

Story 1882 1995 Tape 2)

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Location: Erzurum, capital
of Erzurum Province

Date: January 1995

Peasant View of Market Day

Alaadin, an older friend of mine in Erzurum, told me this story. Many years ago Alaadin's grandmother made her first trip to Istanbul, where she went to visit daughter. That daughter was acquainted with Ahmet Isvan¹ the very popular mayor of Istanbul at that time, and it was through her daughter that the old lady had the opportunity to meet and talk with Ahmet Bey.

The grandmother of Alaadin said to Ahmet Isvan "My son, is Istanbul crowded on Wednesdays?"

The mayor responded, "Lady, why do you ask that? Istanbul is, of course, a very crowded place every day."

"I ask that because on Wednesday Silifke² has a bazaar,³ and people from many villages in that area come there both to sell their farm products and to buy goods

¹Not listed in Türk Ensiklopedisi.

²A kaza town in İçel Province, in extreme southern Turkey.

³An open-air market which on a given day of the week is free to all who wish to sell their goods or wares there.

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from Silifke merchants. So the place is always crowded on Wednesdays. I wondered if it is the same way in Istanbul."⁴

⁴The rural peasant here perceives the great metropolis in terms of the provincial environment of which she is a part.