NOW

GREEK AND ROMAN RUINS
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN 1991–2018

JOSEF

KOUDELKA

HANNIBAL

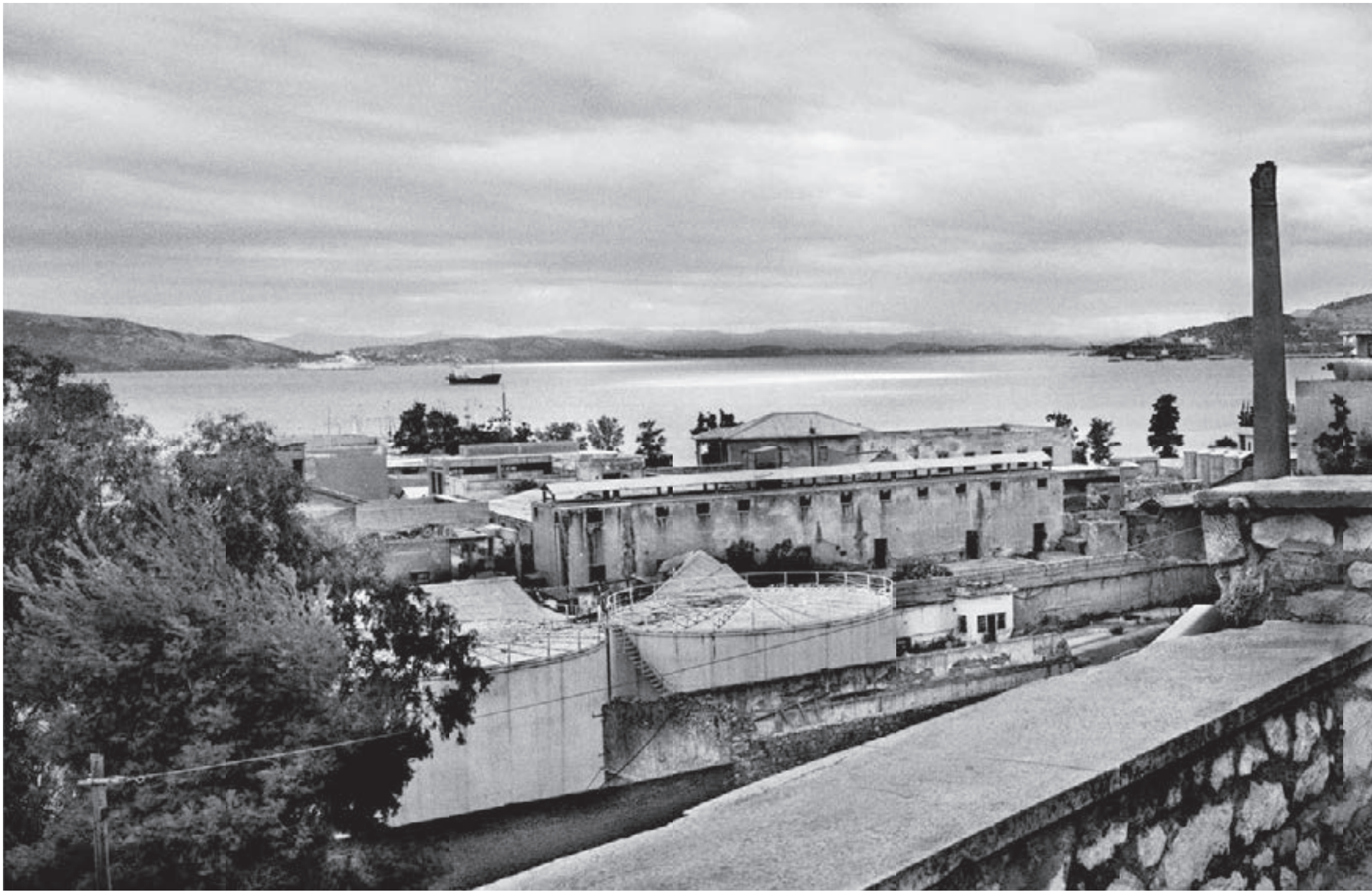
Ruins of the Classical World

Seán Hemingway

The strength of ruins lies in their residual nature, their testimony to the rise and fall of civilizations. It is fitting that Josef Koudelka's photographs of ruins from the classical world begin with the sanctuary at Delphi (pp. 14–15), considered by the ancient Greeks to be the *omphalos*, literally the navel, or center of the world. Nestled in the mountains of central Greece on Mount Parnassus, it was one of their most sacred sites, and it still retains an aura of sanctity when you visit it today. Over the course of more than twenty years, Koudelka traveled around the Mediterranean to experience and record the most striking remains of the Greco-Roman world. These ruins, remnants of major monuments from antiquity, are even more impressive and meaningful when understood within their original context and the rich quilt of history that rendered their present quietude. This essay provides insight into a selection of the archaeological sites that Koudelka visited, to give a sense of the accomplishments of the ancient civilizations whose monuments are captured so beautifully in his powerful panoramic photographs.[1]

One of the most astounding relics of the Aegean Bronze Age (3000–1050 BCE) is the Lion Gate at Mycenae, which has remained visible and mostly preserved since its construction. After the destruction of the Mycenaean citadel in the late second millennium BCE, the gate was a physical testament to the "Age of Heroes" for the ancient Greeks of the first millennium BCE.[2] It also conjures the storied history of the House of Atreus with its deep tragedies and of the Trojan War heralded in the epic poems of Homer. At the heart of the palace complex was the megaron (central hall) with its pillared hearth (pp. 178–179) where the *wanax*, or king, would hold court and receive visitors. The Lion Gate was the main entrance to the citadel, which was encircled by walls constructed of massive monolithic blocks; these were called Cyclopean by the ancient Greeks, who believed they had been built by the Cyclops, towering one-eyed giants such as Polyphemus, one of Poseidon's sons. Imagine how awe-inspiring the Lion Gate would have been to the ancient Greeks who visited Mycenae when it was already in a ruinous state.

So many of the wonders of the ancient world are gone without a trace or exist as mere fragments of their original splendor. In some cases, small-scale copies exist, and many are known from literary references.[3] One exception is the Great Pyramid at Giza, only slightly eroded from its original height of 147 meters; it was the world's tallest man-made structure for more than 3,800 years. Another wonder of the ancient world was the Colossus of Rhodes, an immense bronze statue of the sun god Helios. We know only that it was created between 294 and 282 BCE by Chares of Lindos, one of the greatest followers of the Greek sculptor Lysippos, and that it stood some 33 meters tall near the harbor of the city of Rhodes. The city erected it after surviving a year-long siege by Demetrios Polyorketes in 305 BCE. The statue stood for fifty-six years before being toppled by an earthquake. Though its impressive hollow bronze fragments laid in situ for hundreds of years, nothing remains today and its original location is not known with any certainty.[4]



Greece, Eleusis (Attica) **Terrace of the Museum of Eleusis, overlooking the archaeological site. Statue of a *togatus* from the Roman era with a modern oil refinery in the background. Photograph: 2003.**





Italy, Ostia Antica (Latium) **Baths of the Forum. Remains of two hot rooms in the city's largest and most luxurious baths. The baths are also known as the Thermae Gavii Maximi, after Gavius Maximus, the official in the Antoninus Pius period who had them built. They were completed in around 160 CE and extensively restored in the 4th century. Photograph: 2002.**





Libya, Apollonia in Cyrenaica **Eastern basilica. Its tall columns, topped with reused capitals, are made of Cipollino marble. 5th – 6th century CE. Photograph: 2007.**





Egypt, Serapeum of Alexandria **Pink granite sphinx and red Aswan granite monumental column, erected in honor of Emperor Diocletian (284–305 CE), now known as Pompey's Pillar. Photograph: 2012.**





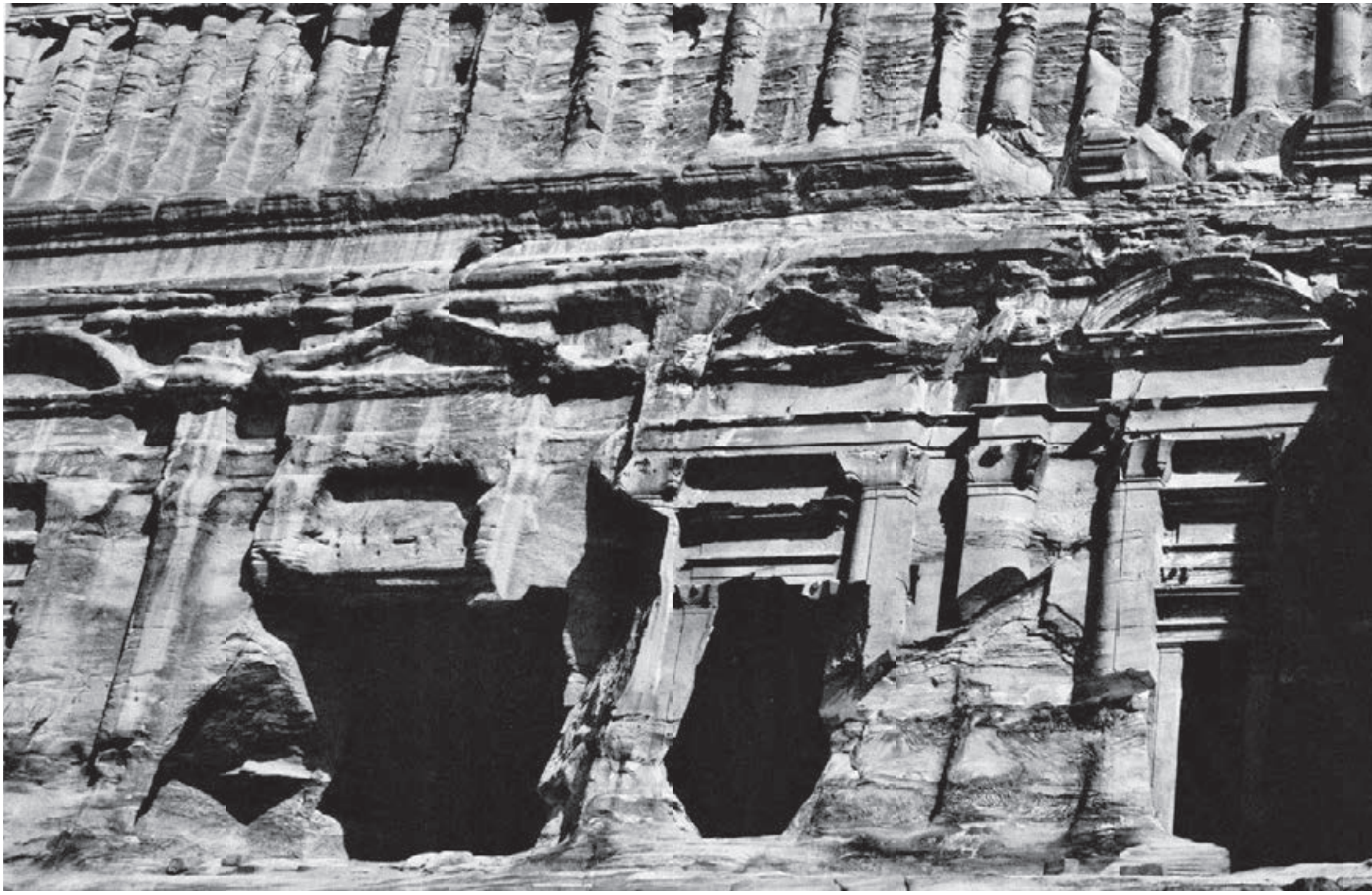
Jordan, Amman **The Citadel, Temple of Hercules. In the foreground, marble hand and elbow from a colossal statue, probably of Hercules (estimated height 13 m), destroyed in an earthquake. 2nd century CE. Photograph: 2012.**



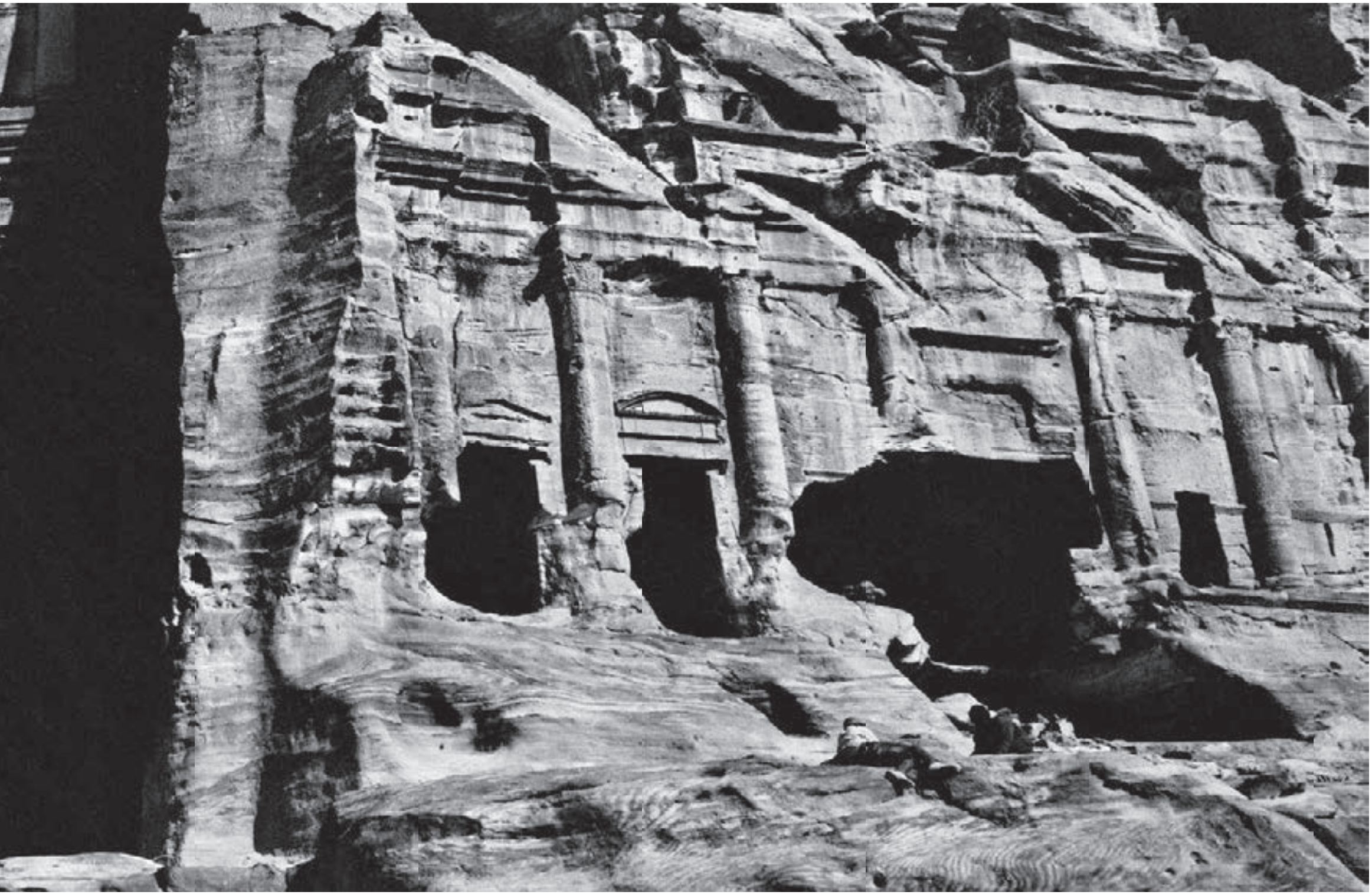


Syria, Apamea (Afamia) **Great Colonnade. The old Cardo Maximus of the Roman city is nearly 2 km long. 2nd century CE. Photograph: 2006.**





Jordan, Petra **The Palace Tomb (on the left) and the Corinthian Tomb (on the right). 1st century CE (Nabataean period). Photograph: 2016.**





Turkey, Aphrodisias **Stadium. Situated on the northern edge of the city, the stadium is 270 m long from east to west and had two tunnel entrances at each end. Stairs give access to the upper and lower tiers, once ringed by a wide gallery edged with porticoes at the top. Late 1st century CE. Photograph: 2013.**





Turkey, Sardis **Temple of Artemis in the background. A pseudo-peripteral temple with 8 × 20 Ionic columns, built between the 4th and 2nd century BCE, altered in the imperial period. View from south. Photograph: 2011.**





Turkey, Myra (Demre) **Theater from the Hellenistic period, rebuilt after an earthquake in 141 CE. In the foreground, sculpted stage decorations. View from south. Photograph: 2013.**



Sites visited and photographed by Josef Koudelka
1991–2018

Albania
Antigonia
Apollonia
Butrint
Byllis
Durrës
Elbasan
Kamenice
Phoenice

Algeria
Djemila (Cuicul)
Lambaesis
Madauros
Medracen
Tiddis
Timgad
Tipaza

Bulgaria
Nesebar
Nicopolis ad Istrum
Plovdiv
Sozopol

Croatia
Pula
Solin
Split

Cyprus
Bellapais
Famagusta
Kourion
Paphos
Salamis

Egypt
Alexandria
Cairo

France
Arles
Nîmes
Orange
Saint-Chamas
Saint-Rémy-de-Provence
Vaison-la-Romaine
Vers-Pont-du-Gard

Greece
Aigai
Athens
Brauron
Cape Sounion
Corinth
Delos
Delphi
Dion
Dodona
Eleusis
Epidaurus
Heraion of Samos
Messene
Mount Olympus
Mycenae
Nemea
Olympia
Orchomenus
Pella
Philippi
Preveza
Rhodes
Sparta
Tiryns

Israel/Palestine
Caesarea
Herodion
Jericho
Jerusalem
Masada
Megiddo
Nabi Musa
Scythopolis (Beit She'an)
Tel Lachish

Italy
Aosta
Baiae
Capri
Cumae
Donnas
Herculaneum
Ostia Antica
Paestum
Pompeii
Pozzuoli
Rome
St Bernard
Tivoli
Trieste
Turin

Sicily
Agrigento
Himera
Murgantia
Palermo
Piazza Armerina
Segesta
Selinunte
Soluntum
Syracuse

Jordan
Amman
Gadara
Gerasa (Jerash)
Pella
Petra
Raphana (Abila)
Umm el-Jimal

Lebanon
Beirut
Byblos
Heliopolis (Baalbek)
Niha
Qalaat Faqra
Qasr Hammara
Tyre

Libya
Apollonia in Cyrenaica
Cyrene (Shahhat)
Leptis Magna
Ptolemais (Tolmeita)
Sabratha

Morocco
Volubilis

Portugal
Evora

Slovenia
Ljubljana

Spain
Italica
Merida
Segovia

Syria
Aleppo
Apamea (Afamia)
Bosra
Church of St Simeon Stylites
Krak des Chevaliers
Palmyra

Tunisia
Aïn Tounga
Bulla Regia
Carthage
Chemtou
Gafsa
Haïdra
Kasserine
Mactaris (Maktar)
Sufetula (Sbeitla)
Thuburbo Majus
Thugga (Dougga)
Thysdrus (El-Jem)
Utica
Uthina (Oudna)

Turkey
Aizanoi (Çavdarhisar)
Alexandria Troas
Alinda
Aphrodisias
Arycanda
Asklepion
Aspendos
Assos
Aydın
Claros
Didyma (Didim)
Ephesus
Euromos
Halicarnassus
Hierapolis
Iasos
Kaunos
Kibyra
Knidos
Labraunda
Laodicea on the Lycus
Letoon
Limyra
Magnesia on the Maender
Miletus
Myra (Demre)
Nysa
Olympos
Patara
Perga
Pergamum (Bergama)
Phaselis
Pinara
Priene
Rhodiapolis
Sagalassos
Sardis
Selçuk
Seleucia
Selge
Side
Sidyma
Simena
Stratonicea
Telmessos
Termessos (Güllük)
Tios
Troy
Xanthos

Italic type indicates sites featured in this publication.



○ Sites visited and photographed

● **Sites photographed and featured in this book**

0 100 km 200 km


Ljubljana
SLOVENIA
Trieste
CROATIA
Pula
Solin
ITALY
Rome
Tivoli
Ostia Antica
Cumae
Pozzuoli
Herculaneum
Baiae
Pompeii
Capri
Paestum
Palermo
Segesta
Soluntum
Himera
Selinunte
Murgantia
Agrigento
Piazza Armerina
Syracuse
Sabratha
Leptis Magna
LIBYA
Apollonia in Cyrenaica
Ptolemais
Cyrene
Nicopolis ad Istrum
BULGARIA
Plovdiv
Nesebar
Sozopol
ALBANIA
Durrës
Elbasan
Apollonia
Byllis
Kamenice
Antigonia
Phoenice
Butrint
Dodona
Philippi
Pella
Aigai
Dion
Mount Olympus
Preveza
GREECE
Orchomenus
Delphi
Eleusis
Athens
Brauron
Corinth
Nemea
Tiryns
Olympia
Epidaurus
Mycenae
Messene
Sparta
Cape Sounion
Delos
Troy
Alexandria Troas
Assos
Asklepion
Pergamum
Aizanoi
TURKEY
Iasos
Claros
Ephesus
Nysa
Hierapolis
Sardis
Magnesia
Laodicea on the Lycus
Priene
Alinda
Aydin
Aphrodisias
Miletus
Labraunda
Didyma
Stratonicea
Sagalassos
Halicarnassus
Euromos
Termessos
Selge
Kaunos
Tios
Kibyra
Perga
Aspendos
Pinara
Side
Knidos
Telmessos
Olympos
Phaselis
Rhodes
Sidyma
Limyra
Rhodiapolis
Xanthos
Arycanda
Letoon
Myra
Patara
Simena
Alexandria
EGYPT
Cairo
CYPRUS
Bellapais
Salamis
Paphos
Famagusta
Kourion
Seleucia
Church of St Simeon Stylites
Aleppo
Apamea
SYRIA
Krak des Chevaliers
Palmyra
LEBANON
Byblos
Qalaat Faqra
Heliopolis
Beirut
Qasr Hammara
Niha
Tyre
Raphana
Megiddo
Pella
Gadara
Caesarea
Bosra
Scythopolis
Umm el-Jimal
Nabi Musa
Gerasa
Herodion
Amman
Jericho
Tel Lachish
Jerusalem
Masada
ISRAEL/
PALESTINE
JORDAN
Petra

Josef Koudelka

Biography by
Stuart Alexander

1938
Josef Koudelka is born on January 10 in Moravia, Czechoslovakia.

c. 1952
Introduced to photography by a friend of his father, he begins to take pictures of family and friends using a Bakelite camera.

1956 – 61
Studies engineering at the Czech Technical University, Prague.
Acquires an old Rolleiflex.
Meets the photographer and critic Jiří Jeníček, who encourages him to exhibit his work at the Semafor theater in Prague.

1961
At the opening of the Semafor exhibition, he meets art critic Anna Fárová, a major figure in Czechoslovak photography, with whom he collaborates until he leaves the country in 1970.
Travels abroad for the first time, to Italy, as a musician in a folk music and dance group.
Begins to photograph the Roma of Czechoslovakia.

1961 – 67
Works as an aeronautical engineer in Prague and Bratislava.
Contributes to the magazine *Divadlo* (Theater) as a freelance photographer.

1963
Meets Markéta Luskačová, a cultural sociology student, who is beginning to photograph religious festivals in Slovakia.

1964
Begins to photograph performances at the Na zábradlí theater in Prague.

1965
Begins to photograph performances at the Za branou theater in Prague, at the invitation of the Theater's director Otomar Krejča.
Becomes a member of the Union of Czechoslovak Artists.

1966
Publishes *Král Ubu: Rozbor inscenace Divadla Na zábradlí v Praze*, a book about Divadlo Na zábradlí's production of Alfred Jarry's play *Ubu Roi*.

1967
Leaves his engineering job and devotes himself full-time to photography.
Receives the Union of Czechoslovak Artists' annual award for the innovative quality of his theatrical photographs.
His photographs of Roma are shown for the first time in the exhibition *Cikáni, 1961–1966* (Gypsies 1961–1966), at Divadlo za branou, Prague.

1968
Travels to Romania with sociologist Milena Hübschmannová to photograph Roma.
Returns to Prague the day before Warsaw Pact troops invade the city, ending the short-lived political freedom in Czechoslovakia that came to be known as the Prague Spring. Throughout this tumultuous period, Koudelka photographs the confrontations between Czechoslovaks and Soviets wherever they occur, as well as daily life in the streets.

1969
In April, Koudelka makes his first visit to England when the Divadlo za branou theater group ask him to accompany them to London and exhibit his theater photographs in the foyer of the Aldwych Theater.
In mid-July, he makes his second visit to the UK, where he remains for at least three months. His photographs of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 are secreted out of the country and sent to the United States. The photographers' cooperative Magnum Photos distributes the photographs while Koudelka is still in the UK, attributing them to "PP" (Prague Photographer) to avoid reprisals against Koudelka and his family; a photo essay "by an anonymous Czech photographer" is published in major international magazines. The images won him the Robert Capa Gold Medal from the Overseas Press Club. Elliott Erwitt, then president of Magnum Photos, makes a short film of animated stills with these images for CBS News, maintaining Koudelka's anonymity.

1970
Leaves Czechoslovakia on a three-month exit visa to photograph Roma in the West. He does not return after the visa expires, and becomes stateless. The UK grants him asylum, and he lives there through 1979.
Begins traveling and photographing Roma, religious and popular festivals, and daily life in various European countries.

1971
Elliott Erwitt proposes that Koudelka join Magnum Photos; he becomes an associate member.

1972
Meets photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson and publisher Robert Delpire, who become his close friends.
Gets to know editor Romeo Martinez.

1974
Becomes a full member of Magnum Photos.

1975
Josef Koudelka, a solo exhibition organized by John Szarkowski, opens at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Robert Delpire publishes Koudelka's photographs of Roma as *Gitans: La fin du voyage* in Paris; Aperture publishes the US edition under the title *Gypsies*.

1978
Awarded the Prix Nadar by Gens d'Images, Paris, for *Gitans: La fin du voyage*.

1980 – 87
Leaves the UK for France in 1980. Still stateless, he continues to travel throughout Europe.

1984
Koudelka's first major exhibition, conceived by Robert Delpire and organized by the Arts Council of Great Britain, is held at the Hayward Gallery, London. To accompany the exhibition, *Josef Koudelka* (Collection Photo Poche) is published in English and in French by the Centre national de la photographie, Paris.
After the death of his father and sixteen years of anonymity, Koudelka's photos of the invasion of Prague are published for the first time under his own name. (Before this date he had sought to protect his family still living in Czechoslovakia from possible reprisals.)

Colophon

Photographs © **Josef Koudelka**, Magnum Photos / Courtesy of the Josef Koudelka Foundation, 2026
Book conception, photo selection and sequencing **Josef Koudelka**

Text **Seán Hemingway**
Copy editing **Cath Phillips**
Project management **Hadewych Van den Bossche**
Cover and book design **Irma Boom**
Photogravure **robstolk®**
Captions **Valeria Tosti**
(from *Ruines*, Éditions Xavier Barral, Paris, 2020)

Printing & binding limited edition **robstolk®**, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Publisher **Gautier Platteau**

ISBN 978 94 9353 135 2
D/2026/11922/67
NUR 653/682

HANNIBAL
© Hannibal Books, 2026
www.hannibalbooks.be

Hannibal Books team Laura Bijnens, Sara Colson, Pieter De Meyere, Sarah Eycken, Natacha Hofman, Séverine Lacante, Sofie Meert, Gautier Platteau, Hedwig Scheltjens, Marie Schoups, Stephanie Van den bosch, Hadewych Van den Bossche, Jarrik Van Der Biest, Bert Vanlathem

With thanks to **Jordan Alves** and Éditions Barral.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any other information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Seán Hemingway is an archaeologist and the John A. and Carole O. Moran curator in charge of Greek and Roman art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He has a PhD in classical art and archaeology from Bryn Mawr College and was a Fulbright Scholar to Greece. Hemingway is the author of numerous books and texts about ancient art.