A Farewell Letter
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Vicious Circle

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Destination: Iran
  Original text by Giulio Ravizza
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A Farewell Letter

“Good-Bye” from a long time friend...

KELLY DAVIES

Dear Koç,

So I am now back in Canada from my year long adventure in Istanbul and Europe. I feel as if I closed my eyes and had the most wonderful dream and woke up to my former life that doesn’t appear to be at all the same as before I fell asleep. I guess I am going through “reverse culture shock,” something we hear so much about before we go on exchange or may have previously experienced, but no matter how we try to brace ourselves we can never quite foresee the impact of crashing back into our own life.

After two semesters in Istanbul, the best way I can describe it is as magical. Istanbul has qualities that I never imagined a city could possess. It is modern and traditional, full of new life and history. In any given day you can hear the prayer call which sends shivers through your soul and draws you towards the mosque, and the sound of music thumping from one of Istanbul’s amazing clubs that lures you to have “just one more dance.” You can stroll along the Bosphorus and watch the fisherman going about their daily business, listening to the seagulls flying above and with a bit of luck see a pod of dolphins playing in the famous straight. Or you can wander down Istiklal and shop in United Colors of Benetton, Diesel, and a bazaar packed with bargains, stop
for a coffee in Starbucks, or hit Nevizade (beer street as I call it) for a drink. This is a city so full of contrast I could write forever but I hope you get the picture.

The main purpose of my trip to Istanbul was to study at your University. Although the primary motivation for signing up for the exchange program was to travel, it was one of the best decisions I could have made for my academic career. As a psychology major I was uncertain what my studies at Koç would offer. Studying at Koç taught me to look at psychology from a completely new perspective and made me realize (finally!) what I want to do with myself after I graduate.

On a personal level the chance to live within the Turkish culture opened my eyes to a different way of life, a way of life I have definitely brought back to Canada with me and I hope will stay with me forever. I will always cherish the people that have showed me true friendship and the city that showed me that a city can be so much more than a city! I know that I won’t be able to stay away for long!!

Thank you for the experience of a life time,

Sincerely,
Kelly Davies
One of the typical Dutch traditions is Sinterklaas. We celebrate his birthday on the 5th of December. First, I will tell you something about the history of Sinterklaas. Sinterklaas is the Dutch name for Saint Nicholas, who is believed to be the bishop of Myra in the 4th century AC. There are a lot of legends about this person. Saint Nicholas is always portrayed as very open-handed, supplying poor virgins with dowries and restoring dead children to life. In the 9th century, Saint Nicholas of Myra was a cult figure in the Eastern Roman Empire. Italian seamen took his body – a holy relic – to the west, to the city Bari, during the Turkish war of 1087. Between 1200-1500, the cult of Saint Nicholas found its way northward. In this period more than a hundred churches were built in Holland and Belgium to honour Saint Nicholas. The reformation – start of the protestant religion – tried to suppress the cult of the popular ‘Sinterklaas’. As a saint, Nicholas, is no longer remembered. As a fairytale figure of folk song and legend, he is still alive today.

Nowadays, Sinterklaas arrives on the third Saturday of November with his steamship. In the steamship, there are presents for the children and also his wit horse. The horse and Sinterklaas are inseparable. Sinterklaas gets assistance of black people, called zwarte Piet (black Piet). About every child in Holland, there is a little story written in his book. This book is very important, because it states if a child gets a present or not. If the child behaves during the year, she/he gets a present. When the child behaves badly, the zwarte Piet will take this child to Spain. This is the place where he lives. It is a secret address.

Traditionally, Sinterklaas is associated with a number of special sweets and cookies. There are pepernoten (little cookies), speculaas (a gingerbread-type of cookie) and chocolate letters (a piece of chocolate in the shape of a letter).

During the period that Sinterklaas is in Holland, children are allowed to ‘put their shoe on’. This means that a child puts his or her shoe on in front of the fire heard and sings a Sinterklaas song. The also put something in the shoe for Sinterklaas (a glass of milk) and the horse of Sinterklaas (like a carrot). The next day there will be a present in the shoe for the child.
On the 4th of December, there was a celebration of Sinterklaas at Koç for all the female exchange students. The Dutch Girls brought all the typical Sinterklaas cookies and sweets they could get from home to the common room of the S-building. First we drank some tea or hot chocolate and chatted about various things. Then, it was present time! Everybody got a present. This game is played with a dice. Every number has a meaning. When you get “three” you had to give your present to the left. A four meant that you have to give your present to the right. After a certain time, the alarm clock went off, this meant the end of the game and you had your final present.

A few days before the day of Sinterklaas we send an e-mail to all the exchange students with the history of Sinterklaas and also asked them to put their shoe outside of their door. On the day of Sinterklaas, they found a little present in their shoe. It was a bag with typical Sinterklaas cookies and sweets. It also had a letter made of chocolate. It was the first letter of their first name or surname.

We all enjoyed our little celebration for “Sinterklaas” at Koç University.

Anneke Tolsma
is this...?

THE BEGINNING?

THE END?

Where we are right here is the beginning of the end...

Chuck Palahniuk
I all advise you to see Bordeaux as a city tour instead of experiencing the strange business school or its Alcatraz-like dormitories called the Domofrance which literally looks like a prison and called Alcatraz by all the taxi drivers of the city as well. Other than the business school and the dormitories you can feel that you’re in a magnificent middle-age city with the millennium’s technology excluding the French banks out of this technology. The people of Bordeaux who call themselves “Le Bordelaise” didn’t change any of the architecture of the old city until the present. I think that’s important for us to take a sample from French people. They all respect to their history and their architecture. Another thing that I observed is their public transportation with its high-tech railway system, already established infrastructure and their fair social security system. Unfortunately Turkey is still behind about a half century from France in terms of social security. In spite of trying to join their union, we’re still better than them about our social security. In spite of trying to join their university, we’re still better than them about our railway system, already established infrastructure and their fair social security system.

Working with students who are from different nationalities, trying to harmonize with the French culture and their magnificently polite language, being patient against unexpected cultural conflicts gave me the chance to know myself better and to have an outside look at Turkey from a broader picture. If you have the chance to participate in this program, you should join and see the results on yourself. I will be pleased to share all my experiences and observations about France and about the Erasmus Program, so please feel free to contact me at gokaybobek@gmail.com.
I have come to the Netherlands 5 months ago and I have only a few weeks left before leaving back to Turkey. It has been a great experience with lots of people from every corner of the world.

In the beginning, I had to say goodbye to all of my luxurious habits and start a brand new life in a campus which looks like after-earthquake prefabricated houses. I had every kind of being in my flat including the mice which seemed to have been domesticated during my last weeks of my stay, since they were not even afraid of me. Besides, I had to ride a bicycle in every kind of weather while trying to hold the wheel with one hand and the umbrella with another.

Despite the negative first impression I had in the beginning, I’ve enjoyed Tilburg and the Netherlands more than I could imagine. The campus I stayed in was eventually a cozy place to live in. We had regularly common dinners, parties in Tilburg and came into contact with both the Dutch students and international students. One day, we were eating the famous Dutch mashed potatoes, the next day some people from Peru were cooking delicious wraps and fajitas served with their traditional drink “sangria”.

Afterwards, the destination was the discos in the center of Tilburg, where traditional Dutch music along with 80’s pop music was for me the unexpected but rather cheerful combination to dance. Rarely though, Tarkan’s “Kiss Kiss” was being played there and those were the times when me and Demet appeared more enthusiastically on the dance stage. In the end, I discovered that the Netherlands does not only consist of clogs, windmills, canals and joints but it is full of with nice, open-minded people who have tolerance and are ready to talk to any people.
I was not able to imagine that Tehran’s sky could be so blue. The very first thing that astonished me of this city was limpid and brilliant color of its oriental skies. I am sure that my “astonishment” depends from what our media impose us through television news, even though I do not like to watch TV. The skies of Tehran is always black on TV; the people of Tehran wears always aggressive green ribbons with “horrible” Arabic scriptures, which suggests that every simple man in Iran is a terrorist. Actually, I agree neither of those.

The first thing that I would like to suggest: take every idea about Iran, which you had before and throw them all to trash. We are trained to see the things from the eyes of the media, but it is necessary to depart from idea that not every government is voice of their people. When people have problems expressing themselves, like in the Iranian case, it is absolutely impossible to judge that country with their governmental propaganda. The videos of the anti-Israel or anti-USA manifestations showed in television are the productions of
governmental set-up. It is time we wake up, ignore TV and try to understand what is really happening!

The Iranians are the most adorable and hospitable people that I have ever met in my life. We were 8 students from KU and each one of us was invited to the houses of the people and they were so warm and generous. The gentleman who was seated beside me continued to give me money because he wanted that I try their typical ice cream and offer it to my friends. And surely, there is no opportunism in this behavior. Nobody asked us anything in exchange. NEVER!

When we first step into Iran, we were confronted with new realities that forced us to restart some of the learning processes. The first thing that we had to learn was to write our names in Persian language. We also tried different tastes (wonderful spices) and savored each taste for the rest of the trip. These spices surely have never been tasted by our people back home. Those spices are not
imported to our countries or when they are, they lose their real taste. Beyond the feelings, their architecture is completely unknown. The structure of those buildings is never shown in our history books that is why we were caught unprepared. We felt ourselves unable to appreciate those of things that we had in front of us. It is like measuring a distance of two cities without referring to a map or to metro plan. On the other hand, we felt ourselves like Adam who discovered the paradise on earth, gave names to things and places. We had the drunkenness of observing and let ourselves be astonished in every angle and game of light.

Slightly outside of Tehran, to the feet of the high mountains that circle the city, there is the last dwelling of the Shah of Persia. If you take a moment to look at the photos, you can see the beauty and elegance of these places, which is too different from those European beauties. The mirrors and the carpets are in great style and they are preponderant. The effect is extraordinarily beautiful, and maybe because western type of beauty that we are used to is quite different than this.

The astonishment cannot catch your attention easily in seeing our two friends wearing the veil but please try! The rediscovery of the world lies also through the observations of an alternative model of man and woman. Two explosive, smart and uncontrollable girls, under that big dark clothing were completely lost.

The experience was extraordinary for all of us, even though many of us had seen enough around the world. This travel to Iran astonished all of the eight
exchange students who left their homes (Milan, Naples, Frankfurt and Manhattan), from a particular country like Turkey. This means every one of you as well would be stunned with the beauties of Iran.

If this article interested you and if you would like to see photos of this trip come to visit my web page www.adlibitumviaggiando.com and click to the section of Iran.

Giulio Ravizza,
Exchange Student from Bocconi University,
Milan / Italy

The original text is in Italian and it has been translated into English by Mehmet Çakmak, a first year KU student, majoring in Business Administration.
Halloween is perhaps one of the most prominent aspects of American culture. On October thirty-first, every year, all over the country, men, women and children of all ages, shapes and shades celebrate this holiday rooted in ancient Celtic traditions with influence. It is an appealing holiday to celebrate because costume wearing; among other things such as going “trick-or-treating” are all very enjoyable feats to pursue.

Halloween enthusiasts manifest their super-selves, their secret-selves or their scary-selves by the wearing of a costume. For children, most popular selections range from Bat Man to Barbie. Adults who celebrate though, especially from my experiences and observations from the years I’ve spent in NYC at the famed Greenwich Village Halloween parade, display creativity and a level of appropriateness that varies entirely from what could be deemed as decent.

However glad I am to be studying at Koç University, I must admit that despite being receptive to the different cultures and customs of the new place where I presently reside, I realized with stubbornness that there are just some things I cannot abandon.

Halloween is one of those things.

So, what did I do?

I threw a Halloween party, of course!

The festivities took place in my comfortable poolside situation in Etiler. Present were the vibrant colors and funny textures of the scary to sexily clad Italian, Dutch and North American exchange students.
The distinguished guests were: Allessio, the human garbage can of Koç University, Alberta, the alluring gypsy pirate, Adalberto, the cheap date from Istiklal Caddesi, Andrea, the playboy Arabian oil tycoon, Allessandro, the only boxer to ever beat Rocky Balboa, Fleur, the pretty sheriff from the South, Lotte, the flirty secretary, Martinee, the villager of Anatolia, Kelly the green care bear of hugs, Anneke, the doctor on duty, Giulio, the raging maniac gorilla, Massimo, from NYC, Michelle, the Federico, the spooky punk rocker and myself, a pink butterfly of sorts.

Together we celebrated the rites of Hallow's Eve accordingly. We danced in jubilee, ate a home-cooked meal, drank far beyond our means of consumption and, as a result, had a very pleasant time, indeed! Perhaps the high—light of the night was when we played a series of socially interactive games that employed all of us to sit in a large circle and exchange humiliating tales, many a laugh and once again, many toasts! The most commonly spoken phrase that night was “Serafe!”

After five hours of fun, the party came to a conclusion, as did I on the matter of tradition, friendship and the challenges to be faced when far from home. Halloween, like many popular holidays, originates from a tradition with a religious perspective however holds a very powerful secular prominence to date. It is another viable excuse to unite with loved ones, dance to good music, and eat delicious food. At the end of the day, what more could you ask for but, “Trick or treat!!”
Adjusting to the Old Routine

Yasemin Erdem

January 2007…
Arrival to Turkey…
8.00 in the morning…
So strange that I feel both
like I haven’t been here for a
long time and also as if I’ve
just left with my suitcases in
my hands. Everything is like
a dream not to mention the
fact that even the dreams are
weird. One day in French the
other in English; one day in
Bordeaux, the next day in
God knows where it is.

Outside, everything is the same, and still I don’t know why, but it doesn’t
seem to me the same anymore. There are no more German, French,
Spanish, Chinese and Turkish guys all around the same table as if it’s a
traditional joke. The rice prepared in harder conditions somehow tasted
better. The weirdness is followed by the missing things, streets, people;
looking at the photos, and trying to adapt to the old routine.
But after all, it has been such a great experience…
Erasmus. It’s a word which is enough to accelerate your heart beats both
going and coming back.
Bond University is located on the Gold Coast where offers a wonderful climate and known as the most popular tourist destination. Because of being a popular tourist destination, there are plenty of activities, shopping and nightlife to keep you entertained during your free moments.

As an exchange student I had the chance to experience a different lifestyle, culture and all while earning credits towards my degree. Studying at Bond provided a global outlook that emphasized the ties among nations and cultures and the necessity of working together.

At Bond, social life was great, the university was beautiful and the students so friendly. There was a huge organized night life, also had great bars both on campus and nearby. The university had an extensive social life with events on almost daily. So you don’t have time to get bored. Free barbeques and brunches near the lake were the ones that I mostly liked. Also I had the opportunity to meet more new people at various other events like theme parties, theatre nights and day trips. I bet you won’t realize how the time passes so fast while running between clubs, classes, and the beach triangle at Bond University.
Exchange Students at KU for The Spring 2007 Semester

We are honored to welcome our new exchange students on campus as well as still proudly hosting the ones from the last semester.

**American University**
Mark Meyer • Kiersten Batzli • Alex Whitaker • Elyse Franko–Filipasic

**European Business School**
Thorsten Gültekin • Andreas Hatzian

**UPENN**
Michael Ellis Lanaux

**Singapore Management University**
Sazzali Sabandi

**Universita’ Degli Studi di Firenze**
Federico Ortu

**University of Tilburg**
Yasin Babacan

**York University**
Elif Genç • Luke Natanek
If you would like to study and experience the life abroad for a semester you can also apply for the exchange programs. Check out the minimum requirements and decide which program suits you the most. Take your time and decide.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact us.

IF YOU HAVE DECIDED TO EXPERIENCE
THE ERASMUS STUDIES ACROSS EUROPE
YOUR APPLICATION DEADLINE IS
MARCH 15!

For further information or other questions:
You may stop by the Exchange Office on the first floor of the Administration Building A.
You can also contact us via phone or send an e-mail.

Exchange Programs Coordinator: Gökem Arsoy
http://exchange.ku.edu.tr
✉ garsoy@ku.edu.tr
✉ exchange@ku.edu.tr
☎ 90.212.338.1851
PARTNER INSTITUTIONS FOR THE ERASMUS PROGRAM

**BELGIUM**

Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium / [www.ugent.be](http://www.ugent.be)
CASE students only
Quota: 4 students per year

Vesalius College, Brussels, Belgium / [www.vesalius.edu](http://www.vesalius.edu)
CASE students only
Quota: 2 students per year

**DENMARK**

Aarhus School of Business, Aarhus, Denmark / [www.asb.dk](http://www.asb.dk)
CASE & MBA students only
Quota: 3 students per year

**FRANCE**

Bordeaux Business School, Bordeaux, France / [www.bordeaux-bs.edu](http://www.bordeaux-bs.edu)
CASE students only (language of instruction is French & English)
Quota: 6 students per year

**GERMANY**

European Business School, Oestrich-Winkel, Germany / [www.ebs.edu](http://www.ebs.edu)
CASE & MBA students only
Quota: 1 student per year

Leipzig Graduate School of Management, Leipzig, Germany / [www.hhl.de](http://www.hhl.de)
MBA students only
Quota: 1 student per year

Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Bochum, Germany / [www.rub.de](http://www.rub.de)
MA in Psychology students only
Quota: 2 student per year

WHU, Otto Beisheim Graduate School of Management, Vallendar, Germany / [www.whu.edu](http://www.whu.edu)
CASE & MBA students only
Quota: 2 students per year

**GREECE**

Ioannina University, Ioannina, Greece / [www.uoi.gr](http://www.uoi.gr)
History students only
Quota: 1 student per year
ITALY

Bocconi University, Milan, Italy / www.unibocconi.it
CASE & MBA students only (language of instruction is Italian & English)
Quota: 10 students per year

Universita’ Degli Studi Di Firenze, Florence, Italy / www.ucm.es
CASE & MBA students only (language of instruction is Italian)
Quota: 3 students per year

NORWAY

BI Norwegian School of Management, Oslo, Norway / www.bi.edu
CASE students only
Quota: 4 students per year

SPAIN

Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Madrid, Spain / www.ucm.es
CASE students only (language of instruction is Spanish & English)
Quota: 2 students per year

Universitat de les Illes Balears, Palma de Mallorca, Spain/ www.uib.es
CASE students only (language of instruction is Spanish, Catalan & English)
Quota: 4 students per year

Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain / www.ucm.es
CASE students only
Quota: 1 students per year

THE NETHERLANDS

Groningen University, Groningen, the Netherlands / www.rug.nl
CASE & CL students only
Quota: 2 students from each faculty per year

Technische Universiteit Eindhoven, Eindhoven, the Netherlands/w3.tn.tue.nl/en/
GSES students only
Quota: 2 students per year

Tilburg University, Tilburg, the Netherlands / www.tilburguniversity.nl
CASE & CAS students only
Quota: 6 students per year

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands / www.english.vu.nl
GSES students
Quota: 2 students per year

THE UNITED KINGDOM

University of Essex, Colchester, the UK / www.essex.ac.uk
CE professors only