

At the Ottoman Bank Museum:

A Documentary Seyr-i Turkiye [A Floating Exhibit of Turkey] An Exhibition Projecting the Nation



From December 20, 2006, through March 20, 2007, the **Ottoman Bank Museum** is hosting two important projects that offer a new perspective on Turkey's attempts to "present itself" to the world – an issue that maintains all its relevance today. The documentary film **KARADENİZ: Seyr-I Turkiye** [KARADENİZ: **A Floating Exhibit of Turkey**] tells the story of the floating exhibition project carried out, under the suggestion of Atatürk, 3 years after the proclamation of the Republic, to acquaint Europe with the new

Turkish Republic. Concurrently, the exhibition, PROJECTING THE NATION: European States in the 1920s and 1930s focuses on some of the European states on the route of the cruiser Karadeniz as it traveled from Istanbul to Leningrad, and offers an overview of the dominant political regimes in the 1920s and 30s, a period which also saw the dawn of Turkish modernity.

The documentary *Seyr-i Turkiye* sheds light on the voyage of the cruiser Karadeniz, as it carried out its task of promoting the new image of a modernizing Turkish society. The film depicts the warm welcome in the harbors where the ship docked, the products offered for sale, the balls organized and the concerts given by the Riyaset-i Cumhur Orkestrasi (Presidency Orchestra), highlighting the varied responses of surprise, pleasure and respect these encounters between Europeans and Turks generated. Through photographs, images and texts - most of them from foreign sources - the documentary successfully goes back 80 years to resurrect the Karadeniz cruiser and this floating exhibition of Turkey.

At a time when the boundaries and the future of the European Union are contested yet again, *Projecting the Nation* offers a voyage toward the recent past of Europe. An international endeavor, the exhibition displays visual materials from close to thirty institutions and private collections in Russia, France, Italy, Germany, England, Spain, the United States, and Turkey. In addition to a short introductory film relaying the historical context of the period, the display features video footage from 10 documentary films and over 120 photographs.