comparison of Turkish and Greek naval strengths, see PRO FO 371/13085, E252/43/44 (5 Jan. 1928). For the Ottoman naval units, see Bernd Langensiepen and Ahmet Güleyüz, *The Ottoman Steam Navy: 1828–1923* (İstanbul: Denizler Kitapve 2000).

41. PRO FO 371/10223 E6637/3189/44 (28 July 1924).


43. PRO ADM 1/9992 NID 02286/MOS87/40 (15 Dec. 1939).

44. In Dec. 1924, the programme was to cover 6 light cruisers, 24 destroyers and 16 submarines to be built in five years. See Ministère de la Défense Nationale, Service Historique de la Marine, Vincennes (SHM), Carton 1BB2/86, Bulletin de Renseignements, No.1231 (Dec. 1924) p.58. According to an earlier French naval attaché report, the programme would include 20 destroyers and 9 submarines to be built in ten years. See SHM, Carton 1BB7/189 ‘Marine Turquie: Renseignements Generaux – Chapitre Second’ (10 July 1924). In 1926, the British naval attaché reported that the initial naval programme the German naval advisors had drawn up provided for six submarines, two destroyers and one cruiser. See PRO FO 371/11557, E7070/7070/44 (28 Dec. 1926).
52. MAE, Serie E, Levant/Turquie, Vol.77/I, No.305 (2 June 1925) p.73.
56. Orbay (note 8) p.160.
57. PRO FO 371/10870, E3338/3338/44 (1 June 1925).
59. PRO FO 371/10870, E4368/3543/44 (27 July 1925). London was interested in restoring naval links with Turkey. In response to a British shipyard’s request for clearance to bid for a Turkish tender for destroyers, the Admiralty wrote ‘the fact that our relations with Turkey are strained is an additional reason for encouraging Messrs. Boardmore to tender, as it is preferable that the Turks should have to rely on us for ammunition, torpedoes, spare parts, etc.’ See PRO FO 371/11521, E1217/13/44 (20 Feb. 1926).
60. PRO FO 371/10870, E7305/3543/44 (26 Nov. 1925).
61. PRO FO 371/11544, E4168/513/44 (10 July 1926).
63. Büyüküoğlu (note 7) p.27.
64. Koçak (note 62) p.46.
66. PRO FO 371/11544 E2050/513/44 (29 March 1926).
67. Büyüküoğlu (note 7) p.32.
68. It should be noted that France was the only Triple Entente power with which Turkey had cordial relations at the time. See MAE, Serie E, Levant/Turquie, Vol.77/I, No.305 (1 and 10 Nov. 1926).
70. Archivio Storico della Ministero Affari Esteri (ASMAE), Pacco 1727/7975, Turchia 1927 (17 Dec. 1928).
71. See, for instance, PRO FO 371/13085, E252/43/44 (5 and 12 Jan. 1928).
74. PRO FO371/13081, E5864/17/44 (25 Nov. 1928).
76. ASMAE, Pacco 1727/7975, Turchia 1928 (3 Dec. 1928).
78. ASMAE, Pacco 1727/7948, Turchia 1927 (21 July 1927).
79. ASMAE, Pacco 1727/7975, Turchia 1928 (4 Dec. 1928).
81. ASMAE, Pacco 1727/7975, Turchia 1928 (17 Dec. 1928).
82. PRO FO371/13817 E1815/189/44 (15 April 1929).
83. PRO FO371/14581 E5568/1666/44 (16 Oct. 1930).
84. ASMAE, Busta 13/6, Turchia 1934 (23 May 1934).
85. Rohwer and Monakov (note 29) p.843.
87. ‘Deniz Müsteseşan Itlaya’dan Geldi’ [Under-secretary of navy back from Italy], Cumhuriyet, 19 March 1930; PRO FO 371 14567 E1071/206/44 (27 Feb. 1930).
88. PRO FO 371 14567 E1792/206/44 (7 April 1930).
90. See, for instance, PRO FO 371, W9293/773/29 (22 Sept. 1926); SHM, Carton 1BB7/163, Bulletin de Informations Militaires (Turquie), No.26 (18 Oct. 1926).
91. PRO FO 371, W9293/773/29 (22 Sept. 1926).
92. Metel (note 34) p.47.
93. The naval officers sent abroad for training published reports on their experiences. See Captain Münir, Avrupaya Tettik için Gönderilen Dz. Zabiterin Raporları 3 [Reports of naval officers attached to European navies 3] (Istanbul: Deniz Matbaası 1929); Ensign Safi Hüsamettin, Avrupaya Tettik için Gönderilen Dz. Zabiterin Raporları 7 [Reports of naval officers attached to European navies 7] (Istanbul: Deniz Matbaası 1931).
104. ‘Hücumboğazımız Femin En Son Tekâmlatınca Göre İnşa Edilmişlerdir’ [Our submarine chasers built to latest technology], Yenigün, 8 Sept. 1931.
105. For detailed engineering notes and calculations related to the stability problems, see Ata Nutku, ‘Ansaldö Destoyerleri’ [The Ansaldo destroyers] (Unpublished manuscript, the Ata Nutku Collection, Deniz Harp Okulu Kütüphanesi, Turkish Naval Academy Library, Tuzla, Istanbul, Turkey).
106. ‘Tahtelbahirlerimize Dün Sancak Çekildi’ [Our submarines commissioned yesterday], Cumhuriyet, 7 Nov. 1931.


108. ‘Zafer ve Timaztepe’ [Zafer and Timaztepe destroyers], Cumhuriyet, 6 June 1932.


110. ASMAE, Busta 6/48, Turchia 1933 (18 and 29 March 1933).

111. SHM, Carton 1BB7/169 Compte Rendu De Renseignements (Turquie) No.5 (16 April 1934).


114. On the expansion of the Italian navy, see Rimanelli (note 26) p.543. He calculates that between 1922 and 1934, the Italian navy built 119 new units that totalled 244,500 tons, including 7 heavy cruisers, 12 light cruisers, 12 scouts, 28 destroyers, 6 torpedo boats, 15 ocean-going submarines and 39 medium submarines.

115. The programme’s financial magnitude could only recently be disclosed thanks to the curiosity of a deputy in the TBMM. In response to a written question on 19 March 2002, the content of the Law 2425 on the funding for armaments was made public a few days later. For the text of the law, see 〈http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/sozlu_yazili_sos.sorgu_baslangic〉 (28 May 2002).


117. ‘Türk Tersanesinde Türk Gemisi’ [Turkish ship built in Turkish yard], Cumhuriyet, 28 May 1934.

118. PRO FO 371/17966, E6915/3652/44 (15 Nov. 1934).

119. SHM, Carton 1BB7/169 Compte Rendu De Renseignements (Turquie) No.8 (8 July 1934).

120. SHM, Carton 1BB7/169 Compte Rendu De Renseignements (Turquie) No.4 (18 April 1934) and No.6 (4 May 1934).

121. PRO FO 371/17964 E7047/2462/44 (23 Nov. 1934).

122. ASMAE, Busta 13/6 Turchia 1934 (18 May 1934).

123. PRO FO 371/19040, E3039/3039/44 (10 May 1935). Emphasis added. For the Turkish General Staff, submarine was in a different category than other units in the fleet. The first two submarines ordered from IVS were initially based at Erdek rather than İzmit, Gölçik where the rest of the navy anchored. Their status with and within the navy remained uncertain for a while. Until they were finally attached to the fleet in Gölçik in 1931, the General Staff jealously guarded its direct command over them. See Büyüktürkül (note 32) pp.636–7.


126. Interview with Şemsettin Bargut, Captain (Ret.), Turkish Navy (13 April 2001) Ankara.


130. PRO FO 371 20860 E2918/188/44 (14 May 1937).

131. PRO FO 371 17966 E6915/3652/44 (11 Nov. 1934).


133. The primacy of air power was also challenged by the naval officers on the basis of cost-effectiveness. The argument was that the navy would provide better security than the air force for the same initial and operating costs. See Mithat Işın, ‘Deniz, Hava ve Kara Silahlarının Teşebbükleri, İktisadi Bakımından Mukayese ve Tetkiki’ [A comparative study on naval, air and land armaments from economic perspective], Deniz Mecmuası 47/338 (Oct. 1935) pp.832–9.

134. PRO FO 371/20865, E3007/528/44 (2 June 1937).


139. PRO FO 371/20072, E269/26/44 (13 Jan. 1936).

140. Çoker (note 13) pp.132–57.

141. PRO FO 371 20029 E5702/1373/44 (9 Sept. 1936).


143. Lee (note 96) pp.8–10. See also Leiser (note 2). It should be added that the Turkish General Staff had approached the German Air Force for assistance before it turned to Britain. However, Hermann Göring did not respond favourably to the Turkish request, as Germany could not afford to spare precious resources for venues other than the quick revival of German air power. See Glasneck (note 137) p.78.


145. PRO FO 371/20865, E1399/528/44 (4 March 1937).

146. PRO ADM 116/4198 M02082/38 (12 March 1938).


150. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Arşivleri, AlV-6, D-54, F102-63 (12 Sept. 1937); Metel (note 3) pp.150–1; Büyüktügrul (note 3) p.161.

151. The naval policy advocated by President Atatürk during the Nyon Conference might be taken as a sign of consistency in his thinking. A British diplomatic document quoted him as having said earlier: ‘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.’ See PRO FO 371 16987 E6297/6297/44 (21 Oct. 1933).

152. PRO 371/21929 E1193/135/44 (16 Feb. 1938). Ankara also sought to acquire new units from Germany. Particularly due to the British reluctance, Turkey asked Germany to build a 10,000-ton cruiser by 1942. However, Berlin turned down the Turkish request as the German shipbuilders were fully booked with the orders for the German Navy. See Glasneck (note 137) p.73.


154. PRO FO 371/21918 E2274/67/44 (14 April 1938).

155. PRO ADM 116/4194, MF17446/1938 (20 July 1938).

156. In that respect, Turkish naval arms procurement behaviour points to a significant degree of continuity with that of its ancestor, the Ottoman Empire. See Jonathan Grant, ‘The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Imports’, *Journal of Military History* 66/1 (Jan. 2002) pp.9–36.

157. The Commander in Chief of the British Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Cunningham was convinced that the Turkish General Staff needed to be educated on sea power in the Eastern Mediterranean. See Andrew Browne Cunningham, *A Sailor’s Odyssey* (London: Hutchinson 1951) p.215.

