

FIVE STANS 27 – ON THE ROAD

Posted on 2024-04-10 by spd_wp_admin

Dear Reader (2024-04-10)

I don't know where to begin. Once upon a time I mentioned that I like visual collisions and discontinuities. They help to demonstrate that a binary perspective is a fallacy. Between black and white there are multiple shades of grey, which is where tone, texture, and conversation exist. Experience also says that many things happen all at once, and they may or may not be related. All that said if the other Four Stans are characterized by visual collisions, Turkmenistan is saturated with multi-car pileups.

Today's title image is from a walk three of us took along a wide pedestrian boulevard in Ashgabat. Besides the very decorative streetlamps, there are also tall light arrays, which probably house high resolution cameras, and possibly listening devices. In Turkmenistan, it is safe to assume that you are probably being watched. Our Turkmen guide was very careful about what he said, as he never knew when he was being watched and by whom. For all he knew, our driver may have been spying on him. As a result, his answers to vague and blatant political questions were guarded. In answer to a question on the state of democracy in Turkmenistan, his answer was that his country was on a road to democracy. Given that it is for all intents and purposes it is ruled by a totalitarian regime, that road is a convoluted one.

All of today's photos were captured through a bus window with the exception of the group photo (01) and the soviet era tractor (10). Shortly after crossing into Turkmenistan, we stopped for a lunch in the town of Farab, at a newly opened restaurant / bar / wedding venue. After lunch, their marketing person wanted a picture of us and all the staff. I found the Turkmen people initially cautious and wary of us. Their suspicions quickly vanished when they found out we were travelers from Australia and Canada.

At one point we were less than 25 km from the Iranian border. We could just make out part of the first row of the 3 rows of fences between Turkmenistan and Iran. Another mystery in my world is how is it that there is an Iranian border fence well within Turkmen lands.

Notes on Photographs

~ 05 – I saw cranes identical to this one in Constanta (see Jackdaw 06). In Soviet times, there was probably a limit number of crane models made by a limited number of collectives.



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08 - Iran is close



09



10



11



12

You are welcome to share a link to this page with others.
As always, all comments are welcome and sought.
Cheers, Sean

One Reply to “Five Stans 27 – On The Road”

1. Keith Cartmell says: 2024-04-13 at 19:59
I suspect it's a Turkmen border fence, not Iranian. I had to look at a map to figure it out. The East German state was rife with spies. Everyone spied and informed on each other. I can't help but think it's a massive waste of resources, trying to connect all the reports from all the people spying and reporting on each other.
 1. I had to look at the photo a bit to figure out the image. Then once I realized there was a mirror it made much more sense. I think.
 2. Not a good place to have your vehicle break down.
 5. I've seen too many bad SF movies. That crane could easily stride across the landscape, looking for victims to pick up and do whatever is done to the victims of wayward cranes.
 6. That doesn't look like a happy place to live.
 11. There's a sort of beauty in that much desolation.
 12. I somehow don't think that is a field of hops, and the building is a brewery, or grapes and a winery.

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