

A dramatic landscape photograph featuring a bright sun low on the horizon, partially obscured by a large, dark cross in the foreground. The sky is filled with scattered white and grey clouds, and the foreground shows silhouettes of tall grass and a dark, possibly metallic, object. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

LAND OF FATHERS

CHRISTIAN SYRIAN ARMENIAN WHO FLED SYRIA

BY GIANMARCO MARAVIGLIA/ECHO

Ivan Havannesian, 7 years old, was born in Aleppo, Syria. Last September, his family, Christian Armenian origin, terrified by the escalation of violence in the Syrian conflict has embarked on a rough road trip to Armenia. Today he lives with his parents in a suburb of Yerevan.



Rafhi, 23, a native of Kamshdy region on the northwest coast of Syria, on the border with Turkey. He fled Syria to avoid being drafted into the regular army of the Assad regime and arrived in Armenia with his family. Not having found a job and can not afford a house in Yerevan, now lives in Berdzor, a village in the republic of Nagorno Karabakh.



The Armenian Christian minority in Syria has always lived in peace.

The area of Aleppo , the region close to the southern border of Turkey, Kessab and plenty other villages have become home to hundreds of thousands of Armenians after the Diaspora.

The explosion of the war in Syria and especially its radicalization has broken the balance of civil life , and Christians feel threatened and under attack , especially after the attack of the city of Kessab on 21 March , by al - Nusra Front the Syrian branch of al- Qaeda .

12000 Armenian decided to take refuge in their land , the Great Mother Armenia.

The community of Syrian Armenian refugees in Armenia is a complex and diverse society .

Coming from a middle or high class, to maintain their social status ,they live in large apartments in the center of Yerevan spending savings of a lifetime quickly running out.

The majority of refugees who lost everything in the war , lives in absolute poverty and hundreds of families live with \$ 25 per person per month.

Finally, those who have no chance to survive in the capital, may want to be sent to Karabakh , a theater of war still not officially concluded with Azerbaijan. As modern settlers they are being given a free house and land to farm in a remote area on the border with Iran, for precise political and demographics calculations.

To all these people Armenia meant homeland of language, culture and religion . The idealized land . Now it is becoming a trap, where they remain suspended between the melancholy of exile and the material difficulties of integration.

TEXT AVAILABLE BY ALESSIO POLVERONI

The area of Kashatagh in Nagorno Karabak. Here many syrians live in the village of Berdzor



H. is one of the survivors of the battle of Kessab, between the islamic rebels of al Nusra Front and the regular army. After remaining two days hiding in the house, on the night of March 24, walked for 5 hours until the altitude of Hqizolug.



Ashtarak, in this area will be built a compound for Syrian Armenians, called "New Aleppo". It is intended for middle and high class, since the advance payment is 5000\$.



Tatiana, two years, from six months living with parents and brother in an apartment provided by the government to Syrian refugees in the village of Berdzor in Karabakh. The family lost everything in the war, now lives with just \$ 80 per month



The Samvelian family is a typical middle class family who lived in the neighborhood of azize, Aleppo. The little girl, Mary, as is tradition in Armenian families studied classical music and playing the piano. The grandmother, Mari, who sits beside her , was a famous jeweler in Syria.



Syrians keep their roots also now in Armenia, food and language are sign of their cultural heritage.

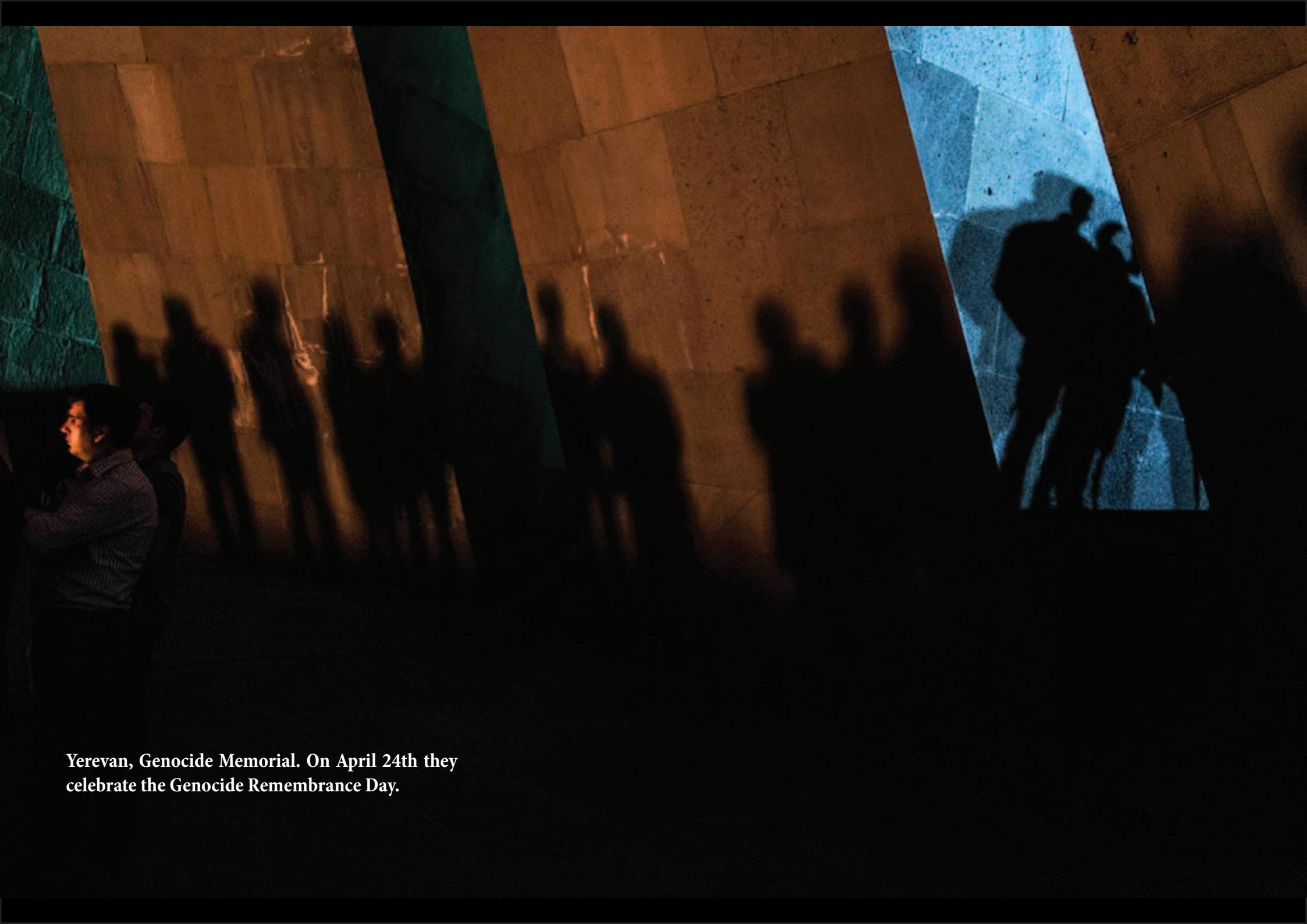


Nagorno Karabak, near Kavsakan. Here, near the border with Iran some syrian armenian had free houses in land to farm.





Vahe Somocljan was born in 1935 in Aleppo in the refugee camp for refugees of the Armenian genocide of 1915. Has spent the past twenty years to collect documents on the history of the Armenian Christian community in Syria.



Yerevan, Genocide Memorial. On April 24th they
celebrate the Genocide Remembrance Day.

Yeghisapet Chilingirian, originally from Aleppo, is an elderly lady who with his family fled the war in Syria and now lives in Yerevan, Armenia.



Kevok Allajan fled from Aleppo, last September. Not having a job nor the money to keep her three children in Yerevan, has applied for an apartment and a land to cultivate in Karabackh. Today he lives in the small village of Kovskan with his family.





Yerevan, in the house of a family who left Kessab after the attack.

Said, a native of Aleppo, lives in an apartment in the village of Berdzor in Karabakh. In Syria he was a working pottery craftsman, in Armenia he is a bricklayer for a public company and earns \$ 100 with which he maintains his wife and two children.



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