

Story 875 (1964 Tape 2)

Narrator: Mustafa Gür

Location: Görele, kaza town in
Giresun Province

Date: August

The Bektaşî¹ ^{Infidel} Envies a Gâvur²

One day a Bektaşî was arrested after he was caught eating during the fasting hours of a day in Ramazan³. In those times fast-breaking before the permitted time in the evening was considered a serious crime. As he looked out between the bars of his prison window, he saw a man holding a large piece of watermelon and eating it as he walked down the street. The Bektaşî called to this man, saying, "Hey, fellow, I broke the fast secretly and still was caught at it and thrown into this jail. If they see you eating there in broad daylight, they may hang you!"

"Oh, no! I am a gâvur."

"Ah, then a man could be grateful at times for being a gâvur!"

¹ A Bektaşî is a member of a dervish order of the same name. In pre-Republican times the Bektaşî order was a very powerful organization both religiously and politically. Along with other dervish orders, it was outlawed during the Kemalist Reforms of the 1920's. The Bektaşî character was known for its unorthodox Moslem attitude, its seeming irreverence, and its independence. One must know this to appreciate the humor--often ironic--of Bektaşî tales.

² Gâvur means non-Moslem.

³ During the month of Ramazan devout Moslems eat not a crumb of any food and drink not a drop of water or other fluid between sunrise and sunset. Usually sunrise and sunset guns are fired to mark the beginning and ending of the daily fast.