

A photograph of a cobblestone path, likely in a historical or European setting. The path is composed of irregular, light-colored stones. Strong, dark shadows are cast across the path, creating a rhythmic pattern of light and dark bands. The shadows appear to be from a building or structure on the right side of the frame. The overall tone is warm and slightly aged.

TRIPE | MURRAY | BOURNE

Prahlad Bubbar

Tripe | Murray | Bourne

Photographic Journeys in India 1855-1870

18 April - 22 May 2016

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Preface

‘Tripe, Murray, Bourne: Photographic Journeys in India 1855-1870’ presents a selection of important and rare photographic prints from mid-19th century India. The exhibition explores the development of the revolutionary medium of photography and highlights the beauty with which India was recorded by three early masters in the field.

Tripe, Murray and Bourne each travelled across India in the 1850s and 60s and recorded its architecture and topography with a keen eye for detail and a desire to record a foreign land with a recently invented technology that changed how we see the world forever.

Captain Linnaeus Tripe embarked for India in 1839, the same year that photography was first introduced commercially, right after its invention. A military training, an aesthetic sensibility and the backing of the East India Company, gave him a unique opportunity to document the sights in Southern India like never before. Tripe’s images convey a deep understanding of temple architecture and Hinduism. Through his sensitive eye for pattern, shade and light, the buildings come alive.

Dr. John Murray, who originally worked as a doctor with the Bengal medical service, started experimenting with photography as an amateur when he moved to Agra around 1848, and was inspired by the great Mughal Architecture there. Using the largest camera available at that time, Murray systematically recorded the monuments at Agra, Delhi and Fatehpur Sikri. His images have a scale and quality that draw the viewer into the picture and are the best ever taken of the Taj Mahal and the Pearl Mosque.

Samuel Bourne is known for his images of the landscapes in Kashmir and the Himalayas taken during the 1860s. His ability to capture the ‘picturesque’ is unmatched. Often working in the most challenging circumstances he recorded the soaring peaks and serene lakes, as well as numerous views of towns and cities. His legacy continued with the Bourne and Shepherd studio until late into the 19th century and later.

Shubha and Prahlad Bubbar
London, April 2016

Acknowledgements

Nicholas Burnett
Crispin Branfoot
George Michell
Miguel Pacheco
Richard Shellebear

Catalogue

Tripe 9

Murray 29

Bourne 45



Captain Linnaeus Tripe

Linnaeus Tripe was born in England in 1822, he joined as captain of the British army in India where he arrived in 1839 as a recruit of the East Indian Company. Having developed the knowledge and technical skills required for the practice of photography in England, it was in India that Tripe took on this endeavor with all seriousness. He became one of the earliest photographers in the subcontinent.

In his brief career as photographer, from 1854 to 1860, he was appointed official photographer by British authorities. Tripe embarked on several photographic expeditions – to Mysore, Burma, and the Madras Presidency, he also opened his own photography studio. This was a time in which, responding to a sense of responsibility for the preservation of India's great monuments, as well as having the political need to acquire deep knowledge of the regions under its power, the colonial administration began to fund photographic surveys.

Tripe's series of photographs of monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes of these regions constitute an invaluable document of India's cultural and religious heritage. However, his images far surpass their documental function, as they are a product of a highly sophisticated aesthetic and demonstrate creative technical skills. The deep artistic vision that Tripe endowed his images with, is seen in the particular choices of viewpoints, use of perspective and a strong graphic sense in the play of light and shadows, further dramatized by the use of negative retouching.

Following a particularly troubled political time in India, which he helped document, Tripe eventually closed down his studio in 1860 and practically ceased all photographic activity.

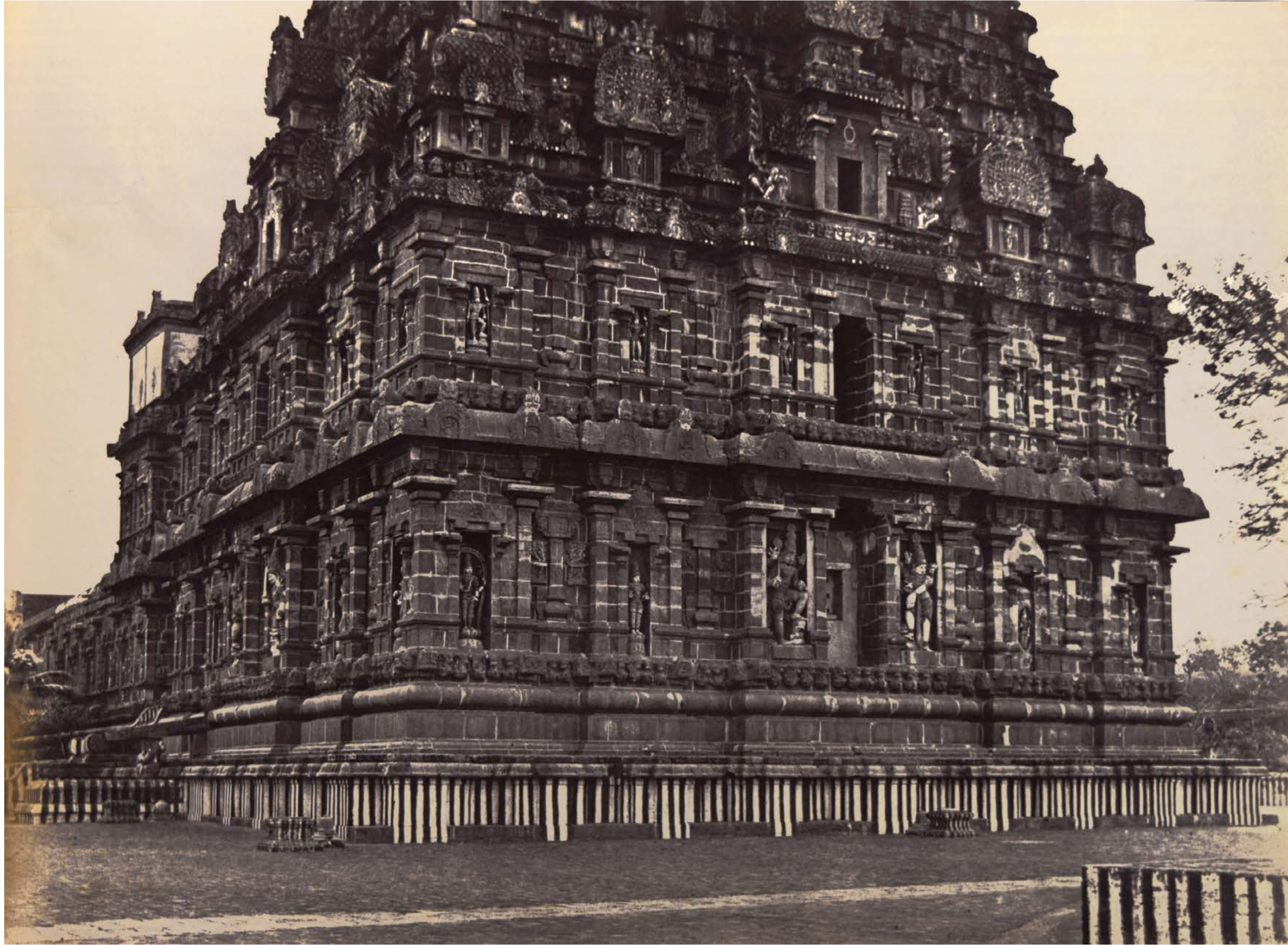


1 Aisle on the South Side of the Puthu Mundapam, from the Western Porico, Madura
 Captain Linnaeus Tripe, India, 1858, Albumen print, 33 x 29 cm



2 *The Great Pagoda in Tanjore, Southern view*

Captain Linnaeus Tripe
Tanjore, India, 1858
Albumen print
28 x 38 cm





3 *Trimul Naik's Choultry, from East*

Captain Linnaeus Tripe
Tanjore, India, 1858
Albumen print
26 x 36 cm





4 *Pagoda at Viralimalai and the hill*

Captain Linnaeus Tripe
India, 1858
Albumen print
24.5 x 36 cm



5 *Trimul Naik's Palace, View of Northeast Corner*

Captain Linnaeus Tripe
Madura, India, January-February 1858
Albumen print
27 x 35 cm







Dr. John Murray

Dr. John Murray was one of the most talented early amateur photographers in India, taking up photography from around 1849, and developing a prolific practice until 1865, a time when commercial photography had just become a settled practice.

Murray, a Scottish-born who had come to India in 1833 as a civil surgeon and was to become Principal of the Medical School in Agra, used photography to document Mughal monuments and landscapes in and around Agra, Delhi and Fatehpur Sikri in North India. His photographic work was driven by a desire to test and master technical aspects of this newly invented medium, using the technique of the Calotype, with large waxed paper negatives to produce expressive and stark prints. Murray accomplished this by all the while reflecting an aesthetic sensibility often influenced by the idealized romanticism of the Picturesque, a movement characteristic of British painting of the late 18th century that found particular expression in India through the paintings of William Hodges and Thomas and William Daniell.

As pointed out by John Falconer (2000), Murray often returned to the same subjects in his photographs, creating images of monuments from different points of view, sometimes only slightly shifting, as to document in detail all different architectural features of the buildings. This process, however, was also a way for Murray to test the capability of photography, a medium itself made with light, to reflect the dynamics of light and shade as reflected by architecture. These are, therefore, images that capture the viewer's eye in the interlacing of the monumental solidity of architecture and the atmospheric evanescence of light.

Murray also often included people in his scenes, establishing a relationship between architecture and the human body. The difference in scale between these elements, however, does not convey a sense of a crushing dominance over the human, but instead points to the human habitability of these monumental environments.



6 The Front of Akbar's Palace, Dr . John Murray, Agra, India, c. 1855, Albumen print, 38 x 44 cm



7 *The Pearl Mosque*

Dr. John Murray
Agra, India, c. 1856
Albumen print
38 x 44 cm

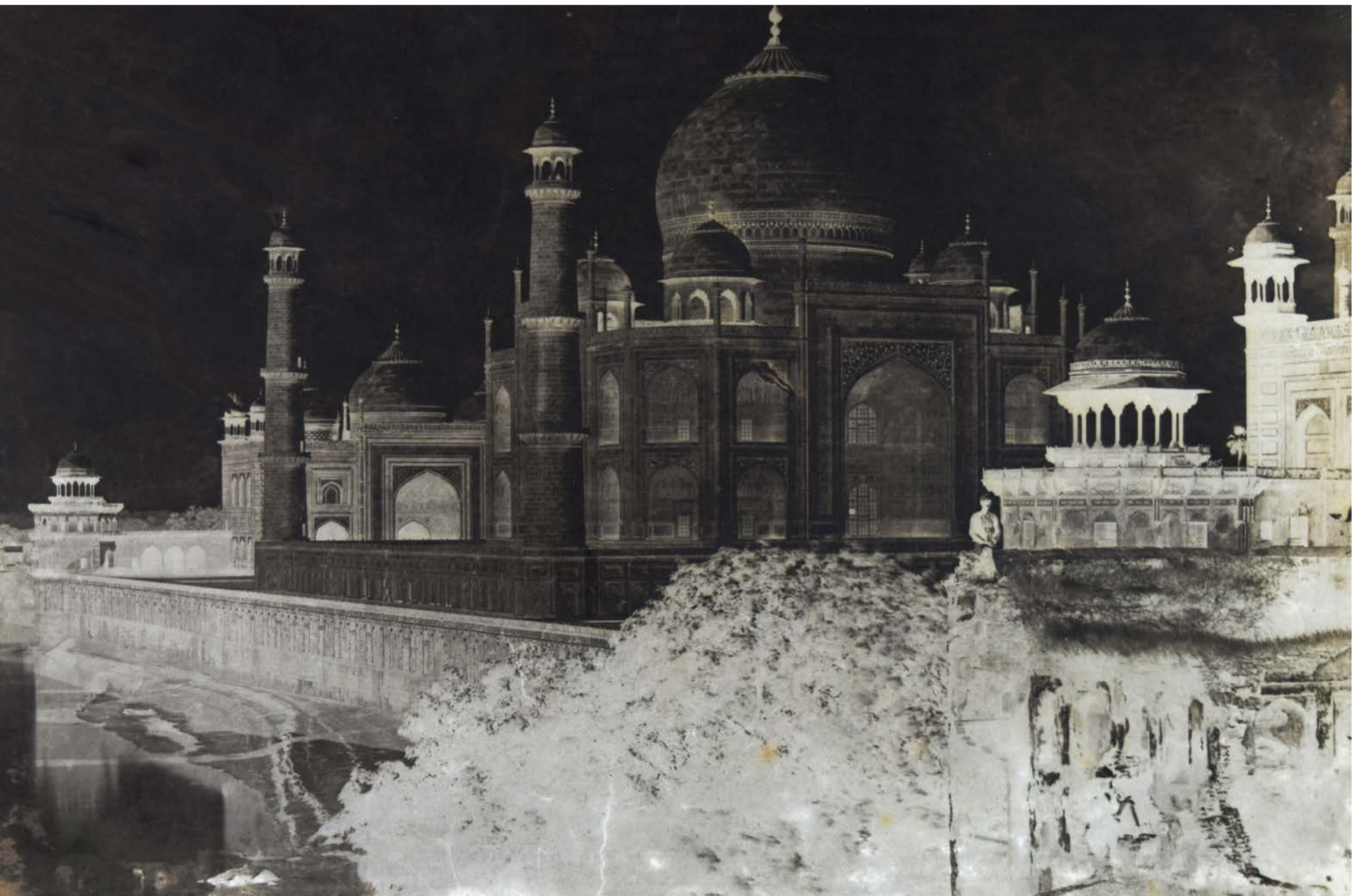




8 *View of the Taj Mahal*

Dr. John Murray
Agra, India, c. 1856
Albumen print
36 x 44.5 cm







10 *The Red Mosque*, Dr. John Murray, Agra, India, c. 1856, Albumen print, 39 x 45 cm



Samuel Bourne

Samuel Bourne was one of the most prolific early British photographers in India, where he travelled to in 1863 after leaving his promising job in a bank in Nottingham. He was to produce numerous photographs of India, opening a highly successful studio with fellow photographer Charles Shepherd, and circulating internationally an idyllic image of the subcontinent.

Bourne's images of India were, in fact, influenced by notions of the picturesque and the sublime, highly popular at the time in British art, which valued a particularly romantic sense of beauty and grandiosity in nature or landscapes created by human presence. In this sense, as Gary D. Sampson (2000) refers, human presence is seen in Bourne's images in a continuum with nature, conveying more of a spiritual dimension than a purely documental interest. His work therefore reflects a pursuit of India's essence through the eyes of Western aesthetic values, which contributed greatly to the creation of a particular view of India to Western audiences.

Bourne opened a studio at the foothill of the western Himalayas at Simla to easily enable his photographic journeys, namely his three major campaigns - to the Himalayas, to Kashmir and to the source of the Ganges River, having as well made other tours of India. He planned his travels in detail, in accordance with the natural phenomena and the indigenous people and structures he would find on his paths. In his journeys, however, he and his teams were faced with grueling and unpredictable natural conditions, which never deterred Bourne from insisting on reaching his idea of perfection in each photograph, both in technical terms and in aesthetic achievement.



11 *View on the Dal Canal, Srinigar, Kashmir.* Samuel Bourne, India, c. 1865, Albumen print, 24 x 29 cm



12 *Ladies in Kashmir*

Samuel Bourne
Kashmir, India, c. 1865
Albumen print
21.5 x 28 cm





13 *Gateway to Hoosainabad*

Samuel Bourne
Lucknow, India, c. 1866
Albumen print
23.4 x 29 cm

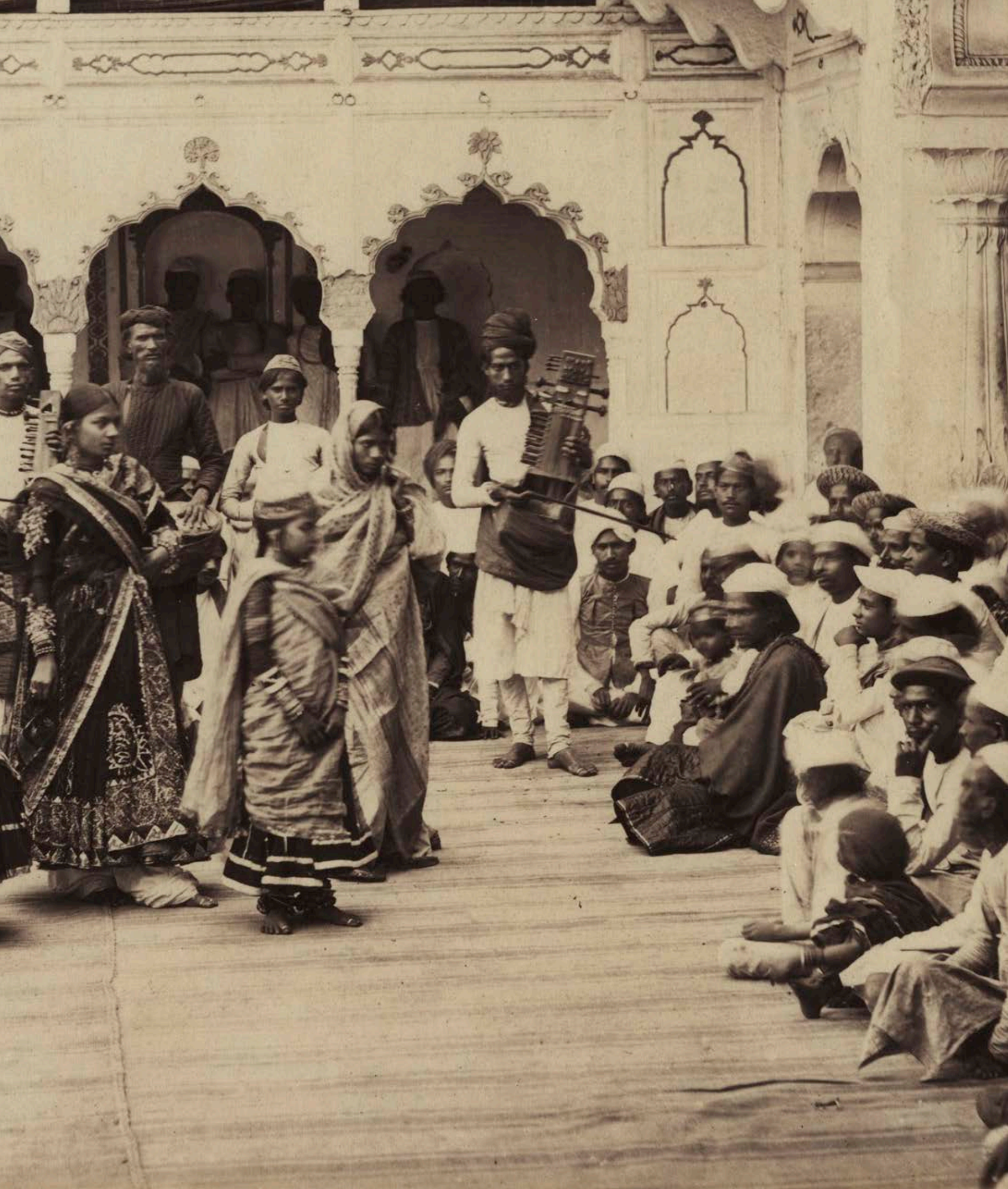




14 *The Nizam of Hyderabad and Suite*

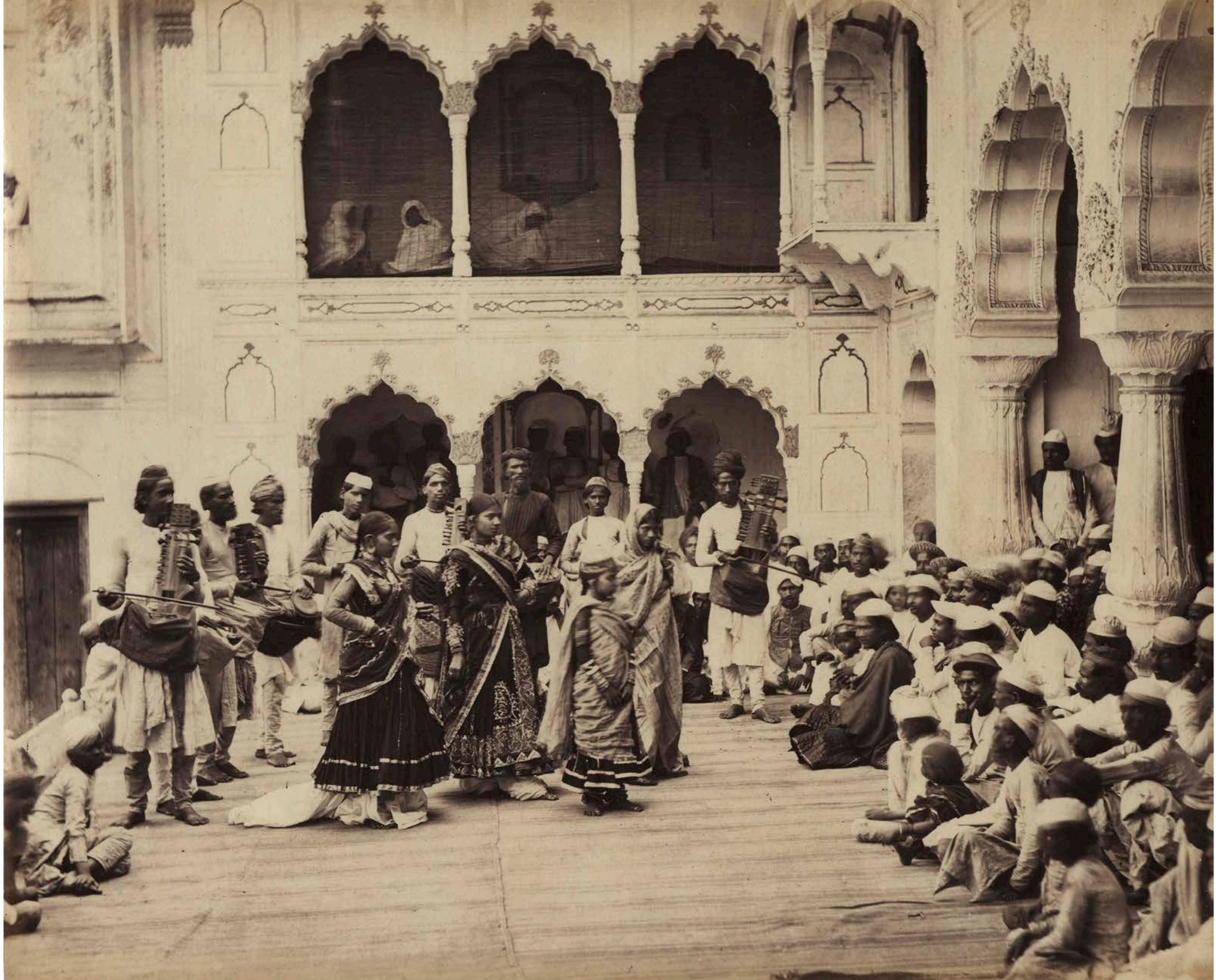
Bourne & Shepherd
India, 1870s
Albumen print
20 x 28 cm





15 *Native Nautch at Delhi (or Shalimar)*

Samuel Bourne
Lucknow, India, 1864
Albumen print
23 x 28 cm







17 *Interior of Palace, Diwan-i Khas or Hall of Private Audience, Red Fort, Delhi*

Samuel Bourne
India, 1860
Albumen print
23 x 29.5 cm





18 *The Taj Mahal, from the fountain*

Samuel Bourne
Agra, India, 1860s
Albumen print
24 x 29 cm



Bonnie 1077



19 *Maharaja of Patiala and Suite*

Bourne & Shepherd
Agra, India, 1870s
Albumen print
23 x 28.5 cm





20 *Interior of Moti Masjid*

Samuel Bourne
Agra, India, 1860s
Albumen print
23 x 28.5 cm





21 *The Maharaja of Ratlam*

Bourne & Shepherd
Agra, India, 1870s
Albumen print
27 x 22 cm



First Published on the occasion of the exhibition:

TRIPE | MURRAY | BOURNE
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Published by Prahlad Bubbar Ltd. London
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Graphic Design by Miguel Pacheco

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