

Story 1673 (Tape erased on  
field trip)

Narrator: Ahmet Öztürk  
muhtar

Location: Ecirli village,  
Çal kaza, Denizli  
Province

Date: May 1962

Bekri Mustafa<sup>1</sup> Forgives His Enemy

All his life Bekri Mustafa drank rakı<sup>2</sup> and wine. When he wanted something to drink, he always asked for one of these two things. When he lay dying, however, he called water.

One of his friends asked, "Bekri Mustafa, why do you water now?"

Bekri Mustafa replied, "The holy Koran says that before we die we should forgive our enemies. I have hated water my life as my worst enemy, and now I wish to forgive it."

<sup>1</sup>Bekri Mustafa was supposedly a drunkard who lived during the reign of Sultan Murat IV (1623-1640). Tradition says that his conviviality was so contagious that it led Murat himself into bad habits. He has become the alcoholic type in Turkish lore, and ever since his time, the name Bekri has had the connotation of drunkard. See other ATON tales that relate some of the escapades of this colorful figure.

<sup>2</sup>An anise-flavored liquor, the most popular distilled drink in Turkey. It is a clear liquid, but when water is added to it, it becomes white--part of the reason for its being dubbed "lion's milk." It is produced by a government monopoly.