

Story #163 (Tape #2, Summer 1970)

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Location: Yukarı Kise Köy  
Güvem Nahiye  
Kızılcahamam kaza  
Ankara Vilayet

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A Successor for Incili Çavuş

The padişah of the time had an adviser by the name of Incili Çavuş who was getting on in years and had to be replaced. The padişah gave his viziers instructions for the training of a young adviser to replace Incili Çavuş. Twelve of his viziers put travel money in their saddle bags and set out to different parts of the world to search for this adviser to the padişah. One of them came, for example, to our village. They visited every possible place--just like you people [said to Ahmet Uysal and Warren Walker, collectors]. A vizier came to our village and was going through the place which we call Kapunbeli--this is somewhere near our village--when he noted a boy running fast and crying aloud. He said to the child, "Why are you running? Stop for a while."

"I can't. He is going to kill me," the child answered, and continued running. When the vizier looked in that direction, he saw a man with a goad in hand chasing the boy.

The vizier stopped the man. "Where are you going?"

"I am going to kill that boy," the man answered.

"What relation is he to you?"

"He is my son."

"Come back," the vizier said. "I'll settle your problem. What is your problem?"

"I'll kill him," the man said.

The boy said, "Efendi, he is going to kill me."

"Do not be afraid, son. Come here," the vizier said. "I'll  
you here. You tell what the trouble is," he said, addressing the boy.

The son was unable to speak.

"Why were you chasing this boy?" he then said to the father.

"I can't tell you."

"You must tell me," he said, and then he turned to the boy. "Do not  
be afraid, child. I shall save you. Tell me how this happened."

"Efendi, this man is my father. Every day we go plowing, and he asks  
me to seed the field and goes home himself. I work from morning to night,  
and do all the work. But one day I could not finish the seeding after  
I had done the plowing. I went home in the evening and said to my mother,  
'Mother, awaken me early tomorrow morning. I must reach the field before  
the crows pick up the seed from the sown field or my father will beat me.  
Wake me up early, Mother, and then send my food after me.' I arose early  
in the morning, took the oxen to the field, and finished the job. I kept  
waiting for the food from home. Although the sun was well up and the time  
was 9:00 or 10:00 o'clock, no one came with food. I swore that I would  
rape the first person who came to that field. Behold--who do you think was  
coming? My grandmother, with the food. Although I shouted, 'Grandmother,  
don't come! Turn back,' she kept coming. As I had sworn, I [did the thing  
I said I would do to] my grandmother. Then my grandmother went and told my  
father about it. My father is so angry he wants to kill me. Efendi, what  
made me more furious than anything else was that although he lay with my  
mother all this time until now, I lay with his mother only once. And now  
he wants to kill me for it."

The vizier said, "What a case I have in my hand! Look here, my man  
Instead of killing this boy, you had better sell him to me." He gave the  
man some gold and took the boy on the back of his horse, saying, "I think

I have the right person to be trained as the padişah's adviser."

The vizier took the young man and went to Istanbul. He took him to the Beşiktaş Hotel [Beşiktaş is the ferry station on the European where very important people used to stay in those days. [The grandson interferes: "You should speak as if you were the vizier himself."-- he wants realism but Hacı Gönem ignored it. Leaving the young man in the hotel with the beys who were watching the view of Istanbul from the hotel, the vizier went to the palace to report to the padişah that he had found a suitable young man.

The young man in the hotel stretched his neck among the gamblers and observed what they were doing. There was among them a man like our Kara Yakup [seated alongside the narrator]. He said to the boy, "Son, what are you doing here? Go away!"

The boy went to the window and looked out over Istanbul. The same man asked him, "What are you looking at?"

"I don't know. I am looking at those tall white things." Apparently he was looking at minarets.

"What did you see?"

"Long white things."

"Aren't there such things in your part of the world?"

"No, there are no such things there. Efendi, what are those white things?" he asked the man who looked like Kara Yakup.

The man said, "They are the penises of Istanbul."

The boy said, "If your city has vaginas to match those penises, you would be in a good situation." [things would go well]

The people there laughed when they heard this remark of the boy. The man was angry, and said, "Where are you from, young man?"

"What is that to you?"

"What is your name?" he asked.

"My name is Demez [he who says nothing]. If I tell you that I am a peasant boy, God knows what you would say. If I tell you I am from Kizilcahamam, you would call me a citak [name for people of this area]. If I tell you I am from Çorum, you would call me an Alevi. If I tell you I am a city boy, you would call me ass-pocketed [peasants wear salvar, without pockets].

The man was very angry when he heard such talk. He asked again, "What is your name?"

The vizier was now overhearing this while pretending he was asleep.

"What will you do with my name?"

"I'll do whatever I like with it. What is it to you? Just give me your name. You will write your name."

"Where?"

"One the side of my ass," the man replied.

"My name is 'Donkey's Penis.' If it is not written on the side of your ass, write it in the middle of your ass

The vizier woke up now and asked, "Why do you tease this boy? Leave him alone."

The vizier sent a telegram\* to the padişah, saying, "I have the very young man to suit your purpose."

The padişah answered, "Very well. Bring him right away. Take him to the bath. Have him shaved. Take him to the tailor and have him dressed and bring him to me."

They did as the padişah instructed. They took him into his presence after washing and clothing him

\* An obvious anachronism

The padişah said "Hoş geldiniz" to him and ordered that his food and lodging be provided and told him to go and walk around the city, adding, "We'll find you when we are in need of you."

*Puzzle*

The young man started walking about Istanbul freely. One day a letter was received from Greece, from the King of Greece, in which there were some questions. One of the questions was, "Would a Greek mare be sired by a Turkish stallion?" The next question was, "Salt in this country is infested with worms. Send a remedy for this. If no reply comes to this letter of ours, war will be declared on you." When this letter was received, the people at court were amazed that salt in Greece had become wormy, and they wondered what answer should be sent to the question as to whether a stallion of this country could sire a Greek mare. What answer would be given to this question? They decided to consult Incili Çavuş.

[Right here Ahmet Uysal asked if the stallion and the mare were separated--one in Turkey and one in Greece

Narrator: This was impossible.

Ahmet Uysal: What about wormy salt? Is that impossible?

Narrator: Of course.]

They called the young man and explained, "There is such and such a state of affairs. What remedy is there for it?"

The boy answered, "Ah, I've got it. I've got it. I have to go over there."

"What do you need?" they asked.

"I need a company of cavalry, and I'll go as a sergeant with it leading it."

He and his troop put on uniforms and mounted their horses. They got on the train at the station and went straight to Greece. They got

off the train in Greece and along the way, riding through the country, they were attacked by sheep dogs.

The sergeant ordered, "Load your guns and get ready to shoot." Then he ordered, "Fire!"

They shot the dogs and rode on. The shepherds reported the event to their aghas, saying, "Some Turkish soldiers came and shot our dogs."

The aghas went to Athens before the Turkish troops got there in order to see them. The Turkish troops were going rather slowly. They reached Athens, but before they entered Parliament, the gendarmie stopped them saying, "We have to take your evidence. Coming into the country with passports doesn't entitle you to shoot all our dogs. Why did you shoot our dogs?"

"We had to."

They entered Parliament and the king of that country heard their evidence. The King said, "What have you done? There is a complaint against you that you have shot some dogs."

"Yes, we have," replied Incili Cavus.\*

"Why did you shoot them?"

"Why shouldn't we? Wolves were eating our sheep dogs in Turkey; these dogs were sitting idly in Greece

"What can the dogs of this country do to wolves in Turkey?"

"All right, then--what can the stallions in Turkey do to the mares in Greece?"

"Good. (Acquitted,)" was the verdict of the King.

"Good. What is your order now?"

you bring the remedy for worm-infested salt?"

"Yes."

\* In his enthusiasm for the story, the narrator forgot that he was talking about a successor for Incili Cavus, and used Incili Cavus himself

"How much of it?" the King asked.

Incili Çavuş said, "Bring that saddle bag over here. The remedy I brought consists of eight kilos of mule's milk and nine kilos of garlic seed." [Mules give no milk; garlic does not grow from seed.]

"What will be made of these?"

"The garlic seeds should be beaten, mixed with mule's milk, and sprinkled over the salt. Then it will be cured."

"Can a mule give milk?" the King asked

"No."

"Can garlic have seed?"

"No, that cannot be, either. Well, then, salt cannot have worms, either."

The King of Greece's adviser was his mother. When she realized that this Turkish young man's intelligence was superior to that of the King of Greece, she told her son, "Send that fellow over here."

The King of Greece sent Incili Çavuş to the harem section of the court. The King's mother said, "Let us see what sort of fellow you are. What does the word 'Adam' remind you of?"

"It reminds me of a descendant of Hazreti Adam." [His Reverence, Adam

"What was the origin of Hazreti Adam?"

"He originated from earth."

"Well, then, did they mix his mortar with straw?" [Mud bricks (karpıç) are made of mud mixed with straw--a type of reinforcement.]

"No, they did not."

The woman then said, "But they did."

"How do you know they did? They didn't."

"How do you know they didn't?" asked the King's mother.

"Well, if they had mixed straw in his mortar, you wouldn't have a hand span of slit in you.

"Be silent, you ill-bred fellow!"

"Why should I? If straw had been mixed, it wouldn't have cracked."

"Take him away!" ordered the mother of the King.

Two Greeks took Incili Çavuş for a walk in the city of Athens. They took him to a gallery where there were some pictures of our padişah and the King of Greece. In one picture, the Turkish padişah was eating simit with one hand and holding his penis with the other, trying to dry it after urinating. And the Greek King in the picture was pointing at the Turkish padişah, as if to say, "Look at him! Look at him!"

The two Greeks took Incili Çavuş to where these pictures were and told him to look at them and asked him who they were.

He said, "One is our padişah and the other is your king."

"Well, what are they doing?"

"Our padişah is eating simit while your king is saying, 'Give me some of it,' and he says to him, 'You take this,' holding out his penis. The answer to this question is so simple."

Thereupon they said, "Let these people have their gifts and go back to their country. We shall never be able to compete with them in words.

They returned to their country, and the Padişah was apprised of their achievements.

One day a letter came from England to the court of Turkey asking for the wisest man of that country to be sent to England. Incili Çavuş volunteered to go. "I'll take a shipload of onions to that country."

Onions were bought in Turkey for 60 paras a kilo [1 1/2 kilos, the narrator said]. When the ship arrived in England, Incili Çavuş said,

"I've brought a shipload of onions to sell here, and I have to see to some business after I sell them."

"How much did you pay for the onions?"

"I bought them for 60 paras a kilo

In England, he found that no one would buy onions--even for 20 paras a

He hired people to unload onions and pour them into the sea. It was decided that the money lost should be met by the Treasury. He had the empty sacks stored in the hold of the ship. He then went to the Treasury and asked that his sacks be brought to carry his money away. He hired some laborers at 10 liras a day. He had ten empty sacks carried to the Treasury. The superintendent started counting miş yaş, miş yaş [nonsense words to pretend that he was counting], and said, "Well, it's full. Tie it

They tied the mouth of the empty sack, saying, "This is full."

[Ahmet Uysal asked, "Is this a word you use here?

Narrator: "No, no--the man was trying to take advantage of these Turks."]

Incili Çavuş did not mind what they were doing. The tied sacks were sealed. When the counting of the money was over, he had the sacks loaded on the backs of porters, who took them to the hold of his ship. Then Incili Çavuş decided to buy some fancy goods in England with this money. An announcement was made that a wealthy merchant had come from such and such a land to buy lots of merchandise. All the merchants came with various goods and were told to empty their goods in the hold and write down the description and amount of their goods. When the ship was loaded, the empty sacks were again taken back by porters. "How much do we owe you?" he asked, and started counting miş yaş, miş yaş.

They asked, "What is going on?"

"I thought miş yaş currency was what was used in this country, and is what we are paying.

They sued Incili Çavuş right away. The court ruled that he was right. "He received miş yaş in payment and he is paying miş yaş in return. The best thing to do is to send this man from the country as soon as possible." Incili Çavuş then returned home.

A letter came from Russia, saying, "There is a big conference here and Turkey is requested to send her wisest man to the conference. Whoever are the oldest and wisest men should come to this conference."

The padişah of Turkey invited Incili Çavuş to his presence and said, "Come, young man. What shall we do now?"

When he had heard the problem, Incili Çavuş said, "All right. I've got it. What is the biggest thing in our country? Of course, it is the camel. Well, first put the camel aside. If they want a white-bearded old we have the male goat. Put that aside, too. Find a man with white and a black beard. Then find a learned man. And then find (a köse.)"

They found all these for him. On the way to Russia, Incili Çavuş taught all these people their lessons. Addressing the man with the white hair and black beard, Incili Çavuş said, "When you go to the palace, the King of Russia will probably notice you. Your reply should be as follows. When you are questioned why your hair is white and your beard is black, answer, 'My beard is 20 years younger than my hair.' If you are asked, 'How can that be?' say, 'I had my hair when I was born, but my beard came out 20 years later.' This is your lesson complete.

He said to the köse, "If you are asked, 'Why do you have a moustache but no beard?' you will answer, 'Well, when my parents were praying in the

nuptial chamber,\* my father prayed to God he would have a son, and my mother prayed that she would have a daughter. Thus a

[Side #2 of Tape 2 starts here]

köse was born, a creature half male and half female.' This is your lesson. "My father said, "I wish I had a son so I could stroke his beard when he grows up." My mother said, "I wish I had a daughter whose face I could stroke." The prayers of both were accepted, and as a result, I have no hair on my face to please my mother and I have a moustache to please my father.' This is your lesson."

They traveled to Russia, where they participated in the conference at once. They asked the Turkish group, "Let your great men come forward." The Russians took a look at the group and could make nothing of the great men the Turks had sent. They said, "We asked for your great men.

"These are our great men," the Turks said.

"Let us see who they are

The Turks pulled the camel forward. "This is our greatest" [in size, he means].

"What about your white-bearded men?" the Russians asked.

pulled forward the male goat. "This is our white-bearded one."

it was the turn of the man with white hair and a black beard.

"Who on earth is this?" the Russians asked.

The man said, "My beard is 20 years younger than my hair. When I was a boy, I had my hair; 20 years later I got my beard, so my beard is younger than my hair.

It was now the köse's turn. The Russians stroked the köse's face and said, "What is this?"

\* When the bride and groom enter the nuptial chamber, they take ablution and pray 2 rekats before going to bed; they pray to make the marriage happy.

He explained that his parents' prayers were accepted, and that was why his face was so. "During the nuptial night my father and mother prayed to God and their prayers were accepted. My mother wanted a daughter so she could caress my face and my father wanted a son so that he could stroke my moustache. That is the reason why."

"All right. That is understood," said the Russians. "Who are you?" they said to the next.

"I am a scholar."

"Who are greater than scholars?" the Russians asked.

"Love poets are greater than scholars."

right. That is understood, too," said the Russians. "Now let us come to the strange part of the business. We wanted you to establish the value of the golden plow and the silver yoke. What do you say on that?"

"We have our answer ready," said the Turks. "If it rains in April, May, and June, the golden plow and the silver yoke would be invaluable. If there is no rain in those months, you can break the golden plow to pieces and shove it into your mother's vagina."

right. That is understood, too," the Russians said.

The Turkish group thus won the contest and returned home victoriously.