

Story 1573 (1987 Tape 3)

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Devrek kaza,
Zonguldak Province

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The Kadı¹ and the Defiled Bribe

Once in the old days a citizen of this village did something which was offensive to one of his neighbors. They argued about this matter but were unable to settle the matter themselves, and so the offended neighbor took the matter to court

The defendant was an axemaker, and in order to bribe the kadı to rule in his favor, he gave him an excellent axe. The plaintiff was a farmer, and in an effort to win the case, he bribed the kadı with the gift of a cow.

During the hearings the defendant tried to remind the kadı of the bribe he had received from him. He said, "O your honor, give your ruling rapidly and sharply--just as if you were chopping with a good axe."

The kadı thought for a moment, and then he said to the

¹The kadı was a judge of Moslem canonical law in pre-Republican Turkey. Actually, he ruled on almost any case that came to his court, whether or not the matter at issue turned on canonical or şeriat law. How often kadıs accepted bribes is a moot point, but the stereotype of the kadı pictures him as being especially vulnerable to this form of corruption.

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defendant, "I was going to do just that, but the handle of my axe was defecated upon by a cow, and so I was unable to grip the axe."