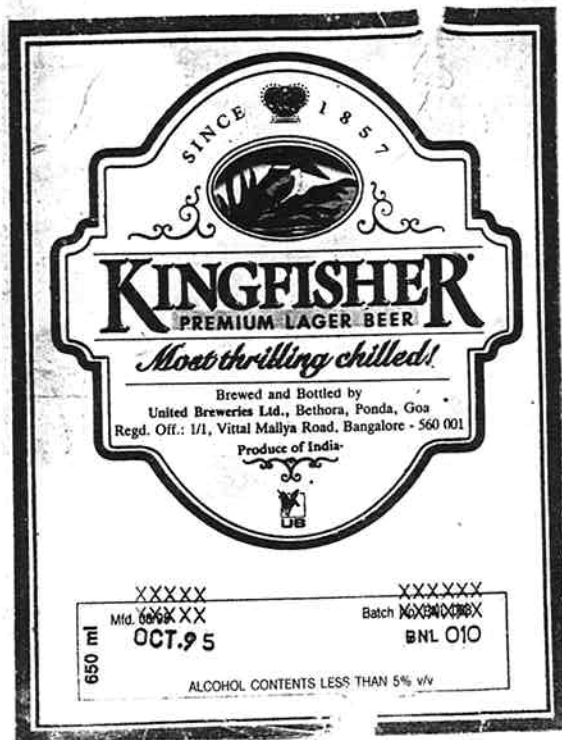




IF FOUND, PLEASE RETURN TO  
BRENDON - 3 APPLE TREE DUE  
GLENS WARRIET VIC. AUST 3150  
FOR REWARD.



13/12/95 Baga beach - Goa - India. of

Have gotten over to some degree the homesickness I was feeling a few days ago. Such a long and uncertain trip ahead of us although India is hardly unexplored country there being quite a few well trodden (too well trodden) tourist routes. It seems to be the food that brings it on. In Bombay the curry seemed to infiltrate everything and starts after a while to overwhelm you.

The thought of endless fried curd throughout! Chira (something which I found turned my stomach in Hong Kong) is enough to bring about the onset of the feelings of anxiety and worry about being so far from home.

Am reading 'Around the world in Eighty Days' at the moment, a great book made all the better by the fact that a lot of it covers areas we have visited only a hundred years earlier! This picture of travelling, the stiff upper lip English genting with man servant,



guides and money at his disposal, bringing with him the atmosphere of the old English drawing room wherever he goes is far from what we will be doing. We will be more the small boat afloat and at the mercy of the seas.

Not that India will be like that. I guess I shouldn't presuppose and just take things as they come being as cool and unperturbed as Mr Phileas Fogg!

Goa is nice for a break and a relaxing start but I am looking forward to getting into the real travelling. It's a frame of mind thing as well, in Goa as with many other parts of India I imagine, it is impossible to get away from the peer scene. The short termers, the long termers, the tourists, the travellers, the rogues, the hippies, it's all here, here to stay at the demise of the local culture unfortunately. Like a weed that has taken root and is starting to spread.

It is just a part of the changing face of the world I suppose and rather than abhor

it I should be just observing it along with all of the other facets of the face, being careful to not become too much a part of it, although the fact you are a foreign traveller in a foreign land, in fact the very fact that you exist means that you are unavoidably a part of the overall picture. It's the which part I suppose.

Some images of the changing face of Goa. Local women walking up and down the beach selling clothing, fruit, drinks, massages etc. Waves balanced upon their heads clothed head to toe in colourful Saris etc, the Kashmiri women also with a multitude of jewellery. Wandering about the topless sunbaking women, the long term hippies with leather G strings and unblemished tons.

A man clad in speedos with 'office fat' videoring his flabby wife receiving a head massage on the beach.

Shaved headed alternatives, pierced bodies the very image of cool, fighting + worrying

about their places in the lines of the post-office to send off cards back home or to look for letters from mum + dad presumably.

Building works for new hotels and restaurants displacing the rich long termers who return for 8 months of the year to live and party with the 'set' in the 'scene', forcing them to go further afield in search of the quieter beaches. Unwitting reconnaissance squadrons for the ever ongoing expansion.

We are all it seems here, everyone of us in our own minds that lone traveller in the world who comes to a place to find tourism taking over. All of us a part of the take over, from the early lone explorers to the later package tour groups. It's inevitable, I wouldn't say it's a shame though in ways it is, it is just a part of the ever changing face of the globe. The travellers of a hundred years ago most likely would have had all the same thoughts, blinded a little perhaps by the self righteousness of the British Empire. It means

though that we should be conscious of the present as we travel and not tour to see the as it ~~was~~ was bits putting the current situation down to the ruthlessness and evil of that ever hungry giant the tourism industry, because that consuming giant isn't an entity ~~is~~ from which we can justifiably distance ourselves. We ~~are~~, every bit as much as the package tourists are a part of it. We are responsible for the way this particular change in the face of the world takes place.

Drivel!!! I've said it before + I'll say it again - this is all just thinking on paper. Quite embarrassed at how bad some of the writing is. Still, it is thoughts and that's what a diary is all about. Not the nice composed thoughts of a captain's ship log or 'Gentlemen's' diary, but thoughts nevertheless.

Money honey from my last book - another worry which will affect how we travel along the way. Would be nice not to have to worry about it.

A\$ at 8/12/95 - \$A 24,028. - Money taken  
travelling to begin with at 8/12/95

USTCHGS	1500 x 1.2 = <del>1800</del> 2100	1400 x 1.2 = 1680
USCASH	100 x 1.2 = 120	100 x 1.2 = 120
\$TCHGS	100 x 20 = 200	100 x 20 = 200
\$CASH	70 x 20 = 140	1495R/25 = 60
	<u>AB 2620</u>	<u>AB 2360</u>

Visited Anjuna markets today and also up to Chopora to have a look at the old Portugese fort and sat on Jagator beach for a bit.

The markets were great. A real scene of colour + activity, warm, together and buzzing amongst the palm trees, sand sea and setting sun on one side and dried rice paddies and road like an ant trail winding away on the other.



16/12/95 One gulp of dodgy seawater and I'm

cleaning my breakfast out of my jocks in a restaurant toilet two hours later thinking high heaven for the top and bucket invaluable for clean clothes! Indian toilets provide!

A midnight jaunt on borrowed naped fearless in the face of a foreign language and questioning police road blocks, searching for a doctor

to deal with split head, added to an adenovirus charged bright and brighter headlights in and coming from all directions, dusty trip home from Calva one night burnt into our memories through a <sup>distinct</sup> patch of petrol 2km from home! ended up with me, chill added to my solidity problems feeling nauseous, too empty stomached with an ear ache and generally self pitiful staring at the above scene for two

days (between coughing up phlegm and splurting out... well... splurt!)

And on the third day after oral rehydration treatments, bread, fruit, yogurt, and any other food element that seemed like it might help, feeling well on my way to death by starvation and more importantly being sick to death of being tied to the toilet, the cerimonious "Blocker" pill was popped, the results of which remain to be seen!

Just had a bit of a temper tantrum - tired, crabby etc, some d', some d'. Frustrated with a lot of little things.

I'm not like most other people who seem to be able to go through life in relative control of all their senses. Seems my lows are always lower (I wouldn't say my highs are higher but maybe when I'm just trotting along I enjoy and appreciate things more). I'm sure one of these days I'm going to end up committing suicide in a severe depression, or destroy

every thing I hold of value or end up in jail in a fit of severe anger.

It maybe because I'm so indecisive and worry about things so much. Every little decision wavers up and down, eventually decided upon but never settle but <sup>instead</sup> constantly reassessed under agitation of worry that it's not the right decision. I feel like there are two people in me constantly arguing over every decision and then there is me forced to take one route or the other, always lumbered with the final decision and never allowed or given a moment's rest worrying all the time about the course of action and its effects. Worrying even about the consequences once they have occurred and constantly reprimanding and cursing myself over not ~~have~~ taken a slightly better option.

I can see this sometimes in the people around me and they are then added to the two. A rage sometimes, in particular, I know it's just part of the way things are and in fact I need to make a lot of the decisions otherwise I'm judging others and internally reprimanding and abusing them. It's just I feel like I can never

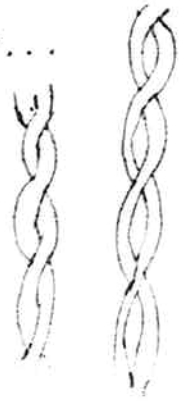
~~Wrote a letter to my mother about the situation~~  
~~Wrote a letter to my mother about the situation~~

or don't know how to even start giving myself a break. Optic!!

Is this an insane mind, a clock spring slowly being wound up and over the limit to a nervous breakdown or violent end? Would explain the fact that sometimes my mind seems to be getting more and more tightly sprung, to the point of seizure. Constrained only to let rational logical decisions to seep out of the gaps in the binding, instead of the freely running, dancing person I used to feel like mentally. Is this just old age? The result of a stockpiling of so much information over the past years?

I don't know...

With old age humility grows.  
Inner weakness it seems exposed.



17/12/95 Just finished reading "Under the eye of the Clock" an autobiography of the childhood of Christopher Nolan confined to a wheelchair unable to voluntarily move but seeing, hearing and thinking clearly. Not sure I liked the way it was written, a bit too frilly around the edges at times (for a simple man such as myself?) but the story and image of outlook passed through was quite beautiful and a rare image to read about.

As with most autobiographies I read I end up tremendously inspired and I'm now full of grandiose visions of photography, poetry and miscellaneous written the connection to publication and for more presentation to the world around me are a bit more blurred.

It also made my secondary school years seem ill-adjusted and makes me wish I knew more about what was going on at the time. Bestful and shy I spent more time in fear of others refusals or reprimands. It did also however bring back an almost tearful longing for uni days, for coffee + chats + discussions about life, university + everything in the 'Muggrave Cafe'.



learning in the almost antinomian, monastic isolation of the universities. Memories of beer from foam cups and beer's rage about some bloody back and remembering some of this hard work and books thrown against study walls makes me think my memories may be slightly rose tinted.

I'd like to get back to uni for a bit - Arts, Law, Astronomy, Physics? Young minds springing up to life + relationships - was really good.

19/12/45 Getting back into beach life now although still tired. Place we are staying - Villa Fatima is really nice. Our room one floor up is off a walkway where you can sit and look out over a courtyard covered in palms. You get the feeling of being nestled within the cool trees as you are up level with the branches - some of the smaller ones. 200 Rs a night, a little more expensive than you could find but worth it for the cool retreat + nice people there.

Tearing through the books! - have just

read the story of Maurice Herzog and his french team's climb of 'Annapurna', the first conquest of a mountain over 8000-. Really interesting as they spend a lot of time and visit some of the villages we will be visiting if we manage to do the Annapurna Trek which is what we hope to do while we are in Nepal.

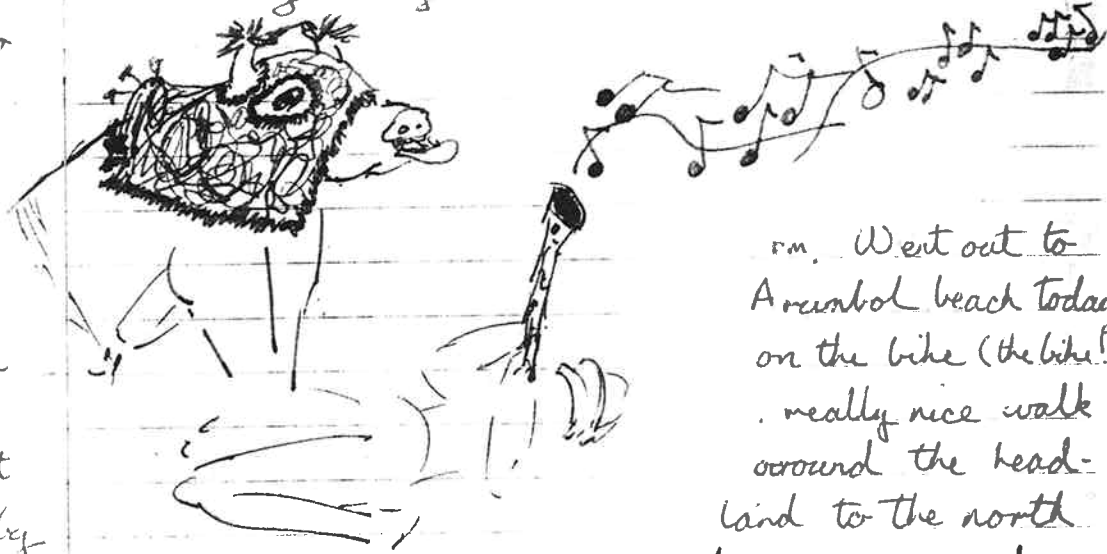
Also a good book, taking you along with him. The feeling of having the whole mountain below you ('and above nothing'), the realisation of the past months hard work and your life dreams embodied at your feet was really inspiring and well written. The trip home, the injections, gangrene, amputations etc pretty horrific.

pm. Diners at Nani + Rani's, walks back by Orion, Taurus, the Plaiades, Mars or is it maybe Jupiter creating a haze of its own low over the sea - helped some fisherman push their boat up onto the beach, palms against starlight seem to sit so well.

20/12/95 Went to Angina markets yesterday and bought a large (double bed sized) painting on cotton showing Krishnas journey from Gokula to Matat...? (Mathura I think) with his brother, girlfriends, and a girl - friend who appears with him in a carrier. That's all I can remember of the story. Really nice anyway, just unsure how to get it home safely (1000 Rs). Also bought some really thin hand made 'Free Tibet' paper. The Tibetans and Nepalese are so relaxed and seem so at peace with things in amidst the Indian hard sell haggle approach to life. No head wobbling here, just quiet, peaceful smiling eyes. Oh - and the little elephant that should hopefully be glued to the seat, raze by this time tomorrow whom I saw I was ripped off with at 40 Rs!

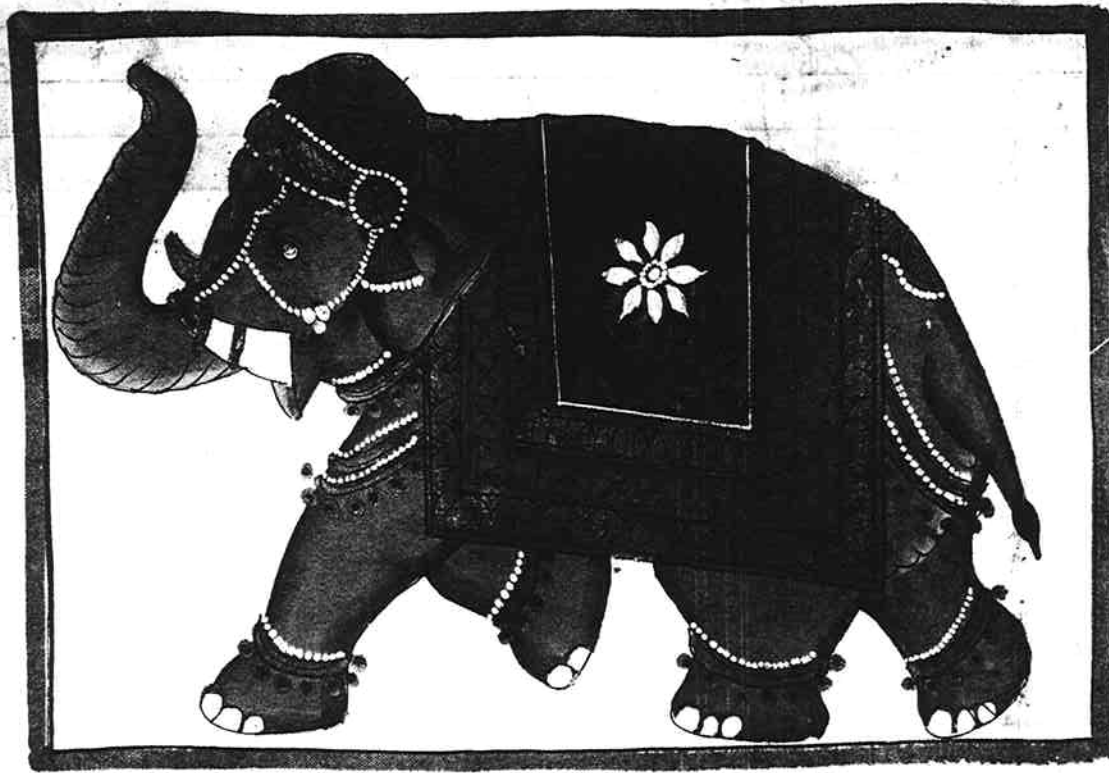
We then went down to the 'Shore Bar' with Rowina + Gill from next door (the hopping place! after the markets), and sat with a couple of hundred other cool dudes!! amidst dancing cows and trotting comets, food vendors etc on the beach.

to masters thighs, seemed to be <sup>st</sup>keying us through his elaborate colorful head piece while chewing a bit of weed - very strange!



pm. Went out to Arambol beach today on the bike (the bike! really nice walk around the headland to the north along some rocky coastline <sup>with</sup> ~~and~~ houses / restaurants dotted along the way to a more secluded beach with a semi fresh-water lake behind it. Would like to get back there and go for a walk through the lush forest behind the lake. Nice ride up as well past a few churches painted in colours and dropping by Choyora

fort - beautiful view along Vagator beach and back up the inlet - and then from Chopora along the water side of the inlet to a 3R's ferry across to the other side and up to



Arumbol. Rice Paddies (dry this time of the year), Cows, Cowherds!, pigs and goats and busy little farmhouses and villages along the way. Hot dry sun on the way and orange sunset on the way back, really beautiful, this was the bits of India I was looking forward to. Quite clear and together compared to the shanty town images running around Bombay and I imagine most of the Indian cities. The tourism associated with Goa drops off quite quickly on a ride like that, off the main road a little.

Another cool evening on the veranda amongst the palms, watching congers and georgs in the courtyard below. Not that it is especially romantic or exotic or anything like that, it's just an unobtrusively relaxed. Girls from the kitchen below giggling and saying prayers, a passive Indian man's voice in music drifting over



like a background noise lullaby from a house  
over the way somewhere.

Some of this writing seems to be coming out  
as utter drivel again, its quite hard to explain  
the feeling of the moment with any success, maybe  
because you have to momentarily withdraw  
(even if only partially) to get the words down!

22/12/95 Reading "Are we alone" a book about  
the philosophical consequences of finding  
extra terrestrial life by Paul Davies. Did you  
know that the Greek philosophers (Leucippus and  
Democritus) expounded an atomist theory of the world.  
And that atoms "coming together in a single whirl  
separate, like to like" formed the planets + hence the  
derivation that the earth is not unique. Impressive!

The motorbike broke down twice yesterday! People  
come from everywhere (locals) to help you out +  
never want anything in return. I dont know if  
this Indian AA' works as they all have an interest

in helping hired bikes (so that people with some day  
help one of theirs they have lent out) or whether its  
an interest in bikes, foreigners in distress, just plain  
foreigners or the kindness of their hearts.

I would like to and actually do believe it  
is the best as there is an underlying warmth and  
friendliness to everybody you meet, its just that  
its always right next to the other prevalent trait  
of trying to get money out of you (as much as  
possible) all of the time.

I find it hard not to take all of the hard sell  
bargaining as a ~~to~~ personal affront to rip me off  
for as much as possible and either come away  
feeling bad about all the hard arguing over 50R  
that means more to them than it does to me (I think!  
or feeling bad about being ripped off. Either way  
it destroys the affinity or even friendship I like  
to feel when buying something off of someone.  
I think maybe its a part of Indian life and they  
treat the business side totally separate from  
what they feel about a person, both functions

mutually exclusive occurring simultaneously in the selling process. Maybe there is as I've heard of in some cultures a little bit of respect placed upon how someone fares in the haggling process.

I remember haggling hard from 12 HK\$ for something (a hat) to 10 HK\$ with a mother + daughter stoneheper in HK and then feeling bad after all the pained faces etc.

Offering it back they refused and were all smiles me trying to press it upon them, them consistently refusing. So I don't think its the on all fours scrambling for money that it can give the impression of being sometimes.

P.M. Went to Mopusa markets today, more fruit and veg (hessian bag after hessian bag of chillies!) and variety of stuff appealing to the locals as well. Busy but can't beat Arjuna for colour and atmosphere by the beach.

Went out to have a look at the stars through the binoculars also. Sitting in a large area of sand away from the beach a bit. Always drives home what a big and beautiful thing the universe is. Stars literally like dust sitting suspended, animated! in an incomprehensible largeness of 3 dimensions.

You speak of and think of 'the universe' all the time but its not until you sit in a quiet space and peer upwards exploring <sup>what</sup> that, that the full thing ever downs over your mind. Truly beautiful and amazing, the stuff dreams are made of.

I think in this 'space age' of electric light that <sup>the</sup> full impact gets lost and its a shame in more ways than one because it seems to encompass us and the world becoming the umbrella identifying ourselves as a part of the whole thing. Without which we seem to be a separate entity, intertwined but separate still and it feels like a narrow minded dead end when you feel the expanse of

wonder of which we are just a speck.

I am I admit talking with that corporate business man, office fat in lap, staring out over the city from his boardroom office, in mind.

When you hear the passion astronomers and scientists, and even mystics and astrologers talk with, the faith in the broad spectrum of the human race is restored. It's the mechanistic

reliance of society on the business man that is a little worrying. It is big enough to be under way in any case and we can only hope to deflect the momentum to the cause as much as we can hoping the settee we have is capable of propagating into whatever lies ahead rather than self destructing or declining along the way, the route to enlightenment, or whatever it is being taken up by another race somewhere, sometime.

Again dowdily cliché after cliché but you will have to forgive me as it's just me going over and soaking in what's been done before so it's hard not to fall into all the old clichés!!

It's the wondrous, amazing, happy dippy spaced out transcending space and time man adjectives that are a bit more worrying. That will all disappear with the development of a writing style I suppose. If I don't get stuck with the equivalent of the adolescent nerd slag Mills & Boon style I seem to be slipping into at the moment. . . . Hummmmm

23/12/95 This book 'Are we alone' takes a lot further

this concept of directional evolution I've always thought more likely. He goes into postulating a law, or tendency for increase in the natural 'organized complexity' of systems, or natural elements. The most basic example he gives as an indication is the tendency of oil to develop into convective currents in a

hexagonal pattern when heated (on the way to a chaotic complexity in boiling).

Feels right especially when you consider coupling it into the entropy equations as a number of missing terms. The entropy equations currently stating that overall disorder must increase in any chemical reaction. Is it the patterning, or the organizational property of the products that is being overlooked, or not quantified. I've often wondered (and I'm sure there is an answer), why the bringing together of two atoms under gravity is not an increase in order (decrease in potential energy, but an increase in order surely!).

He: big bang → expanded gaseous universe →  
big bang → so on.



He also goes through the evolution of the universe (quickly) from big bang and Hydrogen / primordial Helium → Hydrogen,

Helium, Carbon, Oxygen as products of the first generation of stars exploding (going Nova), and mentions the quote from James Jeans that "we are made from the ashes of long-dead stars", which is a really nice thought.

He also puts our epoch in the generation after the first generation (the first generation that had the basic building blocks for life) which is another line of reasoning behind his hypothesis that life or the evolution of consciousness is an inevitable consequence arising from these active evolutionary tendencies for increasing ordered complexity. He also relates the life span of a star to the ratio of electromagnetic forces in an electron which is interesting but slipped over somewhat and a bit irrelevant?

All good stuff! Also mentioned as seems to be the case in any self-respecting science thingy these days is old Shrodinger's cat - bloody thing, I can't ever seem to grasp what everybody is going on about! A radioactive atom - if it



decays some reaction is set up to kill the cat - if it doesn't, the cat lives! It's all in a sealed box and it's said that the cat isn't actually dead until we observe it by opening the door. A duality of states exists which is only decided by ~~by~~ interaction with the observer setting up some vague observer  $\rightarrow$  reality relationship.

What's wrong with one or the other scenarios happening unobserved (except by the cat!) True it has no effect on the outside world until the box is opened but isn't that just a case of closed isolated systems not affecting each other? Like a butterfly flapping its wings in the amazon not affecting me (oops that's another trendy subject - chaos, which I would also like to understand one day!), so ok, not affecting me until there is enough time for an interaction between the 3 or 4m<sup>3</sup> of local systems surrounding us (myself here separated for the moment

from the butterfly theme) to interact?

I'm not saying there is not an observer - actuality relationship, I kind of like the idea it's just bugged if I can understand it!

It's also funny how he goes on to say that all of the natural constants seem to have been set up just for us and if they were just a little bit different we would have just ended up with a lump of He for a universe. What's wrong with some other type of universe arising out of He instead of Hydrogen. Are we so narrow minded to say that our laws on chemicals that we have deduced from the base hydrogen are the only ones there, or that ~~some way unforeseen as that they could~~ ~~also~~ ~~elevate~~ He + its products into a more complex state they couldn't possibly operate on Helium  $\rightarrow$  in some way (because we of course would know about it if they could) to produce building blocks?

A way apart from some

disagreements on peripheral reasoning, some non-understanding on my part of some of the scientific ideas (I can't imagine that I am right + the entire scientific community is wrong considering that bloody cat!), and some derisively, long-winded at times, too short or incorrect at other times treatments of alternative hypotheses on extra-terrestrial life, the book is quite good and I'm enjoying the general thrust!!

24/12/95 ↑ All makes me want to get right into astronomy, although as with most things I only want to do it if I can be really good at it (more from fear of damaged pride I think rather than any grandiose ideals) and I cringe a bit from it all seeing the same competition, hard work, and politics that all seem to draw away from the beauty of the work itself that is around in engineering. All seeming to focus your efforts on the falsehoods surrounding the ideals than the

ideals themselves.

Maybe its something I have to learn to come to grips with. Something I have to learn to ignore except for no pats on the back or political prestige in order to satisfy myself and do the work with humility. It comes back to this basic need to be recognised again. A human affliction which seems to be present in all of the uglier sides to society and homo-sapien.

PM. CHRISTMAS EVE! The Goans are quite into Christianity, but not quite as much as western countries who put up bigger and better decorations much much earlier than the Goans whose dedication is so obviously lacking!

We went and saw Saint Francis Xavier today that's right, his well preserved remains (those which have managed to avoid human hands anyway) are in a silver and glass coffin on display in a church in Old Goa (his remarkable preservation apparently the reason he was promoted into the ranks of saint-dom, rather than I guess being thrown in with all of

(the other martyred missionaries?) Also quite impressive were all the paintings (there must have been well over 50 of them, all full size, painted on planks, canvases etc) of the Portuguese Governors from when Old Goa was the 'Lisbon' of India. Aged browned paintings adorning white-washed walls in bare open rooms, a feeling of cool martini and quiet.

The architecture over here all works on natural ventilation. Large open windows off of shaded verandahs, spacious rooms with no ceilings or open slatted ceilings and a ceiling fan only every now and then.

Anyway you could almost hear the slow swish of the ceiling fans as the governors sat in a large padded cone chair in a corner, calm authoritative expression on their faces. Indian servants in



waiting, cicadas, palms, whitewashed walls and oppressive heat and humidity outside. The bygone era of the Portuguese Raj? Trying to read traits into all of their faces. Was his a fair rule, a rigid one or a compassionate one?, how did he treat the people, were they scared of the portuguese foreigners, benefited by them or what? All from snapshot paintings that almost seemed to echo against the bare floor boards.

There are a few parties around tonight, well probably have christmas dinner down at Britton's and maybe go to midnight mass. Christmas Eve isn't the time that late night partying appeals actually, then again its normally a family christmas the next morning (well used to be!) and were in travel mode on an Indian beach! - will take it as it comes I think.

PPM Have just been to midnight mass, my first! Very reminiscent of a pagan ritual especially when you are listening to it in a foreign language. The

little church we went to was done up like a (like an  
italians dashboard actually), ... paper little shrine  
with gilding everywhere, little statuettes and  
pictures of Jesus bearing his cross and the virgin  
Mary etc. Strings of plastic flowers and even  
a little ~~cross~~ cross formed out of flashing red and  
green ~~flashing~~ lights! Quite an impressive scene  
full of obvious caring and attention actually.

Solemn voices, crossing of hearts, rituals and  
ritualistic props, and the following in humility  
(or is it fear!) of the flock leaders, all  
seeming to fit into this dare I say it -  
non-believes - no that's too strong - this sceptics  
- that's a bit better - view of a mechanism for  
social order (be good now and accept your  
poor lot, and you will be rewarded later). The  
fundamental gist of most religions (Buddhism as  
I understand it is different).

And who am I to knock it, no-one that  
who, it obviously does a lot of good and  
helps a lot of people it's just I can't live

with just accepting it - moves the pity for me I suppose!

Had a nice dinner with Gill + Rowena and some of  
their friends - not a Christmas as much as I would like  
it to be, Hong Kong was quite good - good family  
feeling - Frensham drive a little less so - I look  
forward to Australian Christmases again.

One thing that was good was the phosphorescence  
in the waves on the beach. Like lightning flickering  
in the crests, or a thin line of fire crashing into  
a glow in the dark foamy green. Really bright  
like I've never seen it before. Last year it was  
a brilliant night out at the pub with Justin +  
Rosetta and a white (frosted) frozen wonderland  
on the common on the way back home.

Christmases away from home, but it's the one  
time when family matters more than setting. Maybe  
next year. Merry Christmas Brendon! ☺

25/12/95 Relaxed day and watched our second last  
Clear sunset. Something I've been meaning  
to write about is the doorbell like electronic card



two we heard intermittently for a while which was the Indian girls in the kitchen / restaurant stealing over to the reception hut and all smiles and giggles switching on the plastic father christmas which rotates on the spot playing carol tunes. Quite heart warming actually.

Travel soon, will miss the days on the beach, the boats and cows, the people, the tongas and sunsets. Things have a way of creeping into your lives like that and they seem to have come from nowhere to displace the previous set one day when you least expect the realization to dawn.

That's a lot of what home is, and old age I guess, appreciating becoming attached to solid things around you. Maybe home, but not old age! more the appreciation of home you don't seem to realize until you travel.

26/12/95 There was an interesting Indian girl on the bus on the way to Panjim and Old Goa the other day. She had very dark skin, was very thin and

wore deep colourful reds with lots of in sewn mirrors. Her hair was draped down over her eyes and face pointing at the bottom to come back around each side and be pinned to the rest of her hair at the back. She looked like the Kashmiri (I think they are Kashmiri - Northern anyway) street sellers you see (but without so much jewellery (no ankle bracelets jingling with bells or elaborate dangling nose pieces)).

She was travelling with a couple who were typical of the average (more subdued) Indians you see in the street. You noticed her strong air when she entered the bus. She sat down and the guy next to her said a few words immediately to which she chattered back for a couple of minutes. She had an excited air, one of not being afraid to present a strong presence, as though she held a special privilege and knew that everybody else in the bus knew this.

Maybe a bride on her way to a wedding, or a pilgrimage, holiday of some sort.

She offered payment for all three of their party with a wide beaming smile presenting a 500 rupee note. The fare collector took it smiling and showed it to the other people around the bus everybody shaking their heads, smiling in good humour.

A rather man, standing this time spoke a few words to her and she reached over and placed a 10 rupee note in his hand. Repeating a couple of lines, instructions I think, to him once he had got off in one of the smaller villages and come around to the other side of the bus to talk to her through the window.

A lottery winner or newly bestowed upon heiress? She got off the bus with the couple in Panjim and disappeared into the crowds.

Had a strange dream last night. I can't remember all of the details but we were in a city

that has appeared in my dreams before of which I can't remember much detail apart from a view from a hotel room to an old temple carved in stone through thick jungle, the type of picture that conjures up visions of monkeys stealing tourists unwatched handbags etc.

Anyway Ange was up in the room of a flat four or five stories up in a large white-washed building, the back of which we could see - typical of India with external plumbing etc. I had been in the room earlier on and knew that among others up there was mum and two baby replicas of Beck and Cam. Something to do with the imbalance caused by Mum leaving them somewhere else. They were disturbing to look at with large oversized craniums and small shrunken facial features, like little aliens and skin a bit patchy and raw like it was still adjusting to the world it had suddenly found itself in. Like I said they were disturbing and there wasn't much I could do apart from accept their presence.

as temporary and accept that it would be sorted out when the imbalance was fixed.

I was down at ground level standing with Stuart Smith I think and with Steve Baird (Lyns husband) who was serving drinks. The jungle was behind us and there were lots of people on the beach, the sea busy with boats on the other side.

I saw a big fake whale being towed along and called for someone to get Angie to have a look, while they were I noticed that there was also a killer whale and a couple of humpback whales following and I called again and again to get Angie.

When Angie finally poked her head out of the window, the waves had swelled so that we couldn't see the whales who were in a trough the view blocked by a peak near by. I said to wait for a minute and it would clear, but the swell in front of us just kept getting

bigger and bigger until it was a huge body of water about to break down upon us. We were at the back of the beach and I was vaguely conscious of all of the other people on the beach and their belongings in various confused states over taken by this huge swell.

It roised above us and I was worried about catching the full brunt of the face of the wave but luckily it seemed to pass just over us.

I remember being knocked down flat after taking a huge breath with a roaring whump and opened my eyes to find blanket silence and my head in a bubble, the surface of pamed seawater and sand about half a meter above me. I then took another hurried breath waiting for it all to drop in on me and noticed a chugging pressure variation which I realized was the pressure from above forcing the air of the bubble down through the sand I had my head on

Thoughts of what were was going on

above were racing around my head, was I in a part of the wave, how deep was the water, & was it a mixture of sand and water slowly forming a new seabed above me.

The chugging pressure and ever decreasing bubble size kept up against this blanket silence and I took another deep breath as the bubble got within 6 inches of my face, jammed shut my eyes and thrust my head up hoping at some point to eventually break through whatever it was and pop up in the surface of the backwash of the wave.

I remember an initial feel of swirling wet sand and woke up hitting or bumping my head on the headboard and feeling shocked and relieved, and breathing deeply.

My swimming thoughts wondering if my life somehow connected to my dreams was really in danger, and glad that I had woken and didn't need to find out!

Scenes with huge waves seem to

recur and also brushes with death, the majority of them involving falling from a great height and ~~scrambling~~ with me waking up before I hit the bottom.

Fm	- how are the finances going	A\$
USTCHGS	1100 \$US x 1.7	= <del>1870</del> 1870
£ TCHGS	100 £ x 20	= 200
US CASH	100 \$US x 1.7	= 170
CASH	1604 Rs x <del>0.04</del>	= 64
OWE ANKE	-1500 Rs / 25	= -60

A\$ ~~1870~~ ~~1870~~ 1884

Alright considering it was over christmases - 1000 Rs on messy home, 1000 on cotton painting and none on other chiring + b'day presents to people we met. Will need to buy some more travelles choques before China.

28/12/95 Fourteen hours over the back wheel of a bus from Goa to Bombay and then in and out of air conditioning and waiting to book a train ticket to Awangabad sees me back sweating in bed with a sort of dry flu again. I don't travel very well

on buses!

A few lessons learnt in getting around

- i) 100 Rs commission on a bus ticket worth 400 → go to the bus stands and shop around!
- ii) Keep walking until you find a taxi that will take you by meter (these are normally the younger drivers + new cabs also!). The old cover over the meter trick revealed at the destination to be a scratched  $17 \times 9 = 150$  Rs! Too tired to argue and too willing to put your tired trust in the hands of someone!
- iii) Trust no-one, make sure everything is how it should be ↑ - don't be afraid to be rude.
- iv) Train travel is really cheap - I'll let you know how comfortable (2<sup>nd</sup> class sleeper) it is tomorrow.
- v) 600 Rs for 2 veggie thalis and a (am

+ coke at the Taj Mahal, 50 Rs in one of the local restaurants!

Have managed to avoid some pitfalls - the old take you to a travel agent commission scam but its inevitable that you fall into a few traps especially if you want to keep any semblance of good nature unfortunately.

There is also realising what it is - 14 Rs to someone down (or maybe not) on there luck is still only 14 Rs! (50 +).

Coming back into Bombay today from Goa makes you realise what a dirty busy smoggy city it is. I quite like Gateway and sitting in the park between it and the Taj - a feeling of cool and warm splendour past + present in stone as it changes atmosphere with the light and the sky behind it. Buzzing little boats out to Elephanta always bobbing about the sea of Indian Tourists + street sellers.



30/12/95 Trip out of Bombay was quite good last night and a real experience, took the Devegare Express (to Aurangabad) from the buzzing Victoria Terminus, something to be seen in itself. Second class sleeper was fine although I've been carrying a cold since the nightmare bus trip of the other night!

Spent the day today with Dean Hoshins, an English guy we met, going out to Ellora caves which were also very good except that this cold is really getting to me - caraches, no energy, runny nose, aching muscles, slight nausea, unquenchable thirst & an upset stomach - still could have been alot worse considering I swallowed a little bit of seawater before we left for 'the bus ride' - much worse! Anyway have a bed now (and mosquito net - quite a novelty!) and so will hopefully get back on track go - uwan! . . .

31/12/95 New Year's Eve in Aurangabad. Went

out to Daulatabad, a fortress city built in replacement of Dehli as the capital of India when a sultan decided to march the population of Dehli there in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century killing a lot of them along the way!

Fantastic place, like a deserted city. You can walk through all the different levels of defence the stone walls and spiked wooden gates (to prevent battering by elephants) that would have previously been adorned, ones imagination tells you, with gold tasselled flags, gawds bearing huge and immaculately intricately designed sabres, lookouts high up on the towers and the odd couple of uniformed archers, letting through from a gaggle of all sorts <sup>crowding the door</sup> only those deemed wealthy enough or wise enough. something a little backsheesh would no doubt ~~over~~ <sup>overcome</sup>, different paths winding up and down and all around over finally a moat and up through some black as night tunnels that labyrinth their way to the upper levels of the table mountain fort. Great caves - took up a candle to explore our way - only getting a good look at it all, the bats on the ceiling and scratch marks from the poor bastards who

had to carve them out, when one of the Indian guides came past with a flaming stick dipped in oil as a torch and ensembles of school kids and taggers on.

Had a bit of a fight with Anji whereupon she left to head back to Awangabad and I sat and stewed. After a while of silence ~~and~~ contemplation I started picking out all of the details, the stairs cut out of the walls leading down into the moat, rebuilding in my mind the elaborate houses you could still see the odd wall of and slowly the whole busy scene of the city as it would have been. The pink stone victory tower (the ch — minar) standing proud and majestic in the distance seeming to bring the throngs of people together as the inhabitants of mighty city, the fort on the other side, sheer rock face walls towering in imensity, out of bounds and inaccessible to all but the powerful Sultan and his entourage, the mystery, awe, and wealth being the warm heart of the city around which the populous position

them selves as closely as possible. I could imagine the washerwoman beating the dirt out of the clothes in the water, the small group of guards patrolling the access bridge on the left, street sellers, baskets of fruit and rice and curries, running wchins, monkeys on chains, all in the slight breeze and fading light I could see it in now. Got quite carried away actually and a lot of it was probably just reruns of clips from Indiana Jones movies but the place was such a higglety pigglety model of an ancient Indian city, a place so tangled with staircases and buildings to be reminiscent of one of those 3d drawings that trick the eye with never ending ascents.

It is still quite undeveloped as far as tourism goes a bit of an exploration and I come across a well and a little garden, and in a couple of recesses an old wok, 6 ft in diameter made of riveted steel plates not longer than 1/2 ft square, and a twin shape cauldron fitted with rings to be suspended over a fire also made in the same fashion.

Men with bright big <sup>long</sup> poncha turbans which seem to local to Awangahad, fields of sunflowers, <sup>long</sup> monkeys sitting like television addicts watching the road drama the middle of a field apparently with nothing better to do. Lots of haystacks and hay houses, the difference between which was quite hard to pick! People cutting sugarcane, and us passing bullock carts bumping up and down (and ever getting asthma every now and then)



MOSSIM THEY TELL ME

A very mysterious flag in passively watching and taking in the surroundings.

green and white resembling with the promise of eastern megalith like empires and secret societies we saw flying above one of the

tea sheds in a town we passed through.

I cut a little further up the canyon from the water

at Aigata is a beautiful spot, huge beauty! I think it is cliffs enclosing a pool of water that forms the start of the canyon. During the monsoon it looks like there are three places where waterfalls come over the top of the cliffs to fill the pond and form the river which was dry when we

2/1/96 Drank rather a lot of Honey Bee Brandy

New Year Eve (rather stupidly) and was

sick as a dog (at that night, the next morning,

spent the day immobilised in bed after a valiant but

rather pathetic attempt at leaving in the morning and

finally managed a small burst of sweet corn soup

and some veges + rice over coldcuts for dinner that

night. Never been affected so badly by alcohol before,

probably had something to do with the fact that I hadn't

eaten dinner, and had the remains of what I think was

a flu and the kindly the reduced stamina due to the

malaria tablets. Anyway, was quite a good jolt to

the system and the day in bed got me over the flu

(touch wood)

Have spent the day looking around the Aigata

caves. The bus trip we saw us in the back seat with

me a pitiful sight on the verge of enjoying my two

hours breakfast down the side of the bus for the

first hour. The bananas however seemed to drop

down with ease and I was alright for the last hour and

a half. Was really nice travelling through the countryside.



were there. We stopped for an hour or so to relax and watch all the birdlife, green parrots, storks, of course and the most beautiful of all the little blue kingfishers with ochre red chests that made the odd dive into the pond ~~to~~ chasing the fish.

3/1/96 Aurangabad → Ajanta Caves (and a break for the afternoon) → Jalgaon (and a break for dinner) → overnight to Indore → Mandu. Quite a bit of bus travel  $2\frac{1}{2} + 1\frac{1}{2} + 8 + 3 = 15$  hours over 8:00 am → 10:30 am = 24.5 and held up pretty well... It's nice to have done a hard stretch of travel and for it to have gone all ok - especially considering it was bus travel from my point of view (even braved the last leg this morning without a travel sickness tablet).

In a really nice (Rs 330!) room come bungalow at Mandu having a quiet night of contemplation + reading.

Walked around Mandu a little, not much of a village here but the ruins of the old city are

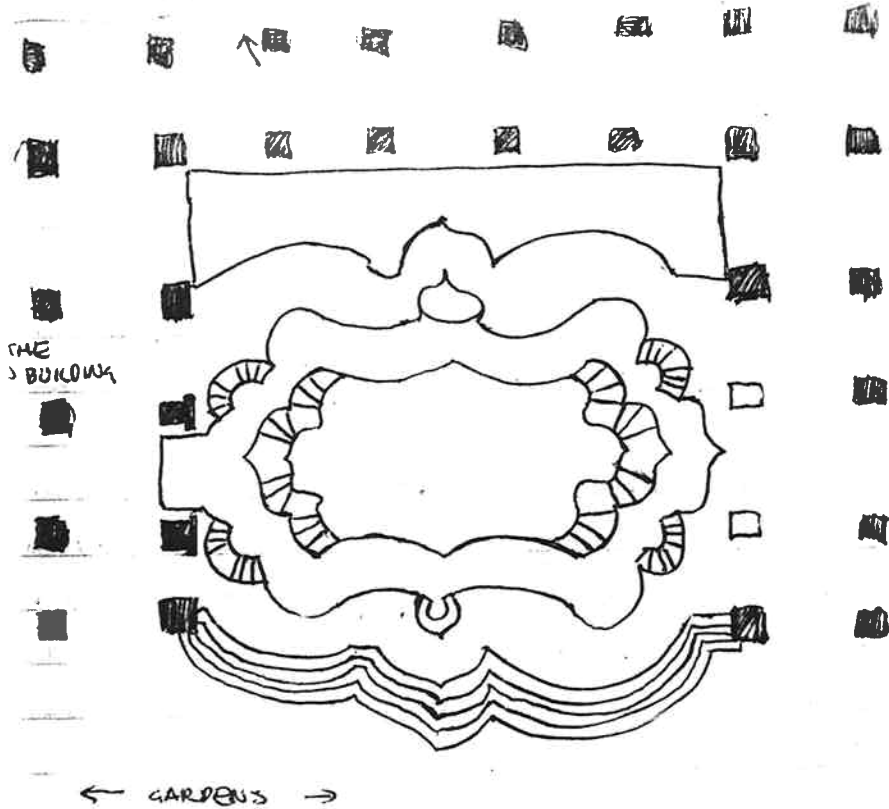
really nice. Old buildings, around peaceful lakes and delicately laid out lotus flower pools etc. Real Arabian nights stuff, must have been magical in its day - all with such a peaceful serene air about.

Something else nice about travelling is getting back in touch with the moon and the stars. Seeing saturn from a different place overnight and watching the moon going through its cycles. Something you only tend to get glimpses of it seems when you're at home and you have too many other things occupying your mind.

4/1/95 Back at the Jahaz

Mahal (the ship palace for the harem of 10,000 girls one of the kings built). Beautiful place by the lake with large ~~one~~ lotus flower pools at different levels. I tried to draw the plan of the large one which is about 3m deep at the deepest but failed miserably on the curves which <sup>are</sup> beautiful and come together almost three dimensionally to give an impression





a lotus flower or in that spirit anyway!

It's quite hard not to get carried away with all of the romanticism in the palaces and fortresses in India. but it is a place that inspires all of that, the colours in the clothing, the red earth and pink sunsets, the bazaars through the city streets and the numerous hollywood movies of veiled women and powerful Rajahs that keep springing into your mind around all of

the ruins. It is a place of misty red dust horizons and labyrinth ancient cities.

The latest onyway was the afternoon walk up to Rajmatis Palace for sunset. A quiet peaceful place (even with the Indian who insisted on playing us a rather haunting little tune on his comb and a bit of paper!) way up high with the lands of the fortress back on one side and the patchwork plains stretching into haze like a carpet a good couple of hundred metres down on the other. Staring out from the top with a fading purple sky it did really feel as one girl put it like we'd arrived at the end of of the world. Quite an inspiring place, something hard to catch in anyway because of the huge scale of the panorama but very inspiring, one of those places (built for the beauty of a princess apparently such that she might survey the plains below her which were so dear to her) that seems to preclude time, whose sunsets are as beautiful today and as real as when they were witnessed by servants and silver back a hundred years or more.

We took a different route back across a small tableland just to see off the beaten track a little and got caught coming down a rather steep bushy slope. We made it all right arriving quite hot + sweaty having surprised a few locals on the way down but it was a bit silly. Not a good idea to get caught out in unknown Territory after sunset when time is against you. Rather a pity as well as it kind of overshadowed the image of magic + beauty from Rumpatis Palace - will know better next time when we've had our fill and leave it at that.

Ange was feeling a little ill today and I still have a bit of this cold. - hope we will settle down into a travelling fitness in the next week or so, I have a feeling its just a matter of coming to terms with a pace - 2 days here 3 days there etc - we will see.



Nice lines about the curves in Indian architecture, a bit more animated, or comic book surreal



than the arches of the churches in

England etc.

5/1/95	One month travelling	BA		Started	2580
	US TECHS	1000 x 14	= 1400		<del>2420</del>
AM.	8 TECHS	100 x 20	= 200	paid	668
	US CASL	100 x 14	= 140	overall	<del>1000</del> R
	CASH	R 240 / 25	= 10	lost	<del>318</del>
					<del>274</del>
					373
					1750
	Since the start of the trip have spent	830	= 26.7		
	Since 26/12/95	" " AS	= <del>1000</del>	AS / de	
		134	= 14.9		

6/1/96 Oh God!!!! I feel like absolute shit - Huesed symptoms - nausea, similar to the couple of days I was laid up in Goa and whats worse is we've been travelling. 1 1/2 hours on a bus down from Mandu with motion sickness, 2 hours sitting on the gearbox (prime position right underneath the horn) from Dhar to Indore. Spent the night being a complete bastard and totally unreasonable to Ange and up at 4:00 am this morning for 5 hours of chilly train ride to Bhopal. After 1/2 hour of whizzing

around Bhopal racing the clock to find that elusive 'main branch' of the State Bank of India who will change a traveller's cheque (just made it) another couple of hours on a bus from Bhopal to Sanchi where the first thing I did was to go to sleep for a couple of hours. Will try and get my body which feels at the moment as if it is dying to get back on the upward rejuvenation trail whilst we are here.

The bus ride from Bhopal to Sanchi was a bit of a Godsend - people sending us in all directions in Bhopal until we finally got on an empty, yes - empty! bus which picked up us and a few other stragglers before setting off. Not only did it remain  $\frac{1}{4}$  full all the way but took the short route into Sanchi + only cost 12 Rs. All of that however being so unusual for an Indian bus trip I was on edge (as ~~was~~ I now am when anything out of the ordinary goes your way) worrying about kidnappings, sexual assault etc. the whole way there!

Let me just mention Indian buses. You finally find the bus you want after several circuits of the

station being pointed in different directions by the helpful locals, usually past other helpful locals embarrassing who had given you directions in the opposite direction 5 min earlier. After arriving at the bus and mentally apologizing to the 50% of the Indians who had told you the correct way to go you hop on your bus which if you are lucky has a couple of seats left.

~~One~~ A minute or two after the scheduled departure time the bus starts to move and your mind calmly clicks into smug mode knowing you are in the system (once you get 'in the system', be it travellers cheque exchange, train reservations etc etc in India, you generally find things run - however longwinded and complicated, involving costs of thousands even sometimes -) they run smoothly ~~and you think~~, it's just getting your foot on the bottom rung of the ladder that can be the painful frustrating part.

The bus then proceeds to rock back and forward on the spot for about five minutes, chomping at the bit to go whilst the conductor runs about the place screaming the place name over and over in quick

succession so that it sounds like mexican ranchers herding a cattle stampede, and this is what it is like, he clasps one arm around anybody going trying to herd them (thinking if he can say the destination enough times quickly and loudly he will make the person believe they wish to go there) onto his bus.

The bus then pulls out in a roar of horns and diesel and dust which continues at 1 mph for the next five minutes whilst you make your way out of the bus terminal, the conductor now hopping on + off the side of the bus ~~is~~ still screaming in a frenzy such that no latecomers should miss the bus.

The bus now jam packed with people leaves the bus station + hits the city streets, the conductor with the wry expression of the man who can smell children at large in the town in Chitty Chitty Bong Bang scouring the streets with his eyes trying to sense people that may wish to go on his bus. hopping off and accosting poor souls who thought they'd pause for a moments rest next to roundabouts or traffic lights, not suspecting for a minute ~~that~~ how close they might

come to being whisked off to a destination unknown.

Once out of the city things go rather more sedately, the overcrowding, the wondering if your gotten ripped off on ticket price, the non-stop severe jolting + swerving, slowing down, speeding up and horn blasting of the bus itself the only things to deal with for the next hour and a half or whatever it is.

8/1/96 Sick in India. Not very nice. Very very ill all of yesterday and it made all the worse by not knowing what was happening, frightened of dying through fevered chills in the night so far away from home. Feel a bit better today but still very weak and an upset stomach coming to grips with the idea of food again. God! that I was well again please.

Have been to see Dr. RPNigam (Homeopath) who as his letterhead reveals is a "specialist in" Internal + Incurabil desideres. He runs the "CWAALIOR HOMEOPATHIC CLINICE" out of the Sachi Bus stand, a man whose



excited smile, enthusiastic blood pressure readings (almost five minutes of careful scrutiny of the mercury whilst my arm went numb and got pins + needles), and searching questions on the percentage of the population who were buddhists in Australia quickly lay to rest any initial doubts or lack of confidences.

As is the Indian way, I now have a plethora of pills + tonics one of which must help the ever present danger of an overdose of vitamin B which seems to be in all of them my only persisting worry.

The chanting that is played for an hour before sunset and an hour before sunrise (we heard it in Goa also) is actually recitals of sutras by buddhist priests as blessings for all and sundry (not much of a blessing played near distortion at 5 am in the morning I can tell you!) They are called Pivith Pivith or something like that. Quite relaxing - at a distance.

Beautiful carvings + interesting stories behind them all at the stupas. →



4/1/96 Getting stronger by degrees - jeans are hanging off me like a scarecrow with no straw! Went + saw all the Buddhist monuments - stupas - big domed mounds (built over relics of Buddha supposedly) with some amazing carved gateways surrounding them with scenes from his life story and teachings, up on the hill behind Sanchi.

Not the most ideal place to be resting, trains back and forward all night, sutra chants at 5 in the morning, rats (or are they large mice - not as friendly looking as the chipmunks anyway!) in the rafters and that horrible mangy dusty smell to everything, the smell you get when you open an old book that hasn't been opened in years! Anyway for 45 Rs a night <sup>each</sup> you can't really ask for much, and in fact at that price some of the phusses start to become more evident! Nice people, big rooms attached bathroom, common reading room. All in the frame of mind!

The good thing about cold showers is that you never need to wait for them to warm up!

10/1/96 Orkha - Another deserted city, palaces, and a lot of temples by the looks of things. Staying in dorm beds in the "Hotel Pilka Mahal" which is just a couple of rooms in some of the old buildings right in the middle of things which is perfect for us if not as usual a little basic but at 25 Rs a night - well! Visited the hotel in the old palace which is 250 a night but great rooms, marble baths and toilets fairly enough with the best position in the place. Take a dump perched out on a turret overhanging the palace walls with beautiful views out across the old city grounds and the river to temples etc. Great entrance gates with the anti - elephant spikes, just another amazing romantic wonder of a place ho - hum!

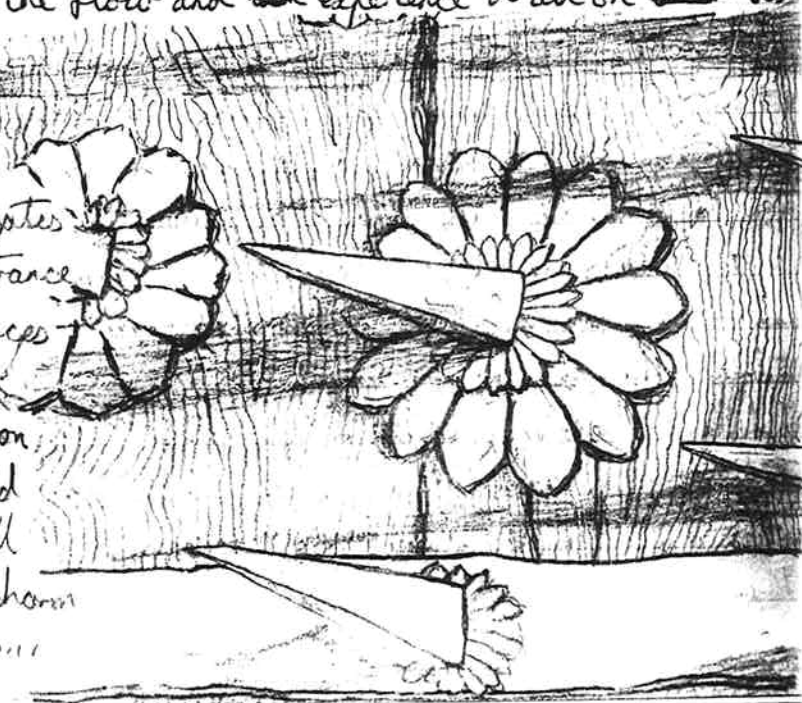
I don't feel like writing a lot so I'm just going to say that religion is everywhere here. It is a way, a reason of life, it doesn't necessarily make sense or enlighten anybody but it's like new shoes on a table I think, superstition, taken with a

grain of salt but not to be ignored! And like everything else they are very noisy about it, chanting bell ringing, etc. etc. all making quite a beautiful atmosphere at times full of charm and mystery and just an unstoppable din at other times when you're not in the mood. That's a home truth about India actually, it's big, it's beautiful, it's mysterious + charming but it's just there, take it or leave it, it's not going to budge an inch so to get in with it you need to go along with the flow and ~~but~~ experience it all on ~~the~~ its terms.

11/1/96 Anti

Elephant gates at the entrance to the Palaces Orkha.

Beaten iron and age old timbers still wound with charm



Enjoy sitting down for a bit and sketching - more doodling and watching the world go past. Must be getting old appreciating the finer, quieter things in life! Be sure it will just be a passing stage so I wouldn't worry too much.

Read a bit of Confucius last night (further evidence of the decay?!). One passage that stuck in my mind was when he said prayers said for him whilst sick once had all been said for hence, meaning (apparently) that his life was his prayer to God - or to "the way" - or whatever and ritualistic prayers could only be additional + superfluous to those. That would be one of my starting points a base in any way to live, all the praying, worshipping etc in the world is not going to do any good. You should be able to live your life free from any religion and provided you go with the currents I believe flow around all people you should reach your destiny. It is I think beyond the power of our comprehension, and draws away from the life at hand, my incessant dwelling upon subservience to a

higher order. And that is not to say that study of a higher order should be precluded from life... It's just that fear and non-comprehension usually drives us into worshipping, pagan subservience <sup>and rituals</sup> which is not right!

Great walk down the river to some rapids and beautiful views back to Orkha with the afternoon sun. It was nice to see fresh rushing water in a quiet spot away from everything, takes you away from the urban that seems to be everywhere. The two jobs we are staying with gave 10 Rs to someone to bring us a bottle of rum back from Jhoni so will sit on our balcony tonight, have a bit of a drink, watch the light dim over the temples and listen to the sounds of India.

I almost forgot we woke up this morning to thick mist surrounding everything and went for a quiet exploration through the palaces and temples. Found my way right to the top of ~~the~~ the largest of the temples up onto the roof area above which only the domes towered. Nice views but what was the most fun were the maze of stairs and corridors running



around the walls and false domes and domes on the way up. A couple of Indian guys who had also made their way up ~~to~~ took me silently back down. (Friends after I'd let them have a look through my camera) a different way down a pitch black staircase, all adding to the Labyrinth effect.

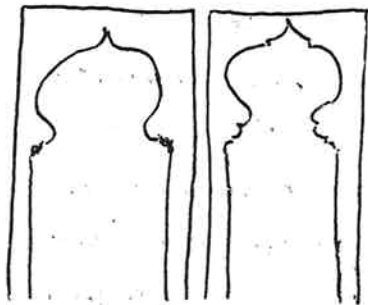
11/14/96 - PM

USFGA > 400' x 1' 4" =	AB	1260
3 TCHA'S 100' x 2' 0" =	200	
US 4 100' x 1' 4" =	140	
R <sub>2</sub> 2000 / 400 =	50	
	25	
	<u>1580</u>	

	SINCE	LAST
	START (38)	WEEK (11)
A 23-7	10	
R 593	250	
(71)	(103)	1 day
	165	days left

22/3/96

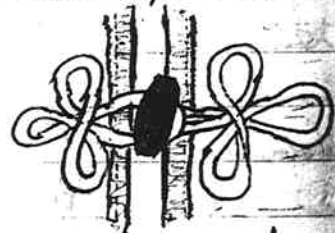
12/1/96 Terrible proportioning of which is a shame because the proportioning of the curves ~~are~~ is what makes so much of the architecture here beautiful. Simple, elegant curves, too many becomes tacky which happens a lot also unfortunately.



Did the 'walkman tour' of the main palaces today and it was really good. Tells you a lot about all of the paintings and the history of the rulers and their buildings complete with a few sound effects

which sounds like it might be terrible but is quite good and really helps your mind transform the place back to its original splendor. Beautiful views around the countryside from the top.

Walked back down the river along the same path we did yesterday it was such a nice walk. Yes a bit of uniformity and security in my life (all 2 days in a row) Had an Indian fellow in a Harley cream top with patterned cord buttons who tagged along and sat with me for a bit explaining with wide eyes and a serious expression lots of little hindi tid bits, words for stones and colours, uses for a few plants I couldn't quite get the gist of. Upon asking his name he rolled up his sleeve and showed me a tattoo on his forearm with his name presumably (very long and blurred over the ages) in both hindi + english. Was quite a relaxed encounter, himself obviously being out for a walk by the river also and got quite a warm feeling him caringly finding and explaining things to me with the river running in the background.



Had a shave at one of the little street stalls which was great. 10Rs for a shave, a bit of shampoo and washing and more importantly a bit of caring + attention for a few minutes. Felt really good even with a little mint water in the corners of the eyes.

Meal (vege curry for a change) with a couple of Germans, one of whom was from East Germany + stayed behind to chat for a bit. Really interesting, makes you realise just what stability in a country is, overshadows things like Labour v Liberal slightly.

Thought for the day - Knowing and recognizing that there are problems around you in the world is one thing, knowing and recognizing what effects you can have on the problems and learning to accept and live with it is another, quite more difficult thing altogether.

I'm not quite sure if the consequences are to struggle against your sphere of influence in a different way or learn to live within it a different way. You need to complain from time to time, its good for the ego.

13/1/96 Forgot to mention yesterday we were almost attacked by a swarm of bees. We were sitting up on one of the fortress type walls looking out trying to trace the path of the river which is actually supposed to surround Orkha as a part of its natural defenses (the other being the impenetrable jungles you used to have to get through to reach it). Anyway this swarm of bees appeared over the tree tops and after a couple of minutes we realised it was getting bigger + bigger and heading straight for us. Not having ever been attacked by bees before (!) we were a bit unsure what to do, visions of people jumping into ponds sprang to mind but the best we could do was run for it and hide behind the walls of the old camel stables near by which seemed to work. All a bit of excitement but I don't think bees attack unprovoked unless its a full moon, Jupiter is in Sagittarius and whole host of other cosmic things line up - I think.

Kapuratho.

Another hellish bus journey. Four hours of shuddering horns, headache and nausea. Should be thankful the travel

achess tablets seem to be keeping me from throwing up!  
Fever and chills on both our parts and a couple of  
diapers + a couple of hours later were a bit fragile  
but still living.

At dinner on my own - sad sight? - probably not in the  
travelling scene. Ange is in bed with the runs and I'm dining  
on veggie soup and boiled rice. Me thinkst that health is going  
to be a constant concern the whole time we are away  
unfortunately. Don't know how we will manage if we're trekking  
for three full weeks in Nepal. Will just have to wait and  
see how we fare from here on in. I feel kind of like a man  
writing the last entry in an expedition journal - impending doom?  
Energy failing, can't hold out much longer, down to our last  
bit of lamp oil, finding it hard to even hold the pen.  
aggggh

~~~~~ Ahh! Banana Lassi came along just in  
time and it is beautiful! Hard to know what is made worse  
or even brought on by attitude to sickness and what is real.  
Not nice being ill and on the back seat so far away from home.  
Starting to hit me or dawn me just what a huge s--- thing

mass of humanity India actually is. People cooking, selling, working,  
living in a tangled mess trying to survive village after village,  
town after town repeated again + again across the whole huge  
country.

14/1/96 Well the feeling of last supper was exactly that.  
3:30 in the morning + I'm throwing up and have  
had diarrhea, really thought I was going to die. Long  
drawn out 5 1/2 hours until the doctor could make. He  
gave me an IV of a couple of re-hydration solutions which  
helped abt immediately.

15/1/96 Feeling much much better today, just a case of the runs.  
8 litres of water including 2 litres of rehydration for the  
next 5 days according to the doctor! I'll do the best I can. It was  
all brought upon apparently because I wasn't getting enough water,  
a result of taking the diareeze tablet a week ago - it cures the  
symptoms only and I think the bug that causes the diarrhea stops  
this is what stops you absorbing the salts etc. The doctor said we  
should be drinking 3 litres of water on average a day so  
that's the order of the trip from here on in I think. The IV solution

stopped my fever + chills and most of my headache within the couple of hours it took to drip in! Expensive by Indian standards I think at 800 Rs for house call (medicine + drips extra 350) but worth it!

A full days activity, 5 liters of water so far and I'm still feeling ok, touch wood. Remarkable what a quick and effective recovery it's been, just as the doctor says - think twice before going to the local buddhist at the bus stand again!

Hired a couple of bikes and did the temples of Khajuraho. Very nice spending a day getting lost in all of statues. Not as many erotic scenes as you are led to believe but there are a few and they are imaginative! Lots of female figures beautifully done striking poses, putting on make up etc etc. Like the elephants in Sanchi they are done with supple curves that are more poetic and full of movement and depth than real life at times. ☺

Slowly learning bit by bit about Hindu religion. I think the three main gods (that appear around these temples anyway) are Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu. Vishnu having lots of re-incarnations starting with a mermaid half man half fish

creature going through tortoise, lion, horse at one stage and finally buddah as the 9<sup>th</sup>. There are so many other gods Laxmi - wealth + prosperity, Sareya - Sun god etc it would be four year uni course to sort it all out I imagine. Maybe that's how it works, everybody is kept so confused it just adds to the mysticism and awe. Not sure whether the Indian way of life has come from the religion (very varied + seemingly confused on principle at times) or vice versa. It's all too complicated for a poor soul such as myself so I'll be contented just to wander, let it all play out before me and pick up what I can.

When I was really sick I just wanted to be at home drinking real orange juice and playing 500 or scrabble with Mum + Dad in the back room by the fire. Just a shy little boy when it all comes down to it. All the rest is built up and tacked on through life as it is with everybody I suppose. Like little tricycles with accessories + panels stuck all over us, some badly put together + unstable, others large and tacky, you could go on + on.



Or an inverted pyramid of boxes to which we slowly add, paddling our way about growing more adept at handling it all with more + more experience.

Really do get quite contemplative and sighing at times  
don't you Ben - nothing else to write about - the temples are  
beautiful + I really enjoyed spending a day amongst them  
but I don't particularly want to document them all. (Took  
enough photos for all that !!).

Something else that was quite nice today was riding back  
to the hotel. It was a festival, or public holiday anyway and  
all the villagers were walking back to the actual village. (The  
main centre of town is shops + restaurants around the temples).  
All in colour and the kids with little bits + pieces they'd bought  
in town - little dachas, or multicoloured windmill sticks,  
or yellow goggles with red cellophane. I just reminded of  
that tired feeling after a day out at noomba, on your  
way home from the business + commotion, satisfied and  
enjoyed to familiar living rooms + fireplaces to study the  
toys and talk about the things that happened during the day.

And Ben and Ange riding the only way you can  
on those bikes, slow, through it all. Creeea...k, Ck,  
Creeea...k, Ck, Creeea...k, Ck, Creea...k.

If you had to pick something to sum it all up it would

be scraps of coloured paper trodden into the dust on the side  
of the road. Something that is I guess common to any festival  
of any kind anywhere.

16/1/96 Agua

Spent a long day travelling, four and a half hours on  
local bus and then 3 hours on a crowded train in which some  
'military personnel' who were travelling back up to Tammer  
after their leave were kind enough to make room for us to  
sit down. We showed them our map and where we had been  
and let them browse through LP abit in return. Feel slightly  
guilty getting preferential treatment as a tourist in situations like  
that + booking tickets etc and try not to take advantage too much  
except in situations like that (after 4 hours on a bus!).

Anyway arrived at the Shanti Lodge recommended by both  
LP and our rickshaw peddler as the cheapest + best' and true to  
form LP was right + we got a view of \*THE TAJ\* from the  
rooftop. When I say we got a view - it isn't actually lit  
at night so we could make out the silhouette. It was so blue  
it seemed like a bottomless pit sucking in any stray light




passing its way. More an outline of where the Taj or its silhouette should have been, an empty space rather than an image. Anyway we were more interested in food, which was a painfully long time coming and water and bed, and that's the order in which it all happened - good night.

17/1/96 Spent the day touring around Agra with Abdul (our cyclerickshaw driver) 30 Rs a day with 6 or 7 shop visits which turned into 50 Rs with only 2 shop visits (paid off his shop commissions so we could spend more time doing what we wanted to do!).

The red fort was impressive (and red). Huge fortress walls and sandcastle gates at the front. Palace buildings inside which were also nice built by Shah Jahan who was later imprisoned in the particularly nice octagonal tower, all white marble inlaid with stone, overlooking the river to the Taj Mahal (his creation as a final resting place for his wife). Not a bad prison - fountains etc again must have been something in its day, kept clean by servants, fountains flowing along with food and wine I'd imagine,

would make a nice place to spend the hot afternoons. He was disposed by his 13 year old son Arangzeb apparently! He must have been doing something pretty wrong or Arangzeb (who was quite something judging by the marks he's left all over india) was (something that is!). Wandered around the bits we could - alot of it is used by the military - too much closed off and too much smelling of monkey piss! One of the monkeys tried grabbing a packet of chips from my hand scaring the hell out of me. Scary buggers as they are so strong and as was driven home in Orchha when we had a family board past us on a wall just above our heads, heavy bastards as well. Must have been a funny sight, me standing there in shock amidst a patch of potatoe chips that 2 seconds earlier had been in the packet in my hand.

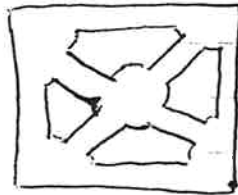
Visited the markets which I really liked - all the down to business Indian stuff - beautiful brass ware for carrying water and buckets 150 Rs - pity too hard to get home.  Brought an army surplus bag for 150 Rs which is a bit stiff but traveller trendy enough and I like stuff like that, recycled rugged stuff

with a purpose!

Then of course there was the Taj Mahal, lived up to everything everybody says about it but seemed a little mechanical. A bit expected and one of the going through the motions sights to be seen. No real romanticism in the experience, I wouldn't say the place because it is romantic and it is beautiful. The white marble does it, against anything, any shade of sky, tree or anything it stands, or soars in majestic marbled white. The Minarets in each corner providing splendour any way you look once you are close up. Very beautiful building. Close up and far away but - I don't know - not missing something, I think it's more that the build up just turns it into a sight to be seen, there are no unique little experiences like the dog howling at a deserted sunset after our walk around Ager's rock, nothing to endear it into your person, but it is truly beautiful + a wonder. Maybe we're just not trying hard enough. I think the things that really connect are slightly unexpected things. Moments that are yours and no one else's, little treasures you can keep with you as your own.

18/1/96 Did a day trip out to Fatehpur Sikri today, and (yes another!) deserted palace come fortress. Beautiful and just took our time wondering around enjoying. Some amazing structures considering it's all stone - beam and way slabs,  $\frac{1}{3}$  span gable props, low level construction in and columns - such a structural engineer!

Some interesting buildings also, the private audience room where the emperor Akbar sat upon a throne upon an ornate column in the middle of the building with four bridges adjoining him from each side so he could confer with religious advisers etc. Ego! Also the Minar Minar, a twenty one metre high tower covered with elephant tusks (although bordering on phallic!) made from stone, built apparently above the grave of Akbar's favourite elephant. Beautiful views from the top out over soft green plains with dark green trees dotting the vista into the distance.



A little pearl from Abdul who cycle rickshaws as the station again this morning "before marriage. Life is love

after, life is wife" - lot of lads talk between me & him going to get the photos processed whilst Anqi posted a parcel!

|        |       |                        |                |                                           |
|--------|-------|------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------|
|        |       |                        |                | LAST WK<br>= 1200 DOCTORS<br>= 700 PHOTOS |
| 01/196 | OSTHQ | - 800 = 174            | = 1120         |                                           |
|        | STCHG | - 100 = 20             | = 200          |                                           |
|        | US    | - 100 = 174            | = 130          |                                           |
|        | Rs    | - 360 / 25             | = 54           |                                           |
|        |       |                        | 1514           |                                           |
|        |       | SINCE<br>57/11/71 (45) | LAST<br>WK (7) |                                           |
|        | As    | 23                     | 23.7           | 12.8                                      |
|        | Rs    | 542                    | 542            | 320                                       |
|        |       | (64)                   | (64)           | (200)                                     |
|        |       | 22/3/96                |                | Days<br>left<br>125<br>118                |

19/1/95 Deeg (from Bharatpur)

Today was one of the days that makes the good days good! It wasn't that we didn't see some good stuff, the palace at Deeg was very nice, cool gardens with lots of grass, big bathing ghats at tanks either side of it at which all the washerwomen were pounding their washing, reflected in the stillness of the rest of the water. The palace buildings still have a lot of their furnishings. Big spacious rooms with large fans drawn to and fro by servants outside, long sweeping furniture all oversized in sympathy with the extensive floor space to fill. A black and white photo in a wooden frame of the maharajah himself standing on one of the tables (the photograph that is!), two elephants

feet, one made tastefully into a decanter holder and the other one of the biggest art deco you are ever likely to come across. The Indian dining room with 6" high horseshoe

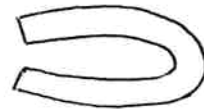
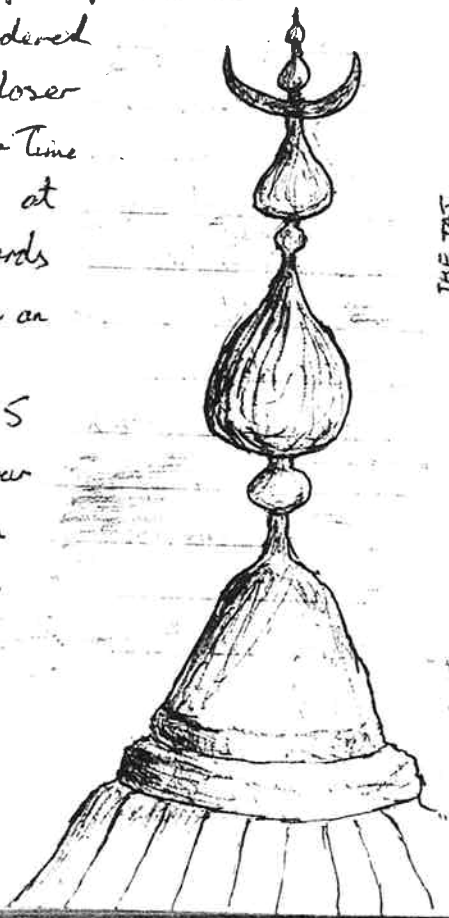


table in solid stone around the outside of which the guests sat and the inside of which the servants wandered to and fro with beer and drink, the English dining room with table to seat most have been 20 and panoramic views out over the lake. A game room for chess etc covered in mattresses and cushions formed into chairs. 200 year old persian rugs everywhere the largest being in the palatial bedroom containing dressing tables and other furniture including the 19' x 13' bed (the original maharajah was apparently 7' tall though you wouldn't guess it from the heights of the doorways!).

It was just one of those days when you ~~you~~ seem to be striding against the flow of the people and refuse to give in. Not many tourists make it to Deeg and it seemed like we were being pushed the whole day. Started by waking up after a quick nap in the maharajah's old fruit garden with four young Indian guys sitting 20 feet away staring at us. Then proceeded with a varying group of 5 to 10

em. Back in Agra watching the Taj and the sunset. Had a great day today. Got up reasonably early and went and had a look at the bird sanctuary. It was well worthwhile. Quiet tracks through marshlands teeming with storks, herons, egrets, spoonbills, pelicans, kingfishers and a hundred other types of birds. One did get rid of the obligatory guide attempt we just quietly meandered along the paths stopping to have a closer look with the binoculars from time to time with the park to ourselves it seemed at times. Got quite a bit busier towards lunchtime so we took a boat trip with an Australian girl we met out into the marshes. Our initial fears of us and 15 others asking which country for an hour were replaced with a beautifully calm and serene punt through ~~no~~ all of the birds including a quick side trip to what must have been a 10ft long python nesting lazily in a tree. The guide just casually



took us out pointing out the odd bird and then let us slowly drift leaving us to ourselves and the silence for the most part. Beautiful trip - not many other places like that in the world I'd imagine. And the park was run in such a way as it was all fixed prices and no tips which also helped to make the whole thing a bit more relaxed.

21/1/96 Had a couple of hours spare yesterday and just sat in Shanbara veggie restaurant, a bit of a travellers hangout, playing cards, drinking tea and watching the street outside go by (or back and forth in most cases) from the warmth of the cafe. Donkeys and their quiet content master carrying sand, the numerous cycles and rickshaws and people and even a funeral procession. It was nice to remove yourself for a bit and just watch. (Country, people, culture; inhaling through a view).

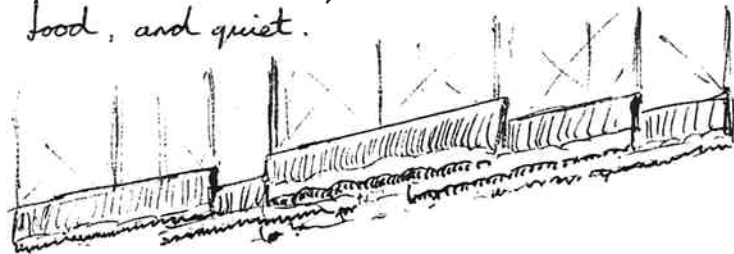
## Delhi

Four and a half hours on the train from Agra, not the quickest trip ever done to Delhi, no kidding - considering there

kids following our every move as we circled the palace grounds trying to get in. A hard core bunch of five followed us up into the fort and along the huge walls, we'd stop for a bit of a rest and contemplation of the view across town, they'd stop, we'd go down a blind alley, they'd wait for us to come back out. Finally ended with Bren asking if they would mind buggering off to school + ~~stop~~ or whenever and stop following us. This had the desired effect along with a few calls of 'monkey' etc and then (deliberately or not I don't know) rocks over the edge of the wall into the moat below and resulting attacking bees chasing Bren + Ange + a few other unfortunate locals who happened to be nearby - stung on the neck - ~~owr!~~ Others included the old hello, which country, your names ... I get the feeling you don't want to talk to me (damn right) ... an explanation of tiredness, talking all day, no offence etc etc as politely as possible followed by ... I want to talk to you and more hello, hellos and trailing. Like he said before, you've got to submit, take another perspective + go with the flow but today I was being a bit selfish for once and as a result it seemed like we were being

pushed and hassled from start to finish.

All the peace and protection of the tourist lodge at last. Food, and quiet.



20/1/96 In a rickshaw ride home in Agra the other night, it was dark and our little rickshaw had no lights and a dirty windscreen which reflected large bright lights every which way through the smears coming in the other direction. Our little man <sup>was</sup> poking his head around the side of the glass every now and then to get a better view and coaxing the news up slowly until we were going at a reasonable rate ~~and~~ then swerving and cornering so as not to lose any momentum. Ange and Bren huddled in the back it gave me the definite feeling of surrealism, of watching this spectacle in one of those movement capsules at Moomba ~~something~~. This smoky view being played out before our eyes, us jolting back and forward in the back to the movement.

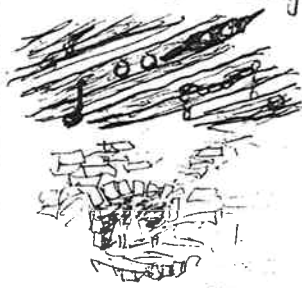


a Shatabdi express somewhere that is supposed to do it in 2 hours! Managed to get seats (or half of one in Angie's case!) it wasn't too bad. Angie unravelled a huge tangled mess of wool for her knitting and people came and helped us first on the platform and then in the carriage to unravel it and roll it into balls. It was really nice, people sitting all round us casually untying and winding wool - very cooperative! ☺

— First impressions of Delhi are good although we've had a bit of a wander up and down Main Bazaar (which is!) where we are staying. People are nice and the prices are not too bad especially considering we are in one of the major cities. The shopping is really good. Lots of interesting things in the stalls from all over, would be a good introduction of India, a warm start, if this was your first visit. Appetite is back with vengeance and I feel like I'm voraciously eating (+ shitting) which is good.

— Was reading some Agatha Christie today in which 'Mr. Cartwright' pulled up into a small town called Kirtlington let in the Salisbury plains somewhere and stranded with a few friends the village pub, the 'Belles and Matheys', and

sits down to a bit of dinner while he waits. Made me quite homesick for England actually! The number of times after a long walk by a canal or a drive in the country we have found our way to the local pub for a pint or two and a meal quite often wet and chilly warming up in a cramped cosy atmosphere with the dogs at our feet. Really going to miss things like that about England. Ummmmmm... Thoughts a long way from India!



22/1/96 Day around Delhi in and out of rickshaws and bazaars, trying to chase down some sleeping bags. Ended up with the best we could do - cheap nylon things that we could have bought in the street outside the hotel! All was not lost however - bought some 50 Rs army surplus pants, found something pretty close to Dublin, an 80 Rs cushion cover which I thought I might give Beck but would like to keep for myself! and checked out the situation on LF China + Travellers cheques. Also went to the Red Fort which was a bit of a disappointment I thought. Was very large and spread out and seemed a bit disappointed with other later buildings and

power lines everywhere. Partly also I think because we were both tired and have seen a lot of good ports along the way up here so it wasn't anything that new or exciting. Impressed with the area we are staying in - Main Bazaar - narrow little street full of a great variety of shops. Found a really cheap place to eat with good food also which always helps endear a place into your heart. More tea, cards and passing street scenes before bed, very nice. It rained slightly tonight so we had the added spectacle of sliding mopeds and rickshaws (into each other a few times) in between the cows helping to clean up all the old veggie remnants.

23/1/96 Have read a couple of very good books lately, the first was George Orwell's 1984. Amazing book, I wish I had read it at school like a lot of people had. Shows thought about society about the human race, would be good for you at that age when so much is selfish or maybe not so selfish but self centred. Well written vibrant book as well. I think when I settle down I would like to have a

library with all the books like that. Old second hand like weathered books with a store of knowledge, of culture, of art and society, of life, something that holds all the beautiful ideals and thoughts my own little brain can appreciate but not hold onto in copacity.

The other was Agatha Christie (have been reading a bit of her stuff lately), the mysterious Mr Quin. A colourful collection of stories with other little ribbons alluded to only running through them. I quite like the idea and image of harkquin. Agatha Christie also gives you a good feeling of society, of ~~scals~~ <sup>scals</sup> who appreciate culture and with those who with aplomb, with good character and those without that move through it. Makes me want to be a part of it all to be one of the interesting people, to know, to appreciate and to be able to move in all circles in the depth of the world. A bit of this is 1984 speaking also, recognizing and almost taking as a necessity class systems to which any one I don't particularly wish to be constrained. That's a part of travelling as well, looking around the boarders, exploring the levels.

(It also made me think of Dad and Uncle Brian bringing

up. Their mum and dad would have been very much a part of all of that, society and ideals stronger back then than now. A lot of dad's bringing up passed through as I am sure I will to my children if we ever have any. The encouragement of arguing and conversation about different things. The same thing with uncle Brian sitting down with a scotch to converse rather than going out to a social evening with Holly. Both of them setting up little steadfasts from their childhood around them, the bar and scotch stone, the golf clubs sitting in the garage and the odd game in pursuit of a sporting challenge to one's better character. Standing glass in hand, a solid domain about them of which they master, a statement of their being to the rest of the world. (I can almost picture my grandfather standing in suit, arm on mantelpiece, neat trimmed hair, scotch glass in hand with the two boys there, commanding (if not getting) obedience by his very posture and distancing himself slightly from them into that realm of good society, partly as an example and partly as his own standards required, the image put forth of a 'gentleman'. Mum has really gone

of bridge with her circle sitting right in. A stern serious-natured household in which all the better things in life and character were valued.

Mums mum and dad would have been more working class, warmer, small living room with armchair, tea and a small fire people. Humbler with quite a good grasp on the ins and outs of life. Yielding softly with the shaping experiences rather than trying to stand stern in the face of a hard uncompromising ~~image~~ presentation of image.

And all of it come together with the softening of the self belief and expanded moral horizons they when my age would have applied to life, revisiting the ideals. The beer drinking parties of the 70's, Rhonda + David, Anne + Ivan, the business opportunism of the 80's all joining in along the way to now.

Totally wrong? Maybe, that's what a lot of the diary is like, not exhaustive studies of life, just a few milling thoughts not really thought out with any rigorous examination of fact, just feel.

Sitting on the Shatohi express on our way

est from Delhi. Both smelly and festering. up early to catch the train after queuing in the halls of New Delhi railway Station last night for tickets.

Given time to finish my book, write down a few bits and pieces I had been meaning to write, Comfy seats for a change, feed on tea and biscuits and a bit of breakfast. almost wished it was an hour longer I said to Anji and she said she would stay here all day! Well almost at Alwar so I'll go and hopefully just have time to read the paper before we stop.

### Sariska N.P. (near Alwar)

Alwar is a nice, mellow little town, surprisingly so since its on the main line between Delhi - Jaipur. No hassling or irritating trees at railway fares etc. It's a mountain range is. backstop also with a big fort, walls draped along the ridges, looking down upon it. I like places with mountains, gives them a bit more character, places usually not missed by anyone where a soul can retreat to if he feels the need. There are dry barren mountains that seem to rise up steeply out of

nowhere, reminds me a lot of the mountains in Greece.

From Alwar it was a short but shuddery bus ride to Sariska Tiger park. Nice ride along the green fertile flats at the base of the mountains, like a split view, barren desert hills on one side and lush fertile plains on the other. Sariska is also very relaxed only consisting of a few hotels and the park office. Again set rates on park entry which takes out a lot of the touting + hassel. Booked ourselves on a little game watching safari this afternoon and are just sitting soaking up the sun on our hotel roof, passing time until were due to go. Most serene dude!

With 25 tigers, god knows how many square kilometers of jungle,

a million quite shady private

retreats and a noisy

jeep I dont hold

the chances of coming

across a tiger as all

that crash but!

The idea of tigers in the Indian

jungle is a nice one anyway)



Went for a walk over to the post palace hotel, a green  
loured place of serenity and society straight out of the  
old British raj, once a place frequented by big game  
hunters of distinction it gives the impression of being a  
bit past its prime and continuing on in ignorant isolation of  
the changing world around it as it only knows how,  
doomed at sometime in the future due to the lack of funds  
people are prepared to spend in seeing tigers rather than  
shooting them. Nice place to visit for the taste of it all  
and we spent a bit of time looking at all the photos  
around the walls of the tiger hunt expedition parties of  
the past during the 1920s and 30s. Trying to imagine  
the people as they were then, taking the clothes and the  
figures and the expressions and imagining the moments  
before and after the snapshots. The gathering of elephants  
and porters for the hunts, the social goings on, the stories  
of hunts gone by and news of England passed over  
glasses of gin in the drawing rooms. The men of great  
character, the big game hunters and their wives expanding  
into the scope their husbands roles allowed them, the  
dignitaries, the often bemused Indians wide eyed at

what must have been sulphur flashes and this huge rallying  
in front of the photographic camera with which they were  
all to be recorded in picture in hardcopy for all time to  
come. Little did they know they would be staring out  
from the walls of the palace at me 60 odd years later!  
Hmmm...

Well we didn't see any tigers - spotted deer, jackals, antelope  
warthogs, peacocks, quail, but no tigers. Nice countryside - a  
bit drier than I thought it would be, lovely setting with the  
mountains all around. I know we weren't expecting to see a  
tiger but its still a little bit of a disappointment, I think I  
would have enjoyed it a bit more but it does have a little in the  
shadow of Bharatpur bird sanctuary which really was something  
else.

Went up to the rooftop for an amazing view of the stars. The  
most beautiful natural wonder of them all, adjectives dont exist that  
describe what the view of the universe holds for someone looking up  
at it. We creep and stretch for angle on a nice waterfall  
somewhere and there above us every man on the planet with a



perfect viewpoint, the most beautiful, ~~interesting~~ wonder of them all, Such depth to behold, and endless sink of possibility, the universe

24/1/96 Jajpur

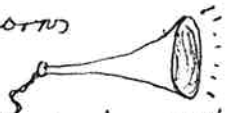


Spent the day looking around the Pink City, which is more pink paint, a little tatty, Tacky, and not the real attraction. The real attraction is the variety in the streets, a series of bazaars within the city walls with shop after shop selling anything from paper mache masks to, to anything! A lot of camels in the streets (Rajasthan - the camel state!) and even the odd elephant, also a lot of students (usually of commerce wanting to practice their english on you which can be a bit tiring after the third one in a row has tagged you for a couple of hundred metres overboard in enthusiasm and tourism advice and the some old questions - although we had one who was most interested in confirming the rumours he'd heard of night cricket and women playing - for money sometimes even!!! Enjoyable city overall to wander around although the shopkeepers in the tourist hotspots are vicious!

Took the bus from Sarisba this morning and had a really

pleasant trip - without travel sickness pills even! Lots of mountain countryside and old forts along the way. We were held up at one point for about 1/2 hour in a traffic jam during which I wandered out to take some photos. Just off the road over a small fence were a couple of old (old I think - maybe not, its hard to tell) guys sitting Indian fashion passing a pipe between them. I ended up making the effort to get around and say hello - it was quite something, breaking, or rather stepping off the road and into this quiet little scene. Sitting there in the sun happy and content as can be looking over the fields of whatever crop it was enjoying the sunshine. A few laughs and words with a man laden down with sticks + branches who slowly appeared walking out of nowhere along a well worn track and who disappeared just as quietly over the wall and onto who knows where. They were quite happy to have their photo taken and seemed pretty non-surprised about anything. I turned and surveyed their fields with them for a minute or two letting them know what a nice view I thought it was. More smiles and nods and passing of the pipe (what was in that pipe I wonder). A quick shake of the hand, more smiles and I left them to their morning sun. A few waves of the hand and I felt like a memory, a little

Flittering happening across the solid enduring canvas in front of them which seemed somehow to be flowing into them. They were as much it as it was them, reality of which will always be, myself the surreal, the passing out of place voices lacking the solidity, the roots, back onto the unreal world of the highway and the bus to the next unreal, or maybe just unnecessary or irrelevant city.

Also saw a wedding tonight, apparently today is a day for the changing of the climate (starts getting warmer?) and a festival day, one of 4 or 5 that are astrologically important during the year and hence is a popular day on which to be married. A little mobile stage with singer, background tear and about 10 or 20 loudspeaker horns  and a connected string of people holding fluorescent tube type lanterns amongst a crowd of wildly dancing wedding goers. A man in the background sending off fireworks way to close to everyone, almost arriving at disaster when one of the rockets fizzled + started going off at ground level, and the groom (the one with a small child - ?) sitting calmly at the back of it all on a decorated horse. We couldn't quite work out where

the lucky girl was suffice to say that she was supposed to be wearing red. Quite a colourful and loud scene. The dances were dancing nightclub style with that wild unco-ordinated abandon accompanied by self doubt which results in a frenzied couple of minutes of fit and the consequential retirement from the limelight to appraise the situation. The women were a bit more at ease with it all just like any scene in any western club!

25/1/96 Visited Amber Fort today and had a great time.

Really impressive fort up on a hillside with views over the town and lake below to the mountains and the boundaries walls draped across them like great wall of China style on the other side of the valley. Lots of elephants carrying people up and down. Lovely animals to see and watch move but I'm not sure how well they are treated. How do you tell if an elephant's happy? They all seemed happy enough but did look a little rough around the edges. One of the highlights of the palace was the king's bedroom and the funny little guide who dragged us in and did a little sequence waving a couple of candles about in the dark. The effect with hundreds of tiny mirrors on the ceiling was amazing, like a cross between the stars and fireworks, really beautiful.

The five minute little episode ended with a heart rendering rendition of twinkle twinkle little star, the mirrors in the room were obviously the stars and the Queen was supposed to be the moon (although which bit of her it was we couldn't quite ascertain).

We then went for a bit of a walk up some fairly steep hills to the boundary walls and lookout towers on the other side. No people about anywhere and spectacular views, overdid it a bit on the photos I'm afraid! Was nice to do a bit of hard walking and get off the tourist trail a bit, especially it being such a nice walk. Must try + do that more in the future, its way too easy to fall into the tourist sights scene.

Back in Jaipur we walked through the city for a bit again, this time taking all of the backstreets and little market lanes. Full of surprises, this is where all the real shops have gone, and no hassels from shopkeepers after the tourist dollar.

The <sup>old</sup> place or city is set up as a grid of quadrangles and everywhere you go there are big gates leading off into different pockets that must have been lords residences or mini cities over which they looked. There are also a lot of old houses painted up beautifully, faded now of course but it must have really

been something (and still is in a different way) in its day. Most enjoyable exploring all the bits and pieces, something new around every little corner. Stopped off at an antique shop to look at some lovely paintings and bits and pieces, way out of our price range but lovely all the same.

Good dinner, sedate rickshaw ride home for a change and Anje + Brea lounging about reading the papers etc fully satisfied and at one with the concept of it all. Days like these are what its all about.

|            |         | 11:20              | SINGLE START (52)        | LAST WK (7) | LAST WK              |      |
|------------|---------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|------|
| 25/1/96 PM | US TCHA | - 800 x 17 = 13600 |                          |             | - 260 LP BOOKS       |      |
|            | US \$   | - 100 x 14 = 1400  | AB 231 <del>211/18</del> | 19.7        | + 315 MONEY CHARGE   |      |
|            | Rs      | - 2900 / 25 = 116  | Rs 579 <del>611/5</del>  | 4.93        | + 350 SLEEP BAGS     |      |
|            |         | AB <del>1376</del> | (54) <del>(54)</del>     | (7)         | - 140 OTHER SHOPPING |      |
|            |         |                    | 24/3/96                  | 70          |                      | days |
|            |         |                    |                          | 81          |                      |      |

Would like to buy some miniature paintings along the way somewhere and frame them in simple glass with white backing + a white distanced border to show up all the ragged edges of the paper/material. Might be being a bit silly but what the heck - indulge ones self once in a while! The real things were beautiful - colours, detail, attention to borders etc and the one I saw was just a page from a book! 150 US\$ was the catch although I'm sure I could have got it for a lot less. I love antiques, not the furniture and pristine mint condition stuff, the dusty, aged used stuff, the odds

+ sods that have character and history, the from a corner of a dusty little shop in so+so and from a travelling Arab-or defunct dowry before that stuff. The stuff that has rubbed up and down against people and been a part of the life through the ages. I've kept a couple of cards of shops with this sort of stuff in it not being able to bear parting without some hold on it no matter how tenuously thin. Who knows, one day when I'm rich and famous...

Would also like to do more sketching, develop some feeling for proportion. I might start here and maybe end up with a sketch pad even. It's a nice way to spend an hour and give the world some time to go by. Watch it move about you rather than madly moving about it for a change taking it at its own natural pace rather than your own.

26/1/96 Jhunjhuna

The painted towns of the Shekhawati region in Eastern Rajasthan. Arrived at 2:30 a little worse for the wear after a flat tyre, an hours delay and standing room only in the next available bus for a couple of hours! The good news is I'm handling these bus trips without any motion sickness pills - would be

worth the trip to India alone if I've gotten rid of that, but I'll play it easy for a bit because I know what the consequences are! A lot has to do with a plain not too large meal before going, I think.

Decided to take it a bit easy this afternoon, the forecast of possible impending coldness as plain as the frowns on our faces. The leed of having to see all Jhunjhuna has to offer in an hour and a half off our minds we went in search of a restaurant. A couple of hours later we had seen quite a bit of town including a couple of the havelis, had a cup of chai with a begging religious man and some helpful side store vendors (the only downfall being the complete lack of useful communication between us!) and were still at a loss for a restaurant. The inevitable of course occurred and we found the closest thing we saw resembling a restaurant 15m from the hotel. We've been getting a bit soft lately and have been steering in the main away from Indian food whenever we can. Memories of rich little bellies being the main driving force (it's been two weeks now + looks like time to get back on that horse!)

Had the inevitable which country, how you like India etc from a student on the bus today + I answered in the mono-tone short sharp I don't want to get chatty mode. Typical of students he just kept plugging away with the enthusiastic, dead air, bright

and chippy eyed questions in the face of my obvious rebuttal refusing to take no for an answer. We went through the 'look I'm sorry, no offence, I'm just tired and a bit motion sick and don't feel like talking' stage (after the flat 'I know you don't want to talk to me') and of course it didn't make the slightest bit of difference. He asked me if I liked Indian people and I said yes, very varied + colourful + nice etc and then I stopped to think if I really did. He wanted me to go to his town and I'm sure would have insisted upon taking tea with us, showing us around and maybe even putting us up for the night all of which every instinct I had screamed out against. And I realised the horrible truth, there are parts of the Indian ~~people~~ people I absolutely abhor. The pushing and shoving in front of fellow man at every ticket window rude to the utmost and total selfishness. The immaturity in a lot of aspects of life, especially sex and relationships. The enthusiastic pestering questioning in the face of pride and respect you get. It's like 'get a fucking life' sometimes! The persistent <sup>everything</sup> burrowing and squirming and bending to make money out of things that goes on. It seems to be worst in the younger people. The older people are a bit more subdued and are content to ask a few questions with pauses for contemplation and response making it a two way thing.

with respect on both sides (I sound like I'm expelling on media etiquette or something don't I!). The two old guys content with a few laughs and a shake of the hand before getting back to the task at hand, showing a pipe and looking over the fields in front of them. What was nice about that little episode was that after I said goodbye they just went back to what they were doing. They didn't stare after me or follow me or anything, I felt like I was a visitor in their world, a world they were quite happy with and were quite happy to show me. I didn't get the feeling of abandoning life, pride and self to pitifully pester us, they were solid and a part of India whereas the young guy on the bus seemed ready to abandon it all in an instant, in fact already had for the money grabbing pushing in front not race that I like to think is not the real India (although of course it is an undeniable part of it now).

This is someone who has grown up with more opportunity than you can poke a stick at speaking ~~and~~ <sup>mind you</sup> Travel and broad horizons I don't think which category I'd fit into if I was in their position because I know I have a bit of understanding. Brendon and try.

There are also a lot of things about the people I admire, some people are extremely nice, the whole country is non-violent and patience and subtlety of skill seem to be consciously exercised traits valued.



more than in western countries where temper are shorter. The attitude to the surroundings, happiness in their lot (although that's all a relative thing) and the bonds on relations to the environment that goes with an agricultural society I guess. Some quite good religious ideals which are more a result of past philosophes than the population at large to which from my untrained eyes religion takes on a hotch potch basic fear-behaviour thing at different confused levels of ignorance. An indicative example being the habit of smoking through the fingers without letting the cigarette touch the lips as it is against their religion to smoke!

27/1/96 Reading (again) a translation of Tao Tê Ching by R.B. Blackney - The way of Life. Can really relate to a lot of it, it seems to be the thinking of people over the centuries it was formed whose path seems to convey and smooth over all the frustrations I have about modern religions and thinking albeit my frustrations are very vague and ~~not~~ only an embryonic inklings whereas I could imagine the insights and what they had to say come from nature humble contemplation of winding trails of thought and exploration of reality that have occurred over centuries. It all appears to have come together through the Chinese mystics, <sup>(not sudden revelatory inspiration)</sup> recluses who having ~~led~~ or renounced civilized society lived in the mountains

or wherever. Generally the great ones started with deep skepticism about popular <sup>or traditional religion</sup> and mass power to influence God or the gods.

Its hard to put down properly as I've only just started but some random things that appeal are:

Reference to God as more a heaven - images that religions form as the God or gods are purely the manifestation of the need of ignorant people to worship or idolize something physical. A focus for them to exist in their own immediate reality and I think only debases any religion whose starts may have been somewhat better.

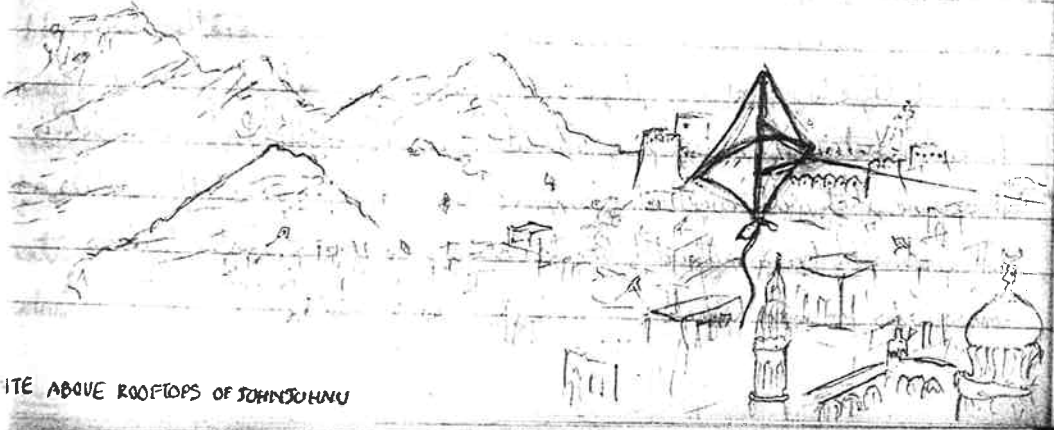
Folk beliefs about gods and spirits give way to a metaphysic of the utmost generality for those who can rise to it. This is said in general about the sayings of different great mystics of the world, the remarkable ~~unity~~ of their findings (those of China, India, Europe, Persia etc.) being described as one of the truly impressive facts of the spiritual history of the human race. In this metaphysic, this universal 'way' I can see the fronts of philosophy (religion being a subset) and of science (of laws, of chaos, of discoveries that seem to open up + extend possibilities rather like supernatural etc rather than ~~not~~ ~~life~~ to schoolroom physics like many peoples image of science would have them believe) coming together at some time in the future which I believe what will eventually happen. The two being parallel studies and eventually being mutually beneficial in who knows what glorious consequences for man himself.

"The secret waits for the insight  
of eyes unclouded by longing;  
those who are bound by desire  
see only the outward container."

(FROM POEM 'THE TECHNIQUE')

The abolition of desire in order to see clearly; the fundament of Buddhism on the path to Nirvana ~~is~~ as I understand it. To my petty life in the immediate, the casting astray of aim and superfluous images to lay bare the pure ideal and pure thought which is the essence behind it all. Not appreciation springs to mind, the ~~new~~ admiration of beauty and craftsmanship often smothered with so many ~~delusions~~ in image, posture, status etc.

"Within the self IT is to be found and there  
it is identical with Reality in the external world"



ITE ABOVE ROOFTOPS OF JOHNSONNU

|            |            |            |                    |
|------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| muslim     | Azzim      | आशिका      | Members of the     |
|            |            | आदिल       | Khetri Mahal       |
| SOPUR      | my jaffa   | इषा हीमराव | club. The secret   |
| ibrahim    |            | शिमराव     | for the elusive    |
| Sikandar   | श्री अशिका | आशिका      | Khetri Mahal       |
| A. Rahmann | राजिद      | Brandon    | ended up involving |
|            | श्री अशिका |            |                    |

This group of muslim kids who followed (or rather led) me right to the top. The palace itself I didn't think much of, small with what I am sure if I knew better were well proportioned lines (refer LP), but a little uncared for and crowded by other buildings. The climb to the top however is worth it with a panoramic view over the town in all directions. Seems to clear you a bit of space and shows you the hills and fort at the back and the extent of spread of all the other buildings, mosques etc of the town. Floating up comes the noise of all the children running and playing carrying over the fainter noise of the city and a dotting of kites swirling around above the rooftops all over. So I sat down to do a little sketch with them all crouched around me pointing out bits and pieces to each other. Was a strangely private moment, them happy just to observe and me happy to just sketch. Did worry me a little when a stone ball about 2 1/2"  $\phi$  on the end of a metre of leather strand

appeared but I was assured it was just a game (not a game you would want to turn nasty!).

Weighed myself the other day 79.0 kg along with the advice "less noise means more cheer" and the prophetic words "although you not easy to live with, you will make an interesting marriage partner!" I know I've lost weight but from 87.5 → 79.0? Anger one wasn't too far off - she had lost weight which she has so it could be right - keep eating + exercising! (or find a machine that tells me what I want it to).

Went out to Mandawa today to look at some more havelis which were really nice. Nice market town with a good feel about it except for a few more tourists, the rich short term type (middle age American and Germans) who were staying at the castle hotel, a bit sleazy! Included one very aggressive, self centred rude American lady who got very noisy when I said it might not be a good idea to buy the wooden artifacts they rip off the buildings as it's to the towns detriment. Well that's one opinion, you can't have been in India long thinking that, you don't know obviously that they don't look after anything! Seems to me India should be left as India, not ripped out of their hands into the protection of a New York suburban home, the word pillaging springs to mind. What the heck lets

pull the whole culture apart and freeze it in hermetically sealed plastic the display of Americans living rooms. There is a reason why they had pull them out of a locked room to show them to her I would imagine. Anyway no one getting worked up - although I will! - just a pointer the goings on in the big wide world and I'm sure there is a lot we can learn from!

The pointed towns were really nice and a nice change as we but I think were off tomorrow having only seen the two but too our time and enjoyed them. Big bus trip tomorrow to Nagaur and hopefully accommodation at the end of it - if not onto Jodhpur that night - next couple of days could be quite hard!

28/1/96 Nagaur - Cattle + Camel fair

Arrived a Nagaur bus stand after 7 hours on the bus made worse by the fact that we thought it would only be a 6 hour trip. Bus atmosphere, smoking, chewing gum and periodically spitting it out of the window, the kid 2 seats in front periodically vomiting out the window. The stops at various towns every hour or so, people on, people off, people scrambling for seats or climbing through people to get to their seats, packages and cases this way and that through

the axes entangled with the forest of twisted legs. The horn and the bumps, baggage and the odd person on top, the impressive faces waiting out the trip, all of it bouncing along in perpetual motion at 45 km/hr, Indian humanity in a travelling bundle vying at the seams.

Nagaur was a pleasant surprise, reasonably cheap hotel (Rs160), good food, reasonably relaxed people and an interesting looking town. But (wait for it) the camel & cattle fair for which we come, didn't appear until after all of the above and a quick rickshaw ride to the city limits, and - it was worth it. Great fair - really down to earth. Street stalls with games, and selling anything you could ever want for a camel, from a nose peg through bridles, reins, saddles, ladles and cooking pots right up to tents for setting up camp, all being made in front of you in between serving customers. Out the back, hundreds of cattle and a few camels mixed in with people camped around the place feeding, cooking, chewing the fat and doing whatever else it is one does at a camel and cattle fair - sell & buy cattle and camels I imagine.

So much stuff I would love to buy - all of it in

fact. gear me up with a camel, working gear, tents, axes, hie the whole bit and set me loose nomad upon the desert. Take away the camel however and try to fit it all in at home (let alone getting it home) and I would imagine it would lose its charm somewhat. The bus trip this morning already feels another world away. It's been a long, good day. Good night!

29/1/96 Another good day at the fair. Bought a whole lot of camel bells and ropes and harnesses just because it's all so much a part of the atmosphere (and they were very cheap!). Such real stuff, I would have loved to have bought the full on cart harnesses or a saddle just because they were so well made, one of those things that would be used so much and last for years and become a part of your life (if you had a camel!). Tools of the trade. It's wonderful just wandering around the markets and the cattle area, similar atmosphere to the pony fair we come across in Ireland, or any town show anywhere in Australia I guess. Friendly people gathered for the same cause everyone sharing in the carnival feeling. Chai tents set up around the place where old men in

colourful turbans sit and discuss whatever they discuss, quality of the cattle, the merchandise, the size of that tourists camera lease! (I try to be discreet).

The people are similar (I keep coming back to) the two guys I came across when the bus was caught in traffic for a bit on the way to Jaipur. - Real lives in which were just a passing point of interest. I really enjoy that part of travelling, standing next to them looking out over the fields, them continuing to have their pipe and doing the same (not staring at me!) a lot of feeling passes between you in sharing a few moments. That's the type of travelling I enjoy, wandering and taking in the atmosphere and life going on around me. The learning of history + culture + intense observations on aspects of life in India are good from time to time but that's not why I travel, it's to feel the life. Feel the culmination of the whole lot through the people and the land and that's exactly what there is a lot of wondering around the goings on of the fair.

Also paid a visit to the fort which was quite good also except for the unhelpful non-english speaking guide who whizzed on around not understanding the concept of being alone to explore + contemplate or even just sit in the sun for a few moments

Had some interesting armour and the highlight, a camel mounted small gauge cannon which looked as though it probably took the camels head off more often than it did any damage to the rajahs enemies!

Gradually getting back onto the curries but I can't say I'm a huge fan, the chilli seems to blow away the taste and they start to all taste the same, like a vitaminized mess with a few veges if its not done properly.

30/1/96 Got up at the crack of dawn (that's one good thing about winter, the crack of dawn is at a half reasonable hour, about a quarter to seven) and went to watch the cattle fair waking up. Got some nice photos, the whole place thick with smoke from all the morning fires, people huddled around reasonably talking about what would be happening in the days to come, or about leaving as today is the last day (I'm not sure what hindi is for 'that man is wearing a rag!' but I'm sure I heard that a few times also). Cows getting into their morning chores and camels giving long snorts filling the air with mist. Watched the sun come up, the Indians for whom it was just another morning at the end of a cold night kept about their

being barely noticing, whilst for me with a warm bed to get back to I held a bit more romantic fascination, felt a little bit alien and false to the whole scene as a result but it was beautiful.

Reading (still) all about Tao te ching. What a great piece of literature and of thinking. You really get a perspective of religion when you travel. From religious education in primary school consisting of bits of bible about creation and Moses and Christianity, through muslim and middle east religious wars on television, Sunday churchgoers, midnight masses and no good television early on Sunday mornings, through news pieces and books on wild runaway cults, music, documentaries and Flowering embers in da hippies echoing the free love, Flower power of the sixties, communism versus the west, a trip to Hong Kong and reading about buddhism, incense and chants in temples, India and Hinduism, mosques, Jainism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, pilgrims, Sahas, holy men and a hundred and one Gods. and And finally Taoism or more importantly Tao te ching.

All the gods, all the miraculous occurrences, all the praying, chanting, and pagan rituals; all products of instruments to keep the common people in their place. Ignorant and happy, and

its extended itself into modern society and crossed boundaries that don't seem as rigid or uncrossable as they used to be. A supposedly intellectual modern society that clutches and hangs from the same fears and superstitions handed down from priest ruling classes thousands of years ago! Maybe the intellectual boundaries are still there its just that they're not that visibly or materially drawn any more.

And then theres this Tao te ching like a handbook for the intellectuals boom, for the priests, the kings, for those interested enough to read it from over a thousand years ago. Its not that superficial actually but sets out an amazingly thought out view of the world and a way to live through it. It doesnt provide any answer to why or whats after, but it studies all of the precludes, all of the facts at hand that we in this life can see first hand and you cant help but feel takes you to the edge from which when we are ready we will be able to leap.

It seems to have compressed time into one for me at least. Taken away the idea of progress, the world is just a swirling bundle of goings on moving this way and that, forward and backward messily adjusting its elf. One day it will come together, order will materialize (the system will jump to a natural



higher order? and we will take another step. But until then we in the past few thousand years have all been at the same level, just with different trimmings and I can't help think that before we can proceed all of this religion will have to be overcome. Maybe that's what's happening at the moment, it is building itself up in ever solidier regimented orders, becoming slower and more stagnant like any big civilization or company or whatever will in the end readily to be downed and crumbled by dissatisfaction of the people in the future. And I think it will be overcome for something that has a lot of the properties of Tao te Ching, is more natural, not necessarily less complicated or mysterious into more natural and learned philosophy that seems to relate facts at hand rather than blind idol following.

Pretty heavy, confused stuff I'd reckon but I think here is a basic thread there somewhere!



Tao - a road, a path, the way of nature  
the way of ultimate reality.

Getting carried away? Maybe. The

poems are beautifully written - also - must send that book home



INDIAN MAN WATCHING THE PRIZING FESTIVITIES

This is why people take life classes in arts, to study body proportion and form! Give you a deep respect for the curves of the figures at Khajuraho whose curves and form seem to create suppleness and movement even in the figures.

Went to have a bit of a look at the local circus tonight, a holy old tent and a few local acts. We got in free because we arrived late but left when the poor bear came on. He had a chain through his nose and was constantly trying to get it out except when he was being dragged around by it. Poor thing, we felt terrible, all sorts of feelings, what can you do and sympathy for him but in the end right or wrong walked away. Higglyh! I will try and write a letter to the Indian government which sad to say will

go further to easing my conscience than it will to helping the bear, but do a start. You can jump into every cause you come across or you'd run out of time + money pretty quickly, but is that any excuse when I'm here, travelling at leisure? No, but I know I will keep travelling anyway. This is a part of me, and no I hope (partly due to things like this) will take up causes through the rest of my life when I have a bit more stability and elbow room. Selfishly, to still be taking however at some time in the future I hope there will be a giving and it will recompense.

31/1/96 Jodhpur (on the way to Jaisalmer).

What an amazing fort! Huge bastion walls rising up from a rocky hill as a backdrop to the main part of town - really impressive. Staying at a nice little place as recommended by our local friendly rickshaw after he told us the tourist guest house was full, and we checked, and he was right. Clean, hot water, nice people, quiet, good view, and a rooftop view of the fort + city for Rs 200. Luxury!

Did a lot of running around today, money etc., the highlight of which was probably avoiding getting cheated by

the friendly parcel packing, tour bookings. (We do anything it says are involved non outside the post office to the tune of almost Rs 1000!) He tried to get us to send our carefully packed under 10 kg parcels as one big one (to save us money) with the old take you behind the counter, give off a bit of hindi to the man in charge and get them priced at the higher registered parcel rate (for items over 10 kg). All for him to make a few rupees out of re-packing them! He even stood firm when I showed him the receipt from another package we had sent ordinary reg air mail. The icing on the cake was him asking other tourists he was ripping off for recommendations to Lonely Planet!

Was a beautiful sunrise on the bus this morning, the sun beginning as a flat strip of burning orange and pull and reaching and distorting its way up into the sky, whited in front the arid desert, cool and slightly hazy with dust and smoke and sparsely interspersed trees passed waiting for the heat of the day to turn the blues and purples to dusty dry reds and greens.

The only thing about a rooftop view from which you can see everything is that everything can see you and pretty soon little faces begin to pop out of the rooftops spinkled around you and

little voices start chirping hellos from all directions. Once the sun goes down however the light becomes less harsh, the sutra chants begin (if that's what they are, I suspect these are more muslim and not buddhist like the Sanchi ones), and everybody disappears, the city bringing on a quiet feeling of rest after the days work, the peoples time. (I think the chants were muslim as they only lasted a few minutes, perhaps heralding the end of the day or calling for the time of prayer). Feel like we've got the rooftops to ourselves again, our own little amphitheatre of the fort, the smoky city, the moon and the hazy orange and violets of the receding sky.

Trying not to get carried away, it's just so much of scene I won't describe it, to tell everyone about it, to keep it, to embrace it in some way rather than just let it pass around me.

1/2/96 Jaisalmer

Up early again and another bus sunrise over the Thar desert. A nag is not that well, vomiting diarrhoea and has vomited four times since this morning! Oh boy here we go again! (at least it's not me for a change!) - An ante usmal jill

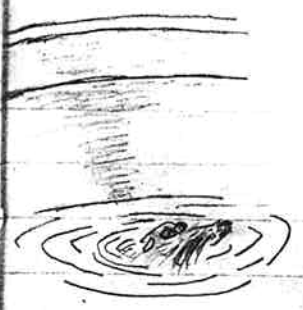
(finally), heaps of water and re-hydration and some plain food and we will see what happens.

Jaisalmer is really nice, corkville fort and lots of little streets crowded by old buildings all in yellow sandstone. There is so much tourist hype about the camel safaris and they are all linked with hotels and this and that and the desert festival which starts tomorrow, it's hard to know when you're getting good advice, bad advice, ripped off or otherwise and you feel a bit on the back foot right from the start which is never very good, but if you look at the facts so far - bus trip ok - 3Rs jeep trip to where we wanted to go, 60Rs for a reasonable room + a great rooftop view (although it's supposed to skyrocket tomorrow for the festival), better in fact than a LP recommendation we checked out, and no pressure for booking a camel safari!!! 9Rs for a bottle of water and relatively mellow + hassle free streets. Keep your govt up Brendon, someone is waiting around a corner with a sledgehammer I'm sure!

A funeral procession (I think) passed through town today and when I went down, just around the corner from the hotel entrance a whole group of women, who had been selling them in silence as before, were wailing and

rocking back and forth. Faces covered completely, pleading with outstretched arms to the gods against the injustices of it all. The un-natural thing about it all were the four or five men, heads shaved apart from a pony tail popping out from the back, sitting around them, just passively watching the individual anguish each woman was demonstrating. A kind of compulsory mourning I guess. Could maybe for release of feelings etc but couldn't help get the impression just a big put on. These women having to be seen to be in distressed mourning, each having to wail + moan as much as her neighbor whom I'm sure they were watching from the corner of their eyes, in order to pitch their performance. The men sitting by ensuring the proper amount of respect is shown. There are stranger customs and I'm not one to knock tradition or ceremony but it did feel very artificial in the face of death which is so real and has so many real feelings associated with it.

|        |                   | US CASH         | US CHECKS | SHOPPING - 700R |
|--------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 2/2/96 |                   | 840             |           |                 |
|        | US CHECK 600 x 14 | <del>1120</del> |           |                 |
|        | US CASH 100 x 14  | 140             |           |                 |
|        | Rs 500 / 25       | 260             |           |                 |
|        |                   | <del>1120</del> |           |                 |
|        |                   | 1240            |           |                 |
|        |                   |                 | 227       | 19.4            |
|        |                   |                 | 568       | 485             |
|        |                   |                 | (55)      | (67)            |
|        |                   |                 | 27/3/96   | (80)            |



The 'rat in the toilet bowl', one of the many interesting little 'experiences' brought to you at budget hotels, India, all in an effort to make your stay a memorable one.

2/2/96

Something there is, whose veiled creation was before the earth or the sky began to be; So silent, so aloof, and so alone, It changes not, nor fails, but touches all.

I do not know its name; a name for it is 'Chang'

From Tao Te Ching (25)

Well they are all still out there mourning. Bemoan the cold hard stone for the day no wonder a few of them were rocking back and forward - quite an ordeal I imagine! I wonder how long it goes on for and if anybody mourns for them when the time comes?

Spent the day looking around the fort while Ange slept and

covered a lot. Nice views out  
over the desert and the town

but im glad we stayed  
just out of the fort with  
a view back to it.

Makes such a nice  
backdrop to everything.

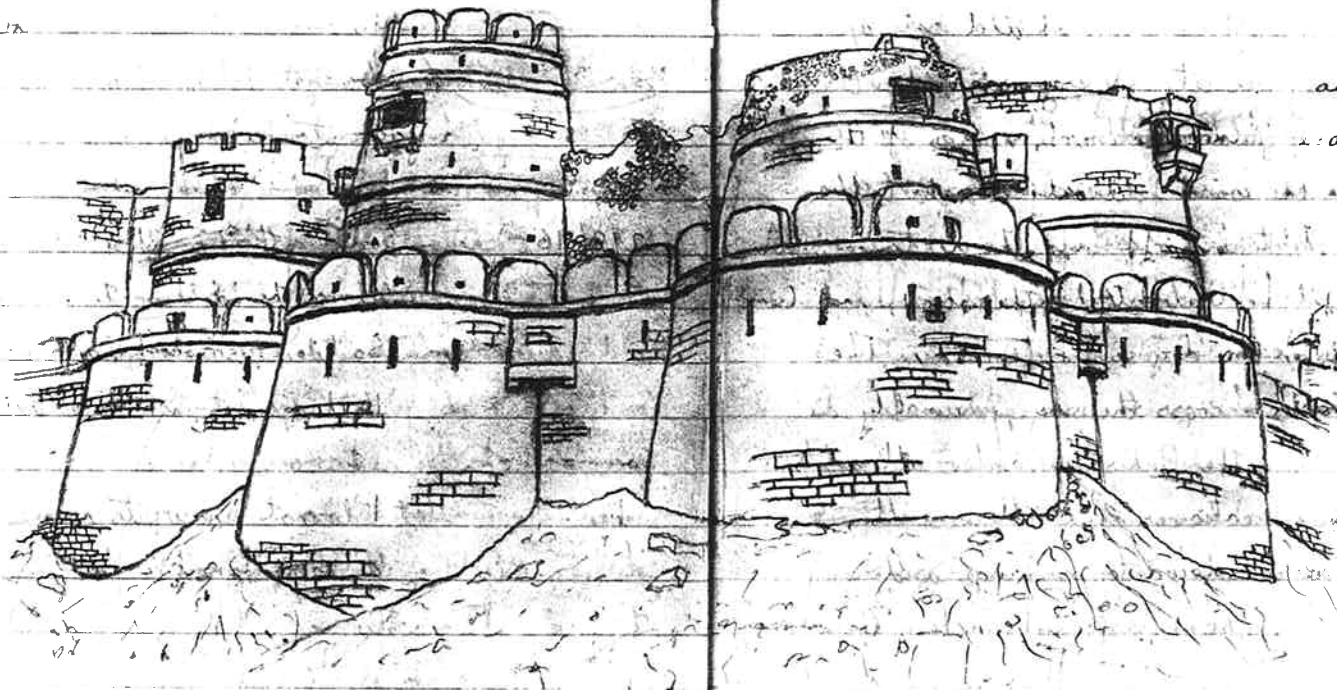
Travelling is being  
able to spend time how  
you want to, reading,  
sketching, sleeping,

not necessarily  
being productive

just going with the

flow. Seems like when you are

working you are grabbing snatches of life here and there, it can  
all become so hectic, so much in and out on top of each other that  
the breaks become snatches of fresh air, breathers between the  
days and it all starts to pass at a furious rate, you keeping up  
with it the best you can. Even with travelling you need to  
step back for a moment every now & then to look at the overall picture.



THE FORT - JAISALMER

3/2/96 Finally caught up with  
some camel races too

and... it wasn't really worth  
all the effort! Still, was

colourful scene especially the  
camel decoration competition

even if it was overrun  
by tourists. A little

bit sad all the soft  
tourists wandering across

the pitch taking photos +  
going wherever they please

with an air of VIP about  
them while all the India

set behind the ropes, restrained  
to the position of poor local person by it seems the lack of an expensive

camera. Nagaur was much nicer, people being people and not fences  
restraining a crowd of onlookers.

The wall out was nice also, stopped at some gazabo type  
structures which contained what looked like gravestones, the burial place  
of some of the richer merchants etc of some years (not that many) past

I imagine.

Anji was feeling up to a walk so we went and sat up on the fort walls and watched the sun set. Very peaceful, the light turning all the sandstone golden yellow, noises of the city below floating up with the wind, distant enough to be comforting and the desert stretching off into the distance. Jaipur has a real desert feel about it, the fort, and I guess because it is desert!! the dry sun + terrain. The odd fighter plane that tracks across the sky presumably on the way out to a patrol along the Pakistan border all adds to the remoteness and unique exoteness of it all as well.

The mourning women are down to mornings and afternoons now and the odd night session - I can hear them in song now (I presume it is them). Earlier today when I passed they were being read some passages from a book, I guess to do with life + death + religion etc, meant to comfort and set the rules straight I would imagine. The men, obviously stronger, continue to sit around in varying numbers during the day, passively watching.

Off on our camel safari tomorrow, looking forward to it, getting out into the desert, and being led along for a

bit, cool nights, hot days, and the silent calm expanse of the desert and villages nestled around you. Sound a bit idealistic! well see!

### Thar Desert (Uda desert)

5/2/96 Not too idealistic. Damn hot during the day, it's nice to take a route through the desert silently waddling along watching the different villages and bits of desert pass by. Always changing and always the same, the main differences being the time of day. It's something to come to terms with, to let sink in and become familiar with ~~the~~ desert, a constant all around in every direction, an area of beating heat and arid landscape that repeats again and again, the same village, the same people another 25 km down the track.

Nighttime and setting up camp was something else. Again not a sight to be seen, <sup>instead</sup> but the desert and its contents creeping in on all directions and carrying you along with it. A <sup>red</sup> sunset amongst cooling sands <sup>on the</sup> ~~other~~ <sup>side</sup> ~~of the~~ <sup>valley</sup> ~~with~~ <sup>purple</sup> shadows <sup>on</sup> ~~ones~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~side~~ <sup>of</sup> a rising moon on the other. I went to fetch some milk from a goatherd for tea, a ~~the~~ winding walk down into <sup>the adjacent</sup> valley, cup in hand



behind ~~the goat herd~~ <sup>him</sup>, down amongst the shrubs and goats, the quiet and the odd ~~ringing~~ <sup>ringing</sup> of goat bells the only sounds. ~~about~~ <sup>the</sup> people shy fish eyed above and a yellow harvest moon (I'm not sure exactly what a harvest moon is but they were the words that sprang to mind), rising above the ~~surrounding~~ dunes to one side of the valley. <sup>sat</sup>

Mula (our camel driver) and Anqi, with a small fire and chai brewing up on top of the dunes and the camels ever present somewhere in the background, chewing cud and letting out the odd snort, <sup>heads erect +</sup> watching.

Dinner (the goat herd come up and joined us) and sleep, beneath the stars, rugged up and warm with all the bedding come camel blankets, and saddle as a windbreak. A double bed with an endless panorama <sup>at its</sup> feet, camels settled a little way off around the remains of their feed bag.

Lying curled on my side to watch the sun come up and listen to the desert. <sup>As with ~~the~~ last night</sup> not a beautiful burst like many sunsets or sunrises, but an all enveloping beauty, a part of a continuum of the day, the night and the desert that we've given ourselves up to for the next 3 days.

6/2/96. Had a bit of a rest day yesterday. Went into the local UNDA. → village and visited the school, relaxed, drank chai, some lunch and some moonshine! with some of the villagers and generally had a look around and became acquainted with the town. Someone was worried five days ago and is off to live in another village (Bharat I think - must have a look on the map) and someone is going to get married in four days time so a couple of the houses were being decorated.

The women were all humble and reserved, carrying out whatever work there was to do, making the chai while the men were for more at ease in what I suppose is their world, sipping chai and watching the <sup>goings on</sup> ~~activity~~ around them <sup>in absence of that the desert</sup> whilst talking + laughing - very relaxed. We felt a little out of it not understanding Hindi but it was nice being in amongst it.

The schoolmaster + a teacher joined us for dinner - we of course were the chief guests + so ate before the others etc (apparently custom) although I have a feeling a lot of it was orchestrated for a good time on their behalf. More moonshine!

Got up early and had a look at the star map - saw the big dipper for the first time + J upiter popped his head up. It really is a beautifully calm place to come. Would like

Means deep - the well is 600' deep apparently

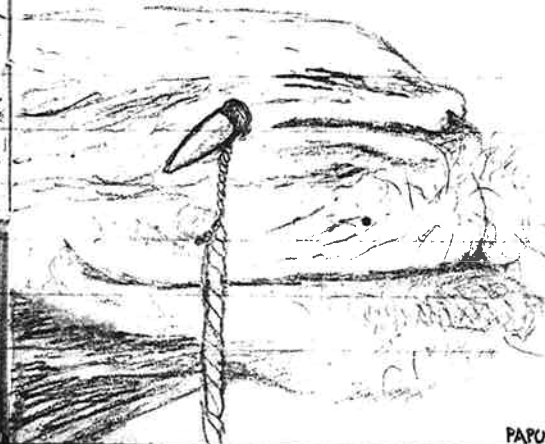
to spend some time here alone. Anyway back to breakfast.

Stopped for lunch under a tree and some shade after a morning ride and a visit to a village for tea. I prefer west the desert, the villagers seem to have some of that tourism in-roads about them, and I don't like being the soft white tourist grazing the village with my visit and insensitive questions and photos. Spending some time in one village like yesterday is better as it takes it past the first hour or so of me per, one chocolate, which country and into, would you mind fixing our solar powered television set, small mistake (big mistake I think!), and chai in the courtyard of their house watching the building on one side being rethatched; or visiting + helping the maths class (grade 2-4) and not being of that much help! - Give me a week or so with them and they'd be adding + subtracting before you know it. At the moment it seems like a painfully slow process (6 days a week and not a lot of breaks) relying on the kids to pick it up themselves from seeing it done on the board, or be hit; I might be being unfair but their didn't seem to be a lot of explanation going on, just a clip over the back of the head and do it properly.

this time. Feel sorry for the poor kids getting all that 6 days a week!

I don't know if you have ever seen a camel walk but they kind of ... gangle along, a bit like they're trying to relax as many muscles as they possibly can in the process of getting from A to B, and their feet are one of the most gangly bits of all. Big pads that spread out like large hoofy slippers out of proportion to the long legs but in keeping with all the other knees and elbows and gangly bits, and they're flopped down with a jid and expand ~~and~~ as the weight is relieved from the other legs. And the whole process is reminiscent a lolloping with silent groans at the effort of each step ~~the~~ old men getting up from and sitting down in armchairs.

7/2/96



An oot is very hard to do. justice to in a sketch although if you had a bit of talent it could be great. I think I'll stick to the black and white photos which hopefully should also come out pretty well,

lots of contrasts and shadows.

It's never lonely in the desert (not if you're a camel driver with a couple of tourists anyway!). Always a village, or a house, or a goatherd somewhere to ~~try~~ along and help with dinner, a bit of a chat and some food for the trouble.

Really an amazing place, subtle differences in terrain from stretch to stretch in an expanse which seems to suggest a uniformity unto its own as a desert. The Thor desert, India, a long, perhaps the longest so far, way from home.

Sat around talking to Mool last night. It's hard to talk at terms as we will always be the rich tourists, there is no two ways no matter how we see ourselves as it's a fact. Cameras, binoculars, good food, money to travel, Mool will always be in this way, money from day to day to live on, chapatis as a staple diet and even then sometimes not enough. Screwed by the tour operators, getting by as the majority of other Indians do, with bare essentials, relying on family. His future he likes to think is digging and coming back as an Englishman, ~~not~~ not marry<sup>ing</sup> and traveling the world. He doesn't think about the future in India too much. It's the first time I've really felt this situation in all its harshness, I'm on the other end and

we are not going to give him thousands of rupees even though it means more to him than me. Why not, I can't give money to everyone, this is the way things are to what they know, happiness is relative and short term money would mean long term sorrow when it dries up. I could think of a hundred reasons and I'm not sure if any of them measure up to what I hear may be the real reason, selfishness. I'll worry on feeling it the best way I can, the underlying philosophy being that things are different and the way that they are <sup>is the way that they are</sup> in different bits of the world. I'm not going to change it on my own, but by travelling I hope it is contributing to the cross fertilization + evening out although that's another debate altogether. In the '1984' required class divisions, there will always be a downtrodden. Feelings are relative to your surroundings and what you know (in which case I'm not helping by haunting wealth).

May it's just me, selfish or not, travelling to see the way things are elsewhere staying all the while in the Melbourne, Victoria, Australia frame. how things are, eventually to return, not a citizen of the world ~~at~~ maybe ~~long~~, but a well travelled member of my little pocket. Hmmm....

Dropped in on a little music party in a village today. A young man to be married the next day, a guy on an Indian Piano accordion and young boy on the drums. Music was great, amazing how they just

let them selves go and meld in with each other. Reminded me a lot of James music, weaving in and out of a flow, the voice tying it all together and seeming to draw upon, or even come from the countryside around.

A couple of one and two rupee notes were placed on the accordion for our benefit I'm sure. It's always hard to know when you're being scammed - I think the feelings are genuine, but a little helpful suggestion at gifts is offered given the relative financial situation for which can hardly be blamed. So ten rupees for the musicians, ten as a small (privately offered) gift for the groom after gracious declines at an invitation to the wedding, and a cup of chai later we were on our way.

Well, our camel trip is over, really worthwhile experience, day, night, the desert and the dunes for four whole days.



8/2/96 Bought a miniature painting today, really nice and good quality also (if we're any judge) 1to of

Shah Jahan of Taj Mahal fame painted on a page from an old book. The paper is around 90 to a 100 years old and the painting around 50. After a bit of pleading poor etc and the shopowner <sup>saying</sup> ~~pleading~~ he could <sup>agree</sup> ~~offer~~ to 1500 only as he needed to pay rent and would be kicked out otherwise from his home and it cost him 1800. Five years ago we finally got it for 1500. (Starting price 3000 rupees). He seemed quite well dressed etc so we didn't feel too bad. He was a nice guy also so we will write to him. If we remember, into the up and coming world cup as are lot of Indians. Good to see some good old patriotic, fanatical following of the game!

Which all brings me to

|                     | DA      | SINCE START (66) | CASH WK (7) | W/O PAINTING 75<br>LAST WK (7) |
|---------------------|---------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| US TCHG 600 × 1.4 = | 840     |                  |             |                                |
| US CASH 100 × 1.4 = | 140     | DA 22.9          | 24.2        | 19.9                           |
| Rs 2270 / 25 =      | 91      | Rs 572           | 604         | 497                            |
|                     | \$ 1071 | (47)             | (45)        | (53)                           |
|                     |         | 26/3/96          |             |                                |

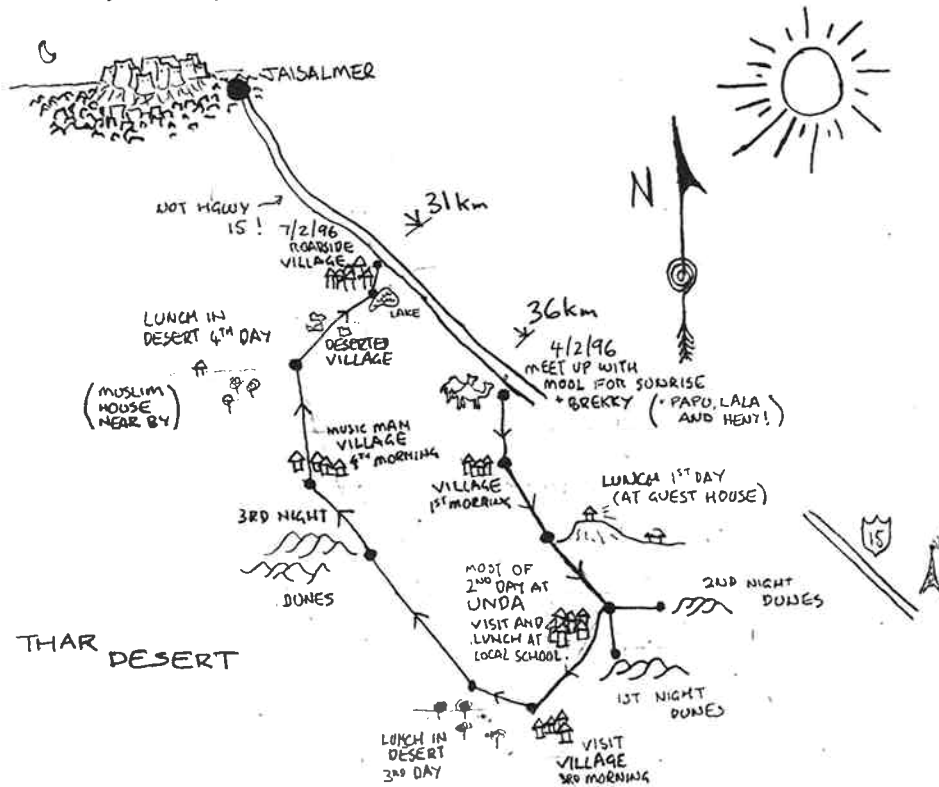
8/2/96 PM

9/2/96 Jodhpur

Back in Jodhpur, and have had the first real rain since we've been in India. so we made the most of it by grabbing a couple of

packets of cream bikkis and sitting in our hotel room (tried another hotel in an effort to escape the early morning prayers and chanting), listening to the street sounds from below and reading and writing.

Still thinking about the camel safari, what a great experience. As far as I can remember our route went:

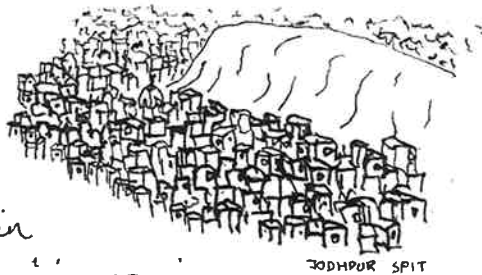


As far as I can remember!

10/2/96 Spent the day looking around Jodhpur fort, huge, huge walls towering above the city with great views out over the blue buildings (those occupied by the Brahmin caste apparently the highest of the four generalized castes) out to the palace and the horizon disappearing into the haze. Sat up there for a while listening to the sounds of the town being carried up from below by the breeze and doing a bit of resting against the expanse of it all! The museum at the fort was really good, the best we've seen so far with exhibitions of elephant seats, armoury (some huge swords + lances and wicked little hand knives); miniature paintings which included some scenes of Indian warriors charging into battle against monster-like creatures (parallels to sailor stories of men with the heads of dogs and women with ten breasts coming back from the far east merchants in 'Marco Polo' which I'm reading at the moment spring to mind), a turban exhibition (sad thing they are dying out, really are beautiful and lend so much colour and character to a scene) and a few furnished rooms showing no restraint at all on the liberality of the coloured glass windows or Christmas type ball-balls that hung from the roofs. Expensive at 50 Rs for us + 50 for a camera but worth it.

We then had a bit of a walk around the base of the wall

and out to the end of an outcrop of rock that looked like a spit of land the blue of at its feet, a really nice with a people in



amongst the houses. The blue is deepish blue there somewhere, strengths mixed

'Jodhpur blue' in various with white. If its one thing Indians know its colour. The other colours that are beautiful and really stick in the mind are the deep pink and gold of the turbans. The gold is the colour for February (from our little turban exhibition today), and I'm not sure about the pink but we saw it a lot around Arangabad and Ellora and that area. They are colours that are so bold and so deep that they always seem to impress just by their nature, not like the wall paint colours you choose at home to find you've changed your mind an hour later, these colours are so strong they have an identity of their own which refuses to be bent by subtle changes in shade.

Anyway after the walk, (involving a little case of nervousness with a couple of suspect looking dogs), a

couple of cups of chai in a chai house doing what I love doing most - watching the world stroll by, we're here killing a few hours at Jodhpur railway station waiting for the overnight train to Udaipur.

11/2/96 Sitting at Marwar Junction (light above MSL 1642 ft, 500. change here for Marwar Jn., Chittaurgarh & Barisadri).

Have just spent the night on the train which wasn't too bad even considering the over zealous Indian family switching lights on and off and reading over our shoulders that are sharing the compartment with us! One of those quiet little stations with low platforms and freight carriages standing in a severely level line along the sidings. Nice scene in the morning light and I took a couple of photos which I hope ~~will~~ come out nicely, unfortunately our engine is sitting over near the freight sidings rather than being on the end of our train where it should be, so we may <sup>have</sup> be a little while yet!

Well! finally out of earshot of the nasty kids (grabbing books from your hands whilst you're in the middle of reading them and a screaming voice that seems to start at 100dB and rise, <sup>accompanying</sup> a pouting face - aggh!) and the



Father wasn't much better, a commerce professor who had as many questions as the kids and who kept spouting GSPs - all in all quite a pathetic family would sum it all up I would say. Patheticness being gently nurtured and handed down from generation to generation.

Had a steam engine for the last leg of the journey which was quite romantic - coal smoke bringing up images of small tiled roofed houses on a damp and overcast cold day in Christchurch believe it or not, and a warm feeling of Mum and Nana and a house to go to, being on holidays still when we should have been back at school - what a feeling to savour.

Udaipur - (Udaipur, Udaipur, Udaipur)

And .... and finally Udaipur, where we jumped onto a rickshaw supervising of being coned, especially when a reference book spelling the virtues of our driver as a guide was shoved in our faces. Two hours later after much searching of streets for the very same book which had somehow fallen out of the rickshaw (our fault?), a promise to

get him another and write a few starting comments, and an arrangement for him to take us up to Monsoon Palace for Rs100 and <sup>the</sup> sunset tomorrow night, we are finally sitting on top of our hotel with great panoramic views of Udaipur + the surrounding lakes and mountains awaiting well earned food. I don't think it was a con if we're any judge but he did a good deal for the hotel etc so it's not too bad anyway. Talk about a rip roaring start to Udaipur, but now it's time to relax + enjoy it, and it looks like a beautiful place so I don't think there will be much trouble doing that.

12/2/96 Udaipur - city of lakeside palaces, mountains, lakes and rooftop restaurants!

Went up to Monsoon Palace this afternoon for the sunset with friend the bookless rickshaw driver Mustafa. A little car scrape the back of his rickshaw on the way up so I don't think we are actually good omens for him, but he's glad to see us out of Udaipur and his face I would imagine! Anyway the views from the palace were spectacular, Mountains



misting off into the distance one after another, kind of like what I had imagined mountains in China to be like, full of mystery and unforged frontiers (the Marco Polo visions rising to the surface again). The only thing that took away from it a bit were all the other people up there at the same time for the same reason. We found our own little spot away a bit but the 20 or 30 other people all sat in the one prime area making it a bit like a showy performance to be seen, curtains up at 6:15 don't be late, show of a lifetime, come and join the thousands of others who have done the Monsoon Palace sunset.

Angie annoys me a bit sometimes as she always wants to leave early, as soon as that suns down, ok out of here. I prefer to sit down and let the soul of it all seep in. Feel the earth below you and the world around you, sitting there silently amongst it all. It's a bit like leaving before the credits of a good film have run through or before a nice meal has had time to go down properly. And we stopped halfway down to admire the changing colours but she had a quick look out the side and stayed in the rickshaw. I just can't understand that type of thing and it frustrates me as I want her to enjoy it as much and get as carried away with it <sup>as much</sup> as I do, to share it I guess, she tells me

she really enjoys it so maybe it's just the way I'm reading it that's the problem. I'll just have to leave her to it and make sure I don't miss out on what I want from it I suppose.

Also had a huge dinner whilst watching Octopussy, a James Bond film that was shot around Odaipur. Was really nice, don't go to watch TV in that family room type manner very often when you're travelling. Quite a good classic Bond movie as well.

Last night was nice as well, went for a walk around the city palace and sat for a while looking out to the lake and its floodlit island palaces recounting really nice places in the world we've come across. Lorne in the wintertime, Ben Weir, Neist Point and NE Skye, Woadale head, Ayres rock + the Olgas, Thornum; the plateau in the middle of Ring of Kerry, Wimbledon Common, The Thor desert, the list goes on.

Odaipur's been nice, just feel I haven't been relaxed enough to give it justice. It seems like a place you could spend a while at, walking out to the mountains or just sitting in a small restaurant watching the world go by, but you do get hassled a bit in the streets, and the hearsay about the vicious rickshaw drivers etc set a bad tone for the place where you are on the defensive before you even get to there. Will try not to get too caught up in that in the future. So what if you pay a

few rupees more here or there, or someone gets a commission off you staying somewhere, ~~but~~ the real damage is the stress you feel about it all, overcome that and the problem goes away.

I almost forgot to mention that poor old Mustafa had his one year old niece scribble big crosses all over his previous comments book in september last year. Guy really has had a rough trot - must think the Gods have got it in for him! Can't help laughing can you ☺. He takes it all pretty well though, must have a good attitude to life, and judging by his clothes isn't doing too badly out of it either. (Hmmm... maybe it was a scam?).

13/2/96 Chittorgarh

Hot, dry and dusty, not what I'd been imagining - (more hills and some forest maybe).

The bus trip out was interesting, very dry arid countryside with cactus bushes planted in rows as fences in the red bare earth and then in odd patches fields of lush green cropped with a sea of white flowers, tulips or large poppies they look like, appearing as though they should be burnt and dried to a crisp by the surrounding desert.

strongholds of irrigation flourishing instead.

The bus trips can be quite good as you see more of the towns and outskirts of the cities. The people are such a part of all the experience over here and I'm not sure much of it ever make it into this diary, I think because it's all around, full on everyday and it would be impossible to describe it all but I'll make a bit more of an effort from time to time in the future.

The people that spring to mind first off are not the people in your face in the cities and on the buses and trains, they're the silent minority (or majority?) that you see out of the windows on the way past. The downtrodden who do all of the worst and hardest jobs of them all. I think that they are the untouchables, or 'Gods children' as Chondit ~~was~~ to rename them in an effort to bring them out of their squalor somewhat. They are the lowest caste, in fact I think that they may even be so low as to be beneath the cast system, and they live at the feet of the rest of the masses on the fringes of caste society, as much unseen or uncared for as much as untouchable.

Women in bright and colourful still, as with most things in India, but well worn clothes carrying the trays of

rubble on their heads along long stretches of road construction. The gangs digging service trenches through the hard red ground alongside them, miles of empty trench behind them and miles of untouched ground in front they must live on that trench as it advances, six or seven people digging with picks and shovels in the beating sun presumably day after day after day.

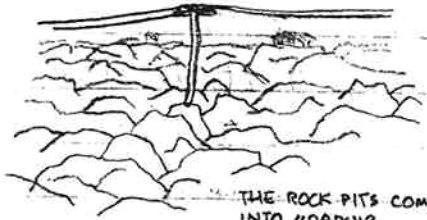
Scenes of cheap human labour reminiscent of the slave labour scenes you'd imagine accompanied all of the great accomplishments of ruling races in history past, the great wall of China or the Taj Mahal etc. The consequences of a low 'life is cheap' value applied to a people. And what would they do otherwise? There isn't I would think any short term solution, bringing in a digger would just mean they would starve or go on to another just as menial or worse job. It's all just a part of India, an India with strong roots in the past and the future working as a social system rich in culture + feeling + soul supporting by whatever means it has more population per square mile than any other country on earth, and probably doing it more independently than any other country on earth. - Whoa got a bit carried away there!

They are the people sweeping the streets clean of rubbish

etc, as dusty and dirty as the streets themselves, the people living in the shanty towns on the verges of the roads in the cities, or on the fringes of the higher caste desert villages, kept there to do all of the dirtier jobs of running a town. Social order kept by religion, tradition and ignorance. I hope the happiness is relative theory applies here because it's not much chop from where I'm standing. And that's the other thing, it is so easy to look straight past them, like wires in any western city they become invisible after a while, shadows that just get walked around.

The other scene that springs to mind was the slate or sandstone pits on the way into Udaipur. Big areas of two or three metre deep pits pocketing in and out of the ground making the ~~terrain~~ <sup>terrain</sup> appear like some unique natural wonder or lunar landscape or something. Dry ~~grey~~ <sup>ash/green</sup> dusty areas with no vegetation, brick huts and telegraph poles dotted on the sometimes island ~~islands~~ <sup>islands</sup> between the pits, all under the same blue sky and relentless sun seeming even harsher here given the complete barrenness. And the people in the dry dust, up and down the little tracks around the hills breaking out the <sup>stabs</sup> of stone with what must be due to the absence of any machinery you could see, manual labour. It's just

trundling part it all on the train while one or two ~~of them~~ lift their heads ~~and stand~~ watching us pass by.



THE ROCK PITS COMING INTO ODAPUR BY TRAIN

Or the families of people breaking rocks down into small pieces for use as subgrade in the roads or aggregate in the cement or God knows what. All these people tied to the earth and this hard way of life by their position at birth. The blood and sweat of India.

The other part of the people that is also very vivid is that which holds them all together, the religions. The sardha holy men, faces painted, tridents in hand roaming the streets in orange and white robes, the temples and paintings of gods around every corner, the sutra chants and praying times, and all the other things woven in and out of the streets that go along with it. While we were in Odapur we passed a trail of women taking part in some coconut festival as a tribute to one of the gods which involved walking down the street with a container of water and a coconut (or two or three) on their heads, swaying this way and that so that drops of the water spilled over them. Some were giggling

and talking and jokingly pushing each other around to spill the water whilst others were stumbling along like they were in a trance, eyes rolling back into their heads helped along and held up by in cases their (I presume) husbands.

Or the festive weddings (which all seem to ~~take~~ happen in spurts and starts around each other) where as we are told the groom goes to collect the bride by horseback having to ride around the house seven times to ward off evil spirits or for good luck or something. A hundred different gods and festivals and beliefs and variations on beliefs scattered in and out of the place everywhere it seems impossible at times that anyone could ever come to terms with it and live by it all!

All the individuals you come across as well. The government run tourist bungalows staff - bored and mostly uninspired about anything, rattling around these huge buildings treating it all as their home, the guests, especially the non-Hindi speaking tourists a bit of a nuisance. The bus station staff behind the counter, eyes always down dealing with a minimum of four or five people waving money at their little windows the whole time, who are usually quite good, look up for an

instant or two to help you and then that's it, eyes back down and back to the throng, the mouth and rest of the face keeping that same distant expression, only the eyes or odd eyebrow movement involved in the communication.

— The bus conductor, sometimes quiet, removed with a job to do, wad of money in hand, thumb on lips counting + filling out tickets bus resting on the side of the back of a seat. Sometimes cheerful and helpful and spreading a few smiles around the bus.

— The squeaky clean, floppy eared, wooden cased students wanting desperately to practice English on you with an enthusiasm that screams gratingly at your 'quiet time' on the bus.

— The community leaders, seen sometimes in a chai shop, or running a hotel or local business, good size stomach on them protruding forward in an expanse under the white pants and shirt, hands clasped behind the back, greased back slightly greying hair and a calm, in control expression on their face taking in all the goings on <sup>around them</sup> comfortable in the knowledge that they have the measure of it all. Questions or conversation responded to with a receptive turn of the head ~~and~~,

and a judicial enquiring raising of the eyebrows; 'yes, what was that you were saying my son type expression as though they've had to take their minds off dealing with the affairs of running the community for a second to give you audience ~~again~~, looking a bit priest like in <sup>the</sup> white with the short little upturned ring collars. In fact that may even be the



case as Morgan the guy who ran Villa Fatima actually did give service at the local church also.

The little kids, one per, one rupee, that cover the whole spectrum fromurchins in the streets to schoolgoers quoting Canberra as the capital etc. I think there is a different way of treating kids over here, they are generally ~~let to~~ allowed to run around and scream + cry + play and bother with the parents taking it all without so much as a glimpse towards them, accepting the noise and flury as you accept the noise and flury of Indian life on your every sense in everyday life anyway. Stern words spoken without much harshness the real message coming with a whack over the back of the head (which is what they get to keep them in line at school) and this is where we westerners run into trouble, our growled words and ignoring silences seen only as indifference to them, no clear message to wrack off getting through, and



For be it for us to ever hit one of them these westerners are 'soft as' and great fun to hang around and pester without fear of reprisal. An Indian's slightly raised hand however contains a little more of a threat behind it through experience.

The endless rickshaw drives; usually all you see is their faces peering back at you from the side of the rickshaw as you get, 'wont rickshaw, wont rickshaw', yes, where you going' and the sweep back to the road in front of them alert on the edge of their seat scanning for the waving hand in the throng of people, or the next tourist once you've tilted your head with a nooooo - sorry. Amazing little vehicles, must have a virtually 90° steering lock and just squiggle in and out of anything. Each town has its own breed, small little 2-3 seater, 2 rupee bus service types with seats at the back facing in the opposite direction, mudflaps painted with movie heroes as in Odajew, or christmas tree standard aerials as in some other town we visited... the list goes on.

So many people and the life seems to centre around the streets so it all comes face to face with you at sometime sooner or later. I never tire of the endless street markets

I must admit. Even when it was only the Victoria markets in Melb. there is just an endless fascination with them, the varieties, the bargains, the bits and pieces, the foods and of course the people, all with life flowing through it, swirling around the alleyways and lanes at street level, there for the taking.

14/2/96 Spent the morning watching New Zealand bat against England (they went on to win :-)) in 1st of the world cup matches. It's a bit like the soccer world cup when we were in Greece and the rugby in London, everyone really getting into it, a point for discussion with all the chair men etc giving you a common point away from all of the other differences which is nice.

Then hired a couple of bikes and after a long hot walk up to the fort spent the day riding around at leisure which made a really good day. Sunset from the fort walls 500 odd feet up overlooking the plains which is always nice! and a rather speedier descent to our friendly bike man who bought us both a coffee after we gave him a bit of a tip! (bikes cost us Rs1 per hour!)

Back to dinner and the TV in the lounge - a really

enjoyable day.

Thoughts at nighttime

For what are you searching?

I am searching for that that is the human race,

I am searching for that that lies beyond ~~that~~ ~~that~~

is the human race also,

I am searching in the hope that <sup>from</sup> these will <sup>give</sup>

follow more form to that which is <sup>I know</sup> inside of me.

I'm exploring the boundaries in the hope of giving purpose to that which I know is inside of me.

I can't quite remember where, <sup>Freud</sup> ~~mark~~ I think it may have been, but someone said we all have a tiny little walnut of void, of emptiness, at the very centres of our beings. I don't know if this little walnut is what is left over from our primal beginnings, a space into which our developing souls are still to grow, or whether it's a socket into which a plug will be inserted to connect us to the rest of the universe when the time has come, when we are deemed developed enough by some sort of cosmic council. It may even be a black hole into which we condemn the

with inside of us. a necessary balance spot the plus minus laws of nature require to be present for overall equilibrium, it feels at times however I am travelling to try and fill that spot, in fact my life as maybe is everyone elses revolves around filling that spot in which ever way we think is the best. I wonder if you can fill that spot, if you believe Buddha reached nirvana then maybe it can be filled, or I wonder if it isn't just some... some quirk... a little quirk of our make up that keeps us all searching, keeps us all living?

15/2/96 Bundi

A long bus trip out from Chittar today (3 1/2 hours stretched to 5 1/2 hours!) but it was actually quite enjoyable. Time just ticked past with the countryside and stops at little towns along the way, the bus never really crowded or uncomfortable at all.

Passed through some very desolate country, long sweeping hills and flat valleys, rocky and dry, the road and train line conspicuously making their way across it all. There was

a stretch of towns at two to three kilometre intervals, <sup>at one stage</sup> that were obviously centred around the rock business with huge spill piles all around. The smaller angular broken bits created in getting the longer flat slabs of rock out. Mountains of it making it seem like a natural terrain, unnatural in appearance if you know what I mean! Was quite a weird scene, rocky ground with rock houses and fences against the mountains of rock behind them, like a set from the Flintstones, like someone had sat down and tried to make a little sense out of a huge pile of rubble, stacking bits and pieces of it here and there into little toy villages, the whole lot still just piles of rubble!

We passed through stretches of 'outback' with no one, no animals or anything for miles, the ground too hard to support any life <sup>suppose</sup> apart from a sparse population of trees. Was a bit comical at times as it seemed here we were the bus load of people all sitting in our seats chugging and bouncing up hills with this barren ~~landscape~~ expanse on all sides, then chugging and bouncing down hills, then west, then North, then west again, then south, always bouncing and chugging, this strange landscape passing by the windows, like some surreal dream, the time starting to

chimmer and become hazy receding before bouncing and chugging through the barrenness, like it was turning into a perpetual thing ~~as~~ would never end somehow, you tuning into consciousness every now and then only, to find your bouncing and chugging (still through the barrenness) in a slightly different direction.

As we were coming to the end of it, a green valley a little distance off in front of us, we passed a group of people who had set up a bit of a ramshackle camp on the sides of one of these sweeping hills of rock, like nomads or something (untouchables?) which also added to the surrealness of it all. What were they doing there?

Anyway Burdi seems like a nice place, not too twisted by the load of things so will spend the day tomorrow having a bit of a look around.

15/12/96 PM

|                                                | SINCE START (TZ) | LAST WK (T) | W/O MAIL 500 MONEY TRANSFER 150 BAG 100 |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------|
| JUST CASH 600 x 1.6 = 960                      | AA 22.4          | 17.4        | <del>13.1</del> 13.1                    |
| US CASH 100 x 1.4 = 140                        |                  |             |                                         |
| Rs 422.5 / 25 = 369                            | Rs 559           | 435         | <del>328</del> 328                      |
| AB 1349                                        | (60) 16/4/96     |             |                                         |
| * TOTAL = 2580 + (15000 - 5000) / 25 = 2980 AB | USARS → AU\$ Rs  |             |                                         |

Keeping hoping it will go down - but its relatively cheap anyway - worked out we spent as much in NZ in a week as we have spent so far in India over 2 1/2 months! if not more. Will buy a

few things in Pushkar to send home I think as I don't want to regret not having bought more + I might as well do it now while I have money + its relatively cheap (compared to home), I think!

"Choose hard things  
before they choose you".

From Tao te Ching (63)

Unfortunately, I have found a lot of the body of the poems in Tao te Ching a bit outdated, or more intended for an outdated system, a king and his populace. I also find them a bit repetitive and annoyingly into this if something is soft it is the hardest. It may be true but its said so often it almost seems like cheap philosophy, designed to impress rather than do the job at hand. Maybe its my lack of patience. I do like the underlying principles of the whole thing but I am slowly coming to the conclusion that one religion is too tailored, has roots set too deep in the past and is too static for fear of self contradiction and change for anyone in this age and I

am slowly coming to that dreaded (by some) statement - I am without religion. That is not to say I am without belief. Religion biggest mistake is in not being flexible enough. You can't set rigid rules or pretend to have a rigid base of belief, you can't paint a picture ~~to~~ of something we know nothing about but can only guess at from what deep feelings within ourselves we can read. You take away religions set up as a ruling tool, a tool for order in society, to keep people in their place, you take away religion that rises from fear or from greed or from powerlust and you are left with not much, you're left with thin wisps of ways of life, of ways to enlightenment, of what lies beyond the human race, in its path somewhere in the far distant future.

I'm sure the path has been trodden by some, its just that these are breakaways, there is too much smoke, too much twisting + warping along the way for it to reach us in its rawest form. I believe religion hints at the ways, it dodges around them, it envelops them to the point of dressing them up and hiding them from view at times so that we won't recognize them for what they are, but it has no real answers. And the shortcomings are covered by fabrications which take away from the ideal, covered by fabrication as they cannot admit

that they do not have the answers.

The easiest line of access to the answers is to drop religion and its smokescreens and its baggage, and to search again from the start within yourself. To look for them in religion is like looking for a needle in a haystack when you have the raw materials to make the needle in your hand. It's just a matter of figuring out how. (which isn't to say that that is an easy task!)

16/2/96

"The people, who are familiar with death are not intimidated by it. Their will to live is greater than their fear of death. In this they are superior to the nobility whose fear of death is greater than their will to live"

from Tao te Ching (75)

I guess I should write a little about the the streets since we spend so much time in them, endless open fronted shops, the shops, the shopkeepers the customers and

all others, animal, vegetable and mineral blending into one long streetscape changing flavour from area to area with the type of merchandise sold. This morning on the way down to and back again from breakfast:

Milk sellers on their bicycles and motorcycles gathered around the main square in groups or doing the rounds to the bus stand and shops. Big brass pots hanging off the front and backs of the bikes like panniers, full of milk which is ladled out into whatever shape container is held out to them. The sellers usually in their late thirties or forties in traditional dress, turbans and the sarong type pants, dark skinned <sup>they</sup> must be from the surrounding country bringing the milk in from the herds to sell every day. <sup>hard + weatherbeaten</sup>

Fruit and veg women. Usually with plain coloured saris with delicate trimmings turned faded by the sun. Some with umbrellas to shield from the sun all with their saris covering their heads and <sup>sometimes</sup> faces, strained expressions looking up into the brightness, one hand holding the saris in place or to shade the sun while they scan the faces. The veges surprisingly full, fresh and colourful in a land where things can be so dry and of pretty dubious quality + freshness!

The keen ~~as~~ mustard man behind the bus counter echo had us in for Chai. Two amazingly different worlds inside and out ~~of the~~ separated by a <sup>big brick wall</sup> small window with half open shutters and bars and grilles <sup>covering it.</sup> The customers on the outside seeing only a crowd of people, the bars and space for the exchange of money (usually full of hands and arms waving <sup>notes</sup> ~~money~~) and occasionally if they angle their heads correctly the face of the ticket seller, who <sup>in turn</sup> sees only the profusion of hands and notes and voices choosing to ignore too much <sup>eye</sup> contact with the faces lest they make a personal intrusion into his world behind the wall where he has free (government) tea no doubt, and a couple of tourists to talk to and break up his day.

The group of silver sellers, their awnings open and <sup>the usual</sup> clear of clutter and decoration, just a hospital clean feeling to white mattresses and cushions covering the verandah where customers sit to do business, scales and weights lying to one side and a big vault at the back of the shop with doors spread and a multitude of smaller glass drawers <sup>showing</sup> revealing the wares inside.

Went up to the palace and the fort this afternoon - steep climb in the heat of the day (again!) looking for rampart elephants above a gate which turned out to be on one of the palace gates below! Good views from the top to the town and valleys, a couple containing lakes <sup>often</sup> below. The palace had some beautiful murals, probably the best ever seen so far (I would say). Huge scenes of hunting and processions and of market life etc. Just their size and colour, made up of a hundred horses marching into battle or a string of people all done in detail make them impressive. Things you can wander around and explore in detail or try to take in <sup>at a glance</sup> the whole scene of flashing colour ~~at once~~ leading the eye this way and that.

17/2/96 Pushkar

The five hour trip from Bandi wasn't that interesting except for the last little bit over the mountains (snake pass or gully or something I think) into Pushkar.

First impressions of Pushkar are good (even though Anji is of the other opinion!). Lots of trawlers and hippy shippers a bit similar to Goa. Flares and mirror pants, woven handbags (I have one!) and sunries, all the cool bits, a lot of looking and a



of her listening to the Stones in Sunset cafe,  
watching and listening to all the goings on  
dipping into the cool hippy dipping scene ourselves  
from time to time, ...non.

lot of looks about the place, some accompanied by trendy non  
too dusty shoes dried from London and make up! But given  
the pretences into this groove + that, there's cheap accommodation,  
good food, relaxed + laid back atmosphere and generally a  
feeling of fun about it all which seems to disarm some of  
the higher pretences or at least to show them for what they  
are. - Drawing a few extrapolations and wild generalizing  
statements about it all I must admit having been here half a  
day but I think I will like it (as I do anyplace you can get  
porridge) anyway.

Pushkar is also holy apparently and lots of Indian pilgrims  
come here to bathe in the ghats, hence a few rules for the tourists  
hanging about the place, no shoes etc within 30m of the ghats,  
no non-veg food, alcohol or drugs, no kissing + cuddling in  
public + no half dress, which is great, sets a few boundaries +  
lets you know what the no nos are.

Travellers, ~~Kelly~~ pilgrims, and locals all in a  
small town about a small lake nestled in some hills  
not very far away at all (just over the pass actually)  
from the nearest big city Ajmer. A bit like camping in the  
back yard as a kid, a little town full of wonders ~~and~~ all

A heavy little side bit I remembered about Pushkar was  
being asked by a stablekeeper about thoughts of packing hot  
meat, he wouldn't quite work out where the sea fitted  
into it + it was also quite hard to explain. In the end  
I think he got the message that it wasn't complimentary to him.

~~with exploration not too far away from the road and~~  
~~there would~~ there for you to explore. Hard to explain, the  
feeling of camping in the back yard, I guess its because its annexed  
just over the hill from Ajmer like a little playground? Six  
incoming phone lines only (making it hard to get through on callback  
like a toy town set up for holiday camps. I know its not  
and I don't mean to belittle it at all, its just that's the first  
impression, a mellow town where you can relax a bit and do it  
a bit easier for a while everything being set up + there for you  
(you do go on a bit Brendon - subconsciously trying to finish  
this book!?).

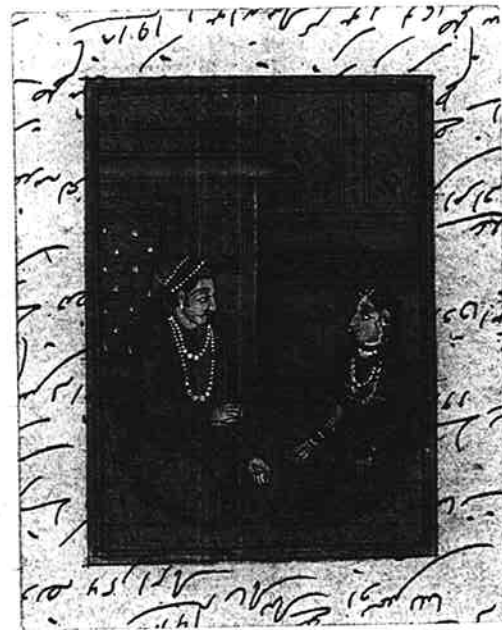
19/2/96 Did a bit more shopping yesterday, a couple of cotton  
paintings, ~~very~~ cheap, not the best quality but you're  
talking a jump of thousands of rupees and they do give a nice  
feeling 500 for doth, hopefully we can get a clip from a large  
enough when we get home! Also some juggling balls and a  
couple of little pouches for this and that - so cheap and I won't be  
but indulge myself. Some absolutely beautiful paintings on paper  
also, scenes of processions on the way to a hunt or for a festival,  
elephants and horses and camels and people all in flashing colours,

... painted on paper from old books, really nice but quite small and 800 rupees is a bit much, showed some restraint! It's worth buying things you really like, like Shah Jahan although I remember he did look a little dirty when we sent him off - I hope it's not too bad, might be a result of the couple of days travelling with him.

Went for a fast (super-fast) paced climb up to the hilltop temple above Pushkar last night spurred on by Anqi. Was good to sweat a bit and blow a few cobwebs out of the lungs. Was a beautiful view as well. The white and light blue buildings gathered around one side of the lake with a purpling expanse of sky and mountains around, and on the other side ridgelines of mountains trailing off with desert inbetween. Watching the camel wagon <sup>odd</sup> make its way along the sandy bits for down below. Again that expanse of atmosphere all around you at your <sup>head</sup> level, slowly changing colour with the sunset, seems to sort of elevate you that bit further, your mind drawn up into it ~~the expanse~~ on all sides. It's that feeling you get when you see circling shots of people on mountain tops in television ads, the blue expanse of air and mountains spinning past

them in the background. (a bit of a cheat but it does give a good idea of what it feels like)

Woke up crabby today and even a 25 rupee all you can eat breakfast has only managed to smooth over the surface. Maybe a nap before lunchtime is in order - I think so!



20/2/96 As you can see selected a bit or compromised to give a bit of a taste of all the paintings! seem to spend so much time looking at! <sup>+ get a glass of tea!</sup> fool Brendan!

We are sitting at Old Delhi railway station wait for the reservations office to open. It's 6:30 am and we have been on a bus since 8:00 pm yesterday and... and feel strangely alive and

well and full of energy, will try and get some beds just for the day because I'm sure the crash will come. Spent most of yesterday

generally happening around Pushkar which was nice - especially dinner at the 'cool dudes place' sunset cafe, at sunset! Reboxed cone chairs, drums out the front, people lounging around just eating, drinking, chatting and passing time while the sunset shined through everything, golden and soothing (calming - I don't know!).

Spent a horrible couple of hours or more a frustrating couple of hours posting off little parcels - I really hope they get through as they have a lot of film in them. Pisses me off having to give up control and leave them in dubious hands, when they are so important to you.

There are times when person goes quiet for a few instants. He draws away from the surroundings and his eyes focus on nothing. He suddenly sees or feels his existence, and is very tired, and feels very alone in a large world. He sees how day after day he must continue to scrape in order just to be, he would like to be able to stop and rest, and recuperate for a bit. He feels his vulnerability in <sup>face of this</sup> the tender existence, relying on him continuing to scrape, and wishes for someone to hold him and say it will be alright, we will look after you should anything happen, and then he just goes

back to what he is doing with a sigh, and gets on with it pushing these other feelings away, because that is all he can do.

The old man with an arm full of papers trying to sell them after someone has been there before him. His shoulders drop and he stands still for a bit with downcast eyes. I am too old for this I need to be looked after...

The cycle rickshaw driver who carrying three schoolgirls up a long hill grimaces pushing down on one pedal with all his weight while he pulls up on the handlebars, and his eyes <sup>still</sup> follow the gear for a split second or two. I don't want to be here doing this, the realities of his commitments, to his family, to his self quite clear in the front of his consciousness bringing him back to the sun + smog and traffic around him with the next revolution of the pedals and a sweaty look up into the traffic around him.

That's what friends and family are for I guess, to present a united front of strength, it's really strong in India also, especially family but friends walk around holding hands or arm around one another also.

Had a day around Old Delhi railway station along with sorting out a few odds and ends in Delhi. Was quite an unexpected

experience actually, we were up and down to the retiring rooms (or dormitories in this case) and in and out of all of the station life: People coming, going, eating, sleeping, parcel packing areas, the snack bars, shops and restaurant, the barber and post office; rickshaws, taxis and porters in a hive of activity out the front and ~~all around~~ <sup>amongst</sup> <sup>all</sup> the ~~big~~ <sup>sedately</sup> ~~engines~~ <sup>engines</sup> and the rolling stock sitting ~~in~~ <sup>They seem to</sup> ~~horizontal~~ <sup>horizontal</sup> perspective lines, mingling with everything ~~around~~ <sup>around</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>in</sup> a ~~relaxed~~ <sup>relaxed</sup> ~~attitude~~ <sup>attitude</sup> not too dissimilar to the cows in the street, just ambling on in and out of their own accord.

Our train is eight hours late so we got a bit more of it than we bargained for but it will be nice to sleep in a proper bed!

A day of trains and railways.

21/2/96 Another couple of hours added to the eight meant we got a full night's sleep and a relaxed day on the train. Reading and sleeping or just watching the countryside go by, nice and indulgent. I was just thinking back to the railway station, really is quite a scene. I wandered around a bit and took a couple of not too promising photos, ~~but~~ there is so much happening everywhere. Trains of parcels being loaded and unloaded here and there; the porters in red shirts, turbans,

and dhotis, brass ~~and~~ <sup>beams</sup> plates draped to their arms ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~wait~~ <sup>wait</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> the next train and the next job, happy and relaxed ~~between~~ <sup>between</sup> the rushes, wandering ~~Sarkholes~~ <sup>Sarkholes</sup> asking for money, the countless chai + snack stalls, and the commotion when a train does pull in, people everywhere trying to get on and off up and down the train, little bits of luggage on the porters heads weaving in and out and the slight smoky haze creating glowing shafts of light where the sun manages to creep through, straight out of an old movie, and me there enjoying it all immensely just standing to the side and letting it all sink in.

22/2/96 Shimla  
2130..

The Indian Coffee House, Shimla; olive green walls with brown sidings, dark brown <sup>padding</sup> chairs, old mottled laminate tables, ~~and~~ <sup>all side lit</sup> ~~with~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~light~~ <sup>light</sup> borrowed ~~from~~ <sup>from</sup> the mall on one side and the ~~windows of the~~ <sup>windows of the</sup> ~~enclosed~~ <sup>enclosed</sup> terrace on the other. People, men mostly, sitting down to coffee with business associates, with old friends, with other members of the community. Dignified conversations taking place with an air of reserved wisdom; people coming in and out; much shaking

of hands, expressive gesturing and adjusting of jackets. <sup>in greetings.</sup> A few men standing back to a coal stove <sup>on the opposite floor</sup> in the middle of the room, rocking slightly up and down upon their heels and warming their hands behind them. White clad waiters with red and gold cummerbunds and crested hats moving to and fro, trays in hand amongst it all. The smell of coffee and coal smoke ~~and~~ of culture and of society and ~~the appreciation of a~~ ~~man~~ ~~and~~ ~~respect~~ ~~and~~ ~~respect~~ mixing with the crisp air coming in from the mountains outside.

Shimla is a nice place, like I'd imagine a European city or town in the Alps to be like. The mall and streets up the ridge banished of motor cars and street vendors are quiet and clean and with a constant flow of people up and down does bring back reminiscences <sup>of</sup> shopping malls back home. The sound of voices and of feet bouncing off the walls instead of ~~the~~ the horns and engines of motor cars. — All with just a hint of old world brought out by places like the Indian coffee house or Marco's antique maps and books, and the endless old English buildings the YMCA where we are staying being one, large old corridors and rooms, chandeliers in the ~~stone~~ hall and big solid stairwells; all with the smells and echoes of grandeur and good English society's past. the Bradford's in room 107. bridge ~~in the drawing room~~, a pipe & paper and maybe a wee games

in the drawing room shot of scotch, what do you think of that uprising business in the south Hastings; damnable business, yes, damnable!; care for a game of billiards old boy?

It's all a bit exciting as well with the fresh cool air at the snow covered peaks in the distance, another world altogether from the plains of Rajasthan and the south and the beginning of our ventures into the mountains, of the snow and the trekking that lies ahead.

|                  | INR    | SINCE START (80) | CASH (7) | W/O                |
|------------------|--------|------------------|----------|--------------------|
| OSTCHQ 600 x 14  | = 8400 |                  |          | 250 - PAINTING 125 |
| US CASH 100 x 14 | = 1400 |                  |          | 100 - BA45 225     |
| RS 5000 / 25     | = 200  |                  |          | 300 - MINA 150     |
|                  |        |                  |          | 350 - PERDOME 175  |
|                  |        |                  |          | KILCE, 870         |
| BA               | 1180   | DA 22.5          | 24.2     | 12.8               |
|                  |        | RS 563           | 605      | 320                |
|                  |        | (52)             | 15/4/96  |                    |



CHRIST CHURCH + THE MALL SHIMLA.

Christ Church lit up at night towers majestically above the wall, or is it the high street?

23/2/96 Met an Italian photog yesterday in the antique books and maps shops and then again in the Indian Coffee Ho. (everybody seems to pass through that place at some

another during the day) where I sat and had a cup of  
with him, Fredricko. Was quite interesting, he is  
usually self taught and did things like to buy potential client  
magazines and enter into a data base the subject and length  
of the article. When he hears from friends or wherever about

<sup>↑</sup> The little tag attached to articles of laundry coming back from the dhoti wallah! very thorough

a place he thinks would be good he brings up all the stuff  
on it and covers areas uncovered previously and tailors his  
material to it. He sends all his stuff home DHL and  
develops it at home usually keeping one in three shots and  
sends it off to potential buyers with commentary / articles he has written  
and they hang on to and sometimes publish it the royalties then flowing to  
him at some later stage. Once returned he resells it again with different  
angles to others getting as much as he can out of it. He was fairly busy, in  
+ out and reckons he works 9 hours a day 11 months a year, but if travelling  
is a part of it its not a bad life! He also does a little fashion photography +  
has various other clients including construction industry etc etc and says  
with all of this he is not a rich man! Maybe I should take some slide  
dillum while we are, if we are!, in Tibet.

25/2/96 Dharamasala (McLeod Ganj)  
2000m

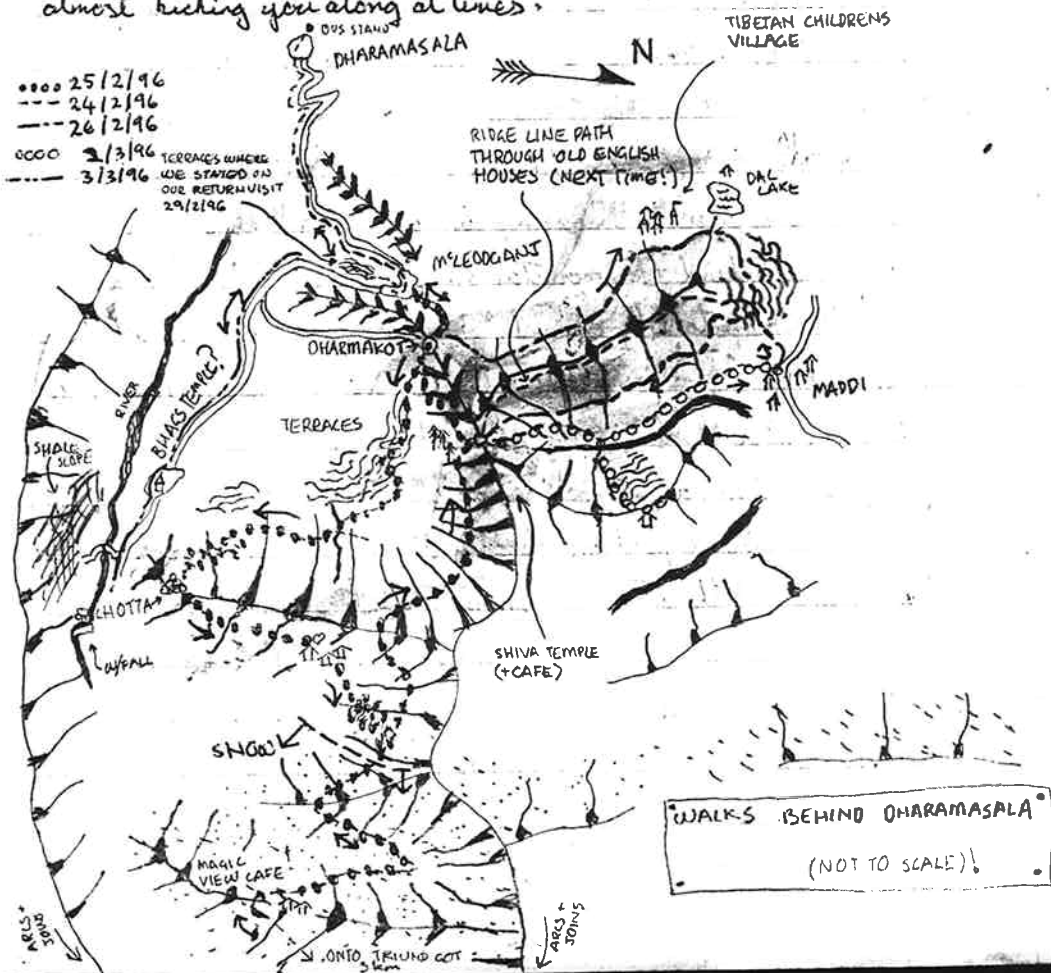
Arrived yesterday at 5:30 in the morning! Took a little taxi car up to  
the upper part of town (McLeod Ganj), wasn't quite up to the hour of us and the  
silent swiss guy sitting in the front had to get out and walk for stretches while  
we rolled back and took a run up. Finally got up, into a hotel and a bed!  
Was raining for most of the day so we spent some time looking around town and  
walked the 4 or 5 km (steep km) into Dharamasala and back. Very strong  
tibetan influence, in fact mostly tibetans! - it is the place of exile for his  
holiness the Dalai Lama after all. The whole town is just built up in the  
mountains, there are views to the green plains and a big lake in the distance  
down below, and behind the mountains keep rising to huge snowy  
peaks. The walk down to Dharamasala was nice, the old steep road  
wiped out by landslides in places, little cafes here and there. Walking in the  
rain and cloudy mist shrouding the peaks above was a good feeling,  
like an easy introduction, a getting familiar with it all. As with most things  
I guess its not the picture postcard beauty its the solidness and reality of it  
all. The eminence of the stone in the mountains towering either side of  
the valleys, the cold, the rain + mist moving through everything -  
the imagined savagery of the wind across the tops of the peaks.

The tibetan culture is all new as well, spinning prayer wheels in  
the town and red, white, blue and yellow prayer flags strung up between  
the trees everywhere, deep deep dark red robed monks (or students?)



wandering around the town calm happy receptive faces always ready to return a smile.

It is hilly, it is cold, the air is fresh and it is wet, these are the things that press upon your senses more than anything else, almost kicking you along at times.



Went on a great walk today. Started in McLeod Chong and followed the road up past the mountaineering institute to Dhormahot, a little tea house and a little further up the ridge. We then took a wrong turn and went to the right through the low level Terraces which was really interesting with paths winding from house to house between the green terraces with little yellow flowered crops and the odd haystack. Stone buildings with slate roofs and dark brick (I imagine!) interiors, clothes strung around the verandahs, some in the rain, some not! We saw one or two people (well one person + another pair of hiking boots) that looked as though they might be westerners, would be a great place to stay, so peacefully imagine people do just that for weeks or months at a time studying meditation or whatever.

We then went onto some goat track type paths that went up quite steeply, very rocky shale, I was quite worried (lot of quitters!) but times as it was a long tumble down to the bottom and we went on a well worn path. When you look up a slope you can't make out paths: you can see the actual slope and at times it looked like there was nowhere a path could cling to but insurmountable slopes coming down in all directions. Anyway we made out some prayer flags and headed up to them finding a little stone hut. Still a bit worried but relieved to find something albeit apparently devoid of all life I knocked on the door and a deer came out with the chotta (pile of rocks) a bit further back. More deer were with the chotta (pile of rocks) a bit further back. More deer were with the chotta (pile of rocks) a bit further back.

minutes later a red robed monk popped out and showed us the track further up, telling us via a little diagram with stones to keep to the right of the houses further up. I had the feeling he would have taken us all the way up if we hadn't gestured for him to return (and I think he was glad to get back to the warmth of his hut as well!) Anyway true to his word there were a few more houses up a bit on what I guess you would call a grazed pasture area slightly less sloping than the rest of the hillside.

Amongst them was

one with some rocks placed in the ground in the shape of a heart, and with some pieces of slate

roughly hewn into heart shapes leaning against the walls, honeymoon lodge?



We then proceeded up some more steep zig zagging that any mountain goat would have been proud of and come across some (old) footprints in the snow which had begun to appear in patches. What was even more encouraging than these was the main path that appeared about 20m further up!

A kilometre or so further up through the snow that now covered everything we found 'The Magic View Cafe'! It was the first time I'd been in the snow for a while and I'd forgotten what it was like. Clean and cold and very quiet - blanket! Such a nice atmosphere you feel enclosed, the softness and the falling flakes so much nicer than the drizzle and rocks further down, creating a little wonderland or a cold wonderland! Anyway, the Magic View Cafe, great! A little hut made out of timber, rocks, and plastic up against a big overhanging rock. The area under the rock had been made into a mud kitchen with two or three little fire places and a kettle and a few other bits and pieces resting on various bits of rock ledge here there. The front area was bedded down in hessian and you could sit down and watch the snow fall across the mountain on the other side of the gorge through a little triangular window. It couldn't be seen bigger than three by four or five metres and was very cosy just perched up above the track on the corner of a ridge line, sides snow falling all around. There wasn't actually anyone there so we had the place to ourselves which was nice in a way although I didn't have the benefit of the fires or warm chai! We sat for while just appreciating the shelter and rest in this place that seemed so far up, cut off from the rest of the world by the

snow and hard walk up, sharing the chocolate + mandarins we'd bought up with us. After half an hour or so we started to get a bit cold having stopped moving so we made our way back out into the snow, went on a little to have a peep around the ridgeline and decided to make our way back down.

The way back down was a bit easier sticking to the main track which stayed a lot higher descending slowly around the hillside. We finally come back to the temple we had intended to get to when we first started out! and made our way back through Dharmakot and the cafe now jam packed with people sheltering from the rain which had <sup>part</sup> started <sup>to</sup> coming ~~down~~ on our descent, and back home to McLeod Ganj.

After changing clothes etc we're now spending a warm and cozy afternoon in the Green Hotel Restaurant (the only one we've been able to find with a coal stove) listening to Enya, Cat Stevens and Janis Joplin whilst drinking milk tea and feeding on veggie noodles!

Lots of long hair and beards, tibetan trendy clothing and all that jazz in Dharamasala. It's a great scene, travellers from all around in a bit of a mix with everything, meditation, the process of finding themselves, roads to enlightenment, appreciating Tibet and generally a higher plane for anyone who's interested man! Some people are one or two day travellers trying

to dip into the scene, trying to hook an audience with his holiness and stretching the selves with a journey into all the corners of life here they can in order to be able to talk about it with a 'been a part of it man' air at a later date (us? others (call me racist but mainly Germans I think) I think are here donned in the gear, attending haphazardly a meditation course or something, trying deeper to drop out of that <sup>ugly</sup> mess that calls itself society back home. These are the people, don't quite fit in at home, they have come here to supplant themselves into another image, to drop out, they are the people (and I generalize awfully) on whom the gear looks foreign and as though it doesn't sit quite properly, they talk a lot with stretched and strained and shocked expressions about the anger inherent in people back home (in fact in instances the 'fucking' anger!) or somehow their minds never really leave that place, the browns giving them away. Others are here in genuine search, or genuine study and so doubt a great place for it.

I wouldn't dare categorize anybody into these or even say there are how it is in some cases, it's just the impressions I get from scanning the surface. I think I'm here as an observer, I'm not the type to immediately supplant myself into the feel of the place, and although I would like to I'm not about to dedicate three months to isolation, meditation, learning enlightenment, by keeping a bit of yourself you learn a bit about who you are and I like to think I'm here to have a look, to appreciate what

is going on and to learn a bit about it all. I don't think we will be hooking into see the Dalai Lama whom I'm sure has much better and more important things to do with his country in sitting in peril under the Chinese than appease a couple of white tourists!

I enjoy these scenes, a bit like the hippidom of the 60's I imagine, people looking for this + that, better ways of living, higher consciousness or whatever, even just status appeal trendiness to take back home with them. That's something of what this trip is about, wandering the world observing its natural wonders, and observing its people and myself in the process of doing it. (more rambling! its quite hard to stop once you get going even when its going over old ground a bit!).

26/2/96 Went on another walk this morning (and yes here we are again in the warmth and music of the green cafe!). Again we managed to take the wrong trail from Dharmakot! This one took us around the west side of a mountain and we spent an hour or so walking through misty forest with what would I am sure if the weather had have been better panoramic views out to the plains + the lakes. We did catch the occasional glimpse of what I think must have been Forsythia Ciang on a neighboring ridge line and ~~perhaps~~ further on the gold spires of a temple and some buildings poking out of the mist a bit further down the hill which

turned out to be the Tibetan Childrens Village, a school (come monastery I think) with 4000 children most of whom have outside sponsors. Anyway from there we descended down to some more Terraces and houses, very peaceful again with the mist and drizzle shrouding everything. Every now and then we came across women bent over double carrying huge loads of cuttings from the oak trees around the place (we also saw alot of rhododendrum trees just starting to flower in the forests, must really be something when they are in full bloom - in Nepal maybe). We found out later that as the cows etc can't go out in the rain + cold weather, <sup>so</sup> the villagers go out and collect food for them - hard wet work!

The terraces led us into a little village on a road at the top of a low level pass and we stopped for a bit of chai and to warm up and met an Indian guy who does lots of walking in the hills and let us know where we were + where we'd gone wrong! Was a really nice guy and walked back to Dharmakot with us telling us stories of leopards, bears (that the villagers try + scare away from the corn crops with bells and firecrackers at night during the corn season), porcupines and all the other animals you find up there. Stories of dogs being snatched from houses (by leopards), long treks home at night in waist deep snow etc etc, was really interesting. Back at Dharmakot the weather, which had provided pretty much constant rain (heavy at times) and even hail, and of course ~~not~~ a

blanket mist which only parted for a few seconds here + there, and until then started to clear. The man in the little cafe was nice enough to bring out a tray of burnt out coals for us to warm ourselves, more chai, and then back down the hill into McLeod Ganj, our hotel, and that great tired, damp, feeling of slowly warming up ~~and~~, the walk still fresh in our minds.

There are a lot of Germans and French here looking for spiritual help + development. The two girls next to us are talking about when they found their teachers and how it changed their lives and how they stay in touch and this + that. I must admit I'm pretty happy at the moment spiritually, although I think I would find it hard to write down all I believe and this + that about how to live life, I believe it is there and I can draw upon it as I need (The basic homework anyway, there is always going to be a bit of to-ing + fro-ing with different situations). Maybe it's just a case of ignorance is bliss, however it that be it I feel I'm happy to sit here in my squalor for a bit and enjoy it. Maybe one day later I'll extend myself to higher planes and all that; but right now I'm happy where I am!

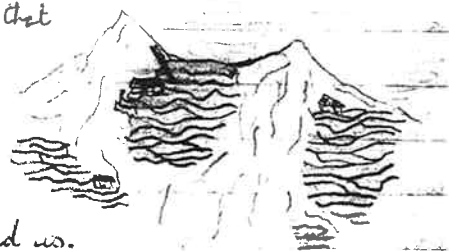
There is a nice passage in Dances with Wolves when, I think its Kicking Bird says to him something like (going by memory) 'There are many trails in this life but there is one you surely get to walk, ever Comanche men... it is the trail

of a true human being, and I believe you are on that trail.'

27/2/96 Dalhousie

A seven hour bus trip from Dharamasala! It was a beautiful ~~clear~~ morning, we had mixed feelings about leaving but, make a decision + stick to it, and it didn't turn out too bad as we walked halfway down to the main village which was nice and the bus trip was really good. ~~Started~~ out along the base of the Dhauladar range which runs all the way ~~up~~ to Dalhousie, a white ice wall of mountain behind the foothills. ~~So~~ bright in the sun they looked like an overexposed photo! Very impressive as you could view them virtually from the floor plains and they rise up to 6000- in places I think.

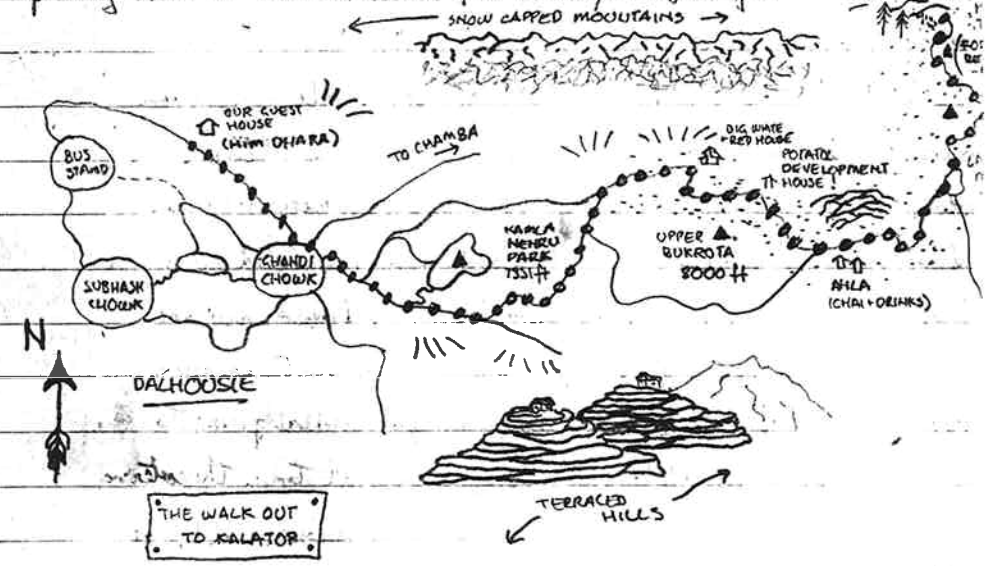
The rest of the trip was winding through mazes of valleys and ridges all terraced to make it look like a landscape garden, lush green steps on anything less than about a 45° slope (I'm guessing!), and at the bases green grey rivers that looked cold as ice running through huge granite boulders some as big as a two storey house. Debris from the snow covered giants behind us.



When we arrived in Dalhousie the small little wisps of clouds that had started to form around the peaks in the morning had turned into thicker cloud cover and we couldn't see much apart from glimpses in the mist. It's also very quiet and I think we both feel it is a bit flat after Dharamasala where there was so much life. Shouldn't be too quick to judge but it's hard not to. Hopefully the weather will be clear tomorrow morning and the views from the place we are staying, a quiet family run guest house perched on the side of the mountain, will live up to their potential + change our minds for us. A lot of it is just home of mind I think. Dharamasala is going to be hard to top. Will spend a couple of days there on the way back also if we can, learn a bit more about Tibet and its culture before we get there.

28/2/96 Weather cleared for us today although still cloud over the highest mountains. Did a huge walk up to Kalatop a forest rest house further up the mountain. Most of it by road with the last 3 km through pine forest and a snow covered walking track which was beautiful. Did about 25 km all up today, which was great, sore legs but it will help get us into shape and build up our confidence. Have warmed a bit more to Dalhousie but it is very

quiet, at this point in the trip I think we would prefer a few more people (+ the restaurants that go along with it). Looking forward getting back to Dharamasala for a couple of days.



29/2/96 Majestic view of the mountains when we got up this morning the sun was just coming up and crept over the range bit by bit as it climbed and ~~went~~<sup>got</sup> into the south a bit. Just ~~not~~<sup>too</sup> far away to see you with the awe you get when they tower over you up close, even though they did fill initially a full 180° of the horizon!

A couple of times in Dalhousie I saw people wander to the side of road and bow their heads, (in prayer?) palms together facing the



mountains, just quietly and just by themselves and only for a moment or two which I thought was very nice. I wonder what was behind it? The eternal snow - land of the Gods? source of all tourist income?!

The bus trip to Dharmasala was good although seven hours the first time was enough, could have done without today's journey. The conductor who looked a little like an Indian Woodie Allen might look, and also reminded me a bit of how a three toed sloth would act if I ever saw one had had a big night (or early breakfast) on the tups and provided a bit of entertainment when he got into arguments over the fares, stopping the bus every 5 mins at times threatening to kick people off (much to the amusement I'm sure, not!, of the big stern looking bearded Arab bus driver).

|             |         | SINCE START<br>(87) | LAST WK<br>(7) | NO. W/O. |
|-------------|---------|---------------------|----------------|----------|
| 29/12/96 PM | AB      |                     |                |          |
|             | US TNGS | 600 x 14 = 840      |                |          |
|             | US CAB  | 100 x 14 = 140      | A\$ 21.8       | 13'4"    |
|             | Rs      | 2650 / 25 = 106     | Rs 544         | 336      |
|             | AB      | <u>1086</u>         |                |          |

And on that good note (good when you consider the amount of travelling we've done) it's time for a nice book!

Books read whilst we've been away.

- Dances with Wolves, Michael Blake
- A ~~short~~ history of Time, Stephen Hawking (again)
- Tao Te Ching, Lao Tzu, (R.B. Bickrey)
- Marco Polo, David Butler + Keith Miles
- Nor M?, Agatha Christie
- The Moving Hand, Agatha Christie
- Annapurna, ~~Madrick~~ Herzog.
- 1984, George Orwell
- A Body in the Library, Agatha Christie
- Halloween Party, " "
- Curtain, Poirot's last case, " "
- Poirot Investigator, " "
- Tales of the Raj II.
- ~~Are you Alone~~, Some S. Aust. Professor!
- Under the Eye of the Clock, Christopher Nolan.
- The Mysterious Mr. Quin, Agatha Christie.
- Around the world in 80 days, Jules Verne.
- Outrodden Paths + Unfrequented Valleys, Amelia Edwards

Summary of money spent along the way!

| PLACE               | TIME  | \$A/DAY | ACC<br>AVG | w/o<br>SHOPPING ETC |
|---------------------|-------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| BOMBAY/GOA          | 3 WKS | 32.3    | 32.3       | "                   |
| BOMBAY → MANDU      | 1/2 " | 14.9    | 26.7       | 14.9                |
| MANDU → ORCHA       | 1 "   | 10.0    | 23.7       | 10.0                |
| ORCHA → AGRA        | 1 "   | 23.7    | 23.7       | 12.8                |
| AGRA → JAIPUR       | 1 "   | 19.7    | 23.1       | 17.0                |
| JAIPUR → JAISAMER   | 1 "   | 19.4    | 22.7       | 15.4                |
| JAISAMER            | 1 "   | 24.2    | 22.9       | 19.9                |
| JODPUR → BUNDI      | 1 "   | 17.4    | 22.4       | <del>13.1</del>     |
| BUNDI → SHIMLA      | 1 "   | 24.2    | 22.5       | 12.8                |
| SHIMLA → DHARMASALA | 1 "   | 13.4    | 21.8       | 13.4                |



