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TITLE: Turkey-Spain Relations in the Period Between the Two World Wars (1923-1939)

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PAGES: 606-625

ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2876708>



Türkiye-Spain Relations in the Period Between the Two World Wars (1923-1939)

Melih DUMAN ¹

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Abstract

The period of World War I and World War II is a very important period of time for Turkey and Spain, where the struggle for existence and survival is experienced. The relationship between the states of Türkiye and Spain, which are located at two different ends of the Mediterranean, goes back a long way in terms of historical process. The study dealt with the relations between the Republic of Türkiye and Spain from a political and economic point of view between the years 1923-1939 and tried to analyze how cyclical developments affect bilateral relations. The main question sought to be answered in the study was how the relations of Türkiye and Spain, which lived through the periods of the Kingdom, the Republic and the Civil War from 1923 to 1939, developed politically and economically in all three phases. The study evaluates Türkiye-Spain relations from the perspective of Türkiye with the method of document analysis between the years 1923-1939 and evaluates them from the perspective of Turkish foreign policy. In the study, which was handled in terms of archival sources, official and periodicals and secondary sources of the Republic of Türkiye, the phases of Türkiye-Spain relations between the years 1923-1939, which can be considered as early, were analyzed in terms of Türkiye and evaluated in terms of historical perspective. Due to the originality provided by the first-hand sources used, it is expected that the study will be a source for studies on Turkey-Spain relations and contribute to the literature. Considering the Türkiye-Spain relations between 1923-1939, it was concluded that the will of the two countries to realize bilateral relations was not at the desired level due to the unstable political developments in Spain.

Keywords: Türkiye, Spain, Turkish Foreign Policy, History, Diplomacy

Duman, M. & Çaylı, Ş. (2023). Turkey-Spain Relations in the Period Between the Two World Wars (1923-1939) . Journal of the Human and Social Science Researches , 12 (2) , 606-625 . <https://doi.org/10.15869/itobiad.1230557>

Date of Submission	06.01.2023
Date of Acceptance	30.05.2023
Date of Publication	03.06.2023
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İki Dünya Savaşı Arası Dönemde Türkiye-İspanya İlişkileri (1923-1939)

Melih DUMAN ¹

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Öz

I. Dünya Savaşı ve II. Dünya Savaşı'nın yaşandığı periyod Türkiye ve İspanya için var olma ve ayakta kalabilme mücadelesinin yaşandığı çok önemli bir zaman dilimidir. Akdeniz'in iki ayrı ucunda yer alan Türkiye ve İspanya devletleri arasındaki ilişki, tarihsel süreç açısından oldukça eskiye gitmektedir. Çalışma Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve İspanya devleti arasındaki ilişkileri, 1923-1939 yılları arasında siyasi ve ekonomik açıdan ele almakta, konjonktürel gelişmelerin ikili ilişkileri nasıl etkilediğini analiz etmeye çalışmaktadır. 1923 yılından 1939 yılına kadar Krallık, Cumhuriyet ve İç Savaş dönemlerini yaşayan İspanya'nın Türkiye ile ilişkilerinin siyasi ve ekonomik olarak her üç evrede nasıl bir gelişme gösterdiği çalışmada cevap aranan temel soru olmuştur. Çalışma doküman analizi metoduyla Türkiye'nin bakış açısıyla Türkiye-İspanya ilişkilerini 1923-1939 yılları arasında ele alınarak, Türk dış politikası perspektifiyle değerlendirilmiştir. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti arşiv kaynakları, resmi ve süreli yayınlar ile ikincil kaynaklar açısından ele alınan çalışmada Türkiye – İspanya ilişkilerinin erken sayılabilecek olan 1923-1939 yılları arasındaki safhaları Türkiye açısından ele alınarak tarihsel bir perspektif açısından analiz edilmiştir. Kullanılan birinci elden kaynakların sağladığı özgünlük sebebiyle çalışmanın Türkiye-İspanya ilişkileri hakkında yapılacak çalışmalara kaynaklık etmesi ve literatüre katkı sağlaması beklenmektedir. 1923-1939 yılları arasında Türkiye-İspanya ilişkileri ele alındığında iki ülkenin karşılıklı olarak ikili ilişkileri gerçekleştirmek üzere ortaya koydukları iradenin İspanya'da yaşanan istikrarsız siyasi gelişmeler nedeniyle istenilen seviyede olmadığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, İspanya, Türk Dış Politikası, Tarih, Diplomasi

Duman, M. & Çaylı, Ş. (2023). İki Dünya Savaşı Arası Dönemde Türkiye-İspanya İlişkileri (1923-1939) . İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi , 12 (2) , 606-625 . <https://doi.org/10.15869/itobiad.1230557>

Geliş Tarihi	06.01.2023
Kabul Tarihi	30.05.2023
Yayın Tarihi	03.06.2023
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Introduction

The study dealt with the relations between the Republic of Türkiye and the Kingdom of Spain/Republic of Spain between the years 1923-1939. The study aimed to reveal how the political and economic factors that affected the relations between the two countries contributed to the current relations. While Türkiye-Spain relations were described as "ambiguous" in the literature before the World War II, especially between 1929 and 1936, it was seen that the relations were mainly started after the Cold War. With the 2000s, the relations between the two countries were discussed in a new process on the European Union, the Alliance of Civilizations and the economy. On the other hand, the internal dynamics and problems of both countries hindered the development of relations between the two countries until the 2000s. This situation also affected the studies on Türkiye-Spain relations and caused the studies on the Spanish side to focus more on the developments after the 2000s, apart from the Mediterranean struggle⁵ in the 16th century. The fact that the first translation book from Turkish to Spanish (Carpintero, 2012: 121-144) belongs to 1954 shows that the subject was not adequately addressed in this period. As a matter of fact, the opening of the Türkiye office of the Cervantes Institute, Spain's public diplomacy institution, in 2001 was another indicator (Cajal, 2009: 45-55; Mestres and Lecha, 2006: 117-126; Chislett, 2009: 1-7; Istanbul Cervantes Institute) that revealed the extent of the relations between the two countries. On the other hand, it was seen that more studies were done on the relations between the two countries in Türkiye, however, it was observed that the studies were directed to the Civil War period (1936-1939), apart from the historical Ottoman-Spain struggle (Aladağ, 2011; Sertel, 2015: 271-290; Birlik, 2016: 122-155; Dokuyan ve Sıtkı, 2019: 1186-1915). Apart from these studies, the study written by Eyüp Uyanık (Uyanık, 2006), although dealing with the period between the two world wars, differs from our study because it does not include archival sources.

In this axis, how the political instability in Spain affected Türkiye-Spain relations during the Primo De Rivera lasted between 1923-1931, 1931-1936 Republic, 1936-1939 Civil War periods, and how the relations between the two countries continued in the aforementioned periods were the main issues that were wanted to be raised in the study.

Political developments in Spain between the first world war and the second world war

Spain's economic progress during World War I created some problems for Spain in the long run. Firstly, the increased workforce enabled the rapid strengthening of the labor movement, which was an important element in Spain's political life. The workers' movement, which prioritized the ideas of revolution, launched initiatives targeting the parties representing the 'bourgeois' power, which made a disproportionate development. This strategy, initiated by the workers' movement, also transformed in a short time in the Catalan and Basque regions, where the industry and therefore the working class were concentrated, and led to the strengthening of separatist thoughts.

⁵ Victor Morales Lezcano evaluated that between 1924-1936, historical rivalries such as the example of Lepanto in Spain were left behind and conferences were given and articles were written on issues that concern the two countries. On the other hand, Lezcano still noted that the two countries were dealing with the problems of Spain and Türkiye for this period (1924-1936); Lezcano, "İspanya ve Türkiye", 1991.

Secondly, the industrialists' failure to invest in the modernization of the industry with the urge to maximize their profits during the war prevented Spain from competing with the industrial countries that started production after the war, and the foreign trade deficit, which increased in a short time, added the economic aspect to the political instability (Paz, 1996: 23).

After 1918, the economy was the basis of the events that shaped the political life of Spain (Esenwein, 2007: 68-70). Economic and political problems, which turned Spain into a boiling cauldron, transformed the political life in Spain together with the Moroccan problem. After the Spanish forces, who could not control the region of Morocco left to Spain, were defeated by the Moroccan resistance in 1921 (Hamoun, 1996: 152), the King and the army were held responsible for the defeat, and the Catalonia Army commander Primo De Rivera carried out a coup in 1923 on the pretext of ensuring peace in the country. After the coup, the King of Spain, Alfonso XIII, supported Rivera and demanded the resignation of the government, and the Spanish administration passed under the control of a committee of soldiers (Aladağ: 2011: 24-25).

From 1923 to 1930, Spain remained under the military dictatorship of General Rivera. Taking the example of the Italian leader Mussolini, with whom he had close relations, Rivera wanted to establish a "fascist" order in Spain with the consent of King Alfonso XIII. The attempts of Rivera, who wanted to close the parliament and establish a corporate state system like Italy, could not achieve the desired results (Sandoval and Azcarate, 1969: 11-12). The work of the king to save the monarchy by abolishing the dictatorship was insufficient. The last government appointed by the king after Rivera held municipal elections to save the political situation, but Leftists defended Republicanism and turned the elections into a referendum against the monarchy. The result of the election against the King made the Republicans take to the streets. While the Republic was proclaimed on April 14, 1931 upon the developments, King Alfonso XIII went abroad with his family without abdicating the throne (Sandoval, ve Azcarate: 12; Armaoğlu: 264).

The Popular Front Government granted autonomy to Catalonia and the Basque regions in 1936, which led the rightists to think that this decision would lead to fragmentation of the nation. Both this idea and the activities of the Republicans such as anti-clericalism and social reforms became the target of right-wing movements in a short time. The right movement was called "Nationalists" during the Civil War. Those who had socialist, communist and anarchist views against the nationalists were called Republicans (Lacoste, 2008: 126). With the onset of the Civil War, the Republicans formed a government in Valencia under the leadership of Largo Caballero, while the Nationalists formed a government in Burgos under the leadership of Franco. The civil war soon became a rehearsal war in which the great states were involved in the process before the World War II. While Soviet Russia supported the Republicans, Italy and Germany supported the Nationalist forces. Apart from the Soviet, German and Italian states, England and France were involved in the process, and in Spain during the civil war, they tried to maintain the calm rather than taking sides (Armaoğlu: 265-267). But the aid provided by Germany and Soviet Russia determined the outcome of the civil war (Bookchin, 2014: 252).

The struggle of the Republicans, which started after a while, weakened the Republican front, and facilitated the progress of the Nationalists led by Franco. With the capture of Madrid by the Nationalist forces in the Spring of 1939, the bloody Civil War that lasted from 1936 to 1939 came to an end (Lacoste: 126; Sandoval ve Azcarate: 154). The balance sheet that emerged when the war ended revealed the tragedy of the Spanish Civil War. As a result of the war that lasted for about three years, five hundred thousand houses were destroyed, one hundred eighty-three cities were destroyed, and five hundred thousand people were exiled. In addition to these figures, two million people were sentenced and one million people lost their lives. In the words of Pietro Nenni, only one party, one religion, one chief remained (Nenni, 1973: 226). As a result of his victory, Franco ruled the country until his death (1975), and after Franco's death, the Kingdom dynasty returned and came to power again (Phillips ve Phillips, 2018: 294).

Relations between the two countries from the foundation of the Turkish Republic to the Spanish Civil War

The year 1923 was a year of historical events for Türkiye and Spain, which are at the two ends of the Mediterranean. The National Struggle, which started after the World War I, declared the Republic of Türkiye in 1923 by winning the most important war, the War of Independence. At the same time, there was a political change in Spain and the administration changed with the coup led by General Primo de Rivera in 1923. Relations between Spain and Türkiye started before the proclamation of the Republic. Spain was among the states participating in the Lausanne Conference and made the first contact with the Ankara Government (Şimşir, 1990: 108). In Lausanne, the Spanish delegates took part in the "subcommittee to determine the legal situation that foreign persons will have" established on capitulation, together with Sweden, Norway and Denmark (Şimşir, 1990: 182). Another issue that Spain was involved in during the Lausanne negotiations was the Mediterranean issue (Şimşir, 1994: 614). The fact that Spain was excluded from World War I and the number of common points in bilateral relations was not high quantitatively prevented the Spanish from being more involved in the process during the Lausanne Conference.

The representation of Turkey in Spain started with the appointment of Vasıf Ahmed Efendi in Madrid in 1787 with the rank of Ambassador. The first Ambassador of Spain to Turkey was Bouigny Juan, who took office in 1779. The Madrid Embassy, which started with Vasıf Ahmed Efendi, lasted until the closure of the Embassy (October 31, 1922) - upon the abolition of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - during the duty of Ragıp Raif [Köseraif] Bey. However, this closure was short-lived and the Embassy was reactivated after Charge d'affaires Mekin Mukbil Bey took office on April 28, 1923. Metin Mukbil, the first Spanish representative of Turkey, remained in office until February 11, 1925. The first ambassador appointed by Turkey in Spain started to work in 1929. In the process after Yahya Kemal [Beyatlı]⁶ (Presidential Republic Archive, Department of Decisions, 1-14-39 / 107-47 6 Şubat 1929; BCA, Department of Decisions, 3-30-13 / 423-2, May 15, 1929), who was appointed as the Ambassador to Madrid in 1929, it was seen that charge d'affaires were appointed in some periods and ambassadors in other periods. The first ambassador of Spain to the Republic of Turkey

⁶ Yahya Kemal [Beyatlı] Bey was given the duty of the Portuguese Ambassador in addition to his duty as the Spanish Ambassador

was Don Juan Servert. The Spanish Ambassador, who presented his credentials on July 3, 1925, continued his duty until 1939. The Governments of Turkey and Spain raised their Embassies to the level of embassy only in 1951 (Aral, 1968: 878-882; Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 469-471).

When we look at the relations after Lausanne, it is seen that the first contact between Türkiye and Spain started with the congratulations of General Primo de Rivera. In the letter sent by Madrid Charge d'affaires Mukbil Bey on October 5, 1923, Rivera congratulated the Speaker of the Parliament and the Commander of the Turkish Arms, Gazi Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk], for the unprecedented heroic success of a weak and endangered Türkiye, and offered his condolences. Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk], on the other hand, thanked General Rivera through the Madrid Charge d'affaires on October 28 (Şimşir, 2001:3).

After the indirect communication between Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk] and General Rivera, the Friendship Treaty was signed between the two countries on September 28, 1924. The treaty signed in Ankara entered into force on April 23, 1925, after being ratified by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. The treaty, signed to cooperate on the basis of friendship, aimed to contribute to the happiness and welfare of the states (Resmi Ceride, 23 Nisan 1925: 111; BCA, Department of Decisions, 13-21-17). The Treaty of Friendship, signed in 1924, remained in force between the states of Türkiye and Spain until 1959. Despite the political changes between the two countries from 1924 to 1959, the current treaty maintained its existence (Uyanık, 2006: 21-22).

The first correspondence between the heads of states, King of Spain Alfonso XIII and Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk], was again through Mekin Mukbil. Mukbil Bey, who was invited by the King of Spain before leaving Madrid, met with King Alfonso XIII during his visit. Praising the Turkish army during the meeting, the King sent his greetings to Gazi Mustafa Kemal (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-2 / 423). After Mukbil Bey's meeting, Ankara was informed of the situation, and upon the request of President Mustafa Kemal, in March 1925, through the Madrid Charge d'affaires, Alfonso XIII, the King of Spain, was thanked for his wishes along with the greetings of Gazi Mustafa Kemal (Şimşir, 2001: 5). The next message between the King of Spain and Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk] was provided by a message sent by King Alfonso XIII on 8 May 1925. Mentioning Türkiye as a friend in his message, King of Spain Alfonso XIII stated that Don Juan Servert y Vest, whose personal qualities he praised, was deemed suitable to be Spain's ambassador to Türkiye and mentioned Servert's contribution to Türkiye-Spain relations. After the message from Alfonso XIII, it was seen that Servert took office as the Spanish Ambassador (Şimşir, 2001: 5-7).

After the crisis in June 1926 due to the customs issue, it was decided to make a temporary agreement until a trade agreement with Spain was made in August. After the temporary trade agreement was signed in 1927, the agreement was extended continuously. For the first time in 1927, it was decided to extend the provisions of the agreement for another six months (Cumhuriyet Arşivi, Department of Decisions, 20-54-10; BCA, Department of Decisions, 25-40-7). In the period following 1927, while the agreement was extended again in 1928 (BCA, Department of Decisions, 29-41-13; BCA, Department of Decisions, 1-10-17), instead of renewing the commercial agreement, which was temporary in 1929, studies were started to conclude a *modus operandi* by

negotiating with Spain (BCA, Department of Decisions, 4-31-4; Resmi Gazete, 17 Temmuz 1929, Issue: 1244: 7948). When we came to 1930, the two countries, which were not geographically bordered, took a new step to develop relations and signed and put into effect the "Reconciliation, Judicial Leveling and Arbitration Agreement" on April 28, 1930 (Resmi Gazete, 5 Temmuz 1930, Issue: 1537: 9193-9195; BCA, Department of Decisions, 10-21-13).

When we came to 1931, the newly established Republic administration in Spain came into action in Ankara to be recognized, and as a result of this initiative, it was reported that Türkiye recognized the new administration with the note sent to the Madrid Embassy. In the information note sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after mentioning the friendship between the Turkish and Spanish nations and the agreements made, the information was shared that "republican and nationalist Türkiye allowed to recognize the republican regime and government that was accepted and approved by the Spanish nation" (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-8 / 423). It is understood that Türkiye was clearly pleased with the establishment of a republican administration in Spain, as can be seen in the affidavit. It was found positive that Spain, which took the Italian dictatorship regime, which took steps that could be considered negative for Türkiye, as an example, switched to a system similar to the regime preferred by Türkiye after the recent developments.

It was observed that the internal tensions experienced after the establishment of the republican administration in Spain did not cover an intense area in Türkiye-Spain relations. Considering the Mediterranean and Balkan developments, mostly Italy-centered, as a priority foreign policy issue between 1932-1936, Türkiye's domestic issues were evaluated as a secondary issue. Despite these, attention was paid to the reports of the Madrid Embassy regarding the events that took place in Spain. In this direction, the rebellions against the republic in the cities of Madrid and Sevilla in 1932 were quite remarkable. In the Embassy report evaluating the rebellion, it was stated that General Sanjurjo (Madrid) and General Fernandez Perez (Sevilla) were at the head of the rebellion movement carried out by high-ranking officers in the army and that both soldiers rebelled with the claims that the current government gave rise to all kinds of abuses and that socialist principles drove Spain into bankruptcy. The report also included the claim that the rebels were not enemies of the republic, but were against socialism. Evaluating the revolt, which ended in a short time, the Embassy officials determined that although the public was not satisfied with the internal policy of the current government and especially its attitude towards the Catalonia issue, they did not support the revolt in order to preserve the republic they saw in danger. Furthermore, the fact that the public was not on the side of the rebels was accepted as evidence that the republican regime had settled (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-10 / 423).

Although the internal tension in Spain was not an area that Türkiye gave priority to, Türkiye-Spain relations gained an important position in the diplomatic field in 1932, freed from these developments. Türkiye's becoming a member of the League of Nations (LN) on July 18, 1932 was realized with the invitation of the Spanish representative M. Madariagaya and the support of the relevant countries (Dışişleri Bakanlığı Araştırma ve Siyaset Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü, 1974: 291-292). Although Türkiye's membership in the League of Nations was realized as a result of the desire to preserve the status quo in

the face of rising anti-revisionism in Europe and to act together with the world states in the face of international issues, ensuring Türkiye's membership with a Spanish offer was a very important initiative for Türkiye-Spain relations (Alantar, 1994: 62).

Until the Civil War, the main issues in Türkiye's relations with Spain generally tended in two directions. First of all, Türkiye, which gave importance to commercial relations, took action to make a new trade agreement with Spain in accordance with the economic conditions in this period and assigned the Madrid Embassy to this task (BCA, Department of Decisions, 53-21-20). The second point that Türkiye attached importance to was whether Spain, after Italy, will pose a threat in the Mediterranean. After Adolf Hitler became prime minister in Germany, what kind of effect he had in Europe would gain in Spain was an important issue for Türkiye. Accordingly, in the report prepared by Türkiye's Spanish Ambassador Tevfik Kamil Koperler on February 12, 1935, it was emphasized that the Spanish government had allocated "extraordinary allocations" for land and naval forces. Explaining in detail in his report how much money was allocated for land and naval armament and the types of weapons to be purchased with this money, Tevfik Kamil Bey also mentioned Spain's fortifications in the Mediterranean. Tevfik Kamil Bey stated that he could not see a fundamental reason for the financial burden he had incurred in the face of Spain's expenses exceeding its budget. Tevfik Kamil Bey, who stated that in the statements made by the official authorities, the allegations that the expense was made due to France in the Moroccan issue and the British in the case of Gibraltar, stated that the "extraordinary allocation", which was already or imagined, was too much for a danger. For this reason, Tevfik Kamil Bey stated that Spain's financial sacrifice could be explained "at best" by the arms race and the Mediterranean policies arising from the Franco-Italian agreement (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-12 / 423).

A second report was prepared by Tevfik Kamil Koperler on the developments that took place shortly after the report on the armament of Spain. In the second report, it was stated that the attempts to reinforce Spain's armed force were not sufficient, and thereupon, Spain took action to increase its naval forces around the national defense program. It was seen that Koperler made a detailed inventory of the weapons to be reinforced. According to Koperler, -with the realization of the planned constructions- apart from the new weapons investments to be made, the decision to build secondary naval bases in Santander, Vigo, Ceuta, Huelva and the Canary Islands in addition to the Ferrol, Cadix, Carthagane and Mahen naval bases in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean will cause the Spanish navy to become a secondary force in the Mediterranean. This shows that this situation became a source of concern in terms of Mediterranean security for Türkiye (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 221-491-23 / 400-3).

Another importance of Spain for Türkiye stemmed from its commercial relations. Türkiye-Spain trade balance, which did not show regular progress, remained in a negative position for a long time, to the detriment of Türkiye. The economic crisis that spread around the world was effective in the occurrence of this situation. After the Great Depression in 1929, the world export-import ratio decreased continuously from 1929 to 1934, and although it increased after 1932-1933, it decreased again in 1937. Türkiye, on the other hand, experienced serious decreases in foreign trade in the period of 1929-1938 (Kaya, 1940: 5-9). The economic change Türkiye experienced inevitably

made itself felt in Türkiye-Spain trade relations. In this direction, a clearing agreement was signed in 1935 in order to restrain the economic impact of the Great Depression on the relations between the two countries (Resmi Gazete, 7 Mayıs 1936, Issue: 3297: 6416; Resmi Gazete, May 25, 1936, Issue: 3312: 6485-6494.).

When the export and import figures in 1923 are analyzed -with the effect of the conditions- it is seen that Türkiye exported 2 tons against 25 tons of imports from Spain. While Türkiye paid 13,489 liras for the goods it imported, it provided 1,428 liras for exports. Foreign trade, which gave a current account deficit of 12,361 lira in 1923, had a deficit in 1924 despite the increase in exports in terms of tonnage and the trade balance was realized as -64.937 liras. While the foreign trade balance decreased to -33,478 liras for Türkiye in 1925, Türkiye's trade with Spain turned in favor for the first time in 1926. The foreign trade figure, which was recorded as 41,317 liras in 1926, turned negative again in 1927 and 1929. It was observed that Türkiye's trade with Spain moved to a positive position since 1930. The foreign trade balance, which lost value -2.798 991 liras- in 1934 compared to the previous year, still yielded a surplus of 598,569 liras. However, in 1935, Türkiye-Spain foreign trade turned in favor of Spain and was recorded as - 116.623 liras for Türkiye (Aykut, 1944: 211). In the last days of 1935, the Trade and Clearing Agreement between the two countries was signed in Madrid and entered into force (Resmi Gazete, 7 Mayıs 1936, Issue: 3297: 6416; Resmi Gazete, May 25, 1936, Issue: 3312: 6485-6494.). Thanks to the Trade and Clearing Agreement, it was aimed to further develop the trade between the two countries by accepting that the countries would use their own currencies instead of the foreign currency used in the trade between the states of Türkiye and Spain.

Turkish foreign policy in the Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War, one of the most striking civil wars in modern world history, turned into a rehearsal war in which the world states were involved before the World War II. Italy, Germany and the USSR were among the leading states involved during the Civil War. The clashes between the two groups called the Nationalists and the Republicans/Popular Front in the Spanish Civil War, which lasted between 17 July 1936 and 1 April 1939, resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of civilians and the disappearance or exile of hundreds of thousands (Gökşenli, 2013: 146). The Civil War, which had disastrous results for the Spanish people, turned Spain into a battlefield before the start of the World War II, causing the Spanish to experience the war beforehand. The fact that the war was a humanitarian situation caused the world public opinion to turn to Spain. In this direction, the world's leading writers and artists came to Spain during the Civil War and took sides. Among these names, names such as George Orwell, Arthur Koestler, André Malraux personally participated in the war. Names such as Ernest Hemingway and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry were in Spain on the same dates as journalists or observers (Şenyıldız, 2017: 152).

The participation of many writers, journalists and artists, especially the aforementioned names, in the Spanish Civil War prevented the world public from being indifferent to the process. Türkiye was also closely interested in the developments during the Civil War. In this direction, the reflections of the Spanish Civil War in Türkiye showed themselves mostly in the press (Dokuyan ve Karabulut, 2019: 1889). While the press was

closely involved with the issue at the public level⁷, Türkiye discussed the developments in Spain at a time when the world was dragged into war in terms of Türkiye's Mediterranean policy. Because before the start of the Civil War, Spain's attempts to gain a fortified position in the Mediterranean had attracted the attention of Türkiye. After the start of the Civil War, Türkiye acted in accordance with international resolutions. With the decision taken on September 1, 1936, with the proposal of France, it was accepted not to send war materials directly or in transit to Spain. In line with the decision taken in Türkiye, it was decided not to send weapons, ammunition, war equipment and ready or demounted warships to the region in Spain and the Spanish colony in Morocco. The main reason for Türkiye to accept this offer made by France was that the "revolution" in Spain was of a nature to threaten the peace in Europe and the law was accepted by many countries (BCA, Department of Decisions, 68-73-2 1: 1936; BCA, Department of Decisions, 236-593-13: 1936).

It was seen that the decision taken against Spain caused problems in terms of Türkiye-USSR relations due to the Straits. In a telegram sent from İstanbul to the Daily Telegraph, it was reported that there were open cannons on the ship's deck among the grain carried to Spain by a Soviet ship passing through the Straits. At a time when the European press focused on the Civil War, this situation became a serious problem for Türkiye. Zeki Apaydın, Türkiye's Ambassador to Moscow, talked about the news in the newspaper in his speech with Maksim Litvinov and talked about the possibility of a conflict between Italy-Germany and the USSR in the Spanish issue. Litvinov said, *"Will they fight, it's not easy, should we value their bluffs and leave the party to them ... They are freely helping the Franco Government. As for us, no, how does something like that happen"* and declared that they would not hesitate to support their allies in Spain (Dışişleri Bakanlığı Araştırma ve Siyaset Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü: 145). Although Apaydın made this meeting after the signing of the Montreux Convention, Türkiye took strict measures regarding the passage of USSR ships in order to prevent Soviet Russia from bringing aid to Spain before Montreux. According to Lecze, Türkiye's stance, which was on the alert in those confused situations, enabled him to gain support in Montreux (Lezcano, 1991: 219).

It was seen that the Civil War damaged the relations between Türkiye and Spain since the beginning. The first loss recorded in this direction was experienced in bilateral trade. Those who exported eggs from Türkiye to Spain could not collect their receivables and could not receive their payments due to the turmoil in Spain. Upon the developments in trade, Türkiye stepped in to provide the payments in accordance with the clearing agreement in order to compensate the losses of the exporters (BCA, Department of Decisions, 68-77-16 / 432-6: 1936).

As the Civil War gained momentum, there was an increase in the number of reports sent to Ankara. In this respect, the report from the Consulate General of Barcelona, which analyzes the developments in Catalonia, draws attention. In the report, an answer was sought to the question of why the Spanish government could not achieve

⁷ While the start of the civil war in Spain was featured in the newspapers as a more striking development, the end of the war did not receive enough response due to international tension; Cumhuriyet, July 19, 1936, p. 1; Tan, July 19, 1936, p. 1; Ulus, July 20, 1936, p. 1; Cumhuriyet, April 3, 1939, p. 3; Tan, April 3, 1939, p. 3; Ulus, April 3, 1939, p. 1.

success over the Nationalists, and information was given about the government that resigned after failure. The report, which determined that there was no unity within the Popular Front, stated that their fate seemed doubtful only if they continued to stay on the axis of "antifascism". While talking about the situation in Barcelona, Barcelona Consul General Fuad Carım could not help himself from comparing Barcelona with the Anatolian War of Independence, in the face of his economic, technical and vehicle breadth (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-13 / 423: 1936). The second noteworthy report on the Civil War came from Madrid Ambassador Tevfik Kamil Koperler. The Koperlers reported the establishment of an autonomous administration in the Basque region of Spain. According to Koperler, despite the declaration of autonomy in Basque, the new administration would be ended by the soldiers "before the administration has time to settle down" and it would be Catalonia's turn (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-16 / 423: 1936).

For Türkiye, the Spanish Civil War was a year recorded in 1937 in terms of all developments. Madrid Embassy, Barcelona Consulate General examined the events in terms of internal and external developments in Spain and quickly shared every development with Ankara (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-34 / 423: 1937). Throughout this whole process, Türkiye continued to stay out of the process by participating in the prohibitions related to the Civil War. After Türkiye agreed with other countries not to send weapons, a decision was taken in 1937 to prevent those who would go to Spain as volunteer soldiers. The decision was implemented in line with the decisions of the Control Committee for Non-Intervention in Spanish Affairs. The fact that the laws of the Republic of Türkiye also contained sanctions for foreign states to enter military service unless the government's permission was obtained, facilitated the decision. Accordingly, it was declared that enlisting in the military for this purpose, regardless of local or foreign, was prohibited, since it was not permissible for the citizens of the Republic of Türkiye to participate in the war in Spain in order not to help any side. It was also stated that if the law was violated, penal sanctions would be applied. At the same time, it was decreed that the decision taken by the Council of Ministers be notified to the Control Committee for Non-Intervention in Spanish Affairs (BCA, Department of Decisions, 72-14-10: 1937). In June, in line with the decision taken in March by the Decentralized Intervention Control Committee in Spanish Affairs, it was decided that Turkish ships going to Spain should be subject to inspection procedures like the ships of other states (BCA, Department of Decisions, 75-49-5 / 432: 1937; Resmi Gazete, June 10, 1937, Issue:3627 : 8260-8262.).

After the start of the Spanish Civil War, Türkiye tried to prevent the problem from getting worse by handling the process in terms of human rights. Decisions taken, such as preventing the sending of weapons and volunteers, showed that Türkiye wanted to support the anti-war movement. While the ban decisions served this purpose, Türkiye also took action to help the victims of the war despite the economic difficulties. The Red Cross requested assistance from Türkiye in order to assist the victims of the war, and the Government referred the matter to the Red Crescent. Upon the Red Crescent's statement that it could not help due to financial reasons, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stepped in before the Prime Ministry and warned that even a little help should be given to Spain, taking into account the interest shown by the Government of the Republic in the humanitarian aspects of Spanish affairs since the beginning of this scourge [Civil

War] (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-38 / 423: 1937). The request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide aid "even if it is little" was an important piece of evidence showing Türkiye's attitude towards Spain, but it was not the first time. Because, in the last days of 1936, Türkiye's Spanish Ambassador Tevfik Kamil Koperler thanked Prime Minister İsmet İnönü for providing the "opportunity to continue with the subsistence of refugees" in the report sent to Prime Minister İsmet İnönü. Koperler took care of the Spanish who took refuge in the Turkish Embassy in 1936 and provided their needs. In the face of financial difficulties, they contacted Prime Minister İnönü directly and asked for and received support. It was seen that Koperler left the hierarchical structure behind in order not to cut the food of the refugees for a humanitarian purpose (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 129-926-14 / 107: 1936).

In Spain, where serious human rights violations were experienced during the Civil War, action was taken to transfer them to Türkiye for better living conditions, apart from providing shelter and subsistence only to the refugees who took refuge in it. At the end of April 1937, it was seen that Karadeniz ship was prepared to be in Valencia. From the preparations made, the journey was planned to take about 15 days (BCA, Department of Decisions, 74-34-17: 1937; BCA, Department of Decisions, 79-86-20 / 109-110: 1937). As soon as the refugees came to Türkiye, it was decided that they should stay in Istanbul and that their food be provided by the Red Crescent (BCA, Department of Decisions, 75-41-12: 1937). On 23 May, 192 refugees, who took Karadeniz ship and took refuge in the Turkish Embassy in Madrid, set out for Istanbul. But when the refugees arrived in Syracuse Port [Sicily], they 'escaped the ship and went ashore'. Refugees, who wrote a letter shortly after they landed, signed the letter and sent it to the Turkish authorities. Spanish refugees, who spoke highly of Tevfik Kamil Koperler, expressed their gratitude to Türkiye, which did not leave them alone in difficult times. Stating that they landed despite all the efforts of the ship's personnel, the Spanish refugees expressed that they signed the text to show their unwavering gratitude and their deep feelings of loyalty to the Turkish nation (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 236-593-40 / 423: 1937).

Türkiye, which took part in all kinds of legal processes to end the war in Spain and did not hesitate for a moment to fulfill its humanitarian requirements, especially avoided taking sides during the Civil War. The distribution of the propaganda instruments related to the Civil War that reached Türkiye within the country was prevented. In this direction, in 1937, the content of the brochure, "Lettre Collectives des Evêques Espagnols", prepared by the Spanish clergy, was banned by the decision of the Council of Ministers. The brochure, which contained the collective opinion of the Spanish clergy, was among the initiatives that showed how sensitive Türkiye was to the developments (BCA, Department of Decisions, 79-83-14 / 86-287: 1937).

The developments in Spain also affected Türkiye's relations with England. The possibility of an undesirable intervention, such as the inspection by General Franco forces of the ships that will transport the planes that Türkiye bought from England during this period, while passing through the territorial waters of Spain, disturbed Türkiye. Seeing the issue within the framework of sovereign rights, Türkiye made an attempt at the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the London Embassy. As a result of the initiatives, the UK was asked to provide protection while the ships carrying the planes were passing through Spain, and the UK made the necessary arrangements

for the ships to pass through Spain without any problems, in line with the request (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 59-399-6 / 61: 1937).

Despite all Türkiye's attempts against Spain, it was seen that the Civil War damaged Türkiye-Spain relations. Especially since the first day of the conflict, the trade relations between the two countries were at the top of the issues that were most affected by the developments. The agreement was annulled by Türkiye due to the fact that the "complex situation in Spain" harmed Türkiye-Spain trade and therefore the Trade and Clearing Agreement between the two countries, which entered into force in 1936, was not respected (BCA, Department of Decisions, 79-83-2 / 432-7: 1937). After the announcement of the decision not to implement the Trade and Clearing Agreement after 31 December 1937, it was decided to pay the unrealized payments that had to be made in return for the trade made by Turkish exporters from the Türkiye-Spain Clearing Account of the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye (BCA, Department of Decisions, 83-34-19 / 423-8: 1938; Resmi Gazete, May 9, 1938, Issue: 3902: 9809). The chaotic situation in the economic relations between Türkiye and Spain in the shadow of the Civil War necessitated the issue to be handled by Türkiye in July 1938. Nebil Batu was authorized to sign trade and clearing agreements with *modus vivendi*, which was determined to shape the current situation until the commercial relations between Türkiye and the Spanish Republic were finalized. Shortly after Batu's authorization, the treaty was ratified by the Council of Ministers (BCA, Department of Decisions, 84-62-3 / 423-9: 1938; BCA, Department of Decisions, 84-66-3 / 433-10: 1938).

In the report written by Madrid Ambassador Koperler on October 20, 1938, he noted that the public was tired because of the war, and stated that the economic and financial situation was very dire. Noting that despite agricultural activities, the people were experiencing food shortages, Koperler underlined that the people who were not suitable for fighting or who did not work for war equipment did not receive any help as per the government's policy, and therefore they were "fractured by hunger, misery and disease". Sharing his conviction that the war would last until the last man, the Ambassador stated that the end of the war was not easy (BCA, 30-10-0-0 / 236-593-45 File Appendix: 423 (General Directorate of Transactions, 20.10.1938). It soon became clear that the Koperlers were right, and the Popular Front/Republicans decided to continue the struggle despite all the internal and external support they lost as 1938 ended. Even when the USSR officially cut its support in September, it could not prevent the conflicts from continuing until the spring of 1939. While the Nationalist forces under the leadership of Franco entered Madrid in March 1939, the process did not end, the trial period started in the Civil War and the trials continued until 1943 (Phillips ve Phillips, 2018: 274-275).

After the Franco forces dominated the country, it was seen that Türkiye-Spain relations gave signs of coming out of the interregnum period. On April 5, 1939, Foreign Minister Şükrü Saracoğlu stated that in the affidavit he sent to the Prime Ministry, it was officially announced that the "National Spanish Government" had decided to appoint first-class ambassador Carlos Lopez Doriga to Ankara, and an aggregate was requested. Doriga, who started to work shortly after, continued his duty until 1940 when he was appointed (BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 131-939-5 / 114: 1939; BCA, General Directorate of Transactions, 131-939-20 / 114: 1940). Sending an ambassador to Türkiye right after the end of the war in Spain was an important detail that showed the

importance Spain gave to Türkiye. Türkiye, on the other hand, sent the Tirana Ambassador Fuat Tugay to Madrid on August 1, 1939, and implemented diplomatic reciprocity in order to contribute to the relations between Spain and Türkiye (BCA, Department of Decisions, 88-76-11/ 71-439: 1939).

Conclusion

Although Türkiye-Spain relations go back a long way in the historical process, the fact that the two countries does not share a common past and a common geography outside the Mediterranean affected the relations of the states established at the two ends of the Mediterranean with each other. The relations that developed on the basis of the Mediterranean became official during the Ottoman Empire and political relations began between the two states. The growth of the two states in their geography inevitably led them to come face to face with the claim of sovereignty in the Mediterranean at a middle point. However, the fact that states such as England and France began to lag behind in the 17th century brought about a decrease in Turkish-Spanish relations. Although it was aimed to develop relations with Spain, centered on the Mediterranean and North Africa, during the reign of Abdulhamid II, it was seen that this project could not be put into practice. After the World War I, it was observed that the relations between Spain and Türkiye were handled and developed with a different approach.

Spain showed closeness to Ankara during the National Struggle, and during the Lausanne negotiations, it participated in the Conference and made the first contact with the Ankara Government. After Lausanne, General Primo de Rivera, who seized power in Spain, congratulated Gazi Mustafa Kemal, and a positive opinion was formed about the two relations. As a matter of fact, the year 1923, which marked an important breaking moment in the history of the two states, was a milestone for the development of relations between Spain and Türkiye. Shortly after the first contact, diplomatic representatives were appointed mutually, and the Treaty of Friendship was signed on September 28, 1924. Türkiye-Spain relations, which can be evaluated in two parts, were a period in which institutionalization was tried to be ensured from 1923 to 1931. The second period was also the period of 1931-1939, when the initiatives made in the first period were damaged due to the civil war and conflicts in Spain.

Karadeniz Ferry, which went on a trip to Europe in 1926, stopped by Barcelona, which was the first and important step Türkiye took to improve relations with Spain. The commercial problems experienced during Karadeniz Ferry's visit resulted in the conclusion of a trade agreement between Türkiye and Spain, the lack of which was felt seriously. Between 1923 and 1931, Türkiye signed many agreements with Spain, such as Modus, Trade, and Tediye, in order to institutionalize bilateral relations. Despite the mutual steps taken by Türkiye and Spain, the chaos caused by the political turmoil in Spain since the beginning of the 20th century and the 1929 Economic Depression prevented Türkiye from developing the relations it wanted. In 1931, while the republic administration was established in Spain instead of the kingdom, the increasing political tension during the republic period brought Spain to the Civil War, where inevitable developments took place. Türkiye positively welcomed the proclamation of the republic in Spain during the turmoil before the Civil War. The proclamation of the republic in Spain was a very positive development for Türkiye, which was ruled by a republic, at a time when totalitarianism gained momentum in Europe. In addition to this, Türkiye

also found it positive in terms of Mediterranean developments to abandon the "fascist Spain" system, where Italy, where it had problems in its foreign policy, was taken as an example in terms of administration and politics.

The change experienced by Spain did not bring about a significant change in Türkiye-Spain relations. The main factor in this situation was that Türkiye-Spain relations were not a priority foreign policy issue for both countries. On the other hand, foreign trade was brought to the fore in order to improve bilateral relations. Foreign trade, which developed against Türkiye, turned in favor of Türkiye for a short time as of the 1930s. During this period, the Mediterranean was another issue that affected Türkiye-Spain relations apart from trade. Turkish officials, who evaluated the developments after Rivera in Spain as positive, found Spain's attempt to make a breakthrough in the military field, especially in the sea, by being under serious financial burden, at a time when the world was dragged into a new war. The emergence of Spain as a threat in the Mediterranean after Italy was alarming in terms of Türkiye's security policies.

In 1935, a very important step in terms of Spanish-Turkish relations was taken and the Trade and Clearing Agreement was signed. However, the Civil War, which started shortly after, affected Türkiye-Spain trade and caused the treaty to be terminated. During the Civil War, Türkiye took part in international initiatives to limit the impact of the war and stood against attempts such as sending weapons, ammunition and volunteer soldiers to Spain. Türkiye did not remain indifferent to the humanitarian situation in Spain. Türkiye, which sheltered and cared for those who took refuge in the Madrid Embassy during the Civil War, mobilized all kinds of financial means for the refugees to live in Istanbul.

At a time when the footsteps of the war were heard in Europe, Türkiye evaluated all kinds of developments in order to analyze the nature of its relations, which fell apart during the Civil War. It was seen that Türkiye-Spain relations, which were damaged after the Franco forces won and ended the Civil War, started to recover. The fact that the Franco administration appointed a person who was important to Türkiye as an ambassador in a short time and Türkiye's response to this diplomatic initiative showed that relations started to normalize again after the Civil War. While Türkiye-Spain relations, which can be analyzed in two periods, took the first steps towards institutionalization in the first period, the political developments after 1931 and the resulting Civil War negatively affected the relations between Türkiye and Spain, and the bilateral relations that gained momentum almost reversed and regressed. Considering the Türkiye-Spain relations between 1923-1939, it was seen that the will of the two countries to realize bilateral relations was not at the desired level due to the unstable political developments in Spain.

The relations between the two countries, which were good between the two world wars, continued to improve during and after the Cold War. Spain's accession to NATO and the EU in the 1980s further improved Turkey-Spain relations. Projects such as the Alliance of Civilizations initiated by the joint initiative of the two countries, and the Turkey-Spain Intergovernmental Summit meetings have taken Turkey-Spain relations to the next level. Spain, which can be considered an important partner of Turkey in the political and economic field in Europe, is a country that Turkey attaches importance to in political, economic and military matters. In this context, Turkey-Spain relations will

continue to maintain their importance in the near future with the steps to be taken in the cultural, political and economic fields.

Peer-Review	Double anonymized - Two External
Ethical Statement	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.
Plagiarism Checks	Yes - Ithenticate
Conflicts of Interest	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare.
Complaints	itobiad@itobiad.com
Grant Support	The author(s) acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research.
Author Contributions	Design of Study: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50) Data Acquisition: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50) Data Analysis: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50) Writing up: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50) Submission and Revision: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50)

Değerlendirme	İki Dış Hakem / Çift Taraflı Körleme
Etik Beyan	Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.
Benzerlik Taraması	Yapıldı - Ithenticate
Etik Bildirim	itobiad@itobiad.com
Çıkar Çatışması	Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.
Finansman	Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.
Yazar Katkıları	Çalışmanın Tasarlanması: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50) Veri Toplanması: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50) Veri Analizi: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50) Makalenin Yazımı: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50) Makale Gönderimi ve Revizyonu: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50)

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IV. Periodicals

Cumhuriyet
Resmi Ceride
Resmi Gazete
Tan
Ulus