

Story 1490 (1992 Tape 6)

Narrator: Mehmet Kavasoğulları
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Location: Ankara, Ankara Province

Date: July 3, 1992

Failed Lesson

During their required military service, Turkish soldiers taught many different kinds of things.¹ While Mehmet was in the army he had difficulty learning some of the things that instructor tried to teach him. The officer could not make Mehmet understand what the real meaning of his country was. He therefore decided to use a different means of teaching him this idea. The officer called upon Ahmet and asked, 'Ahmet, does your country really mean to you?

Ahmet answered, "Sir, it is like my mother."

The officer then turned to Mehmet and asked, "Can you now tell me the real meaning of your country?"

"It is like Ahmet's mother," answered Mehmet.

¹The Turkish army long bore a heavy commitment to general education. As recently as the 1960s, the great bulk of the Turkish population was rural, and a high percentage of ordinary troops were only semiliterate. The army developed an excellent program in language training which used special textbooks and study aids of its own.