

# Assessing Türkiye's Blue Homeland Doctrine through Mahanian Sea Power Theory

## Türkiye'nin Mavi Vatan Doktrininin Mahan'ın Deniz Gücü Teorisi Açısından Değerlendirmesi

Ferhan ORAL\* – Serhat Süha ÇUBUKÇUOĞLU\*\*

### Abstract

This study analyzes Türkiye's "Blue Homeland" doctrine through Alfred Thayer Mahan's principles of sea power, assessing its role in shifting Türkiye from a land-oriented tradition to a maritime orientation. It discusses the three core elements of sea power—fleet, trade, and bases—alongside Mahan's six strategic factors: geographical position, physical conformation, extent of territory, population, national character, and governmental character. The central research questions of the study are: How has Blue Homeland shaped Türkiye's naval strategy? And to what extent has it placed the country on the path to becoming a sea power? The study argues that the Blue Homeland doctrine has catalyzed a strategic reorientation by expanding naval capabilities, reinforcing regional security roles, and advancing offshore energy exploration activities. It highlights the impact of indigenous defense programs, alongside overseas basing and forward-defense initiatives, as evidence of Türkiye's emerging maritime identity. However, the process also has some shortcomings: institutional fragmentation, a lack of codified maritime strategy, economic constraints, and the persistence of a land-centric outlook. From a Mahanian perspective, the Blue Homeland doctrine has nudged Türkiye toward a regional sea power by prioritizing naval modernization, securing maritime trade routes, and extending operational reach. However, without sustained investment in fleet capacity, overseas bases, and cultural embrace of the sea across society, ambitions risk outpacing capabilities. The article concludes that Blue Homeland represents a pivotal first step in Türkiye's maritime transformation; however, its long-term success depends on whether the strategic vision can be translated into enduring naval strength and influence.

**Key Words:** Sea Power, Naval Strategy, Maritime Security, Blue Homeland, Türkiye

### Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin "Mavi Vatan" doktrininin Alfred Thayer Mahan'ın deniz gücü prensipleri ışığında analiz ederek, Türkiye'yi kara odaklı bir gelenekten deniz odaklı bir yönelime geçirmedeki rolünü değerlendirmektedir. Çalışmada ayrıca deniz gücünün üç temel unsuru olan donanma, ticaret ve üsler, Mahan'ın altı stratejik faktörüyle (coğrafi konum, fiziksel yapı, toprak genişliği, nüfus, ulusal karakter ve hükümetin karakteri) birlikte ele alınmaktadır. Çalışmanın temel araştırma soruları; "Mavi Vatan, Türkiye'nin deniz stratejisini nasıl şekillendirmiştir?" ve "Ülkeyi bir deniz gücü olma yoluna ne ölçüde sokmuştur?" olarak belirlenmiştir. Çalışma; Mavi Vatan doktrininin deniz yeteneklerini genişleterek, bölgesel güvenlik rolünü güçlendirerek ve açık deniz enerji araştırma faaliyetlerini geliştirerek stratejik bir yön değişikliğini tetiklediğini savunmakta, yerli savunma programlarının yanı sıra, denizasını üsler ve ileri savunma girişimlerinin ise Türkiye'nin yükselen denizci kimliğinin kanıtı olarak etkisini vurgulamaktadır. Ancak sürece yönelik zafiyetler de mevcuttur. Kurumsal parçalanmışlık, resmi olarak yazılı bir

Makale Geliş Tarihi: 18.09.2025. Makale Kabul Tarihi: 20.04.2026.

Araştırma Makalesi / Künye: ORAL, Ferhan – ÇUBUKÇUOĞLU, Serhat Süha. "Assessing Türkiye's Blue Homeland Doctrine through Mahanian Sea Power Theory". Gazi Akademik Bakış Dergisi (GABD), 19/38, (Haziran 2026): s. 417-440. <https://doi.org/10.19060/gav.1973768>

\* Asst. Prof. Dr. Piri Reis University, Maritime Faculty, Tuzla-İstanbul, Türkiye, and Security Analyst at ANKASAM, Ankara, Türkiye, E-mail: foral@pirireis.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0003-3249-5266

\*\* Senior Researcher and Head of Türkiye Office at TRENDS Research & Advisory, Abu Dhabi – UAE, E-mail: scubukcuoglu@yahoo.com, ORCID:0009-0007-2643-8149

Gazi

Akademik  
Bakış

417

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

denizcilik stratejisinin eksikliği, ekonomik zorluklar ve kara merkezli bakış açısının devamı, bahse konu gelişmeyi sınırlamaktadır. Mahancı bakış açısına göre Mavi Vatan doktrini; donanmanın modernizasyonuna öncelik vererek, deniz ticaret yollarını güvence altına alarak ve operasyonel etki alanını genişleterek Türkiye'yi bölgesel bir deniz gücü olmaya doğru yönlendirmiştir. Ancak, donanma kapasitesine, denizasırlı üslere ve toplum genelinde deniz gücünün kültürel olarak benimsemesine sürekli yatırım yapılmadığı takdirde, hedeflerin mevcut kabiliyetlerin önüne geçme riski bulunmaktadır. Çalışma, Mavi Vatan'ın Türkiye'nin denizcilik dönüşümünde önemli bir atılımı temsil ettiği sonucuna varmaktadır. Ancak sürecin uzun vadeli başarısı, stratejik vizyonunun kalıcı bir donanma gücü ve nüfuzuna dönüştürülüp dönüştürülemediğine bağlıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Deniz gücü, donanma stratejisi, deniz güvenliği, Mavi Vatan, Türkiye

## Introduction

Only a few people directly and profoundly influenced the theory of sea power as the acclaimed strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan. In his historical book *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, he developed a philosophy of sea power and formulated a theory of naval strategy by linking them with drivers of economic prosperity<sup>1</sup>. Mahan defined a set of six fundamental elements affecting sea power: geographical position, physical conformation, extent of territory, population, character of the people, and character of the government<sup>2</sup>. Naval historians like Eric Grove later split the set into two categories, with the priority group consisting of “economic power, technological capability, socio-political and cultural power” and the secondary group including “geography, maritime trade and resource dependency, government policy and vision”<sup>3</sup>.

This article examines Türkiye's “Blue Homeland” (*Mavi Vatan*) doctrine within the context of these original six factors, albeit with some reappraisal considering recent technological and geopolitical developments. Blue Homeland emerged as a naval doctrine rooted in Türkiye's republican-era realpolitik strategic culture, shaped by successive generations of naval officers, and evolving from the late 1990s into a comprehensive strategy that, amid persistent threat perceptions and structural constraints, sought to advance Türkiye's blue-water ambitions within an increasingly activist foreign policy. Coined by Admiral (Ret.) Cem Gürdeniz, in 2006, to encompass Türkiye's maritime jurisdiction areas and energy rights in the surrounding seas (the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Aegean) at the time, Blue Homeland encapsulates Türkiye's evolving maritime vision. The concept is built upon earlier naval doctrines, such as “Towards Blue Waters,” and draws from operational experiences and traditions. It is an anti-imperialist manifesto and a progressive vi-

- 1 Edward Mead Earle (Ed.), *Makers of modern strategy: Military thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, (2<sup>nd</sup> print), Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1973, p.49.
- 2 Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Influence of sea power upon history 1660-1783*, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1890, p.39.
- 3 Eric J. Grove, *The Future of Sea Power*, Routledge, London, 1990, p.227.

Görüş

sion grounded in Kemalist principles that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk codified in the republic's foundation<sup>4</sup>, <sup>5</sup>.

As a concept, Blue Homeland defines the country's areas of interest and jurisdiction at sea; as a strategy, it outlines a geopolitical roadmap to secure the maritime periphery and safeguard national survival in a turbulent region; and as a symbol, it reflects foreign policy activism and the extension of the *Vatan* (homeland) concept into the maritime domain, representing the transformation of a traditionally land-oriented power into an emergent sea power. The Turkish state-run *Anadolu* news agency defines it as "maritime jurisdiction areas recognized under international law, over which it can exercise sovereign rights"<sup>6</sup>. Beyond these etymological, legalistic, and geographic definitions, Gürdeniz frames Blue Homeland as a holistic doctrine: simultaneously a concept, a symbol, and a strategic roadmap that integrates naval power, maritime economy, energy security, and national independence into a single vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Over the past decade, Blue Homeland has evolved into a blueprint for building a more capable naval power, adapted to shifting geopolitical dynamics in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond. What began as a broad notion of maritime interests has since matured into a structured framework informing foreign policy and guiding naval modernization. Against this backdrop, the central research questions arise: "How has Blue Homeland shaped Türkiye's naval strategy? And to what extent has it placed the country on the path to becoming a sea power?"

The term Blue Homeland does not appear as an explicit definition in official documents such as the National Security Policy Document (*Milli Güvenlik Siyaset Belgesi*), a classified file outlining Türkiye's national security and defense policy. Nor is there a white paper prepared by the Navy and approved by the Ministry of Defense that places Blue Homeland on a coherent institutional identity. The only exception is Ankara University's Centre for Research on Maritime Law, whose semi-official publications and maps, as shown in Figure 1, offer both a conceptual framework and a measure of institutional endorsement<sup>7</sup>. However, it would be wrong to assume that Türkiye's strategy is only bound by the official documents. Inclusion/exclusion of a topic in government

4 Cem Gürdeniz, "Mavi Vatan'dan Açık Denizlere-1", *Veryansın TV*, 2025a, <https://www.veryansintv.com/yazar/cem-gurdeniz/kose-yazisi/mavi-vatandan-acik-denizlere-i>.

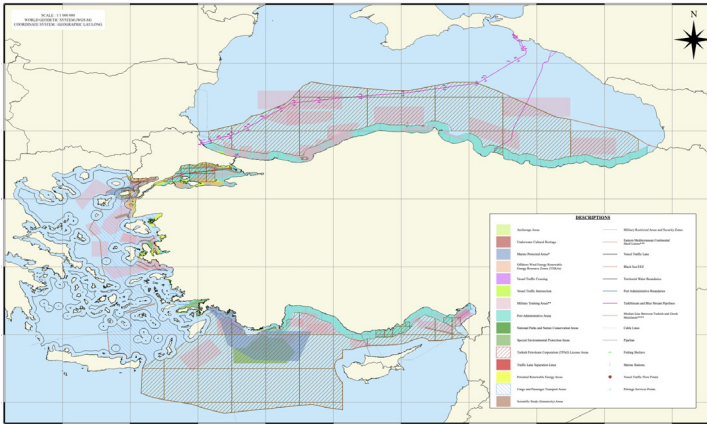
5 Atatürk (1881-1938) is the founder and the first president of the modern Republic of Türkiye.

6 İrfan Kaya Ülger, "Türkiye Mavi Vatanı Savunmaya Devam Ediyor", *AA*, 2020, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/turkiye-mavi-vatani-savunmaya-devam-ediyor/2004480>.

7 DEHUKAM, "Türkiye Deniz Mekânsal Planlaması Haritası erişime açıldı!", 2025, <https://www.dehukam.org/2025/04/16/turkiye-deniz-mekansal-planlamasi-haritasi-erisime-acildi/>.

publications “is not necessarily the only criterion to infer execution, or lack thereof, of policy options”<sup>8</sup> according to Admiral (Ret.) Deniz Kutluk. In fact, there are indications that the government has officially embraced and implemented the Blue Homeland concept, as reflected in statements by the ruling party’s spokesperson describing it as Türkiye’s “red line”<sup>9</sup>, or in naming naval drills as *Mavi Vatan*, and the inclusion of the concept in the school curriculum<sup>10</sup>. Initiatives such as *Teknofest Mavi Vatan*, a technology exhibition jointly organized by Baykar and the Turkish Navy, further reinforce this narrative by promoting technological innovation, youth engagement, and public consciousness around Türkiye’s maritime domain<sup>11</sup>.

**Figure 1:** Marine Spatial Planning of Türkiye, DEHUKAM (2025)



Within this framework, Blue Homeland aims to strengthen Türkiye’s identity as a maritime nation, transcending its status as a landlocked state. It functions as a strategic vision and a rhetorical manifesto, widely employed in political discourse, media, and symbolic maps to shape public perception. Through striking slogans like *Yerli ve Milli* (local and national), *Türkiye Yüzyılı* (Turkish century), and *Vatan* (homeland), it fosters maritime awareness. Taken together, these efforts highlight that Blue Homeland’s present purpose lies less in legal/institutional codification and more in mobilizing public opinion,

- 8 Interview with Deniz Kutluk, 06/07/2021, *Ankara* [Zoom].
- 9 Ömer Çelik, “Blue Homeland doctrine, Turkey’s red line: AK Party spokesperson”, *Daily Sabah*, 2021, <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/blue-homeland-doctrine-turkeys-red-line-ak-party-spokesperson>.
- 10 Aydınlik, “Anaokulundan lise sona MEB’in müfredat taslağını enine boyuna inceliyoruz! Mavi Vatan müfredatta!”, 2024, <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/haber/anaokulundan-lise-sona-meb-in-mufredat-taslagini-enine-boyuna-inceliyoruz-mavi-vatan-mufredatta-468927>.
- 11 TRT Haber, “Milli Savunma Bakanlığında ‘TEKNOFEST Mavi Vatan’ çağrısı, 2024, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/bilim-teknoloji/milli-savunma-bakanligindan-teknofest-mavi-vatan-cagrisi-917472.html>.

raising consciousness, and asserting maritime claims in a powerful, emotive, and symbolic way. However, it is questionable to what extent the authorities have succeeded in socializing and implementing this concept. Sea power is not achieved merely by building naval platforms or declaring maritime zones; it requires a fundamental national reorientation toward the sea, reshaping institutions, cultural narratives, education, and political vision alike. Türkiye can be better described as a developing naval power, with broader maritime transformation constrained by competing institutional priorities and economic pressures.

There are four parts in this article. The first is a literature review that defines key concepts of sea power, naval power, and maritime power—along with their distinctions. The second section on the evolution of Türkiye's maritime interests, naval policy, and the emergence of the Blue Homeland concept focuses on its strategic and operational implications. Using secondary sources and a descriptive-analytical approach, the third and fourth sections provide a critical analysis of Türkiye's naval power and the six factors influencing its sea power, considering recent technological advancements and geopolitical factors, as originally outlined by Mahan and later adapted to modern contexts. The fifth section concludes by examining Türkiye's ongoing efforts to assert its maritime influence, the challenges and opportunities it faces, and the prospective pathways through which it may secure its position as a sea power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Literature Review

Analyses of Türkiye's Blue Homeland doctrine through the lens of Mahan's theories of sea power in extant literature are limited. While there is no fundamental difference between Alfred Thayer Mahan and Sir Julian Corbett in terms of naval strategy and warfare, as discussed by McCranie<sup>12</sup> and Armstrong<sup>13</sup>, their approaches somewhat differ. Whereas Corbett viewed sea power as a flexible, supporting instrument of national policy, Mahan emphasized the concentration of naval forces to secure command of the sea through decisive battles and blockades. Both Mahan's and Corbett's theories continue to profoundly influence discussions on how states exploit the sea in a strategic sense. Although some views claim that Mahan's theories are dated, "The essence of Mahan's vision still pertains"<sup>14</sup>. His thesis on sea power emphasized commerce over

- 12 Kevin D. McCranie, *Mahan, Corbett, and the Foundations of Naval Strategic Thought*. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2021, p.227.
- 13 B. J. Armstrong, "The Shared Genius of Mahan and Corbett", *War on the Rocks*, 2021, <https://warontherocks.com/2021/11/the-shared-genius-of-mahan-and-corbett/>.
- 14 J.M. Richardson, "A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority", *USN Chief of Naval Operations*, 2018, <https://embed.documentcloud.org/documents/5633091-A-Design-for-Maintaining-Maritime-Superiority/>.

*Gazi*

Akademik  
Bakış

421

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

naval strength<sup>15</sup>, viewing overseas trade as the cornerstone of a state's security and its capacity to achieve national objectives.

Analyzing Türkiye's Blue Homeland through a Mahanian lens provides an interesting case of an emerging state actor vying for sea control and power projection in securing its sovereignty and advancing economic interests. For Türkiye, becoming a true sea power requires more than naval modernization, maritime zone declarations, or a forward-leaning posture; it demands a comprehensive national shift toward the sea—embedding maritime priorities into its institutional culture, education, economy, and long-term political vision. However, the great majority of the writing on the topic is descriptive and lacks a systematic analysis of Blue Homeland's implications. Among only a few credible studies in this area is one by Gürçan titled "A Neo-Mahanian Reading of Turkey and China's Changing Maritime Geopolitics", which applies a "Corbett-inspired neo-Mahanian framework" to explore key dynamics shaping Türkiye's maritime geopolitics in a multipolar world<sup>16</sup>. In another study titled "*La Turquie et la Méditerranée: Une Approche Constructiviste de l'identité*", Uygun explores maritime power by linking it to Mahan's theories and concludes that Türkiye has the potential to become such a power<sup>17</sup>. According to Algür and Ercan, Türkiye should capitalize on the advantage of having the longest coastline in the Eastern Mediterranean by boosting the capacity and effectiveness of its ports based on Mahan's "extent of territory" criteria<sup>18</sup>. Admiral (Ret.) Özel emphasizes a common theme, saying that "a nationalized and Turkified Mahanist strategic mindset occupied their teachings in the naval academy"<sup>19</sup>. Polat, in his study, concludes that Türkiye needs a robust, determined, and ready-to-act naval force to maintain its survival on solid foundations<sup>20</sup>. Yapar connects the Blue Homeland doctrine to Mahan, stating that "Blue Homeland might mean a Mahanian turn in Türkiye's geostrategic vision given her heavy investment in its naval capabilities in the last decade"<sup>21</sup>. Finally, Gürdeniz promotes building

Görüş

- 15 James R. Holmes, & Toshi Yoshihara, The Influence of Mahan upon China's Maritime Strategy, *Comparative Strategy*, 24(1), p. 26.
- 16 Efe Can Gürçan, A Neo-Mahanian Reading of Turkey and China's Changing Maritime Geopolitics, *Belt and Road Initiative Quarterly (BRIQ)*, 2(1), 2020, p.27.
- 17 Ayşe Gülce Uygun, "La Turquie et la Méditerranée : Une Approche Constructiviste de l'identité". Université Paris I- Panthéon- Sorbonne 2016, p.46 (PhD dissertation).
- 18 Betül Algür & Murat Ercan, Deniz Hâkimiyet Teorisi Kapsamında Doğu Akdeniz ve Kıbrıs Jeopolitiği'nin Türkiye'ye Etkileri, *Anadolu Akademi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 3, 2021, p.200.
- 19 Mesut Özel, Turkish Navy's Move "Towards Blue Waters": Its Origins, Development and Implementation", Kadir Has University, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, İstanbul 2021, p.B-101, (PhD Dissertation).
- 20 Doğan Şafak Polat, The Influence of Sea Power and Turkey's Struggle in The Blue Homeland. In *Global Maritime Geopolitics*, Transnational Press London, 2022, p. 332.
- 21 Hakan Yapar, From Strategic Depth to Blue Homeland and Beyond: Understanding Turkey's Drift towards Greater Strategic Autonomy (40/2021). IEEE, p.9, <http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/>

offensive capabilities to secure Türkiye's littoral waters and deny its adversaries total control of geopolitically vital maritime domains<sup>22</sup>. He argues that Türkiye's maritime strategy prioritizes political objectives, treating naval power primarily as an instrument of diplomacy and as a means of safeguarding and advancing national interests at sea<sup>23</sup>. Similarly, Çubukçuoğlu argues that Türkiye's maritime strategy emphasizes commercial control, zonal defense, and strategic blockade rather than decisive battle or total sea dominance<sup>24</sup>.

### ***Sea Power, Maritime Power, and Naval Power: Definitions of Maritime Strategy***

Although finding an all-encompassing definition of "sea power" is difficult<sup>25</sup>, it refers to a state's capacity to use the sea for both military and civilian purposes<sup>26</sup>. "Naval power", by contrast, focuses only on naval forces as an instrument in the service of political goals. According to Lambert, "maritime power" is "about the total national engagement with the sea and the capacity to operate there", embracing all uses of the sea, civil and military<sup>27</sup>. He views sea power and naval power as subsets of maritime power, the former centered on securing strategic leverage through control of maritime communications and economic warfare, and the latter confined to the operational activities of navies. Mahan also distinguishes these terms by emphasizing that the scope of sea power "includes not only the military strength afloat but equally the peaceful commerce and shipping..."<sup>28</sup>. In other words, "sea power" refers to a country's ability to influence and dominate the seas and oceans, thereby upholding maritime sovereignty, safeguarding trade routes, and projecting its military might. Similarly, Şeker defines maritime power as "a system that encompasses all of the sea's material and spiritual power elements [including non-tangible factors such as culture and education] and transfers their whole efficiency to national power"<sup>29</sup>. Sea power encompasses all dimensions of national power connected to the sea—ranging from commercial and civilian activities, including ports and maritime infrastructure, to military, constabulary, and law enforcement functions, collectively enhancing a state's political influence.

fichero/docs\_opinion/2021/DIEEEO40\_2021\_HAKYAP\_Turquia\_E NG.pdf

22 Cem Gürdeniz, *Hedefteki Donanma*, Kırmızı Kedi Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2013, p.184.

23 Interview with Cem Gürdeniz, 17/08/2021, Ankara [telephone].

24 Serhat Süha Çubukçuoğlu, *Turkey's Naval Activism: Maritime Geopolitics and the Blue Homeland Concept*, Springer Link (1<sup>st</sup> Edition). Palgrave Macmillan, 2023, p.38.

25 Torsten Albrecht, Konstantinos Tsetsos, and Philipp Grunwald, Concept of Sea Power. In A. M. Sookermary (Ed.), *Handbook of Military Sciences*, Springer International Publishing, 2021, p.3.

26 Eric Grove, *Sea Power* (Vol. 1). Oxford University Press, 2017, p.35.

27 Andrew Lambert, *The British Way of War: Julian Corbett and the Battle for a National Strategy*, Yale University Press, London, 2021, p.44.

28 Mahan, op. cit., p.40.

29 Burak Şakir Şeker, *Global Maritime Geopolitics*, Transnational Press, London, 2022, p.775.

*Gazi*

Akademik  
Bakış

423

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

Mahan identifies three elements of maritime power: a fighting fleet, a trading fleet, and bases. While the importance of a fighting fleet remains valid, the other two elements have shifted in relevance. Unlike in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, modern trading fleets no longer need to be nationally flagged, and advances in propulsion with longer ranges have somewhat reduced the strategic necessity of overseas bases, except for those related to naval diplomacy and intelligence. Nailor and Bolton add another feature: “political will”<sup>30</sup>, and argue that for a state to be a “maritime power,” it must have all three (or four) in a balanced manner. They cite Norway as an example, noting that despite its large merchant fleet, its small fighting fleet and lack of overseas bases prevent it from being a maritime power on par with Britain. Similarly, China is a continental power with a navy and a merchant fleet, making it a rising sea power capable of projecting influence through control of sea lines of communication (SLOC). Yet, it cannot be considered a maritime power, as its engagement with the sea across cultural, societal, and institutional dimensions remains limited compared to established maritime nations. In contrast, North Korea illustrates another pattern, possessing a sizeable fighting fleet but lacking a merchant fleet. In contemporary times, conditions for becoming a naval power include the ability to safeguard and exploit areas of maritime jurisdiction<sup>31</sup>; the capacity to operate a fleet of more than one hundred naval vessels<sup>32</sup>; and the capability to project power beyond coastal anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) bubbles into the wider sea<sup>33</sup>.

### ***The Blue Homeland Leap: Türkiye’s Struggle to become a Regional Naval Power***

Mahan, in his work titled “On Naval Warfare,” underlined the importance of the navy: “Among the complex problems to which the idea of strategy gives rise, there is none more important than that of the constitution of the fleet...”<sup>34</sup>.

This view is also expressed in Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s words as “The navy of the Turkish state, whose significant and major parts of the borders are seas, should also be significant and major”, where he presented a vision to rebuild the navy from its ashes in the early days of the republic. His objective was “to create a republic strong enough to defend and developed enough to hold its

30 Peter Nailor & David Bolton, The utility of maritime power: Today and tomorrow. *The RUSI Journal*, 131(3), 1986, p. 15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071848608522748>.

31 Jun’ichi Takeda, China’s Rise as a Maritime Power, *The Opri Center of Island Studies*, 131(3), 2014, <https://www.spf.org/islandstudies/research/a00011.html>.

32 Connor T. Murphy, Modernization of the Turkish Navy: An Examination of Factors and Significance, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 2020, (Master of Arts Thesis) p.71.

33 Serhat Süha Çubukçuoğlu, *Turkey’s Naval Activism: Maritime Geopolitics and the Blue Homeland Concept*, p.6.

34 Allan F. Westcott, *Mahan on Naval Warfare: Selections from the writings of Rear Admiral Alfred T. Mahan*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1918, p.23.

own technologically and culturally<sup>35</sup>. This vision formed the most important domestic foundation shaping Türkiye's naval identity and ultimately paved the way for the emergence of the Blue Homeland concept.

During a Black Sea tour with the *Hamidiye* cruiser in September 1924, Atatürk gave the signal to start the "Republican Fleet's"<sup>36</sup> construction, leading to the creation of the Ministry of the Navy, restoration of the *Yavuz* cruiser, and construction of the Gölçük naval base. The Montreux Convention of 1936, which restored sovereignty over the Turkish Straits, gave further momentum to this naval buildup over an impressively short period of time<sup>37</sup>, as showcased through fleet visits to Malta and Greece.<sup>38</sup> This period marked the rise of "naval nationalism" in Türkiye<sup>39</sup>, as Türkiye invested in a prestige fleet to reassert its regional standing and cultural centrality<sup>40</sup>. In the 1960s, a sequence of events prompted Türkiye to refocus its naval priorities on the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>41</sup> Foremost were the Cyprus issue, Greece's maritime expansion, and the Soviet fleet's deployment in the Mediterranean after the 1958 U.S. intervention in Lebanon. The U.S.-imposed arms embargo on Türkiye after the Cyprus Operation (1974)<sup>42</sup> temporarily hampered military modernization efforts but also triggered the establishment of domestic defense industry companies under the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation: *Aselsan*, *Havelsan*, and *Roketsan*.

In the 1980s, the navy procured frigates, fast patrol boats, and submarines either from Germany or built them under license in local shipyards<sup>43</sup> In

35 Malik Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2009, p.27.

36 The republican fleet inherited the ruins of the Ottoman fleet following the War of Independence, but not the Ministry of the Navy, which was re-founded in 1924 and sparked new hope for the navy's revival. However, the Ministry (Bahriye Vekaleti) was abolished in 1928. Maritime affairs have been handled by a sub-division within the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure since 2018.

37 Figen Atabey, Cumhuriyet Donanması'nın Oluşum ve Gelişim Süreci (1923-1938). *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2023 (59), p.335.

38 The fleet's deployment to Malta and Piraeus—ostensibly a courtesy visit to King Edward VIII—was in fact a bold act of naval diplomacy, signalling opposition to Mussolini's aggression following Italy's invasion of Abyssinia.

39 Interview with Burak Kadercan, B. (2021, December 27) [Skype].

40 Howard Wang, "Chinese Maritime Transformation and Sea Power" Johns Hopkins University, International Affairs Department, Baltimore, Maryland 2021, p.8 (PhD Dissertation).

41 Within NATO, Greece was assigned responsibility for the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean, as its islands could serve as a secondary defense ring and block Soviet access should Türkiye fall to the USSR.

42 Under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, Greece, Türkiye, and the UK were granted the right to act—unilaterally if necessary—to prevent Cyprus's union with another state and restore its constitutional order.

43 The Turkish Navy has long sent officers abroad—particularly to the U.S. Naval Postgraduate

Gazi

Akademik  
Bakış

425

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

the 1990s, Türkiye received eight Knox-class frigates from the U.S. as compensation for the *Muavenet* incident, when *USS Saratoga* “mistakenly” struck the Turkish destroyer during a NATO exercise,<sup>44</sup> killing five crew members. The tragedy delayed naval nationalization efforts, particularly the MİLGEM corvette project, by nearly a decade. In 1997, Türkiye released its first naval strategy document called “*Açık Denizlere Doğru*” (Towards Blue Waters) as the slogan to reach beyond green/coastal waters and become a mid-size regional power. Especially in the aftermath of the Kardak/Imia Crisis (1996) with Greece over the “grey zones” in the Aegean Sea<sup>45</sup>, the navy reaffirmed its clear commitment to aim for the high seas and to build a more capable fleet. Under this strategy and the former Chief of the Navy, Admiral (Ret.) Özden Örnek’s guidance, the navy launched major in-house modernization projects between 2003 and 2005, such as the R&D Center, Genesis-Advent combat management system, and Long Horizon radar network for heightened situational awareness.

Taken together, the sequence of events from the early 1960s to the 2000s demonstrates that Atatürk’s directives have significantly influenced Turkish strategic thought, shaping perceptions of insecurity and ongoing concerns regarding the maritime domain. Ankara launched Operation Black Sea Harmony (OBSH) to safeguard stability and its strategic interests in the Black Sea, firmly upheld its position in Aegean maritime disputes, maintained a military presence in Cyprus, initiated Operation Mediterranean Shield (OMS) to defend its maritime jurisdictions and to ensure the security of strategic oil transportation from Ceyhan Terminal in the Eastern Mediterranean, and promoted a strategic shift toward becoming a regional naval power with a forward-defense posture. As Atatürk’s 1924 vision gradually took shape, what remained was a unifying term—a compelling phrase that could succinctly encapsulate these efforts for public discourse and political use. The Greek-administered Republic of Cyprus (RoC)’s The unilateral Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) demarcation, the failure of the Annan Plan to reunify Cyprus, and the circulation of the “Seville Map” disregarding potential Turkish claims between 2003 and 2005 galvanized the naval community and spurred the emergence of the Blue Homeland concept as a manifesto built on OBSH and OMS<sup>46</sup>

This approach resembles China’s active defense posture and its “Blue National Soil” doctrine, outlined in the 2010 Ocean Development Report<sup>47</sup>, which underscores its growing emphasis on naval power, ambitions to domi-

School—for advanced engineering education.

44 For more details on why this cannot be an accident, see *Muavenet-i Milliye ve TCG Muavenet “Bir Zaferin ve Bir Hüznün Hikayesi”*, İsmail Can, Galeati Yayıncılık, 2024.

45 152 islands, islets, and rocks of disputed status, claimed by both sides.

46 Interview with Cem Gürdeniz 17/08/2021 [telephone].

47 Dean Cheng, China’s “Blue Soil.” *War on the Rocks*, 2013, <https://warontherocks.com/2013/08/chinas-blue-soil/>.

Görüş

Akademik  
Bakış

426

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

nate strategically vital waterways, and broader aspiration to attain great-power status in global maritime affairs. While some view this as a continental power's instinct to treat adjacent seas as extensions of land through fortification and control, Blue Homeland doctrine instead stresses mobility, forward presence, and power projection, tying Türkiye's security and deterrence to an outward-looking naval strategy<sup>48</sup>. As Türkiye positioned itself into a pivotal role between NATO/U.S. and Eurasia and balanced its traditional alliances with regional security impediments from 2010 onward, the navy revised its "Towards Blue Waters" strategy in response to tighter geopolitical and technological constraints in 2015, pivoting to the Eastern Mediterranean to prioritize maritime rights and economic interests—without explicitly invoking the Blue Homeland doctrine.<sup>49</sup> Considering proposed force structures in 1997 and 2015 strategy documents, the navy was the only service branch to have released a declassified strategy paper twice within two decades, enabling closer examination of changing perceptions of ends, ways, and means across time.

The navy has maintained its aspiration to become a "Regional Power Projection Navy",<sup>50</sup> and after the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2016, under the state's evolving policy priorities—centered on survival, territorial integrity, and security—Türkiye's quest for maritime access manifested in asserting its energy rights and gunboat diplomacy in the Eastern Mediterranean. In response to perceived inequities from the EU, the RoC, and a coalition of rival powers under the East Med Gas Forum (EMGF), Türkiye adopted a more proactive maritime posture until 2020, deploying hard power to challenge the alliance and culminating in its maritime demarcation Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Libya's UN-recognized government in Tripoli and the submission of its maritime zones of interest to the UN. However, since the end of 2020, Türkiye has scaled back its assertive Blue Homeland doctrine, opting for a more conciliatory approach in regional and Western relations. From 2021 onward, it has shifted its focus toward bilateral diplomacy with Greece, sought closer engagement with the EU for financial incentives, backtracked from oil/gas exploration in the Mediterranean, aiming to mitigate geopolitical risks, ease economic challenges, and allegedly to enhance its global reputation as a viable partner in the Middle East. While Blue Homeland remains a prominent theme in domestic rhetoric, its role as a foreign policy instrument has become more symbolic than coercive in recent years.

48 Cem Gürdeniz, "Mavi Vatan'dan Açık Denizlere—II", *Veryansın TV*, 2025b, <https://www.veryansintv.com/yazar/cem-gurdeniz/kose-yazisi/mavi-vatandan-acik-denizlere>.

49 Though geographically a semi-enclosed sea, the Mediterranean has historically served as high seas and a gateway for the Turkish navy's oceanic reach.

50 Fels in his book "Power in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", by using Todd/Lindberg's classification system, places Türkiye as a "Blue Water Navy" in the 4<sup>th</sup> category with regional power projection capability.

Gazi

Akademik  
Bakış

427

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

## Assessing Naval Power: Resources, Instruments, and Activities

Over the past two decades, Türkiye's maritime strategy has shifted from a coastal defense focus to an assertive, expansive posture under the Blue Homeland doctrine, reflecting a broader vision to build sea power through resources, overseas linkages, and naval capabilities. In assessing Türkiye's naval power from a Mahanian perspective, it is essential to examine the available instruments employed to secure and project influence, and the range of activities that define its strategy.

### Naval Assets: The Fleet

Twenty years ago, Türkiye was largely dependent on U.S./NATO-supplied equipment; today, local components make up about 75-80% of inputs<sup>51</sup>, ranging from İstanbul-class frigates to Ada-class corvettes; from *Atmaca* anti-ship missiles to the Advent/*Müren* combat management systems. In 2025, the navy announced steel-cutting ceremonies for an indigenous aircraft carrier, TF-2000 anti-air warfare destroyer, and MILDEN submarine. No other country in the Mediterranean, except for France, has this capability. The Library of the Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO)'s Index of the Navy (IoN)<sup>52</sup> confirms that the Turkish navy's biggest strength is its indigenous capabilities to build platforms and modern weapon systems. It is no surprise that Türkiye's defense budget for 2025 reached record levels of more than US\$46 billion, the bulk of which goes to the navy and corresponds to a 17.5% annual increase.<sup>53</sup> Constructing 36 vessels simultaneously, Türkiye's defense industry has expanded its naval exports, supplying frigates to Indonesia, corvettes to Malaysia and Pakistan, offshore patrol vessels to Turkmenistan, and unmanned surface vessels (USV) to Azerbaijan. According to SIPRI, Türkiye ranked 11th in arms exports and 17th in military spending last year.<sup>54</sup> These activities constitute key elements of maritime power and illustrate how indigenous shipbuilding supports both sea power and international defense cooperation.

Görüş

Akademik  
Bakış

428

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

- 51 Patrick Sykes, "Turkey Bets on Homegrown Navy for Edge in High-Seas Power Play", *Bloomberg*, 2025, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-01-24/turkey-bets-on-homegrown-navy-for-edge-in-high-seas-power-play?sref=BtkSCofS>.
- 52 Alexander P. Polivach and Pavel A. Gudev, *The IMEMO Sea Powers' Rankings 2024*. – Moscow: IMEMO, 2024. – Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO), 23, Profsoyuznaya Str., Moscow, 117997, Russian Federation.
- 53 Jens Bastian, "Türkiye's rise in defense sector: Filling the gaps in defense industry manufacturing", *AA*, 2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/opinion/opinion-turkeyes-rise-in-defense-sector-filling-the-gaps-in-defense-industry-manufacturing/3478398>.
- 54 Mathew George, Katarina Djokic, Zain Hussain, Pieter d. Wezeman and Siemon t. Wezeman, *Trends in International Arms Transfers 2024*. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/fs\\_2503\\_at\\_2024\\_0.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/fs_2503_at_2024_0.pdf)

Submarines hold the greatest potential to reshape the regional naval balance. Equipped with advanced SIGINT/ELINT sensors for stealth and situational awareness and armed with indigenous systems such as the *Akya* heavyweight torpedo, *Atmaca* anti-ship missile, and soon the *Çakır* cruise missile, they provide formidable strike capabilities. These assets will significantly strengthen Türkiye's A2/AD posture and serve as a powerful deterrent in the Eastern Mediterranean<sup>55</sup>. Regarding the domestic submarine project (MİLDEN), some former officer academics are in favor of building subsequent versions with a nuclear-powered propulsion system (SSN) in the mid-term<sup>56</sup>, which would provide an almost unlimited range, greater secrecy, and a surprise effect. The Chief Admiral of the Turkish Navy, Dr. Ercüment Tatlıoğlu, confirmed that "following the [significantly localized (~80%)] *Reis* class submarines, the navy will take a crucial step towards constructing nuclear-powered submarines, essential for our vision of being a mid-scale power with global influence"<sup>57</sup>. Ambitious as this vision may be, it should be viewed as a long-term aspiration, one that faces significant technological, financial, and strategic hurdles before it can be realized.

Türkiye's aircraft carrier project (MUGEM) also attracts attention. The 60,000-ton vessel, set to be delivered in 2030<sup>58</sup>, measuring approximately 285m in length and 72m in width, is planned to operate a mix of up to 50 manned and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), including platforms like the *Bayraktar TB-3*, *Kızılelma*, *Anka-3*, and *Hürjet*<sup>59</sup>. However, debate continues over whether Türkiye needs an aircraft carrier, with some highlighting its deterrent and symbolic value,<sup>60</sup> while others see it as unrealistic, politically driven, and absent from naval operational plans.<sup>61</sup> The Turkish defense industry has indeed achieved a quantum leap with the commissioning of *TCG Anadolu* landing helicopter dock (LHD), which can quickly deploy a battalion-sized landing

, Stockholm, March 2025, p. 2.

55 Trends Research & Advisory, Mapping Türkiye's Growing Naval Power, 2025, <https://trendsresearch.org/insight/mapping-turkiyes-growing-naval-power/>.

56 Murat Koray, Deniz Ulaştırma İşletme Müh. Açısından AUKUS İttifakının Değerlendirilmesi. In *Küresel Aktörler ve Büyük Güç Rekabeti*. Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık, Ankara, 2023, p.259.

57 Cem Devrim Yaylalı, "A Nuclear Future? Turkish Navy Reveals Ambition for Nuclear-Powered Submarines (Part 1)", *Devrim Yaylalı*, 2025, <https://devrimyaylali.com/2025/05/01/a-nuclear-future-turkish-navy-reveals-ambition-for-nuclear-powered-submarines-part-1/>

58 Türkiye Today, "Türkiye strengthens geopolitical influence by sending patrol ships to Qatar", 2024, <https://www.turkiyetoday.com/region/turkiye-strengthens-geopolitical-influence-by-sending-patrol-ships-to-qatar-30855>.

59 Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications-TC İletişim Başkanlığı, 2024.

60 Boğaziçi Deniz Kültürü Çevre ve Spor Platformu, & Hakan Ercan, 2024, Uçak Gemisi ve Türkiye - E. Tuğamiral Hakan Ercan [Video recording]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvSewscxzcl>.

61 Interview with Cem Gürdeniz, 12/02/2025, Ankara [telephone].

force anywhere nearby. But given that most threats to Türkiye's vital interests originate from within a thousand-mile radius, and hence remain under air coverage from the mainland, it is questionable what strategic purpose an aircraft carrier would serve apart from naval diplomacy and deterrence.

UAVs, such as *Aksungur*, with their extensive sensor suites, long endurance, and anti-submarine warfare capabilities, for instance, are particularly advantageous for operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. The navy is enhancing its operational capabilities by integrating these units into its fleet. This integration signifies a substantial shift in regional naval power dynamics, enabling Türkiye to project force more efficiently and cost-effectively, thereby enhancing its blue-water operational reach. More positively, as most European navies shrank after the end of the Cold War, the Turkish defense industry has significantly advanced, particularly in the development of USVs like the *Ulaq*, *Marlin*, and *Levend*—with the last one revealed at NAVDEX 2025 in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The *Marlin*, a collaborative effort between Aselsan and Sefine Shipyard, is an armed USV equipped with advanced capabilities in surface and underwater warfare, electronic warfare, and asymmetric operations. Notably, it successfully launched the *Kuzgun-KY* cruise missile during tests, demonstrating its operational effectiveness<sup>62</sup>. The strategic deployment of USVs has been transformative in modern naval warfare, as evidenced by their impact in the Black Sea during the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Just as aerial drones are increasingly doing work that previously required fighter jets, sea drones will perform work that has been done by naval vessels<sup>63</sup>. This is partly why, for instance, the U.S. navy wants 40% of its fleet to be unmanned boats by 2050<sup>64</sup>.

When the ongoing projects reach completion, Türkiye will have met two out of three additional criteria to become a naval power: operationalize a fighting fleet of more than one hundred naval vessels at sea (it will have 2029)<sup>65</sup>; and project power beyond A2/AD bubbles in coastal waters. If the goal is to have a carrier strike group under the MUGEM (will take 4-5 years), and two supporting landing-amphibious task groups led by *TCG Anadolu* and *TCG Trakya* (5-6 years), supported by TF-2000 class destroyers for air coverage and MİLDEN submarines for strategic deterrence, this will be a complete force structure—even exceedingly perhaps—to project power anywhere in the Mediterranean,

62 Tayfun Özberk, Türkiye's Marlin USV fires KUZGUN missile for the first time, Naval News, 2023, <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2023/04/turkiyes-marlin-usv-fires-kuzgun-missile-for-the-first-time/>.

63 Raj M. Shah & Christoph Kirchhoff, *Unit X: How the Pentagon and Silicon Valley Are Transforming the Future of War*, Scribner, New York, 2024, p.288.

64 Ray Alderman, "The worldwide market for unmanned naval vessels", *Military Embedded Systems*, 2024, <https://militaryembedded.com/unmanned/isr/the-worldwide-market-for-unmanned-naval-vessels>.

65 Patrick Sykes, Turkey Bets on Homegrown Navy for Edge in High-Seas Power Play.

Görüş

Akademik  
Bakış

430

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

the Red Sea, and the Western Indian Ocean. Thus, it is clear that from the second quarter of the 21st century onward, the Turkish Naval Forces will undergo modernization and emerge as a more effective and deterrent force<sup>66</sup>.

### **Naval Bases Overseas**

The subsequent step to attain naval power status is to have overseas bases for situational awareness, forward-defense, and economic outreach, which kick-started with deployments in Cyprus, Albania, Qatar, Somalia, and Libya. Türkiye's expeditionary military strategy posture has been solidly reinforced by extensive forward-basing in accordance with the Blue Homeland doctrine. The training base in Somalia, Türkiye's forward-deployed corps in Cyprus, the joint military camp in Qatar, and the Libyan contingent demand special emphasis in this regard<sup>67</sup>. The navy arrived in Somalia in 2024, home to Ankara's biggest overseas military base (TURKSOM), to escort hydrocarbons exploration. Other major tasks are to help build a Somali navy, shipyards, and infrastructure to secure the country's 3,898 km long coastline against maritime security threats such as illegal fishing, piracy, and smuggling, as well as foreign intrusion<sup>68</sup>.

Similarly, Tuzla-class Turkish patrol boats arrived in Qatar in 2024 to operate under the Qatar-Türkiye Joint Command to enhance military cooperation and support regional stability<sup>69</sup>. Another opportunity is to base Turkish warships on Sudan's Suakin Island in the Red Sea. Overall, the shift toward the open seas requires precisely such an evolutionary transformation—from an “area-centered defense” mindset to a vision of “forward basing and sustained deterrence” by carefully picking suitable basing locations<sup>70</sup>. While the navy's presence in Libya, Cyprus, and Albania has broad support, however, extensions such as Somalia remain contested, with critics warning that distant bases risk overstretching resources and weakening Türkiye's defensive capacity in the Eastern Mediterranean against an increasingly assertive Greece backed by the U.S.<sup>71</sup>. Expanding Türkiye's footprint in underserved Middle Eastern and African markets may yield long-term economic benefits, but these ambitions must be balanced against the geopolitical realities of the near abroad<sup>72</sup>.

66 Kaan Kozanhan, 21. Yüzyılda Deniz Kuvvetlerinin Operasyonel Yeteneđi, in *Türkiye'nin Deniz Hukuku ve Güvenliđi*, Kenan Şahin (Ed.) A. M. Seçkin Hukuk, Ankara, 2023, p.77.

67 Can Kasapođlu, Turkey's Burgeoning Defense Technological and Industrial Base and Expeditionary Military Policy, *Insight Turkey*, 2020, p. 120.

68 Serhat Süha Çubukçuođlu, “Maritime Security Aspects of Türkiye-Somalia Defense Cooperation Agreement, TRENDS Research & Advisory”, 2024, <https://trendsresearch.org/insight/maritime-security-aspects-of-turkiye-somalia-defense-cooperation-agreement/>.

69 Türkiye Today, Türkiye strengthens geopolitical influence by sending patrol ships to Qatar. 2024.

70 Cem Gürdeniz, Mavi Vatan'dan Açık Denizlere—II.

71 Halktv, Türkiye'nin Somali'ye asker çıkarmasının sonuçları ne olacak? Türker Ertürk anlattı! [Video recording], [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Op3t4mPhcM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Op3t4mPhcM).

72 Serhat Süha Çubukçuođlu, Maritime Security Aspects of Türkiye-Somalia Defense

*Gazisi*

Akademik  
Bakış

431

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

## ***Maritime Jurisdictions and Energy Exploration***

The next—and perhaps most challenging—step for Türkiye is to fully leverage its maritime jurisdictions in the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Black Sea, which together constitute the near-maritime geography of the Blue Homeland. Türkiye currently limits drilling and seismic research to the Black Sea, with an additional survey off Somalia concluded under their bilateral offshore energy cooperation agreement. State-owned Turkish Petroleum announced that natural gas reserves in the Sakarya field, located 83 miles off the Black Sea coast, have been revised upward to 710 billion cubic meters (bcm). The total worth of the field as it stands is estimated to be an astounding US\$440 billion, which is about 40% of Türkiye's GDP. Türkiye still imports 75% of its energy needs and relies on imports for 95% of its natural gas consumption, mainly from Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, U.S., and Algerian LNG. In the short term, dependence will persist, but Black Sea production marks a landmark step toward greater energy security.

The Aegean presents a more complex picture. Under the 1976 Bern MoU, Türkiye and Greece agreed to refrain from seismic research and unilateral exploration beyond their territorial waters. Despite periodic disputes, the agreement formally remains in force. The Eastern Mediterranean stands as the most prominent arena of maritime energy geopolitics. The RoC and Egypt reached an agreement in 2025 to facilitate the commercialization of natural gas from the Aphrodite (Block 12) and Cronos (Block 6) fields south of Cyprus, positioning Egypt as a key hub for LNG exports. Türkiye, on the other hand, abruptly ended all exploration activities in the Mediterranean in 2020, and it requires not only a show of force but also political capital and skillful diplomatic engagement—reminding Nailor and Bolton's emphasis on “political will” as a precondition—to re-embark on sustainable, durable exploitation of maritime zones. A notable exception is that Libya's national parliament is reportedly moving toward ratifying the 2019 MoU that grants Türkiye rights to conduct oil and gas exploration in Libyan waters<sup>73</sup>. Underscoring the thaw in relations with the eastern government, the Turkish navy corvette *TCG Kınalıada* docked at Benghazi's port for the first time in August 2025, as Ankara weighs deploying military trainers and advisers to support Libyan authorities.

## **Application of Mahan's Six Key Factors on Türkiye's Sea Power**

Türkiye's maritime rise is driven by its geopolitical position, naval modernization, and force projection. Expanding capabilities, infrastructure, and regional

---

Cooperation Agreement.

73 Selcan Hacıoğlu, & Salma El Wardany, “Turkey Set for Gas-Exploration Deal After Wooing Ex-Libya Foes”, *Bloomberg*, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-08-21/turkey-set-for-gas-exploration-deal-after-wooing-ex-libya-foes>.

Gaz

engagement already make it a de facto naval power, with clear potential to emerge as a true sea power in the future. This context raises curiosities on how Blue Homeland's evolution has impacted Türkiye's capabilities at sea. By applying Mahan's six key factors—geographical position, physical conformation, extent of territory, population, national character, and government character—the assessment in this section highlights Türkiye's trajectory as a rising sea power in the Mediterranean and beyond.

### **Geographical Position**

According to Mahan, a central geographic location where maritime transportation is intensive bears strategic advantages to a coastal state<sup>74</sup>. Türkiye tries to maximize its security as a key nation situated at the crossroads of competing global centers. To compare with the case of the United States in retrospect, Mahan understood—more than a century ago—that America had to secure the Panama Canal and the Caribbean before it could patrol the oceans, as nations that establish control over their home regions gain a stronger foundation to extend their influence into the broader maritime domain<sup>75</sup>. Similarly, Türkiye must secure its periphery before expanding overseas, a situation that bears some resemblance to the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>76</sup> In a tumultuous region, Türkiye cannot afford to allow hostile powers to dominate the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean, which represent its vulnerable soft underbelly. This is especially so in a context where “the preeminent maritime hotspot in the world is not seen as the South China Sea or the Arabian Gulf but the Eastern Mediterranean”<sup>77</sup>. Türkiye, as the successor of a historic territorial empire that once thrived along the overland Silk Road, has traditionally been a land-focused power. However, with a shift in its naval strategy after the emergence of the Blue Homeland doctrine, it now seeks to assert itself as a rising sea power.

### **Physical Conformation and Extent of Territory**<sup>78</sup>

Mahan argued that when a state is divided by the sea—whether bordered, surrounded, or separated by it—control of the surrounding waters becomes not just advantageous but essential, as such geography can either foster sea

74 Ayhan Türker Koçpınar, Deniz Stratejisti: Mahan ve Corbett, in *Askeri Stratejinin Temelleri Kuramcılar* (Eds.: Emrah Özdemir, Ali Bilgin Varlık), Kronik Kitap, İstanbul, 2024, p.274.

75 Hal Brands, “The 20th Century's Lessons for Our New Era of War”, Foreign Policy, 2025 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2025/01/17/hal-brands-eurasian-century-geopolitics-war-us-china-russia-foreign-policy/>.

76 In his 1823 annual message to Congress, President James Monroe warned European powers against interfering in the Western Hemisphere—a principle that became known as the “Monroe Doctrine” (Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, 2025).

77 James Stavridis, “Most Dangerous Waters in the World Are in the Mediterranean”, *Bloomberg*, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-09-02/greece-turkey-and-oil-raise-fears-of-war-in-the-mediterranean>.

78 This study examines these two factors together due to their close connection.

power or render the country strategically vulnerable. As a two-peninsula country encompassing Thrace and Anatolia, Türkiye is bordered by multiple seas, a geography that grants it significant strength and a pivotal geostrategic role as the gateway to both the Aegean and the Black Sea. Similarly, Mahan highlights that the development of sea power is influenced not only by a country's surface area, but also by its coastline and the character of its harbors. Türkiye has the distinction of having the longest coastline in the Eastern Mediterranean (2,280 km), which is a source of strength. Along this coastline, there are three important ports: İskenderun, Mersin, and Ceyhan.

İskenderun Port is a key transfer hub for Middle Eastern trade and re-exports, valued for its multifunctional capacity in dry bulk, general, and liquid cargo. While long active, it has recently become a preferred destination for heavy-lift ships. Handling over 68 million tons of cargo in 2024<sup>79</sup>, it ranks as Türkiye's third-largest port after Aliğa (in İzmir-Aegean coast) and Kocaeli (on the coast of the Marmara Sea). Mersin Port, strategically located on the Mediterranean, is Türkiye's largest export terminal and a key hub for container, ro-ro, and general cargo, with some oil trade. Its capacity, connectivity, and geographic position make it a vital gateway to domestic and international markets. In 2024, it ranked as Türkiye's fifth-largest port by container capacity, handling nearly 1.9 million TEU.<sup>80</sup> Located on the northern shore of the Gulf of İskenderun, the Ceyhan Terminal ranks among Türkiye's largest ports, handling dry bulk and general cargo. Its position on a major Mediterranean transit route offers strong logistical advantages. Most importantly, it serves as the main export terminal of the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline, linking Caspian oil to global markets.<sup>81</sup> In 2024, it handled over 45 million tons of cargo, ranking as Türkiye's fifth-largest port overall<sup>82</sup>.

Considering the Blue Homeland doctrine's goal to protect SLOC, there is a pressing need for Türkiye to establish a shipyard capable of docking and repairing large-tonnage commercial vessels in the Mediterranean and estab-

79 Turkish Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure-UAB, *Yük İstatistikleri 2024*, <https://denizcilikistatistikleri.uab.gov.tr/yuk-istatistikleri-2024>.

80 Container News, *Turkish ports record 13.5 million TEUs in 2024*, February 7, 2025, <https://container-news.com/turkish-ports-record-13-5-million-teus-in-2024/>.

81 The 1,768 km BTC Pipeline transports oil from Azerbaijan and Georgia to Türkiye's Ceyhan terminal on the Mediterranean. To secure this strategic route, deter potential threats, and support NATO's collective maritime security efforts by contributing to the creation of the Recognized Maritime Picture (RMP) and coordinating in areas of common interest such as counterterrorism, irregular migration, energy security, and maritime traffic monitoring, Türkiye launched "Operation Mediterranean Shield," reflecting Mahan's concept of "defensible harbours" under the extent-of-territory factor.

82 Turkish Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure-UAB, 2025, <https://denizcilikistatistikleri.uab.gov.tr/yuk-istatistikleri-2024>.

Göz

Akademik  
Bakış

434

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

lish a naval base in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus<sup>83</sup>. If implemented, these measures would safeguard Northern Cyprus's sovereignty while reinforcing Türkiye's maritime rights and interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, including protection of its merchant fleet. Through bilateral agreements, the UK, France, and the United States maintain access to military installations and air/seaports in the RoC, enabling significant power projection and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operations. These facilities strengthen the U.S.-led offshore balancing strategy in West Asia by providing another critical foothold. To counter Greek claims over the entire island, Turkish Cypriots emphasize the need for a Turkish naval base in Northern Cyprus. Evolving geopolitics in the region<sup>84</sup>, such as the regime-change in Syria, Israel-Palestine conflict, Israel-Iran war—despite the present ceasefire—and Houthi attacks against merchant shipping in the Red Sea, necessitate a fresh re-evaluation of the security paradigm in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant region.

### ***Population and Character of the People***<sup>85</sup>

Mahan argued that the development of a strong navy or merchant fleet requires a society that is broadly attuned to and supportive of maritime affairs. The population's effect on the development of sea power is not as important as it used to be, considering technological developments such as digitization and AI/autonomous systems. However, the pressing need for qualified mariners continues. The growing number of universities and vocational schools throughout Türkiye that offer programs in maritime transportation, logistics/port management, and marine engineering provide the qualified manpower. The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, for instance, has achieved the "Target 2023: One Million Amateur Mariners" project, the objective of training one million amateur sailors, ahead of schedule<sup>86</sup>.

The Turkish-owned merchant fleet reached 52.7 million deadweight tons of capacity in the first half of 2024, rising to eleventh place in the world rankings<sup>87</sup>. Considering that Türkiye's foreign trade is mostly (>80%) conducted overseas, its goal is to be in the world's top ten. Despite having an 8,333 km coastline—nearly three times longer than its land borders—Türkiye has long maintained a land-oriented outlook, though public interest in maritime

83 Cem Gürdeniz, *Mavi Vatan'dan Açık Denizlere—II*.

84 IISS, *Geopolitics: Fragmentation, competition and the persistence of conflict*. In *Turbulence in the Eastern Mediterranean*, 2024, <https://www.iiss.org/publications/strategic-dossiers/geopolitics-fragmentation-competition-and-the-persistence-of-conflict/>.

85 This study examines these two factors together due to their close connection.

86 Adil Karaismailoğlu, Bakan Karaismailoğlu, "2023 yılından önce 1 milyon amatör denizci hedefine ulaşıldı", AA, 2022, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/ekonomi/bakan-karaismailoglu-2023-yilindan-once-1-milyon-amator-denizci-hedefine-ulasildi/2755741>.

87 The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB), 2025, <https://tobb.org.tr/Sayfalar/Eng/Detay.php?rid=31129&Ist=MansetListesi>.

Gazi

Akademik  
Bakış

435

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

affairs is now growing with the rise of the public appeal for the Blue Homeland concept. The public embraced Blue Homeland, which, despite political polarization, evolved into a rare unifying symbol. Interest in the navy expanded markedly, evident in the large crowds drawn to naval ceremonies and port visits throughout the country. Rising maritime awareness is reflected in growing public attention to Eastern Mediterranean tensions and the expansion of Türkiye's navy and defense industry. A survey conducted during the peak of energy disputes showed that "58% of Turkish citizens viewed EEZs as a national security issue, up from just 3.8% in early 2020"—in contrast to the traditionally land-oriented outlook<sup>88</sup>.

### ***Character of the Government***

The most dazzling results in Türkiye's maritime development throughout history occurred under a wise leadership and a government totally attuned to the spirit of the people and aware of its genuine tendencies. History shows that nations achieve greater strength and security when dominant at sea. Governments and institutions must therefore prioritize maritime interests by investing in both the industry and skilled manpower. Maritime governance in Türkiye has seen repeated institutional restructuring, and although Türkiye has long pursued a land-centric security strategy, recent developments highlight a growing emphasis within the government on naval power, maritime trade, and overseas influence.

In the Aegean and Mediterranean, Türkiye contests Greek and EU maritime claims; in the Black Sea, it balances NATO and Russia while safeguarding strategic autonomy; and in Africa, it extends its naval reach through military cooperation and trade partnerships. This assertive maritime posture has enabled Türkiye to project power beyond its borders, though not without diplomatic frictions. To sustain this trajectory and advance the broader goal of becoming a sea power, the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Maritime Affairs would provide unified governance of maritime activities and foster the maritimization of both the state and society.

### **Conclusion**

The study has examined the evolution of Türkiye's maritime interests, naval strategy, and the development of the Blue Homeland concept through the lens of Alfred Thayer Mahan's factors influencing sea power. By assessing Türkiye's strategic trajectory in terms of its fighting fleet, trading fleet, and naval bases, as well as Mahan's six key factors, it is evident that the country has undergone a significant maritime transformation. Türkiye's investments in naval moderniza-

88 Serhat Süha Çubukçuoğlu, *Turkey's Naval Activism: Maritime Geopolitics and the Blue Homeland Concept*, p.47.

Görüş

tion, technological advancements, and maritime infrastructure demonstrate a commitment to solidifying its position as a regional naval power. The expansion of indigenous naval assets reflects strategic aspirations beyond immediate defense needs. The country's growing military outreach, supported by overseas bases, aligns with a broader vision of forward defense and power projection.

Yet, Blue Homeland also reveals shortcomings. Since 2020, Türkiye has tempered its assertiveness, opting for a more conciliatory diplomatic approach in regional and Western relations. While Blue Homeland remains a prominent theme in domestic rhetoric, its role in foreign policy has become more symbolic than coercive. Its lack of formal institutional codification, the absence of a unified maritime authority, and the gap between ambitious rhetoric and practical implementation have constrained its effectiveness. Although Türkiye continues to strengthen its overseas naval presence, its force structure and operational concepts remain largely oriented toward littoral defense, constraining its capacity to project power into distant seas. Moreover, Türkiye's enduring land-centric orientation, economic pressures, and contested regional diplomacy hinder the transformation of naval activism into a comprehensive sea power.

Although current official rhetoric downplays the Blue Homeland doctrine's strategic aspects, such as proactively exploiting offshore gas deposits in the Mediterranean or asserting claims on grey zones in the Aegean Sea, Türkiye's defense industry remains resolute in its quest for self-sufficiency. The country's growing naval capabilities, coupled with its evolving maritime strategy, suggest a trajectory toward becoming a sea power in the future remains firmly in motion. While the tactical backward shift in Blue Homeland activism on the ground reflects pragmatic geopolitical and economic considerations, a resurgence of assertive maritime policy remains a possibility should regional pressures and security threats intensify. Indicators of such a shift would include advancing plans for a naval base in Northern Cyprus, resuming hydrocarbon exploration in the Eastern Mediterranean, and renewed naval activism in the Aegean.

Ultimately, the answer to this study's research questions is clear: Blue Homeland has acted as a catalyst, steering Türkiye toward an enduring naval strategy. From a Mahanian perspective, Blue Homeland has undeniably nudged Türkiye onto the path of becoming a sea power by promoting naval modernization, overseas basing, and protection of maritime trade routes. However, without sustained investment in fleet upgrades, forward bases, and the cultural embrace of the sea across society, Türkiye risks falling short of the comprehensive requirements Mahan outlined. While the doctrine marks a decisive first step, its long-term success depends on whether Türkiye can translate this forward vision into enduring maritime capacity and influence.

*Gazi*

Akademik  
Bakış

437

Cilt 19  
Sayı 38  
Yaz 2026

## References

- ALBRECHT, T., Konstantinos Tsetsos, and Philipp Grunwald “Concept of Sea Power”, in A. M. Sookermany (Ed.), *Handbook of Military Sciences*, Springer International Publishing, 2021, pp. 1–17.
- ALDERMAN, Ray, The worldwide market for unmanned naval vessels—Military Embedded Systems, *Military Embedded Systems*, 2024, <https://militaryembedded.com/unmanned/isr/the-worldwide-market-for-unmanned-naval-vessels>.
- ALGÜR, Betül & Murat Ercan, “Deniz Hâkimiyet Teorisi Kapsamında Doğu Akdeniz ve Kıbrıs Jeopolitiği'nin Türkiye'ye Etkileri”, *Anadolu Akademi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 3, 2021, pp.192–206.
- ALLAN, Westcott, *Mahan on naval warfare: Selections from the writings of Rear Admiral Alfred T. Mahan*, Dover Publications, 1918.
- ARMSTRONG, B. J., *The Shared Genius of Mahan and Corbett, War on the Rocks*, 2021, <https://warontherocks.com/2021/11/the-shared-genius-of-mahan-and-corbett/>.
- ATABEY, Figen, “Cumhuriyet Donanması'nın Oluşum ve Gelişim Süreci (1923-1938)”, *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2023 (59), pp.317–340.
- AYDINLIK, Anaokulundan lise sona MEB'in müfredat taslağını enine boyuna inceliyoruz! Mavi Vatan müfredatta! *Aydınlık*, 2024 <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/haber/anaokulundan-lise-sona-meb-in-mufredat-taslagini-enine-boyuna-inceliyoruz-mavi-vatan-mufredatta-468927>.
- BASTIAN, Jens., Türkiye's rise in defense sector: Filling the gaps in defense industry manufacturing. *AA*, 2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/opinion/opinion-turkiyes-rise-in-defense-sector-filling-the-gaps-in-defense-industry-manufacturing/3478398>.
- BOĞAZIÇI Deniz Kültürü Çevre ve Spor Platformu, & Ercan, Hakan, 2024, October 7, [Video recording]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvSewscxzcl>.
- BRANDS, Hal, The 20th Century's Lessons for Our New Era of War, *Foreign Policy*, 2025, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2025/01/17/hal-brands-eurasian-century-geopolitics-war-us-china-russia-foreign-policy/>.
- CAN, İsmail, “Muavenet Muavenet'i Millîye ve TCG Muavenet “Bir Zaferin ve Bir Hüzünün Hikayesi.” Galeati Yayıncılık, Ankara, 2024.
- ÇELİK, Ömer, Blue Homeland doctrine Turkey's red line: AK Party spokesperson, *Daily Sabah*, 2021, <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/blue-homeland-doctrine-turkeys-red-line-ak-party-spokesperson>.
- CHENG, Dean, China's “Blue Soil”, *War on the Rocks*, 2013, <https://warontherocks.com/2013/08/chinas-blue-soil/>.
- ÇUBUKÇUOĞLU, Serhat Süha, *Turkey's Naval Activism: Maritime Geopolitics and the Blue Homeland Concept* | SpringerLink (1st Edition). Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.
- ÇUBUKÇUOĞLU, Serhat Süha, Maritime Security Aspects of Türkiye-Somalia Defense Cooperation Agreement, *TRENDS Research & Advisory*, 2024, <https://trendsresearch.org/insight/maritime-security-aspects-of-turkiye-somalia-defense-cooperation-agreement/>.
- CONTAINER NEWS, Turkish ports record 13.5 million TEUs in 2024. February 7, 2025, <https://container-news.com/turkish-ports-record-13-5-million-teus-in-2024/>.
- DEHUKAM, Türkiye Deniz Mekânsal Planlaması Haritası erişime açıldı!, 2025, <https://www.dehukam.org/2025/04/16/turkiye-deniz-mekansal-planlamasi-haritasi-erisime-acildi/>.
- EARLE, Mead Edward, (Ed.), *Makers of modern strategy: Military thought from Machiavelli to Hitler* (2<sup>nd</sup> printing). Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1973.
- FELS, Enrico, Jan-Frederik Kremer, Katharina Kronenberg. (Eds.), *Power in the 21st Century: International Security and International Political Economy in a Changing World*, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2012.
- GEORGE Mathew, Katarina Djokic, Zain Hussain, Pieter d. Wezeman & Siemon t. Wezeman, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Trends in International Arms Transfers 2024, [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/fs\\_2503\\_at\\_2024\\_0.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/fs_2503_at_2024_0.pdf), Stockholm, March 2025, pp. 2.
- GROVE, Eric, *The future of sea power*, Routledge, London, 1990.

Görüş

- GROVE, Eric, *Sea Power*, Oxford University Press, online publication, 2017.
- GÜRCAN, Efe Can, A Neo-Mahanian Reading of Turkey and China's Changing Maritime Geopolitics, *Belt and Road Initiative Quarterly (BRIQ)*, 2(1). 2021, <https://briqjournal.com/en/neo-mahanian-reading-turkey-and-chinas-changing-maritime-geopolitics>.
- GÜRDENİZ, Cem, *Hedefteki Donanma*, Kırmızı Kedi Yayınları, İstanbul, 2013.
- GÜRDENİZ, C. (2021, August 17). Interview with Cem Gürdeniz [telephone].
- GÜRDENİZ, Cem, (2025, February 12). Interview with Cem Gürdeniz [telephone].
- GÜRDENİZ, Cem, Mavi Vatan'dan Açık Denizlere-I, *Veryansın TV*. <https://www.veryansintv.com/yazar/cem-gurdeniz/kose-yazisi/mavi-vatandan-acik-denizlere-i>, 2025a.
- GÜRDENİZ, Cem, Mavi Vatan'dan Açık Denizlere—II, *Veryansın TV*. <https://www.veryansintv.com/yazar/cem-gurdeniz/kose-yazisi/mavi-vatandan-acik-denizlere-ii>, 2025b.
- HACAOĞLU, Selcan & Salma El Wardany, Turkey Set for Gas-Exploration Deal After Wooing Ex-Libya Foes, *Bloomberg*, 2025. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-08-21/turkey-set-for-gas-exploration-deal-after-wooing-ex-libya-foes>.
- HALKTV, Türkiye'nin Somali'ye asker çıkarmasının sonuçları ne olacak?, 2024, Türker Ertürk anlattı! [Video recording]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Qp3t4mPhcM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Qp3t4mPhcM).
- HOLMES, James R., & Toshi Yoshihara, The Influence of Mahan upon China's Maritime Strategy, *Comparative Strategy*, 24(1), 2025, pp. 23–51.
- IISS (International Institute for Strategic Studies), Chapter I | Geopolitics: Fragmentation, competition and the persistence of conflict. In *Geopolitics: Fragmentation, Competition and the Persistence Of Conflict*, 2024, <https://www.iiss.org/publications/strategic-dossiers/geopolitics-fragmentation-competition-and-the-persistence-of-conflict/>.
- KADERCAN, B. (2021, December 27). Interview with Dr. Burak Kadercan [Skype].
- KARAIŞMAILOĞLU, Adil, Bakan Karaismailoğlu: 2023 yılından önce 1 milyon amatör denizci hedefine ulaşıldı. AA, 2022, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/ekonomi/bakan-karaismailoglu-2023-yilinden-once-1-milyon-amator-denizci-hedefine-ulasildi/2755741>.
- KASAPOĞLU, C. (2020). Turkey's Burgeoning Defense Technological and Industrial Base and Expeditionary Military Policy. *Insight Turkey*, 22 (Summer 2020), pp. 115–130.
- KOÇPINAR, Ayhan Türker, Deniz Stratejisti: Mahan ve Corbett, in *Askeri Stratejinin Temelleri Kuramcılar* (Eds. Emrah Özdemir, Ali Bilgin Varlık, Kronik Kitap, İstanbul, 2024, pp. 260-287.
- KORAY, Murat, Deniz Ulaştırma İşletme Mühendisliği Açısından AUKUS İttifakının Değerlendirilmesi. In *Küresel Aktörler ve Büyük Güç Rekabeti*. Atlas Akademik Basım Yayım Dağıtım, Ankara, 2023, pp.247-264.
- KOZANHAN, Kaan, 21. Yüzyılda Deniz Kuvvetlerinin Operasyonel Yeteneği, in *Türkiye'nin Deniz Hukuku ve Güvenliği*, Kenan Şahin (Ed.) A. M. Seçkin Hukuk, Ankara, 2023, pp.67-89.
- KUTLUK, Deniz, (2021, July 6). Interview with Dr. Deniz Kutluk [Skype].
- LAMBERT, Andrew, *The British Way of War: Julian Corbett and the Battle for a National Strategy*, Yale University Press, London, 2021.
- MAHAN, Alfred Thayer, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783*. Little Brown, 1890.
- MCCRANIE, Kevin, D., *Mahan, Corbett, and the Foundations of Naval Strategic Thought*. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2021.
- MUFTI, Malik, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009.
- MURPHY, Connor, T., *Modernization of the Turkish Navy: An Examination of Factors and Significance*, *Naval Postgraduate School*, 2020, <http://hdl.handle.net/10945/66114>.
- NAILOR, Peter & David Bolton, The utility of maritime power: Today and tomorrow. *The RUSI Journal*, 131(3), 1986, pp.15–21.
- ÖZBERK, Tayfun, Türkiye's Marlin USV fires KUZGUN missile for the first time, *Naval News*, 2023, <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2023/04/turkiyes-marlin-usv-fires-kuzgun-missile-for-the-first-time/>.

- ÖZEL, M. "Turkish Navy's Move 'Towards Blue Waters': Its Origins, Development, And Implementation", Kadir Has University, Istanbul, 2021 (PhD Dissertation).
- POLAT, Doğan Şafak, The Influence of Sea Power and Turkey's Struggle in The Blue Homeland. In Global Maritime Geopolitics, Transnational Press London, 2022, pp. 325–340.
- POLIVACH, Alexander P. & Pavel A. Gudev, The IMEMO Sea Powers' Rankings 2024. – Moscow: IMEMO, 2024, <https://www.imemo.ru/files/File/ru/publ/2024/SPR-24.pdf>
- RICHARDSON J.M., A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority, USN Chief of Naval Operations, 2018, <https://embed.documentcloud.org/documents/5633091-A-Design-for-Maintaining-Maritime-Superiority/>.
- RUBEL, Robert C., Navies and Economic Prosperity: The New Logic of Sea Power, Corbett Paper No 111. The Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies, King's College London. 2012, <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/dsd/assets/corbettpaper11.pdf>
- SAVUNMASANAYIST, Türk Deniz Kuvvetleri'nden 'Milli Nükleer Denizaltı' sinyali. *SavunmaSanayi*İST, 2024, <https://www.savunmasanayist.com/turk-deniz-kuvvetlerinden-milli-nukleer-denizalti-sinyali/>.
- SHAH, Raj M., & Christopher Kirchoff, Unit X: How the Pentagon and Silicon Valley Are Transforming the Future of War, Scribner, New York, 2024.
- STAVRIDIS, James, Most Dangerous Waters in the World Are in the Mediterranean. *Bloomberg*, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-09-02/greece-turkey-and-oil-raise-fears-of-war-in-the-mediterranean>.
- SYKES, Patrick, Turkey Bets on Homegrown Navy for Edge in High-Seas Power Play, *Bloomberg*, 2025, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-01-24/turkey-bets-on-homegrown-navy-for-edge-in-high-seas-power-play?sref=BtkSCofS>.
- ŞEKER, Burak Şakir, Global Maritime Geopolitics, Transnational Press, London, 2022.
- TAKEDA Jun'ichi, China's Rise as a Maritime Power, *The Opri Center of Island Studies*, 2014, <https://www.spf.org/islandstudies/research/a00011.html>.
- THE MONROE DOCTRINE, 1823, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, 2025, <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/monroe-doctrine-1823>.
- TRENDS Research & Advisory, Mapping Türkiye's Growing Naval Power, 2025, <https://trendsresearch.org/insight/mapping-turkiyes-growing-naval-power/>.
- TRT Haber, Milli Savunma Bakanlığından "TEKNOFEST Mavi Vatan" çağrısı, 2025, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/bilim-teknoloji/milli-savunma-bakanligindan-teknofest-mavi-vatan-cagrisi-917472.html>.
- TÜRKİYE TODAY, Türkiye strengthens geopolitical influence by sending patrol ships to Qatar, *Türkiye Today*, 2024, <https://www.turkiyetoday.com/region/turkiye-strengthens-geopolitical-influence-by-sending-patrol-ships-to-qatar-30855>.
- ÜLGER, İrfan Kaya, Türkiye Mavi Vatanı savunmaya devam ediyor. *AA*, 2020, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/turkiye-mavi-vatani-savunmaya-devam-ediyor/2004480>.
- UYGUN, Ayşe Gülce, La Turquie et la Méditerranée: Une Approche Constructiviste de l'identité. Université Paris I- Panthéon- Sorbonne, 2016, PhD dissertation.
- WANG, Howard, "Chinese Maritime Transformation and Sea Power", Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, Maryland, 2021, PhD dissertation.
- YAPAR, Hakan, From Strategic Depth to Blue Homeland and Beyond: Understanding Turkey's Drift towards Greater Strategic Autonomy, *IEEE (40/2021)*, 2020, [http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs\\_opinion/2021/DIEEEO40\\_2021\\_HAKYAP\\_Turquia\\_E NG.pdf](http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_opinion/2021/DIEEEO40_2021_HAKYAP_Turquia_E NG.pdf).
- YAYLALI, Cem Devrim, A Nuclear Future? Turkish Navy Reveals Ambition for Nuclear-Powered Submarines (Part 1), 2025, <https://devrimyaylali.com/2025/05/01/a-nuclear-future-turkish-navy-reveals-ambition-for-nuclear-powered-submarines-part-1/>

Görüş