

Story 995 (1975 Tape 1) Narrator: Mehmet Kara (Koruk),
Muhtar

Location: Nasreddin Hoca vil-
lage, originally
Hortu (supposedly the
birthplace of N. Hoca)
Sivrihisar kaza,
Eskişehir Province

Date: September 27, 1975

Keloğlan or Delioğlan?

One year when Nasreddin Hoca was still a boy, there was a famine here in this village. People here were very hungry. On one of the bayram¹ days Nasreddin Hoca and his father walked to Sivrihisar to visit some of their friends in that town. Because it was bayram, everyone they visited offered them food.

"What a pleasant country this is!" said Nasreddin Hoca. "They fed us, and we are no longer hungry."

The Hoca was right, but since that time no one has paid much attention to the kind of thing he was talking

¹A bayram is a holiday in the literal sense, Holy-Day. The two principal bayrams are Şeker Bayramı (Sugar or Sweetmeat Bayram), the first three days after the end of Ramazan, the month of fasting; and Kurban Bayramı (Sacrifices Bayram), a longer festival which begins forty days after the end of Ramazan. Every family which can afford to do so slaughters a lamb, gives half of it to the poor, and feasts on the other half.

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about. Nowadays if you have money, you are Keloğlan.² If you do not have money you are Delioğlan.³ If you are a poor man, no one will understand you when you are sick. If you are a rich man, no one will believe that you could ever be untrustworthy.

²A keloğlan, literally, means a bald boy, one made bald by ringworm infestation of the scalp. But apart from these literal facts, the keloğlan is a popular character type in Turkish folklore--a sympathetic character who usually succeeds in his undertakings.

³Delioğlan means crazy boy.