Caption: **Château-d'Oex, Switzerland**
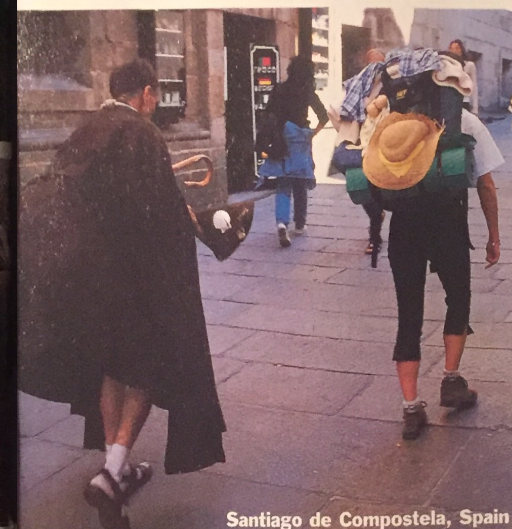
Caption: **Tometrask, Sweden**
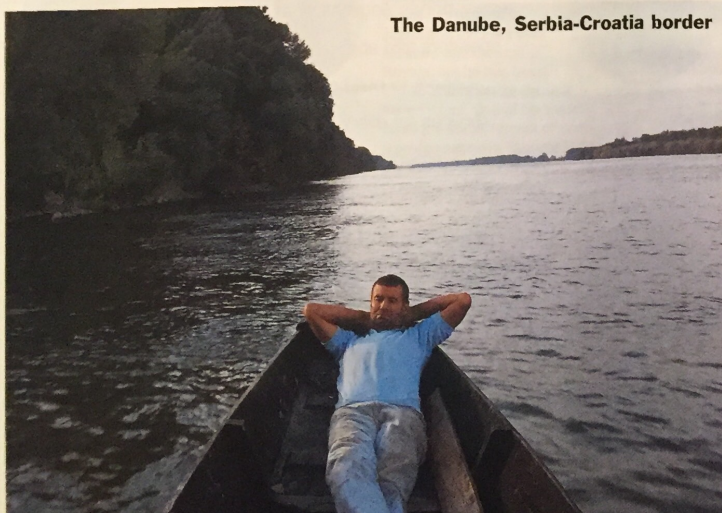
Caption: **The Danube, Serbia-Croatia border**

Caption: **Nicosia, Cyprus**
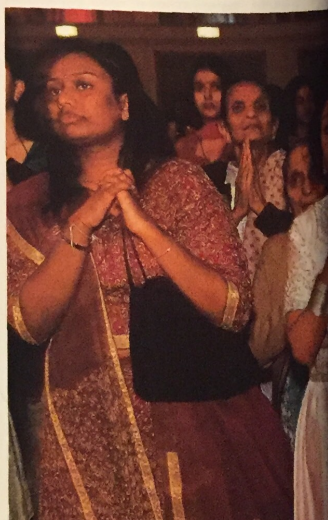
Caption: **Santiago de Compostela, Spain**

Caption: **London, England**

# Fantastic
# VOYAGE

TRAVEL BROADENS THE MIND, AND THE MAKING OF Fast Forward Europe—for which six TIME bureau chiefs and a clutch of correspondents covered tens of thousands of kilometers by plane, train, boat, bicycle, automobile and hot air balloon—was certainly a mind-expanding experience. To chronicle the people, places and trends that are shaping the new Europe, we set out on a marathon journey from the far Nordic north to the tip of the Iberian Peninsula, from Dublin's bustling pubs to a barren patch of rocky outcroppings in the middle of the Aegean. What we discovered was a region full of creative energy and contradictions, a continent coming together under the banner of the European Union while staunchly defending unique national and regional identities. We limited our trip to those countries that are already part of the E.U. or have some prospect of joining it in the near future. Despite the rhetoric of "ever closer union," we found the East-West divide still very much alive—in politics and economics as well as in people's minds. Along the way we encountered some fascinating trends in some surprising places, stories we've titled "Off the Beaten Track." We also met innovative individuals we think will be making news in the future; you can read their profiles under the "People to Watch" banner. Perhaps the most striking theme of our travelers' tales is a sense of wonder at how Europe continues to evolve and change and innovate through a millennia-old process of cultural alchemy. T.S. Eliot, an American poet who chose to make his home in Europe, expressed this sense of wonder in his *Four Quartets*: "And the end of all our exploring/Will be to arrive where we started/And know the place for the first time." We trust that after traveling with us through Fast Forward Europe, you will see the Old World from a new perspective. And who knows, you may find us passing through your part of Europe soon.

*James Geary*

Editor, Fast Forward Europe