

Story 1829 (1989 Tape 7)

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of Konya Province

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The Virtue of Brevity

This is a story about something that happened quite a while ago. It was during the time of the last sultans

A man who had been arrested for some kind of crime was being send to İzmir. He was being transferred to İzmir in the custody of a gendarme.¹ During the trip, the criminal managed, somehow or another, to escape.

When the gendarme was unable to recapture the criminal, he realized that it was necessary to report his escape at once. He decided to send a telegram to his headquarters. Before he did so, however, he remembered instructions about telegrams that he and other troops had received during their basic training. They had been taught

wireless service was expensive and that they should, therefore, make their telegrams as brief as possible

¹The French loan word gendarme refers to a soldier assigned to the Ministry of Interior to perform police duties in rural areas which have no organized police protection.

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Accordingly, the gendarme sent this message back to
İstanbul:

Greetings from İzmir.

Prisoner escaped--and that is all

Gendarme İslam.²

²The word İslam is sometimes used as a personal name, even though it is usually used as the name of the Muslim religious system.