

LONDON SEPTEMBER 9th - KATMANDHU NOVEMBER 14th 1969

ENCOUNTER OVERLAND

Expedition to India Kashmir and Nepal

ENCOUNTER OVERLAND

WREN PARK, SHEFFORD, BEDFORDSHIRE

Telephone: Chicksands 2470

Encounter Overland's Expeditions to India in 1969 follow the same pattern as former years and as always we want to give you a clear idea of what Encounter Overland is about and what you can expect from this journey with us.

Encounter Overland is an organisation that operates long range expeditions. It began in 1963 and ever since has particularly interested itself in the routes that lead to India, studying the problems, adjusting to the changes, experimenting with detours. As a result we have considerable knowledge of the route and experience of the conditions. We believe this experience has shown us what people want and what can be offered.

Being an expedition it is a basic principle to be independent and self-contained. At the same time travelling in a small group there are opportunities to mingle with the people and enjoy local food. The expedition is planned to allow time for people to see and learn something of the countries through which they pass. With this in mind the itinerary takes us, in easy stages, by the most interesting rather than the most direct routes, with opportunities for exploration and relaxation.

Long days' drives are confined to the less interesting stretches and night driving is kept to a minimum. Adventure is combined with good organisation and what is undertaken is sensible and safe.

These friendly and informal expeditions have always attracted people with individuality looking for something really different.

THE PRICE

When you travel with Encounter Overland you have paid an inclusive price. The cost takes into account transport and ferry fares, food, accommodation, insurance and our responsibility in the event of a serious problem, of getting people home or on to their destination without extra cost. Included, too, is the one week full board on the houseboats on the lakes in Kashmir. There are no hidden extras and apart from other advantages this leaves a Briton with his £50 allowance intact, to be spent on an occasional local meal, drinks, etc., and of course gifts and souvenirs.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT CAMPING, VEHICLES. AND FOOD

CAMPING along the route is pleasant at these times of the year. In Europe and near the big cities of Asia organised camping sites are generally used. The facilities of mission hospitals and police outposts are available to us where necessary in outlying tribal areas. Experience of Asian hotels has shown us the advantages of camping, which also keeps the price down. Tents, camp-beds, etc., are all supplied, you need only your own sleeping-bag.

OUR VEHICLES, 1 1/2 ton four-wheel-drive Austins powered by 3.8-litre British Leyland diesel engines, are extensively modified and specially equipped to meet our very exacting requirements. They are rugged and dependable yet fast and spacious. Whenever possible it is our policy to have two vehicles travelling together. Within the framework of the itinerary they are independent but there is always the support one can give the other.

The trucks are designed to seat up to twelve people travelling in comfort with their belongings and the equipment, food, water, etc. Cooking is done as easily inside as outside; there is room to stand up and prepare food on gas stoves and for the group to sit down at a table and enjoy it.

GOOD FOOD is an essential part of a good trip; most of our provisions are taken with us, supplemented with fresh food bought en route.

THE GROUP LEADER

LEADERS have a wide scope of expedition experience and of working with a group. As skilled drivers their concern is the safety of the group and maintenance of the vehicle.

THE GROUP

MEN and WOMEN who are interested in a journey like this and realise what is involved are able to contribute enormously to its success. We don't look for a particular type but for people who, with a spirit of enquiry and goodwill, can help in their different ways to make the expedition enjoyable.

A CHOICE

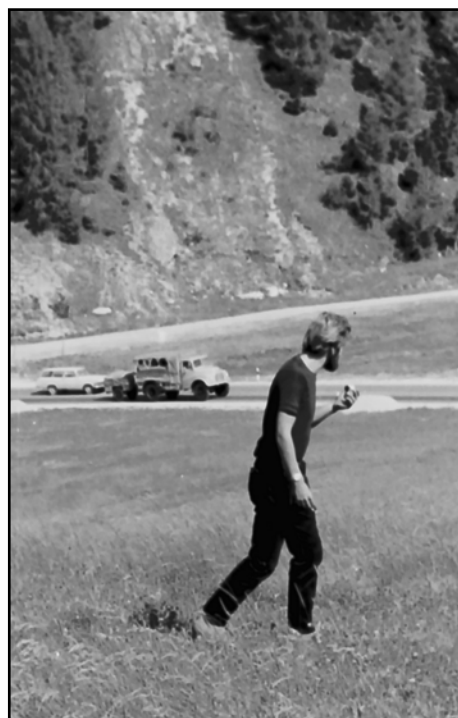
Though people who go to India do so for a variety of reasons, they may very probably be divided into those who plan to travel beyond India and those who will be returning to Europe.

FOR THOSE CONTINUING to Australasia or the Far East, Calcutta has direct links with Bangkok, Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong and Japan.

THOSE RETURNING can do so with the same expedition or with a later one. Alternatively it is possible to fly either from Bombay to London via Cairo or from Kabul via Moscow. It is also possible to return to Europe by ship via South Africa. Prices are reasonable. Contact us for more details.

THE EXPEDITION

THE JOURNEY TO INDIA has been described as one of the last great adventures within the reach of any traveller. If it is an opportunity not to be missed, so too is it an opportunity not to be wasted. Go properly informed, prepared and equipped and it will be an exciting and often hilarious experience.



COST

70 Days — London—Calcutta, 11,000 miles - - - £178

Return Overland — direct route — 25 days approximately - £50

(Please ask for separate return booking form)

BOOKING AND PAYMENT

A deposit of £18 should be sent with the Booking Form. This assures you your place. You will receive an official receipt. The balance is due ten days before departure. Cheques should be made payable to Encounter Overland.

REFERENCES

For your reference our bankers are Lloyds Bank Ltd., Cox's & King's Branch, 6 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1. Other references will be supplied on request.

INSURANCE

Included in the cost of the expedition is travel insurance for each individual member of £2,000 Personal Accident, £200 Medical Expenses and £100 Personal Effects. The Insurance Proposal Form will be sent to you on receipt of your deposit and should be filled in and returned to us. You will receive your policy at the time of departure. The policy is for 100 days and thus covers the duration of the expedition to Calcutta and an extra 30 days for all, whether returning or travelling on. If you wish to make your own insurance arrangements there is a £6 reduction of the cost; but clients must have effective insurance cover.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

PASSPORTS must be valid for the length of the trip and have sufficient pages (eight at least) for visas and border stamps. British and Commonwealth Subjects require TRANSIT VISAS for Iran. They are easily obtained by simply presenting your passport at the Iran Embassy or sending it to them. Their address is 50 Kensington Court, London, W.8; tel. WESTern 5225. Other visas for Afghanistan and Nepal will be obtained by the group leader en route.

INOCULATIONS

Injections for Smallpox and Cholera are required. Ministry of Health Certificates must be shown at several borders. You should contact your local doctor or The Hospital of Tropical Diseases, 4 St. Pancras Way, London, N.W.1. Tel. EUSton 4411 (no charge), or The Vaccination Centre, 53 Great Cumberland Place, W.1. Tel. 01.262.6456 (charge 1 guinea each). Vaccination against Typhoid is also strongly recommended and is usually obtainable at the same time.

MEETINGS

Throughout the year there are meetings at The Royal Overseas League in London. Some are general for people to meet us and discuss plans further, others are for those going on a particular trip, contact us to find out when they are. Through these meetings are useful and enjoyable they are not essential and of course people join expeditions who have not been able to meet us beforehand.

Alternatively come and see us at Wren Park. People are always welcome here at our workshops and office, though prior notice is preferred.

OTHER DETAILS

A guide to Money (Exchange Control and Sterling Area), clothing and personal equipment, final departure arrangements, mailing addresses etc. will be provided at meetings or by post.





I took the 'hippie trail' to Katmandhu in September 1969 (age 21). Travelling by truck and Landrover from London through Europe and through the Alps to the Balkan Countries, Greece and Turkey and across the Bosphorous, through Asia Minor, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and to Northern India with an excursion to Kashmir and ending up in Nepal in November. Today this overland trip is not possible since the fall of the Shah in Iran in 1979 and war in Afghanistan since 2001. Kashmir too is now divided and areas of Pakistan are unsafe to visit. I have copied the various documents I have kept since then, added notes from the record I made throughout the trip and the few photographs I still have. I hope you will find this little bit of history interesting.

Peter Tillotson

August 2019

OVERLAND TO INDIA, KASHMIR AND NEPAL

SEPTEMBER 9TH - NOVEMBER 14TH 1969

Timings

THE ITINERARY

Approx
Distances

EUROPE

Leaving Dover at midnight we dock in Ostend at dawn. What will probably be the earliest start of the trip aims to get us quickly through Belgium and south through Luxembourg to near Heidelberg. We then cross part of the Black Forest to Munich and at Salzburg, against a beautiful background of mountains, enter Austria. Soon the Alps close round us and we climb the magnificent Radstadt Pass and descend to Villach.

We leave Austria by the Wurzen Pass and go to Bled with its lake and castle, before continuing on the Yugoslav autoput to Zagreb and south to Belgrade. We travel through the vineyards and cotton fields of Serbia and Macedonia stopping to shop in the country markets and camping beside the rivers.

From the border with Greece it is only a few hours to the shores of the Aegean. Along the coast on the way to Istanbul are marvellous beaches giving us our first chance to swim, and a little beyond the small fishing town of Kavala we load the vehicles on a boat and sail to Thassos, an island with beautiful beaches and interior.

TURKEY

Istanbul, port and metropolis, is packed with interest. The three days and nights we spend here are time to visit the famous mosques and the Topkapi Palace and explore the water-front and the Grand Bazaar. Great salesmen these Turks with no regard for your £50 allowance!

We take the ferry across the Bosphorous into Asia and meet the coast again at Izmir, then visit Ephesus, one of the great Greek cities of Asia Minor, and travel inland to Pamukkale (Hierapolis) with its Roman Baths and hot spring where Paul the Apostle was martyred in A.D. 80. The following evening will bring us to the south coast with its magnificent seascapes studded with the ruins of antiquity and Crusader Castles; Antalya, Aspendos, Side, Anumur to be explored. One can bathe from the rocks and beaches of unspoilt coves.

From Mersin we travel inland to the heart of Asia Minor and visit Goreme, a place of eerie splendour. of troglodytes dwellings and beautifully freacoed cave churches of the early Christians. After Erzurum, as the landscape becomes more desolate, we pass Mount Ararat and cross into Iran.

THE DESERTS

Between the border and Teheran is the region of Azarbaijan, an area of empty plains once the kingdom of the Medes. From Teheran we make a special detour 700 miles south across the high

PERSONAL LOG

September 9

Depart Victoria Station

September 10

Docked Ostend 4.30am

Travelled as far as Bastogne (Site: Battle of Bulge 1944). Landrover in garage for repair all afternoon.

September 11

Lunch at Saarbrücken. Good weather - Austin's sides rolled up. Camped night at Heidelberg.

September 12

Visited Dachau Concentration Camp

September 13

Pass Salzburg then over The Alps to Bled. Weather remarkably fine - travelling with side flaps rolled up

September 14

From Bled travelled through Zagreb to Brod (halfway to Belgrade). Bad road - saw many accidents

September 15

From Brod to outskirts of Thessalonika (over 500 miles). Stopped in Belgrade for lunch. Warm day - slept in open air for first time in trip.

September 16

Spent day in Thessalonika for repairs then travelled to Kavalla for night. First illnesses and some dysentery (not me!)

September 17

Arrived Thassos at lunchtime. Set up camp by the sea - sea calm and warm, sky clear and bright. Good food (for those able to eat), cheap wine and Ouzo. Very relaxed!

September 18

Departed Thassos late afternoon. Camped on top of a hill in the middle of nowhere overnight.

September 19

On way to Istanbul, stopped midday outside Alexandropolis. Delayed departure to Istanbul while repairs to damaged chassis on trailer. Arrived Istanbul late night. Istanbul 4 nights. Sightseeing and shopping.

September 23

Crossed Bosphorus and motored hard all day

September 24

Arrived midday in Ephesus. Travelled evening to Priene

September 25

Arrived midday at Pamukalle and Hieropolis. After lunch bathed in warm water pool. Overnight near Pamukalle.

September 26

Wonderful drive through Taurus Mountains. Camped in hills above Antalya.

September 27

Visits to Termessos, Pirge, Aspendos and Side. Overnight camp by sea at Side

September 28

Late start for for drive to Anumur. Lunch on the way at Alanya. Wonderful views. Night by castle at Anumur.

September 29

To Silike by midday - relaxing afternoon and evening on the beach. Rowdy evening!

September 30

Hard drive to Mersin and then inland to Goreme. All remaining day in Goreme for visit to rock dwellings

October 1

All day drive to Kayseri

October 2

All day drive to Malatya

October 3

Lovely drive through mountains to Erzurum.

October 4

Erzurum to Marand (Azerbaijan)

October 5

Marand to Takestan (Iran) - arrive Tehran late afternoon

Day 8
Thessalonika
2570kms

Day 11
Istanbul
3170kms

Day 18
Antalya
4700kms

Day 25
Erzurum
6000kms

Day 27
Tehran
7220kms

arid plateau through Quom to Isfahan and Shiraz.

Isfahan is surely the loveliest city in Persia. It is famous for its mosques and bridges and for the continuance of its ancient crafts. You will still see the goldsmiths and silver-smiths, the potters and the carpet weavers at work and can courteously be asked to buy.

Day 32
Shiraz
8140kms

One of the mightiest cities of the ancient world lies farther to the south. Situated in what is now little more than a wilderness, Persepolis was once the heart of the great Persian Empire, the summer palace of the kings that was finally destroyed by Alexander. We visit Shiraz, the literary centre of old Persia, with its fabled gardens and perhaps try to discover for ourselves the solitude always evident in the songs of the great poets.

Day 34
Tehran
9060kms

We return to Teheran and can visit the Royal Palace to see the peacock throne, and the crown jewels in the vault of a bank. Leaving Teheran we cross the Elburz mountains by the Demavend Pass and descend to Babolsar, a quiet fishing village on the Caspian Sea, we then continue along the fertile coast and through the forests of Gorgan.

It is not long before we are away from the climatic influence of the Caspian and back in the desert. On the dust road to Mashhad we are almost certain to meet camel trains and nomadic settlements on the fringes of the Great Salt Desert. Mashhad is the city of a shrine second only to Mecca and a place of pilgrimage.

Day 39
Herat
10280kms

The first city in Afghanistan is Herat. On the outskirts are the funeral towers where the Zoroastrians, instructed neither to burn or bury their dead, hung them for the vultures. A good road takes us to Kandahar in the south and then to Kabul. Beside a lake overlooking the city we camp with the mountains of the Hindu Kush around. It is the end of the trek across deserts and we can relax. The short day's journey from here to the border of Pakistan is through wild mountain scenery. Following the Kabul river through a huge ravine the road snakes down to the level of the plains.

THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT

From the customs post at Torkham the road winds up the Khyber Pass and it is not hard to see the strategic importance of the place, nor hard to understand the romance. Around the Frontier Agency Post armed Pathan tribesmen sit talking and laughing in the sun. Beyond is Peshawar and the fertile Indus valley.

Day 44
Rawalpindi
11580kms

In Peshawar are the bustle and colours and smells that will become so familiar as we travel in India. We cross the Indus at Attock and pass through Rawalpindi to Lahore, where one ought to visit the Red Fort and find the old siege cannon known as "Kim's Gun." At the shady place called Banda Singh Wala is the check point into India.

Once in the Indian Punjab we go to the old capital

October 6

Departed Tehran late evening to Isfahan

October 7

Arrived Isfahan midday. Sightseeing afternoon

October 8

Departed Isfahan afternoon to Persepolis

October 9

Arrived Persepolis midday - visit all afternoon

October 10

Arrived Shiraz early morning for half day visit.

Suffered in very dry heat and dense fumes although bazaar interesting

October 11

Return trip to Tehran via Isfahan

October 12

Arrived Tehran midday

October 13

Departed Tehran after lunch.

October 14

Travelled all day. Terrible road

October 15

Stopped in Mashhad for repairs to Landrover

October 16

Returned back to Mashhad for repairs to broken half-shaft

October 17

Crossed border to Afghanistan. 4 hours at customs! Arrived Herat late afternoon

October 18

Arrived Kandahar

October 19

Arrived Kabul early afternoon

October 20

Departed Kabul evening after day sightseeing.

Camped other side of Kabul Gorge

October 21

Passed customs and arrived Peshawar midday.

Tedious drive through Khyber Pass.

October 22

Spent morning in Rawalpindi and travelled on to Islamabad

October 23

In Lahore

Personal note

In the log for November 1st I record some feelings about the trip. There were 33 people on the trip of both sexes, from all backgrounds, from teenagers to a 65 year-old Irish peer. By now there were factions within the group causing a lot of friction generally. While we had set off in high spirits, through Europe and Turkey there was a generally friendly atmosphere within the group. But being constantly on the move coupled with the discomforts of camping and constant illness, nearly everyone was now looking forward to the end of the trip. For me it was still an exciting adventure.

Amritsar which is the holy city of the Sikhs. We can enter the Golden Temple and will probably long remember the music, the incense and the flowers.

We now make the second detour to spend a week in the Vale of Kashmir. We pass through Jammu and begin the climb through green hazy foothills to 8,000 ft. The road goes into a milelong tunnel. On the other side we can look out across Kashmir. On the lakes and on the river near Srinagar the famous houseboats are moored. Arrangements to live aboard have already been made and we are expected.

The food, both Indian and European, is excellent and at last a real bedroom and bath.

The idea in Kashmir is to really relax. There could be no better place and the organisers realise the need for a change in the mode of life and for people to be able to do just as they please. You can go pony trekking or walking in the mountains - the boatmen will pack you a lunch - or take a boat out on the lakes, swim and water ski or you can just wander around the fabulous bazaars. This really is a most beautiful country. To the north lie the mountains of the Karakorum. some of the highest in the world. in the bazaars and from the boats are sold many types of beautiful and intricate ornaments and cloth and carpets and precious stones.

After a week we leave for Delhi. From Delhi we will go on to Agra where on the banks of the Jumna river, stands the lovely Taj Mahal. Nearby is Fatehpur Sikri, the now deserted capital of the Great Mogul rulers.

The route then takes us through Gwalior and Jhansi to the temples of Khajuraho with their minutely detailed mani-festations of Kama--physical love and virtue--in the peaceful setting of rural India.

We then return to the land of the rivers and go to Benares, the unchanging sacred city on the holy river Ganges. It is here that a Hindu comes to end his days and have his remains cremated on a sandalwood pyre on the river bank. There are many interesting temples in the old city where the cows browse amidst priests and pilgrims.

To go to Nepal we must cross the river Ganges near Patna and drive north. Almost as soon as we cross the frontier the scenery changes, At first it is still flat but the dry plain is behind us and we drive through lush tropical vegetation with frequent streams and rivers pouring down from the mountains. The Nepalese call this low-lying jungle area the Terai. Now we begin to climb one of the most fantastic roads in the world to over 8,000 ft. and descend to Khatmandu. The scenery is breathtaking. As far as the eye can see from west to east are the peaks of the Himalayas. From Khatmandu we can trek to some vantage points like Nagakot from where Everest can be seen away in the east. Khatmandu is a delightful town, much of it is timber built, including the famous Monkey Temple where travellers come on foot from all over Nepal.

Day 47
Srinagar
17000kms

Day 54
Delhi
17810kms

Day 59
Veranasi
(Benares)
18650kms

Day 62
Katmandhu
19160kms

Day 65
London
(7650kms to
Katmandhu)

October 24

Arrived India. 3 ½ hours at customs! Travelled on to Kashmir and camped near Jammu

October 25

Departed Jammu early morning and drove through Vale of Kashmir. Arrived late evening in Shrinagar

October 26

Oh - the luxury of a hot bath! Wonderful peace on the lake. Explored Srinagar afternoon.

October 27 - 30

Weather turned wet and misty but enjoyed some duck shooting and visit to Gulmarg and up into the mountains

October 31

Departed Shrinagar and arrived evening in Jumma

November 1

Arrived Amritsar and visited Golden Temple

November 2

Arrived Delhi after all day travelling. Stayed night in YMCA Hostel

November 3

Delhi sightseeing. Moved to central hotel for night. Attended concert by Assam folksingers and dancers.

November 4

Rejoined group and travelled on to Agra. Arrived too late for sunset at Taj Mahal.

November 5

Visited Taj Mahal early morning - more beautiful than expectations. Travelled on to Fatehpur Sikkri for visit and then back to Gwalior

November 6

Travelled from Gwalior to Khajuraho

November 7

Khajuraho sightseeing morning - found the 1000 years old temples absolutely fascinating. Lovely drive to Benares in afternoon

November 8

Benares sightseeing

November 9

Travelled through Patna to Raxaul (on the border with Nepal) Stayed overnight in tourist lodge.

November 10

Late crossing into Nepal. Arrived late evening in Katmandhu. Raining.

November 11-13

Realxing stay in Katmandhu

Personal note

I had set out on this trip to escape problems in my private life. I had been expected to work in the family newspaper business but had already decided I no longer wanted this. The trip gave me time to work out what I really wanted. On my return to London I decided on marriage to my girlfriend and a career in the arts. The trip had opened my eyes to all sorts of possibilities and I was thinking about dealing in Oriental Art. As it turned out, I went to Manchester University to study art history.

HEIDELBERG
SEPTEMBER 11

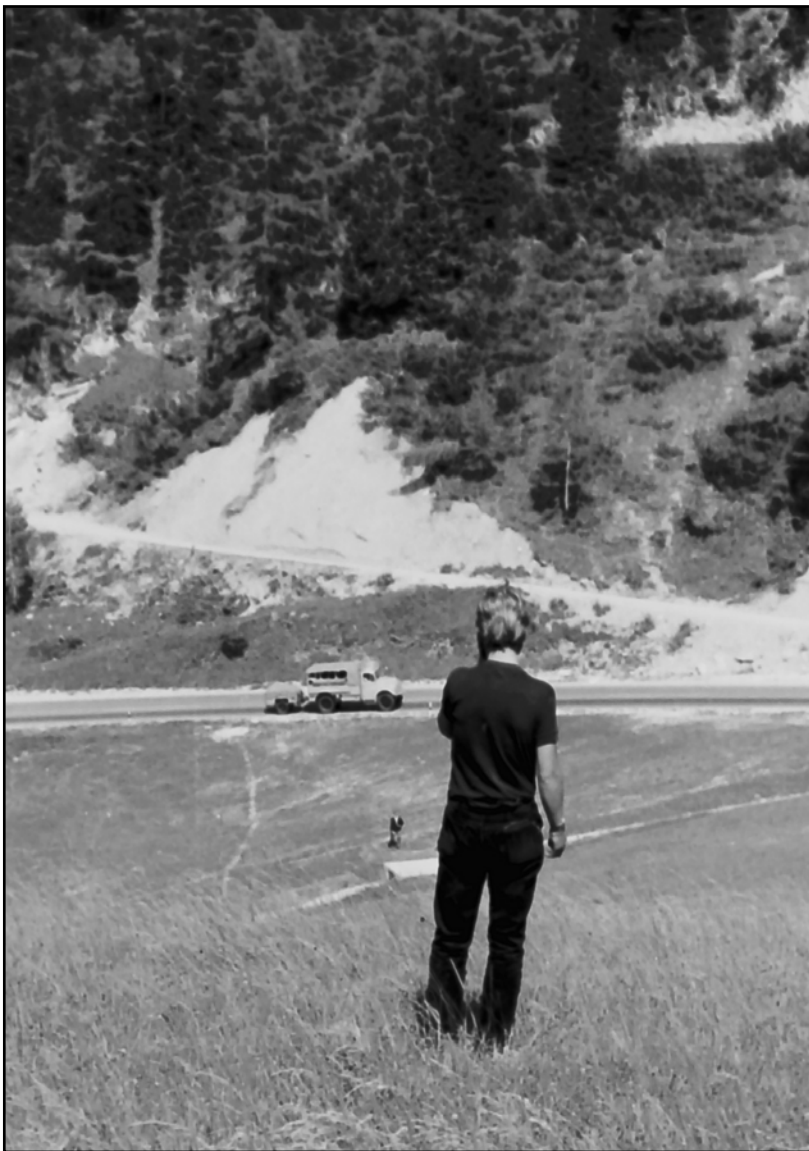


DACHAU
SEPTEMBER 12



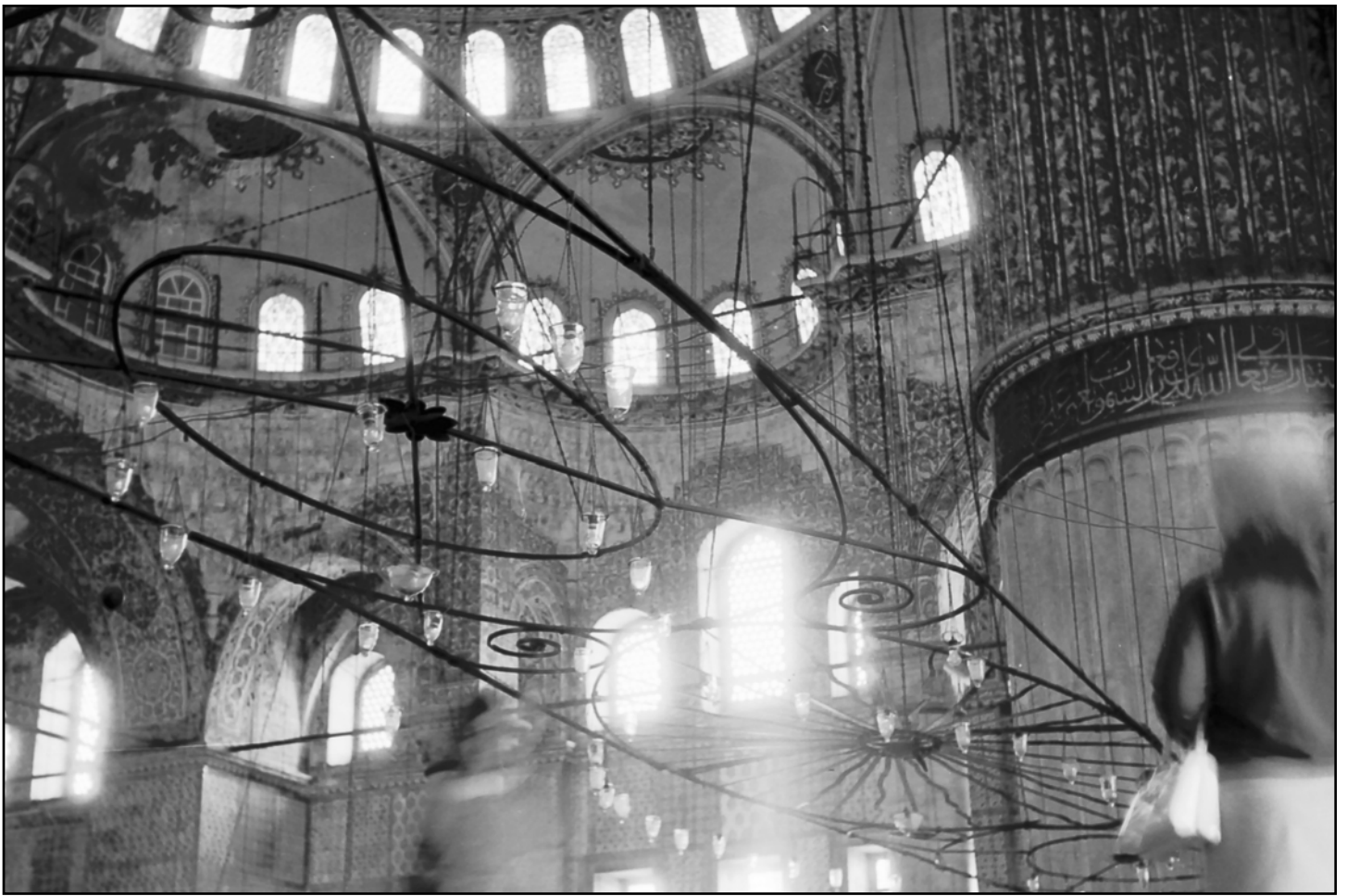


WURZEN PASS - THE ALPS
SEPTEMBER 13



THASSOS
SEPTEMBER 17





ISTANBUL
SEPTEMBER 20



IZMIR
SEPTEMBER 23





EPHESUS
SEPTEMBER 24



PRIENE
SEPTEMBER 24

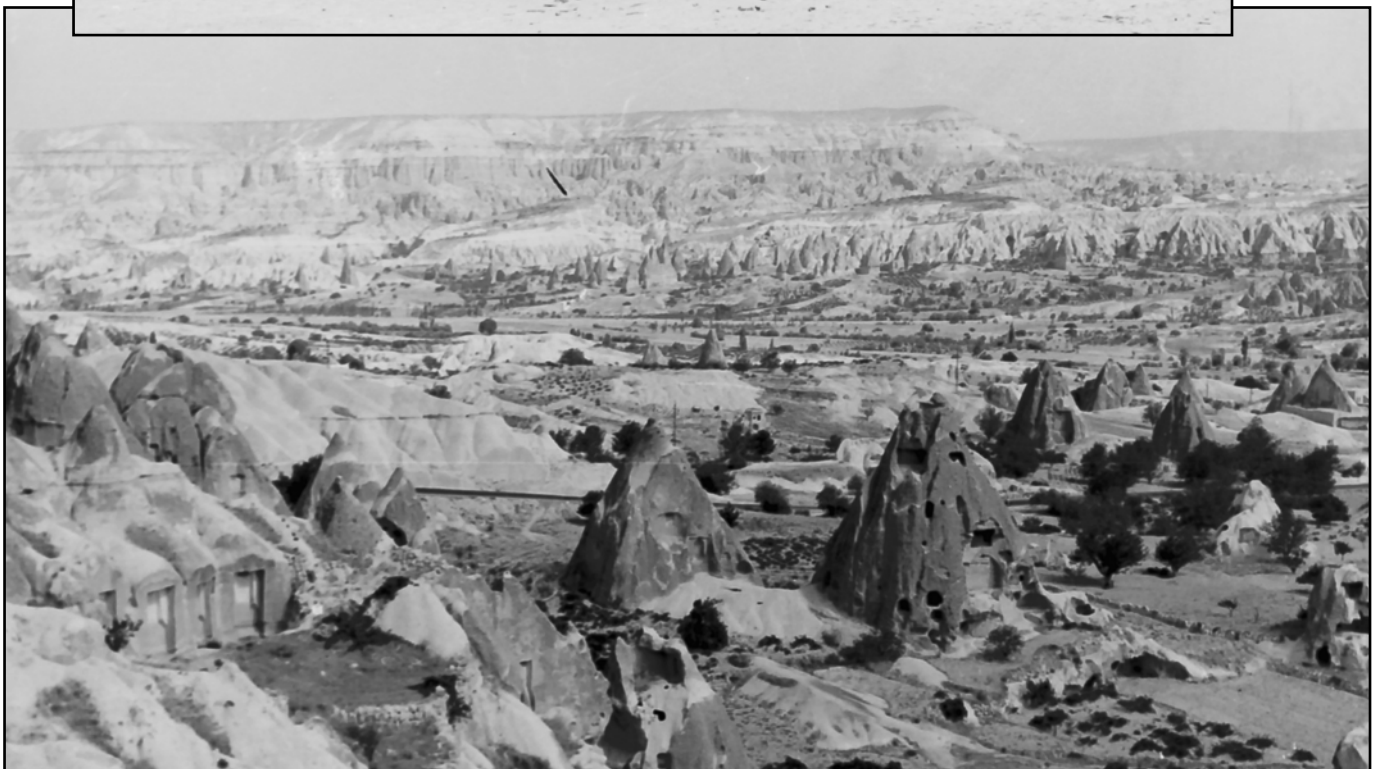
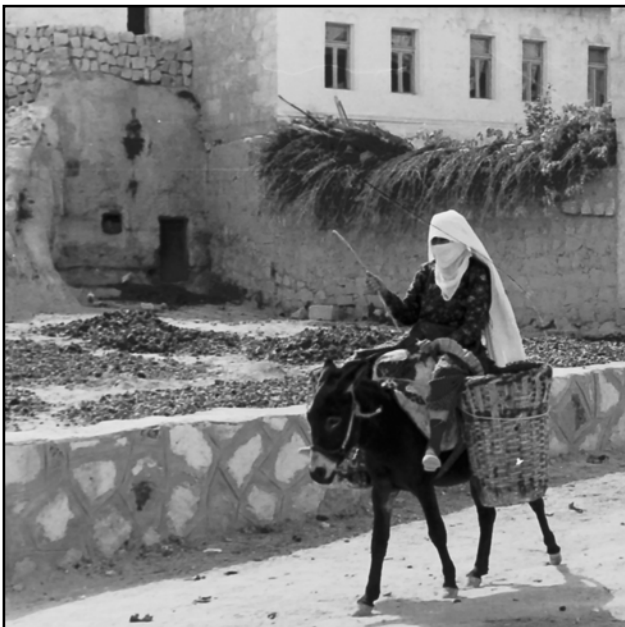


TERMESSOS
SEPTEMBER 27

ANUMUR
SEPTEMBER 28

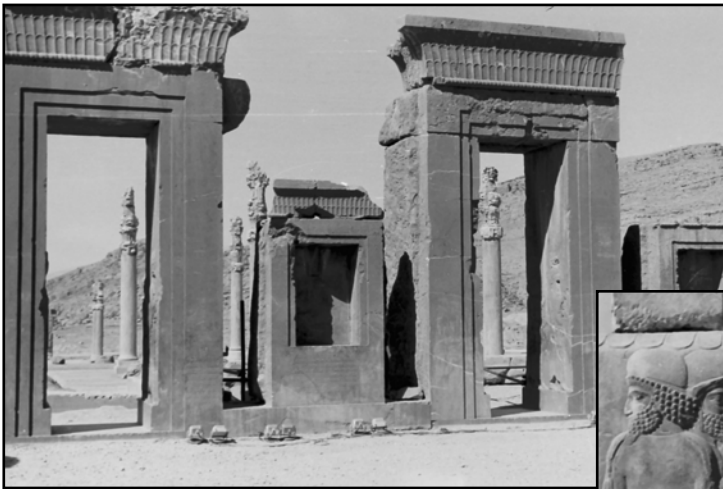


GOREME
SEPTEMBER 30





ISFAHAN
OCTOBER 6

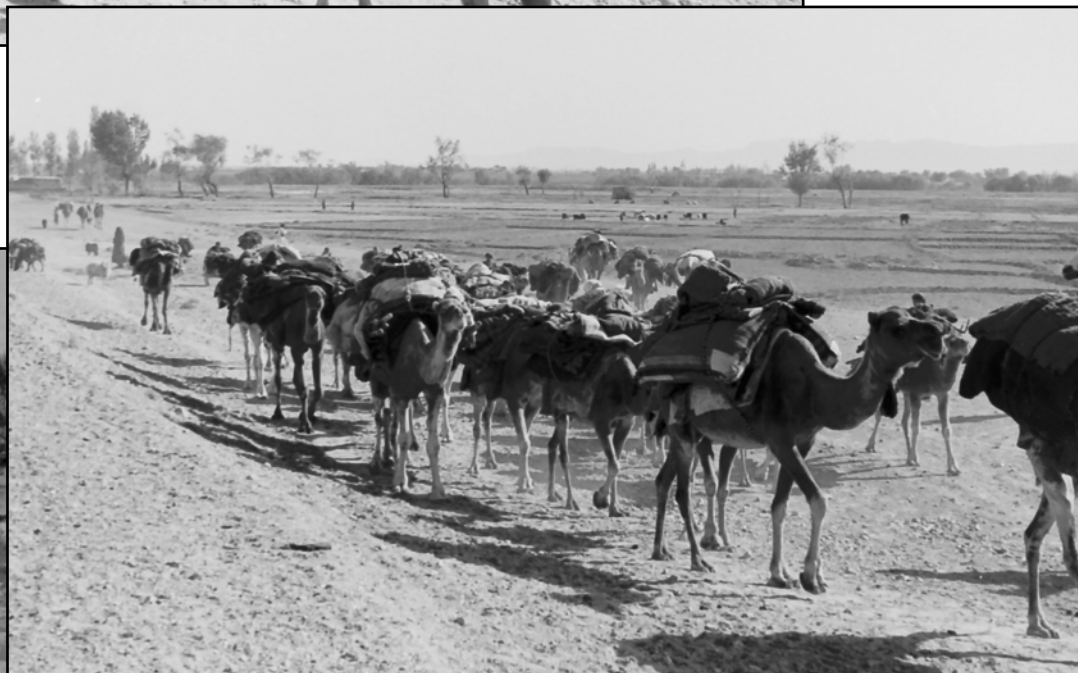


PERSEPOLIS
OCTOBER 8



SHIRAZ
OCTOBER 10

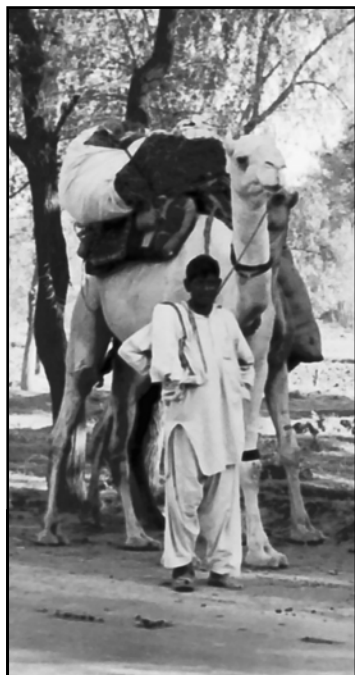
IRAN
OCTOBER 5-17





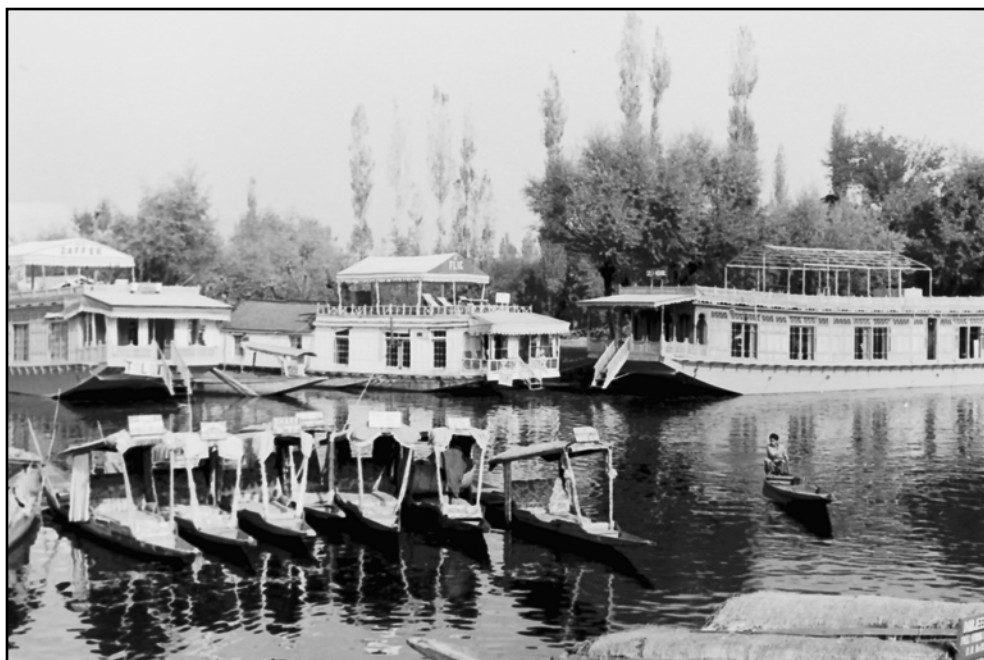
KABUL GORGE
OCTOBER 20

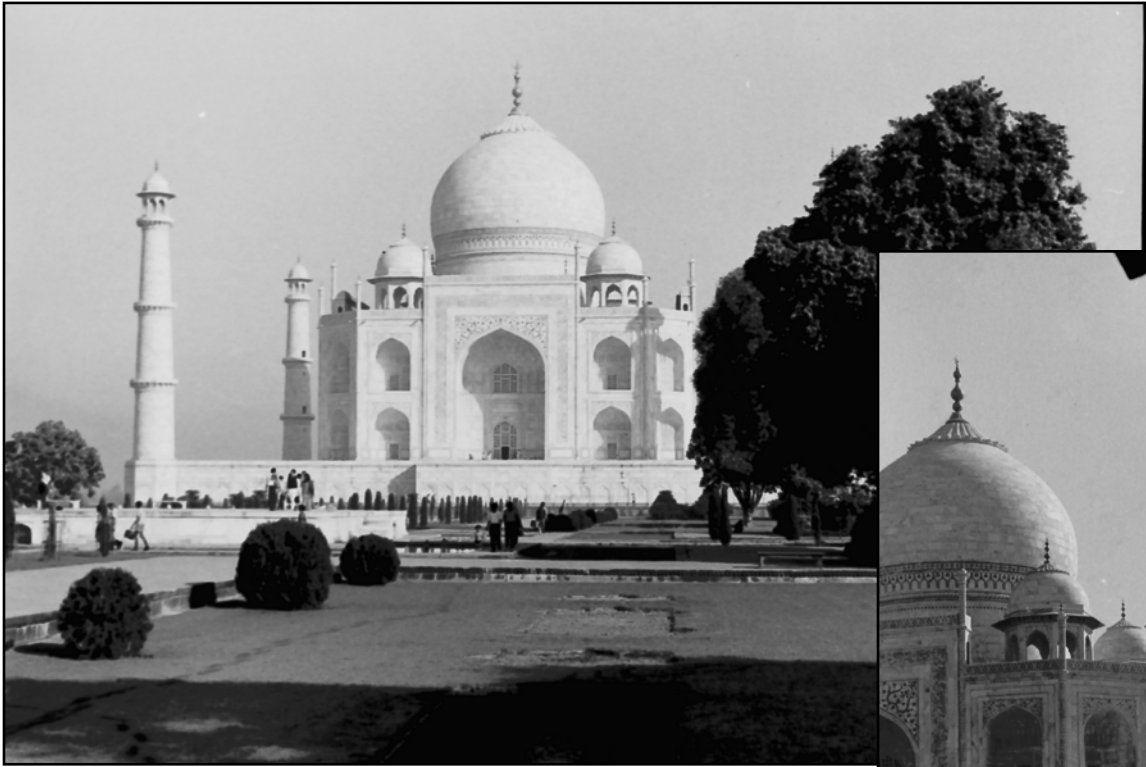
PASHAWAR
OCTOBER 21



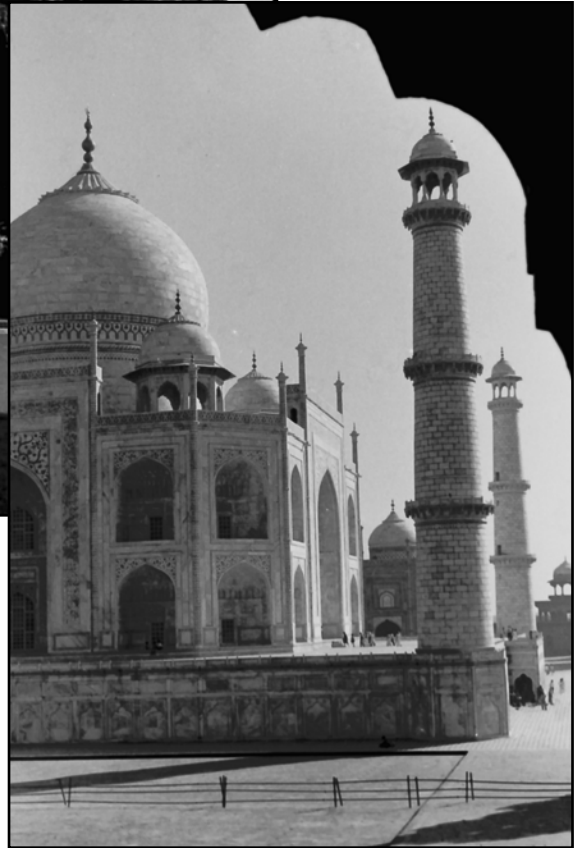


SRINAGAR
OCTOBER 26





TAJ MAHAL
NOVEMBER 5



KHAJURAHO
NOVEMBER 6

FATAHPUR SIKRI
NOVEMBER 5

