

Story 1764 (1994 Tape 4)

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of Istanbul
Province

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A Laz¹ Sharing of the Wealth

Once there were three friends who went treasure hunting. One was a Laz, one was a German, and the third was a Frenchman. After spending much time and effort, they located the treasure they sought on the very top of a mountain

When it came time to divide the treasure among the three, the Laz took charge of this matter. Picking up two knives, he stuck one into the heart of the German, saying, "That is your share." Then he stuck the other one into the heart of the Frenchman, saying, "And that is your share." Then he said, "And what is left is my share."

¹The word Laz referred originally to an ethnic minority living primarily in Trabzon and Rize provinces, along the extreme eastern part of the Turkish Black Sea coast. More recently the word has come to be applied to any resident of the entire Turkish Black Sea coast. In the Turkish oral tradition Laz people are stereotyped as being stupid or inept. This stereotype (like most others) is unjustifiable, for Lazes are, of course, much like other people.