

## Over the hills and far beyond, 2018.

„No friends but mountains“ says an old Kurdish proverb, indicating the long history of oppression of the Kurds, who share a unique language and whose mountainous territory spans in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria.

Among Kurdish–Turkish, Iraqi-Kurdish, and Kurdish–Syrian conflict, Kurdish–Iranian conflict is a long-running dispute between the Kurdish opposition and the governments of Iran since 1918.

The proclamation issued by the Iranian government which declared Kurdistan as a non-safe economic zone caused a lack of financial investment and unemployment in the region. As a result, for people living in Kurdistan, there is no other way than smuggling to earn a living.

In the last years, the Zagros Mountains have witnessed the increasing number of couriers shot and arrested by Iranian border guards. Despite all these risks thousands of young and old villagers risk their lives for approximately \$20 for each journey. By tracking 14 hours between borders, couriers carry goods such as electronics, clothing, cigarettes and banned items in Iran such as alcohol and satellite dishes.

The photo series deals with the geopolitical landscape of the border between Iran and Iraq and follows the smugglers on their tracking route from Takht-e-Kuh mountains towards the black market in the city.