

Story 1673 (Tape erased on  
field trip)

Narrator: Ahmet Öztürk  
muhtar

Location: Ecirli village,  
Çal kaza, Denizli  
Province

Date: May 1962

Bekri Mustafa<sup>1</sup> Forgives His Enemy

All his life Bekri Mustafa drank rakı<sup>2</sup> and wine. When-  
he wanted something to drink, he always asked for one  
of these two things. When he lay dying, however, he called  
water.

One of his friends asked, "Bekri Mustafa, why do you  
water now?"

Bekri Mustafa replied, "The holy Koran says that before  
we die we should forgive our enemies. I have hated water  
my life as my worst enemy, and now I wish to forgive it."

<sup>1</sup>Bekri Mustafa was supposedly a drunkard who lived  
during the reign of Sultan Murat IV (1623-1640). Tradition  
says that his conviviality was so contagious that it led  
Murat himself into bad habits. He has become the alcoholic  
type in Turkish lore, and ever since his time, the name  
Bekri has had the connotation of drunkard. See other ATON  
tales that relate some of the escapades of this colorful  
figure.

<sup>2</sup>An anise-flavored liquor, the most popular distilled  
drink in Turkey. It is a clear liquid, but when water is  
added to it, it becomes white--part of the reason for its  
being dubbed "lion's milk." It is produced by a government  
monopoly.