

Captions :

PARADISE LOST

«Flee from war in Syria to reach the Iraqi Kurdistan... »

Photographic essay by
Frédéric Mery Poplimont

2013



Photo 01 - Syrian migrants camped near the last Syrian border crossing, along the road leading to Kurdistan. As many as 10 000 migrants can wait here for days in the hope that the local authorities will open the crossing.



Photo 02- Syrians holding up their refugee cards for a distribution of food in the Domiz camp (Kurdistan). Many of these families have left everything behind, fleeing from the war to get to Kurdistan.



Photo 03 - A long queue for new arrivals at the Domiz camp in Kurdistan. This camp, established over two years ago, now holds more than 70 000 refugees, most of whom have settled here.



Photo 04 - A Syrian refugee and her mother look at their jumbled personal effects having just arrived by bus at the Basirma camp (Kurdistan). In this region where the climate is difficult, the camp houses migrants in dwellings adapted to the harsh winter.



Photo 05 - Distribution of cooking equipment to new arrivals at the Domiz camp (Kurdistan). Many of these families have absolutely nothing when they arrive at the camp.



Photo 06 - Stock of heaters to face the hard winter at the Domiz camp (Kurdistan). Climatic conditions here go from one extreme to another: from icy cold in Winter to scorching hot in Summer, making life difficult for all.



Photo 07 - A hot wind, laden with dust, blows through the alleys in Kawergost camp (Kurdistan). Built in 2013 as a temporary camp, it now houses more than 16 000 Syrian migrants.



Photo 08 - A young Syrian girl pushing a wheelchair laden with mattresses in an alley of Kawergost camp (Kurdistan). Even children have to do hard and sometimes dangerous tasks, putting their health at risk.



Photo 09 - A Syrian refugee, her child in her arms, looking at the extension for new arrivals at Domiz camp. This camp, built more than two years ago, houses today 70 000 refugees, most of them settled. As the conflict wears on, this camp, quite close to the frontier, sees new refugees arriving every week.



Photo10 - A portrait of Abu, a Syrian toy salesman in Domiz camp.



Photo 11 - A marchand and his family pose in front of his shop – called a "sari sari" in one of the alleys of Kawergost camp. This sort of small shop serves as an illusion of normality amongst the hardships of daily life.



Photo 12 - A barber shaves a customer in one of the many such shops in Kawergost camp.



Photo 13 - Three teenagers kill time playing with their mobile phones in a tent in Kawergost camp. Without a residence permit, no-one can leave the camp. Boredom is one of the biggest afflictions affecting the young in the camp.



Photo 14 - Ali and his seriously handicapped son, in their tent in Kawergost camp. Precarious living conditions make survival particularly hard for children suffering from serious illness.



Photo 15 - Two young Syrian refugees pose for the camera in their suits, in Kawergost camp. Separated during the respective flight of their families one month apart, today they are celebrating being reunited in the camp.



Photo 16 - Tempers flare between two Syrian migrants waiting for a temporary permit to leave Dormiz camp. Without the precious permit, no-one can leave the camp nor work outside it, at least in theory. However, considering how the camp is spread over a large area, fences have a fairly notional value.



Photo 17 - Old prison cells in Akra transformed into makeshift shelters for newly arrived refugees in Kurdistan. Faced with the huge wave of refugees at the end of August 2013, the Kurdish authorities had to find rapid solutions to accommodate almost 45 000 migrants in the space of a few days.



Photo 18 - A young Syrian girl wandering about a cell in the old prison in Akra, transformed into a temporary refugee camp with sheets acting as walls.



Photo 19 - Two Syrian children play in the area reserved for the latrines in Domiz camp. The children, many left to fend for themselves, play wherever they can.



Photo 20 - Night-time at two shops in an alley in Kawergost refugee camp. Within limits, all that is needed to recreate the atmosphere of a village has been installed.



Photo 21 - A father holds his daughter at arm's length so that she can connect an aerial to the family's television. The TV is the only link for many families with their home country, to where they hope to return one day.