

Story 1828 (1989 Tape 7)

Narrator: Memduh Derin

Location: Konya, capital city
of Konya Province

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Poet Eşref¹ on a Gypsy Musician

One day Poet Eşref was invited to a party at the home of one of his friends. To entertain his guests at party, the host had hired a gypsy group to come and provide music.² One of those gypsies was a very fine tef³ player. (Back in those days they called the tef a daire.⁴)

After he had heard the performance of this gypsy tambourine player, Poet Eşref commented upon it with this quatrain.

Like a vali,⁵ he entered, collapsed on a cushion
He performed as if he were equal to Allah,
A player whom nobody else could equal;
But he acted as if his tef were an orphan.

¹The real name of this poet was Mehmet Eşref (1847-1911). During part of his life he was kaymakam (administrator of a kaza) in Manisa Province.

²Gypsies' ensembles are often hired to provide music for Turkish weddings.

³A tef is a tambourine.

⁴Daire means circle. The tambourine is a flat, circular musical instrument.

⁵A vali is the governor of a Turkish province.