

NAGORNO-KARABAGH

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SYNOPSIS

Populated by Armenians and supported by Armenia, officially part of the Republic of Azerbaijan but *de facto* independent since 1991 Nagorno-Karabagh lived for twenty five years in an in-between, neither in war nor in peace, between independence and non-recognition.

A ceasefire ended the independence conflict in 1994 after 30 000 deaths and 800 000 refugees. From this moment diplomacy, personified by the Minsk Group, failed to find a way out and the “frozen conflict” unfreezes slowly. The border with Azerbaijan, a continuous line of contact, was the place of clashes increasingly recurrent until the night of April 1st 2016 when the conflict restarted for four days. Populated villages were bombed, tanks and helicopters shot down. Although it is difficult to estimate, the toll is more than 200 deaths, military and civilian. On April 5th, a cease-fire was signed under the auspices of Russia but is violated every day. Soldiers have been killed, villages bombed again. Although since April 5th, the intensity of fighting is not the same as during the four days of war, the current state is a state of war. While Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh are supported by Russia, while Azerbaijan is supported by Turkey and buy weapons to Russia, will Nagorno-Karabagh be the instrument of the conflict between those two forces ?

We propose a story on this territory where we went in 2010, 2011 and 2013 and in April 2016. We worked during the four trips on the daily life of this unrecognized State, to find out how is life in this country “between war and peace”. During our last visit in April 2016 we paid attention to military situation by visiting the contact line with Azerbaijan, bombed villages, wounded soldiers, civilians who fled their village, etc.

Anais Coignac and Julien Pebrel are working together on projects in the South Caucasus, Romania, Argentina, Lebanon, France, etc. Their work was published in The Sunday Times Magazine, Internazionale, Newsweek Japan, Revue XXI, Le Monde, M le Monde, Geo, Causette, Neon, etc.



A landscape on the road between Armenia and Karabagh



A map of Armenia and Karabagh united in the school of the village of Moshatagh in the Kashatagh region (considered by Azerbaijan as "occupied" by Armenian army as it was not part of Nagorno-Karabagh obsat)



Landscape in the village of Mataghis, one of the villages bombed during the 4 days war. Almost all women and children have left the village. It was also bombed after the cease-fire.



In the Mardakert region. An inhabitant from Mataghis village bring his cattle to his family in Mardakert. Animals have been killed during bombings and have been stolen after.



A sheperd in the Kashatagh region, not far from the border with Armenia



On the road to Talish. Soldiers coming back to the frontline after a break in their family. They are waiting to a vehicle.



In Talish, one the bombed villages. An armenian militay vehicles destroyed by Azerbaijan army.



A new village built in the Kashatagh region (considered by Azerbaijan as “occupied” by Armenian army as it was not part of Nagorno-Karabagh obsat), the region is under repopulation as it was populated with azeris who where expelled during the war.



A volunteer in the village of Talish



Volunteers in the village of Talish.
The water reservoir of the village has been bombed by Azerbaijan army.



Volunteers in the village of Talish.
In front of them, a bombed house.



Shooting exercise in a military base in Askeran.
Young soldiers during their military service.



A young soldier on the line of contact in the Martuni region.
He is doing his military service.



Two young soldier son the line of contact in the Martuni region.
They are doing their military service.



Renovation of a military monument in a military bas in the Askeran region.



A soldier on the line of contact in the Askeran region



In the museum of war in Stepanakert



A volunteer in the village of Talish



A young soldier on the line of contact on Askeran



Two young soldiers sleep in a small shack on the line of contact with Azerbaijan army in the region of Martuni.



Family and friends of a soldier gather in Stepanakert on his grave a few days after his funeral



Hak village, Kashatagh region.
A sheperd who lost his leg when he walked on a landmine



Hospital for kids in Stepanakert. He, his brother and a friend were hit by a bombing in their schoolyard in Martuni. His brother died during, until now he's not aware of this.



A veteran from the Second World War walks in the street with her medals on the day of the commemoration of the 20th birthday of the independence



An old soviet monument in the street of Shushi



A dancer in the national choregraphy academy



A dancer in the national choregraphy academy



In the national choregraphy academy



In the national choregraphy academy



In Tsitsernavank



In Shushi



Five brothers, during a traditional commemoration given in school the day before the start of the school year



In a school of Shushi.



In Stepanakert. The monument is a statue for Stepan Chahoumian who gave its name to Stepanakert.



Stepanakert.
Commemoration for the 101th birthday of the armenian genocide.



In Shushi. On the commemoration of the 20th birthday of the independence.



A chess club in Stepabakert.



In Shushi. On the commemoration of the 20th birthday of the independence.



A shop in Stepanakert



In Shushi



A view of one of the Shushi's old mosques from a destroyed building



Daily life in Shushi



Preparation of the traditional commemoration given in school the day before the start of the school year



In the private kindergarden held by Karine in Stepanakert



In the private kindergarden held by Karine in Stepanakert



Gohar is pregnant of 8 months and 3 weeks, her husband is on the frontline



In Mataghis, one of the bombed villages.
Men try to reinstall television



A family from Mataghis who left the town during the bombing, they live in a
hotel in Stepanakert



A women from Mataghis who left the town during the bombing, she lives in a hotel in Stepanakert



A family from Talish who left the town during the bombing, they live in a hotel in Stepanakert



A family from Talish who left the town during the bombing, they live in their uncle house in Shushi



A man who was injured during the bombing in Mataghis



Blood in the house of three old people who, according to armenian authorities and some armenian journalists, were executed by Azerbaijanis soldiers who cut their ears.



In the military hospital of Stepanakert, a wounded soldier



In the military hospital of Stepanakert, a wounded soldier



In the school of Talish. It was bombed on the april 2nd.



A soldier in the city hall of Talish. It was bombed on the april 2nd.



In a high school in Stepanakert. Students have military strategy lessons were they learn mong other things to assemble a weapon. This student is training for a speed context in which his school will participate.



In a high school in Stepanakert. Students have military strategy lessons where they learn among other things to apply a tourniquet



Hovhannes, an Armenian from Iran who left everything to leave his dream: live in Nagorno-Karabagh. He died alone this year.



In the Kashatagh region



Hak village, in the Kashatagh region



Mirik village, in the Kashatagh region.
The grand mother of the bride just after the wedding;..



In Shushi in the house of a large family who, thans to a governemental program,
was granted a house after their 6th kids.



In the church of Shushi



In the church of Shushi during a mess for the soldiers a few days after the cease fire.



In the church of Shushi during a mess for the soldiers a few days after the cease fire.



In Shushi



In the house of a family in Shushi.



In the house of a family in Shushi



The truck who collect the milk in a valley in Kashatagh region



Shushi



A village in the Kashatagh region (considered by Azerbaijan as “occupied” by Armenian army as it was not part of Nagorno-Karabagh obsat), the region is under repopulation as it was populated with azeris who where expelled during the war. But villages look like ghost towns where only a few houses are occupied.



Mirik village, in the Kashatagh region



Mirik village, in the Kashatagh region



In Shushi



The football stadium of Stepanakert



During an electoral “meeting” for the municipal elections in Stepanakert



Bako Sahakian, President of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh



In a school in Moshatagh, the day before the start of the school year.



Memories... Hak village



In a large family house in Shushi



A birthday party in Shushi

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