

Story #636 (1974, Tape #50)

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The Hoca's Turban and Cumberbund

Once upon a time there was a Hoca \_\_\_\_\_ [unintelligible] who would write on a piece of paper and then hide it in his turban. And he would read the note later. One of his students perceived this trick and stood by the glass of his door. When the hoca came by, he quickly took the piece of paper from the head dress. The hoca went in a stuck his hand into his head dress, groped around, but could not find the piece of paper. He pondered a while and then took another piece of paper and wrote on it. When he went out the student again took the piece of paper out of his turban. Again the hoca looked for the piece of paper and could not find it.

The third time the hoca tried to find a solution to his dilemma. He tried to think of the person who might have stolen the piece of paper. So, this time he tucked the piece of paper into his waist.<sup>1</sup> Later he took off his head dress and, not finding anything, checked his waist. He found the piece of paper and cried, "Thanks be to God, you couldn't find this piece too."

<sup>1</sup>Many villagers still wear tightly wrapped waist bands or cummerbunds. This is not for a decorative purpose but for health, they feel. In 1970 and 1974 we observed many farmers wearing such cummerbunds while making hay in the fields. The cummerbund is made of a band of cloth about 12-18 inches in width and 30 feet long. It is wrapped around and around the abdomen.