Barcelona & Turkey, 1999

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Last edited, June 15, 2015

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I wrote these notes some time before I left Canada and moved to Turkey in the summer of 2000. I left the notes behind in my computer account at McMaster University, only recovering them in December, 2005. I have done little editing since then. One change has been to remove needless instances of the phrase "of course"; I have decided that this phrase is entirely overused.

On Sunday, 13 June, 1999, I left Hamilton, Ontario. I was bound for Barcelona, and would continue to Istanbul after a week. I returned to Canada on 21 July. If you want to know about my trip, then you can read these notes. I shall be reading them as well. I want to aid my memory by noting some things to remember for future travels. Rather, I want to aid my *forgetting,* by noting some things I won't *have* to remember once they are written down.

Table 1 shows when I entered a place, or a mode of travel, where I would be spending at least one night.

I went to Barcelona for a conference, the Joint Conference of the 5th Barcelona Logic Meeting and the 6th Kurt Gödel Colloquium. This took place on 16 through 19 June. I reached Barcelona on the 14th and left on the 21st. Unfortunately the 20th was a Sunday, so I couldn't take the train out of town. I had wanted to visit Montserrat, the location of a Black Virgin and supposedly some nice mountain trails. I had thought I might go there on the 15th, but then I didn't want to take the chance of being too exhausted after just having crossed five time-zones.

Rather than pay for door-to-door service to the Toronto airport, I took the "Go" bus to Toronto, the subway to Islington station, then the "Airport Express" bus to the airport. I saved the return tickets and one subway token in a little zippered pocket in my knapsack, to use when I got back.

That knapsack—I try to call it a knapsack rather than a backpack, as to my mind a backpack is for backpacking, and backpacking is hiking in the woods with everything you need for a week or more. Even for a "day-pack," my knapsack is pretty small. It is true that I was taking this knapsack on a trip of more than five weeks. However, I wasn't sleeping outdoors, and I supplemented my luggage anyway with a stuff-sack and a waist-pack. The clothes I wasn't wearing fit into the stuff-sack, which strapped onto the bottom of the knapsack. Possibly I could have dispensed with the waist-pack. It would have been better to do without the stuff-sack, to take weight off my shoulders. Nonetheless, I did accomplish two packing goals: to be able to walk easily with all of my stuff, and not to have to check any baggage on an airplane.

For clothing, all I carried was a complete change, with a little bit extra. Most articles were synthetic, so they would pack more tightly and dry more easily. I thought about bringing a sweater, just in case, but I didn't want to make room for it. I was right not to bring it, though there was one drizzly day in Istanbul when I would have worn it if I could.

1999	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
June	13 airplane	14 Barcelona	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21 Istanbul	22	23	24	25	26 Ankara
June/ July	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
	4	5	6 bus	7 Alanya	8	9	10 Kaş
	11	12	13	14	15	16 Ayvalık	17
	18	19 Istanbul	20	21 Hamilton			

Table 1: When I went where.

Here then is the clothing I travelled with, including what I wore. Most of it came from Recreational Equipment Incorporated:

- Two nylon long-sleeved shirts, each with a long zippered breast pocket. Because of these pockets, I didn't bother with a money-belt, though Barcelona was indeed a place to worry about thieves.
- Two synthetic tee-shirts, one with long sleeves; I think the material is of the "Cool-Max" brand. Had I needed a bit more warmth, I could have worn one of these under a nylon shirt; I didn't need to do this in Barcelona.
- Two pairs of long nylon pants, one with removable legs (though I never removed the legs in Barcelona).
- Four pairs of undershorts, two synthetic and two cotton; cotton is more comfortable in warm weather, but really I need not have brought it.
- Three pairs of ragg wool socks, with three pairs of wool liners. I find these most comfortable, even in the heat. I could have done

with two sets, but I own three of the same age, and wanted to wear them out evenly. (That was a silly reason to bring an extra set of socks though.)

- Walking shoes.
- A nylon "shell" jacket that stuffed into its own pocket; I wore it in Istanbul on the day when I would have worn the sweater.
- Sandals (Teva brand). Sandals that were stepped into, rather than strapped on, would have been more convenient for simple things like going to bathe; they would also have been lighter; but having the straps was sometimes invaluable. The straps might dig into my feet, so just in case, I brought:
- A pair of synthetic socks I happened to have.

Once I dressed myself from this collection (and wore the shoes, not the sandals), the rest fit into a reasonably small sack.

What then went into the knapsack and the waist-pack? A good question for my memory. Some answers:

- Some books, for me and for gifts. One was *Walden*. Perhaps I think of Thoreau as travel literature because Robert Pirsig read him with his son on the journey recounted in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. I did read Thoreau, though it was a bit odd to do so in a bustling city like Barcelona. I also brought a Zen book, as a matter of fact: *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones* by Reps and Senzaki.
- A litre water-bottle; it would be better to have this on a strap or something, outside the knapsack. Actually, *two* litre-bottles might be good, for containing the contents of the litre-and-a-half bottles of water that one often ends up buying—or for filling from a five-litre bottle that you leave in your room.
- A clothesline, that is, a length of nylon cord. I think I left it in Istanbul.
- Toiletries. That's pretty obvious. I don't use much. Nail clippers. Without scissors on my Swiss-Army knife, I should have had to bring scissors to trim my beard. A two-in-one shampoo, Pert brand in fact; in French that's *Prêt*; I don't like it though, next

time I'll just deal with two bottles. Liquid soap (Dr Bronner's), a washcloth and backpacking towel. Comb, ponytail-bands, toothbrush and -paste. Sunscreen, which I foolishly didn't use on the only day when it would have mattered: the day I got burnt. More on that later, along with the insect repellent that I did not bring.
- A plastic knife, fork and spoon. The spoon is essential for yogurt, and a table-knife is a lot better at spreading than a pocket-knife.
- Toilet paper. Don't recall needing it, but one never knows.
- Three small mesh bags, to hold the little things.
- A couple of bandanas; in lieu of a hat, one of these could protect the top of my head from the sun, as well as make me (more of) a hippie.
- A necktie, just in case, because of a suggestion in a very funny book called *The Drinker's Guide to the Middle East* (which I bought in an anarchist bookstore in San Francisco). A tie would be a simple way to show respect to your host, if somebody should invite you home. On the other hand, I have worn one of the nylon shirts, tie-less, to an American wedding (which I reached by a thirty-mile bicycle-ride).

After Barcelona, I was to meet Ayşe in Istanbul, and after some time there, we were to go back to Ankara, where I had left some clothing. I looked forward to being able to wear this clothing, because it was cotton, but I *could* have done without it.

There is a Turkish word, *eş,* which means "one of a pair," or "partner," as well as "spouse." I would call Ayşe my *eş*; but nosy people we met in our travels in Turkey would ask Ayşe if I were her *eş*, and she had to say No, I was her *arkadaş.* Now, *arka* is one's back, and the suffix *daş* indicates sharing. That doesn't mean that an *arkadaş* is somebody with whom you make "the beast with two backs"; rather, with your *arkadaş* you would fight back-to-back as you made your last stand. The usual translation is "friend."

Flying overnight from Toronto to Barcelona, I didn't sleep much; still, on the day of arrival, I did manage to stay awake until dark, and I did manage to keep going all day the next day and succeeding days.

Thus I dealt with the change of time-zones.

Barcelona is a city of Spain or of Catalonia, depending on your politics. I wanted to be able to speak a few words of the local language—but which one, Spanish or Catalan? Catalonian nationalists would rather speak Catalan, perhaps, so I decided to know how to say *Parleu Angles?* rather than *¿Habla Ingles?*—and *Si us plau* instead of *Por favor.* But all I could find about Catalan was the bit of information in the the *Barcelona* volume of the Rough Guide series. It wasn't much. I should have brought a small phrase-book for Spanish.

Signs in the Barcelona airport were in the two local languages and English. The woman at Tourist Information spoke English, not surprisingly; she gave me a city map less bulky than the big Michelin map I had brought with me, and she pointed me in the direction of the train into the city.

The train had a terminus at the airport. There was a short queue at a machine dispensing tickets, and a long queue at the ticket window. An American student told me that the machine required exact change. The line at the window did not take forever; nor did the attendent object to my paying with a large bill. I got my ticket, entered the platform, and walked down to the far end, the end in the sunshine, where I marvelled that I was in Spain.

I had changed a traveller's cheque in the airport. (American Express pretentiously uses the spelling "cheque" for their product, but Canadians use it as a matter of course, and for now I am a Canadian.) On the Saturday before leaving Hamilton, I had realized that there was a change office in the downtown mall, and it was actually open that day; however, they were out of pesetas, and I was disappointed. I didn't want to have to depend on the change office at the Barcelona airport, which I thought was bound to give me a bad rate. In the event though, they gave me a good rate, much better than the office in town that I used a few days later. (Actually the rate in town was better, but the commission was confiscatory.) Note then: $200 US ended up covering seven days of Barcelona expenses, except the hotel bill. (In Barcelona, I could have changed cheques in Canadian dollars, but it would have been more difficult in Turkey.)

As the Rough Guide had predicted, when I got off the train at Plaça de Catalunya, I did not know which way to go. I was in a big busy city, where plenty of people were walking around with somewhere to go. There were also plenty of young people, with various "alternative" styles of hair and jewelry, hanging out about the *plaça.* After wandering a bit, I could orient the map to the place; then I saw a couple of folks trying to do the same thing. I guessed that they were not locals and would speak English. They may in fact have been from eastern Europe; in any case, they didn't know much English, but I pointed them to where they wanted to go, which was the station I had just come out of.

Where I wanted to go was the Ramblas. I had seen it from the plane: a strip of green heading down to the harbor. Strictly I should say I saw *them*, a sequence of streets lying end to end, each called "Rambla" (as in Rambla de Canalettes, Rambla dels Estudis and so forth). They reversed the pattern familiar in the New World: on the Ramblas, *humans* took up the broad center of a road lined with plane trees, while cars were pushed into narrow lanes on either side. Some of the streets feeding onto the Ramblas were too narrow for cars at all.

It was a thrill to walk down that green way. Many of my fellow pedestrians were tourists. But tourists could not have been the customers for the stalls selling birds or houseplants. I could believe the statement of the Rough Guide that the street was as popular with locals as with outsiders.

What is the purpose of this life-sized statue, covered with copper paint? And there is one painted with aluminum paint! The figures on the pedestals turned out to be alive. They held a pose until somebody dropped a coin in their hat; then they allowed themselves to move mechanically to another pose. Sometimes a child would drop coin after coin into the hat of a Roman warrior or a Wild West gunslinger, squealing as the statue reached for his pistol or adjusted his spear and his grimace. I felt sorry for the figures not destined to delight the youngsters, like the woman painted white and black with head bowed contemplatively towards the red rose in her raised hands. She didn't get to move much. I left her some coins towards the end of my stay.

I found my hotel a couple of streets west of the Ramblas. The notion of a block doesn't mean much in the old city of Barcelona, where streets run every which way. The man at reception didn't know English, but my Spanish colleague Ana had made my reservation, so everything was fine. I was staying at Hostal La Terrassa, the cheap one on the list of suggested accommodations for conference participants. According to the Rough Guide, the hotel was in the red light district. It did have a terrace, and my room was one of the four on the far side of the terrace, in the building otherwise accessed from the next street over. My room had a single bed, a bedside table, a wardrobe, a sink, and a window onto the terrace. It looked at first like a prison cell, but in fact it was no more or less than I needed. There was a toilet stall, the size of an airplane's, back on the other side of the terrace. To sit down in there, you had to fit your knees under the sink, and the door was right next to somebody's window. There was a full bathroom inside the main building. Out on the terrace were several tables.

Had I arranged for my room earlier, I could have had one with a bath. Not only would a bath have been unnecessary, but I would not have reached my room by crossing the terrace, and so would not have had such an easy way of meeting fellow travellers. An Australian was sitting on the terrace when I arrived; she gamely answered my newcomer's questions. I can't remember what they were though, except "Can you drink the water?" (Yes, but it is salty.) I did not bother to ask her about vegetarian restaurants, since she was eating some meat out of a tin.

Fortunately, the Rough Guide gave me a list of vegetarian restaurants. I found the first one that Monday afternoon: Self Naturista, a cafeteria. Their *menu* left me with enough food to serve for dinner as well. I would be going back there several times—for paella or quiche perhaps, with a glass of carrot-juice.

Back at the hotel, I could have had trouble with noise, but I didn't. On Monday night, people were talking on the terrace, but I was too sleepy to be disturbed. Seagulls would wake me in the pre-dawn for a few days. On Thursday night, *I* was one of the people on the terrace doing the disturbing—not me individually, but I was with a group of people, not all of whom knew how to keep their voices down. There were a young *Quebecoise* and a young man from New Jersey who were living together in London—living in squalor, by their own account, while working in pubs. The woman seemed amazed and delighted to learn that I was in town for a math conference; she gushed about how she *loved* math. I wasn't sure at first, but she seemed genuine. She had not yet been to university though; likewise the man (who had no interest in math). Presently we were joined by two Italian men—students who were attending the conference. One of them spoke little English, but could communicate with the Canadian in French. The other Italian spoke some Spanish, because he had a Spanish girlfriend. So when a woman yelled out of a window, in Spanish, "Some of us have to work tomorrow!" he could answer "So do we!" (This was true for three of us, since we had lectures to attend at 9 a.m.)

The two North Americans had been drinking a bottle of cheap wine, getting ready to go out on the town. When the bottle was finished, the man went across the street for another, which he bought for the equivalent of a US dollar. The wine helped him forget to keep his voice down. The woman said he had made them go on this trip, although they could barely afford it. She said she didn't really want to go out that night either, since they hadn't been getting much sleep. He said they didn't need sleep. "Come on, you love it!" he said. So off they went. She had written down the location of the conference, seemingly hoping to attend, but we never saw her again.

Other people I met on the terrace:

- A Spanish man with whom I could exchange only smiles; I could not give him a *fuego* for his cigarette, but he showed me the switch near my window that controlled a light on the terrace.
- Two Australian women (different from the one I met the first day) who were sharing an apartment in Dublin. I saw one or other of them frequently, once with a bottle of gin.
- Three Danish men who wanted to live in Barcelona for a month

or two, though they were having trouble finding a place. One of them had his passport stolen.

- Some French people in town for a music festival that happened to be taking place right next to the site of our conference, so that the music could be heard through the walls; I just talked to one of them briefly in the little French I knew, since he didn't know English.
- Three Arab men; one was Lebanese and two were Palestinian. One of the latter allowed that in fact he was an Israeli citizen, though the other one wasn't; they were all students in Valencia, in town for some exams, so they were sorry I would be gone before it was time for their math exam.

Perhaps I had at least ten years on all of these folks, I don't know. I didn't see many people from the conference on the terrace; if I did, they were often working. One of them, from Austria, said he would have liked to do some sightseeing, but he just didn't have time. Well, I did some math on the terrace as well, but I certainly was not going to ignore the place where I was.

Some weeks back, I had bought (at a discount) a Rough Guide "Special" called *First Time Europe*, though I had already made three trans-Atlantic trips. The book strengthened my resolve to travel light, though I disagreed with the author's claim that a money-belt was indispensible; I also didn't agree that you needed five pairs of underwear and seven pairs of socks, or that those little synthetic backpacking towels were no good. On the cover of the book were several photographs: of tourists puzzling over a map, of tourists kicking back with their water-bottles, of gondolas in Venice. A fourth picture was of some bizarre and rather hideous brown towers topped by red and yellow decoration; they looked like plaster chickens advertising a restaurant with down-home cooking. Now I know where the towers are. They are in Barcelona, at the Temple de la Sagrada Família.

On Tuesday, I walked to the Sagrada Família, Gaudi's masterpiece. It is some distance outside the old city, surrounded now by regular city blocks. I had to agree with Orwell: the Anarchists showed bad taste by saving it. Hell, I wish they had blown up the gothic *catedral* in the old city too. Well no, not really; that cathedral is a fine building, but I just wish people weren't lighting candles and genuflecting inside. Over in Istanbul, it's just as well that the Ayasofya lost its Christian function 500 years ago. (Now the Muslims need to leave the Blue Mosque.) As for Sagrada Família, it is unfinished and unequipped for congregational use, so that's good; but the construction continues. Climbing up into the towers was wonderful, and I spent a long time up there, chatting with other tourists, and taking in the breeze and the view. As far as stone buildings are concerned though, I prefer the lines to be straight, unless they are the curves of Gothic arches. Leave the organic forms to organisms. Plant trees and vines next to your stone edifice; don't carve your stone edifice to look like trees and vines. The funny thing is, in a place where Gaudi did put some straight columns, they are not vertical, but slanted. I would have expected them to arch.

I lunched at a nearby vegetarian restaurant. At one o'clock, I was just about the only customer, but by and by, another man had to sit with me, because there was no other space. Other vegetarian restaurants were to prove similarly popular, at hours later than I would expect. I ordered the *menu*, but rather than select one appetizer, one vegetable, one main dish and one dessert, I left the decision to the old man bringing the food. I found a metal shaving in one dish, and a woman took it back to show the cook. When I found another contaminant in the dessert, the woman went around the restaurant, looking for somebody who could explain in English that it was only a piece of almond. It seemed more like a shell to me. Despite the contaminants, I *did* enjoy the food.

After lunch, I continued walking away from the old city, over to the Parc Guëll, also designed by Gaudi. There were arcades lined with slanting pillars that looked like cobblestones cemented together. The pillars *were* that, but underneath the stones, there must have been steel to do the pillars' *job*—unless the roof above was self-supporting. In any case, the Gaudi architecture was dishonest. But OK, it represented his fantasy, and the park was nice to walk around in anyway.

From the top of the hill in the park, there was a grand view; I sat there for quite a while—wondering, in part, whether I could stay awake until dark. As I was coming down, a woman going the other way stopped to talk to me. She was Mexican, but living in New York City. In Barcelona, she was staying in the old city with a friend, whose shared toilet was like the one on the terrace at my hotel: when the friend was suffering from hemorrhoids, everyone in her building knew about it. Yes, and now *I* knew about it. The conversation did revive me though.

The conference began the next day in Casa de Caritat, which had a lovely old courtyard. Like the mathematicians we were, we early arrivals got our conference materials, and quietly and solitarily studied them. There was nobody I recognized for a while. I did start talking to *somebody*; he turned out to be Croatian, studying in Scotland under Angus Macintyre. Angus, I particularly wanted to see.

For lunch that day, I went by myself to yet another veggie restaurant, Biocenter. You asked at the kitchen for your hot food, and could make yourself a salad if you wanted. The chef didn't speak English, but I managed to ask for whatever the people in front of me got. In the dining room were two other unilingual tourists, Katherine and Phil. Her accent was Irish, and his was Australian; their passports were British, and they were living together in Belfast. They were vegetarians, had been in town a couple of days, and had been having trouble finding good food. I was delighted to show them the list in the Rough Guide.

Phil suggested meeting for dinner, and we arranged that he and Katherine would fetch me at my hotel. After the afternoon's math talks, a fellow named Byunghan ended up hanging out with me. He might have wanted to eat dinner with somebody, but everybody else had drifted off. I indicated that I was going to eat at a vegetarian restaurant with some people I had met. I knew he thought vegetarianism was weird, but he said, "OK, I will join you!" He was surprised later to learn that these people I had met were total strangers, and *not* mathematicians. He thought *this* was weird too.

At a cafe on the street, Phil asked whether we had ever been looked down on for our nationalities, as he had for being a Brit; Byunghan mentioned the attitude of African-Americans towards Koreans such as himself. At the restaurant later, Phil did get louder with each organic beer he ordered from the good-natured waitress. He seemed like a decent chap, though he had become a vegetarian only because Katherine was doing the cooking. Katherine wondered whether she wanted to spend her life keeping house for a man; she indicated that Phil showed tendencies of being the "lager lout" that he didn't want people to assume that he was.

Meanwhile, Byunghan had grown nervous and left the dinner, in order to work more on the talk he would give the next day. I gave a talk then as well, but I had not expected to. On Thursday morning, one of the organizers of the conference said it was too bad I was not speaking. He said that if I wanted to speak, they could find time. In fact, because somebody had not shown up, there was a slot that afternoon. I took the chance. After a quick lunch, I worked on my talk in the courtyard of the old hospital. Old here means centuries old; it's not a hospital now, it is a library and arts center. You can't tell about the courtyard from the outside; you just have to know that the little opening in the stone wall leads to a delightful green place within. I worked there, while nearby, young people played music on their guitar and drums; it wasn't distracting, but very pleasant.

The talk went fine, so I was glad that I had had only a few hours to prepare and hence to worry.

I dined that night with Angus and other mathematicians, so I just followed them to the restaurant of their choice. I don't remember what I ate, but it wasn't much. Same thing the next night; I went out with meat-eaters, and had to settle for a salad and some asparagus that was not very good. Had I not known where to find vegetarian restaurants for my other meals, I would not have been happy.

Friday afternoon was free—no talks. I relaxed for a long time under the orange trees in the courtyard of what is now the Mares Museum. Mares was a dead person. I went in to see his collection of crucifixes and such; also, upstairs, his room-after-room of stuff, odds and ends, all neatly displayed: cigar labels, straight razors, whatever; also, pictures of the Black Virgin.

A sufficient reason to visit that and other museums in the old city was to see from the inside the old buildings that housed them. This was especially true of the Picasso museum, which I visited on Saturday afternoon. It was in two adjacent mansions. A mansion had no yard around it, in this case; the yard was the courtyard inside.

On Sunday, I walked up to Montjuic, so called as the hill where Jews lived until their expulsion from Spain. There were the Romanesque and Gothic collections of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, housed in the Palau Nacional. In the Romanesque section, the museum had recreated a number of churches from the surrounding mountains, installing what remained of their frescoes.

There were several other sites on Montjuic, some left over from the 1992 Olympic Games. Behind the Palace, I was trying to get into a garden, but the gate was locked unaccountably. A girl came along, also hoping to get in, and she was pleased to find that I spoke English. She was Russian. We found another way into the garden, then walked up to the peak of Montjuic, where there was an old fortress with a military museum and spectacular views of the city and the sea.

In time I learned that the girl was sixteen, and her name was Olga. She had come to Barcelona with her mother, but her mother had left. Olga was to start taking Spanish lessons the next day; I didn't learn exactly why, except that her mother thought it was a good idea. Olga herself didn't seem so sure. She was nervous about being on her own.

After we had explored the fortress, I announced my inclination to go back to the old city and eat in a vegetarian restaurant; Olga was inclined to come along. I had intended just to walk down the hill, not wanting to trust my nerves to the cable-car. But I could see that Olga really wanted to take the cable-car, so I went along; in fact the ride was no big deal. The car only went halfway down the hill; then we took the funicular railway, like the Tünel in Istanbul.

Olga had not been in the old city; her hotel was somewhere else. I am not sure what impression it made on her. We wandered those narrow streets a while and sat at a cafe. Then Olga decided not to eat with me, but just to go back to her hotel. I don't know what considerations went into her decision, unless she got nervous about spending so much time with this strange man more than twice her age. Or maybe she just got bored. I found the restaurant (Comme Bio), ate my meal and filled out some postcards.

On the next day, Monday, 21 June, I flew to Istanbul via Munich. In Munich I filled out a survey concerning the airport. It was amusing to be sitting there and have a young woman walk up to me and utter several sentences in German. When I explained that I didn't speak German, then she switched effortlessly to English and brought out a different copy of the form. I reported that everything in the airport was fine, remembering only later that this was not true: the bathroom was inconvenient, being downstairs and reached through two doors, and having only one sink.

On the flight to Istanbul were many Turkish families with children, and there was some rambunctiousness. When we landed, many people got up before they were supposed to. They ignored repeated warnings; finally the flight attendant gave up and said "Fine, it is your own responsibility; you are not insured!" My neighbor had been a pleasant Turkish businessman; he had not been assigned the seat next to me, but had moved to accommodate a family with children. For this, the flight-attendants had given him a bottle of wine; as we left, he complimented them for their excellent service in the midst of troublesome passengers.

I made my fourth entrance to Istanbul, but only the first one by air. The passport control people seemed pleased that I could speak the Turkish pleasantries. I had my reunion with Ayşe, an event whose sweetness made up for the time spent waiting for it.

We stayed five nights in Istanbul, at the Hotel Bristol. This was in Beyoğlu, across from the American Consulate; it was down the street from Hotel Monopol, where I had stayed on all other visits. Monopol had not quoted Ayşe a good rate this time. The Bristol was like the Monopol: probably quite impressive when new, but now somewhat run down. Perfectly comfortable, except that the cold water ran hot for so long that we thought it really *was* the hot water.

What did we do in Istanbul? We spent a certain amount of time just hanging out. Ayşe had discovered a *pasaj* with several small cafes; one we took to frequenting was the Cep Sanat Galerisi—the Pocket Art Gallery. It really was tiny. The two or three tables inside were the stands for old sewing machines, complete with treadle. The tables outside were old blocks of masonry.

Tuesday was hot and sunny. We crossed the Bosphorus to visit Ayşe's friend Deniz in her hospital room. That night, we ate in Safran, a restaurant listed as vegetarian in the Rough Guide. With Elisabeth and Stewart (my sister and brother-in-law) the previous summer, I had been unable to find the restaurant; that was because it was on the second floor of a building, and it had no sign on the door. Ayşe and I were the only customers. We noted that the menu featured plenty of meat, and the waiter explained that they had not been getting enough customers as an exclusively vegetarian place. What about the missing sign on the door? Well, there used to be one, but it fell off.

I drank lots of the water that the waiter poured into our glasses; I did not get sick.

On Wednesday, we took the ferry to Eyüp, the tomb of the Prophet's standard-bearer, where he fell in battle at the wall of Constantinople. Many little boys were running about in the white uniforms that signified their imminent circumcisions. Some rich fundamentalist was paying for the ceremony. Creepy. Through the cemetery on the slope above the Golden Horn, we made our way up to the Pierre Loti Cafe. The view was great, but would be better without the highway crossing the Horn.

We took the ferry back to the Balat stop and made our way up to the Kariye Camii, which once was in the countryside, though just within the city wall. We passed a certain amount of squalor to get there. When we did get there, we found that this former Church of the Holy Saviour in Chora was closed; we had to return on Thursday to see its fabulous mosaics and frescoes. Perhaps a book that I have read since was right: you should see Kariye *before* Ayasofya, so that from memories of Kariye you can get a sense of what Ayasofya was like in all its glory.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday afternoon, we walked from Kariye back to the Galata Bridge. We stopped by the Beyazit Mosque, but it was prayer time. A couple of English-speaking tourists were sitting outside, but they seemed disinclined to talk. We walked through the Egyptian Bazaar, housed in a gorgeous old building. We were not shopping for anything. The tendency to sell spices in such a place is odd, since Turkish cooking itself has not much use for them; but tourists must buy them.

After returning to Kariye on Thursday, and visiting Deniz—at home this time, on the European side—we met Ayşe's friend Mustafa and his German cousin Salma in a tea garden on the Bosphorus, in Beşiktaş. Salma and I spoke English, while Ayşe and Mustafa spoke Turkish. Salma was just learning Turkish, so that, like me, she habitually replaced "I beg your pardon?" with *Efendim?*

Istanbul had become cool and rainy—strangely so, according to Ayşe. Friday was especially overcast, but we took the ferry to the Princes' Islands anyway. Nominally within the city, they are another world. We walked, and pedalled rented bicycles, past the cottages on the hillsides. The former house of Sait Faik was unaccountably closed. (He is the "Turkish Mark Twain," according to some; the Rough Guide has an excerpt of his work.) For dinner, we faced the vegetarian's dilemma: how to eat in a place that gets its food from the sea? We were able to stick to our principles nonetheless, eating vegetable *meze* and drinking a bottle of *rakı* as we sat by the water.

On Saturday, 26 June, we had lunch at Nuh'un Ambarı—that's Noah's Granary, a vegetarian establishment associated with Buğday in Bodrum. The storefront and inside walls were adobe; it looked very nice—*groovy,* I would say—, and I hoped that they could at least break even, selling basic whole foods, and handicrafts like wooden spoons. We discovered *Istanbullshit,* a monthly magazine in English; it gave us some ideas of places to check out when we came back. For now though, we had a bus to catch to Ankara.

We stayed in Ankara for ten days. It was good to be at home for a while. Some days, we went to METU—that's Ayşe's university. Some nights, we accepted Gülden *Teyze*'s invitations to dinner; it is always nice eat with Ayşe's parents, except that one is embarrassed by being treated to such good food.

We also ate with a colleague of Ayşe's and his wife at their apartment on campus. Andreas was German; Elizabeth, Austrian; but they had decided to learn Turkish and come to Turkey to live. I was impressed, and they seemed like good people. They had three young children. Andreas composed music, and he demonstrated a computer program that would play his compositions. I was inspired afterwards to spend some time studying musical scales: specifically, the imperfections with which the ideal musical intervals are fit together to form a scale. The best that I could figure (with the help of a web search on Ayşe's computer) was to assign frequencies this way:

$F^\sharp$	G	$G^\sharp$	A	$A^\sharp$	B	C	$C^\sharp$	D	$D^\sharp$	E	F	$F^\sharp$
$\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{4}{5}$	$\frac{5}{6}$	$\frac{8}{9}$	$\frac{15}{16}$	1	$\frac{16}{15}$	$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{6}{5}$	$\frac{5}{4}$	$\frac{4}{3}$	$\sqrt{2}$

(One would never actually play $F^\sharp$, because with C it would make a tritone, the Devil in Music. So I thought that the true interval should be irrational.)

On Friday, Ayşe went to a demonstration in which her union was participating; the government was planning to change the pension scheme, to the detriment of the workers. On the following Sunday (4 July), Ayşe's father, Necip *Amca*, took Gülden *Teyze* and us to the Bolu region, specifically to a couple of mountain lakes. The scenery was gorgeous, but on the way back, we all seemed to agree that the drive was too long for one day. Indeed, Gülden *Teyze* started to develop a headache. (She is subject to migraines.)

On Monday, at METU, we attended a colloquium by a Canadian geometer who was visiting Bosphorus University; his talk was ultimately helpful to my own work. As the day wore on though, *I* got a headache. First I thought it was from not having the *Türk kahvesi* I had grown accustomed to every morning. We went to Ayşe's parents' for dinner as planned, but I couldn't eat, and I vomited what I *had* been able to swallow. Eventually I was able to sleep, and recover, and eat.

The following night, we took a bus to Alanya, on the Mediterranean coast. We had wanted to take the trip during the day, to see the countryside, but such a trip would have taken longer (because it would have taken a longer route, or the bus would have stopped more often). In the Wednesday-morning twilight, I woke from a doze and saw that we were on a gravel road in the mountains. Spectacular scenery, and I figured that the sea was just on the other side. No, we had a long way to go.

When we did reach the sea, I got my first glimpse of banana trees grown for a crop. The climate certainly seemed tropical, once we alit in Alanya; it was as hot a place as I had ever been. The heat was not unbearable, but the water was too warm to be very refreshing. The main discomfort that I was to feel was self-inflicted. On our first afternoon on the beach, we rented chairs and an umbrella, but I forgot to consider that the sun's rays could penetrate the fabric of the umbrella. I didn't use the sunscreen I had brought, and I was burnt.

Mosquitos were Ayşe's persecution. She had to stay covered up at night, despite the heat. That's why I should have brought repellent.

Our *pansiyon* was convenient for having a kitchen on each floor; this partially made up for the inconvenience of not having breakfast included in the price. The towels were grey, and sand made its way to our fourth-floor room and stayed there underfoot. The main unpleasantness was moral, so to speak: the women of the establishment wore headscarves, and the owner himself was a *hacı*, a pilgrim to Mecca.

The old citadel of Alanya is on an enormous rock jutting out into the water. I convinced Ayşe to *walk* up there, rather than take the bus, and she was not ultimately unhappy that I did. One looks down on the new city; one sees old Ottoman houses on the slopes; one passes through the old Selçuk walls of the fortress. Being on top is like attaining a higher plane of existence. Later, swimming in the water below, I would gaze up at the citadel, as if to a sacred place. It could almost be worthwhile to stay in the hotel up there—except that we would not be near a good *lokanta* where we could eat meatless meals. As we headed back down the hill, we did stop to eat *gözleme* and drink *ayran* while seated on cushions at a low table underneath grape-vines. Heaven, but for the tour-buses passing from time to time.

Alanya was equipped to receive tourists from Northern Europe: German, Dutch, and Scandinavian. An English-speaking tourist was an oddity—correction, a tourist whose *mother*-tongue was English was an oddity.

An attraction besides the citadel itself was the Kızıl Kale, a red-brick tower at the base of the hill, built to defend the eastern harbour. Back over on the western side, where we were staying, were the museum and Damlataş, the latter a cave whose air was supposed to be good for the respiration. In the museum, what caught Ayşe's eye especially was a tablet with a Turkish inscription in Greek letters; it was from a nineteenth-century Anatolian church.

The Vitamin Station was a great place to have a fresh orange juice while sitting in the shade of vine leaves. One sat on logs, at a table made from one enormous split log.

We exhausted the attractions that Alanya held for us; on Saturday morning, we caught a bus to Antalya, continuing west from there to Kaş in a smaller bus. Beyond Antalya, the road is not very old; before the road, the only access was by boat. You can imagine that the scenery must be something. Maybe the road should *not* have been built, like California's Pacific Coast Highway. At least the road on Turkey's Turquoise Coast is built on solid rock, and won't be washing away.

A couple of tourists flagged down our bus some ways beyond Antalya. At a rest stop, I tried to catch the man's eye, but he just kept walking by. Perhaps he was shy because he didn't know English, and assumed I knew nothing but. His wife talked to me. She didn't pay much attention to Ayşe though! She was German, as I recall, and he was

Croatian; they had met in Greece, and the language in which they could communicate most easily was French.

Kaş. We stayed at Nur *Pansiyon.* My goodness. From one's balcony, one sees: the mountains along the shore; the sea; the Greek island of Meis in the distance. Tables are beneath the trees of the patio below, for breakfast and just hanging out. Our floor did not get sandy. We stayed six nights. $100 US. It will be more when tourists stop fearing terrorism.

One complaint. I don't know how many times I hit my head on the lintel of the balcony door.

The Rough Guide had described the *pansiyon* as "out of town." Sure, along with all of the other pensions and hotels along the shore. It was a short walk from town centre. The Rough Guide had also suggested that there was a beach, but not much of one. There was not a beach. Each establishment had its terraces built on the rocks, with ladders into the water. After Alanya, the water seemed quite cold. It *was* cold, I thought from currents bringing waters up from the deep; but Ayşe heard that the coldness was from springs. The coldest water was in a layer on the surface. Such water was good to bathe in when the temperature of the air was like that of one's body.

I left the story there, writing "To be continued" although it never was.