

= Greek ironclad Hydra =

Hydra (Greek : ?????) was an ironclad warship of the Greek Navy , named for Hydra , one of the Saronic Gulf islands which played a key role in the war at sea during the Greek War of Independence . The lead ship of her class of ironclads , she was ordered in 1885 in response to a crisis in the Balkans and Ottoman naval expansion . The ship was launched in 1889 and delivered to Greece by 1892 . She was armed with a main battery of three 10 @. @ 8 in (270 mm) guns and five 5 @. @ 9 in (150 mm) guns , and had a top speed of 17 kn (31 km / h ; 20 mph) .

Hydra and her sisters saw heavy service with the Greek Navy . They participated in the Greco ? Turkish War in 1897 until the Great Powers intervened and prevented the Greek Navy from capitalizing on their superiority over the Ottoman Navy . Hydra saw action in the First Balkan War at the Naval Battle of Elli and was present at the Naval Battle of Lemnos , but was too slow to actively engage the Ottoman forces . She did not see action during World War I , and was reduced to a gunnery training ship after the end of the war . She was ultimately broken up for scrap in 1929 .

= = Construction = =

In 1885 , Greece ordered three new ironclads of the Hydra class . Hydra was ordered from the Ateliers et Chantiers de la Loire shipyard in St. Nazaire , France during the premiership of Charilaos Trikoupis . The ship , named for the island of Hydra , was launched in 1889 , and by 1892 , she and her sister @-@ ships Spetsai and Psara were delivered to the Greek fleet . The ship was 334 feet 8 inches (102 @. @ 01 m) long between perpendiculars and had a beam of 51 ft 10 in (15 @. @ 80 m) and a mean draft of 18 ft (5 @. @ 5 m) . She displaced 4 @, @ 808 metric tons (4 @, @ 732 long tons ; 5 @, @ 300 short tons) as built . She was powered by a pair of steam engines of unknown type ; they were rated at 6 @, @ 700 indicated horsepower (5 @, @ 000 kW) and provided a top speed of 17 knots (31 km / h ; 20 mph) . Coal storage amounted to 500 t (490 long tons ; 550 short tons) .

Hydra 's main battery consisted of three 10 @. @ 8 in (270 mm) guns . Two guns were mounted forward in barbettes on either side of the forward superstructure ; these were L / 34 guns . The third gun , a L / 28 gun , was placed in a turret aft . The secondary battery consisted of four 5 @. @ 9 in (150 mm) L / 36 guns in casemates were mounted below the forward main battery , and a fifth 5 @. @ 9 @-@ inch gun was placed on the centerline on the same deck as the main battery . A number of smaller guns were carried for defense against torpedo boats . These included four 3 @. @ 4 in (86 mm) L / 22 guns , four 3 @-@ pounder guns , four 1 @-@ pounder guns , and six 1 @-@ pounder revolver cannons . The ship was also armed with three 14 in (360 mm) torpedo tubes . The ship was armored with a mix of Creusot and compound steel . The main belt was 12 in (300 mm) thick and the main battery was protected by up to 14 in (360 mm) of armor .

= = Service history = =

The ship saw limited action in the Greco ? Turkish War in 1897 , as the Royal Hellenic Navy was unable to make use of its superiority over the Ottoman Navy . The Ottoman Navy had remained in port during the conflict , but a major naval intervention of the Great Powers prevented the Greeks from capitalizing on their superiority . In 1897 ? 1900 , Hydra and her sister @-@ ships were partially rearmed ; Hydra was modified at the La Seyne shipyard . Their small @-@ caliber guns were replaced with one 3 @. @ 9 in (99 mm) gun forward , eight 9 @-@ pounder guns , four 3 @-@ pounders , and ten 1 @-@ pounder revolver cannon . One of the 14 @-@ inch torpedo tubes was replaced with a 15 in (380 mm) weapon . In 1908 ? 1910 , the old 5 @. @ 9 in guns were replaced with new , longer L / 45 models .

The Balkan League , of which Greece was a member , declared war on the Ottoman Empire in October 1912 . Two months later , the Ottoman fleet attacked the Greek navy , in an attempt to disrupt the naval blockade surrounding the Dardanelles . The Ottoman fleet , which included Turgut Reis , Barbaros Hayreddin , two outdated ironclad battleships , nine destroyers and six torpedo

boats , sortied from the Dardanelles at 9 : 30 . The smaller ships remained at the mouth of the straits while the battleships sailed north , remaining near to the coast . The Greek flotilla , which included the armored cruiser Georgios Averof and Hydra and her sisters , had been sailing from the island of Imbros to the patrol line outside the straits . When the Ottomans were sighted , the Greeks altered course to the northeast , in order to block the advance of their opponents . In the ensuing Naval Battle of Elli , the Ottoman ships opened fire first , at 9 : 50 , from a range of about 15 @, @ 000 yards ; the Greeks returned fire ten minutes later , by which time the range had decreased significantly to 8 @, @ 500 yards . At 10 : 04 , the Ottoman ships completed a 16 @- @ point turn , which reversed their course , and steamed for the safety of the straits in a disorganized withdrawal . Within an hour , the routed Ottoman ships had withdrawn into the Dardanelles .

The Naval Battle of Lemnos resulted from an Ottoman plan to lure the faster Georgios Averof away from the Dardanelles . The protected cruiser Hamidiye evaded the Greek blockade and broke out into the Aegean sea ; the assumption was that the Greeks would dispatch Georgios Averof to hunt down Hamidiye . Despite the threat to Greek lines of communication posed by the cruiser , the Greek commander refused to detach Georgios Averof from her position . Georgios Averof appeared approximately 12 miles from Lemnos ; when the powerful Greek ship was spotted , the Ottomans turned to retreat with Georgios Averof in pursuit . She scored several hits on the fleeing Ottoman ships before breaking off the chase . Hydra and her sisters were too slow to keep up with Georgios Averof , and played no part in the engagement .

By 1914 , Hydra had been withdrawn from active duty to serve as a gunnery training ship . At the outbreak of World War I in at the end of July 1914 , Greece 's pro @- @ German monarch , Constantine I , decided to remain neutral . The Entente powers landed troops in Salonika in 1915 , which was a source of tension between France and Greece . In October 1916 , Hydra and a pair of torpedo boats defected to the Venizelist faction in the National Schism . Ultimately , the French seized the Greek Navy on 19 October ; the heavy units of the Greek fleet were disarmed and placed in reserve for the remainder of the war . Hydra was decommissioned in 1918 and stricken from the naval register the next year . She was to be sold for scrapping in 1921 , but instead returned to her role as a naval artillery school from 1922 until 1929 when she was broken up for scrap .