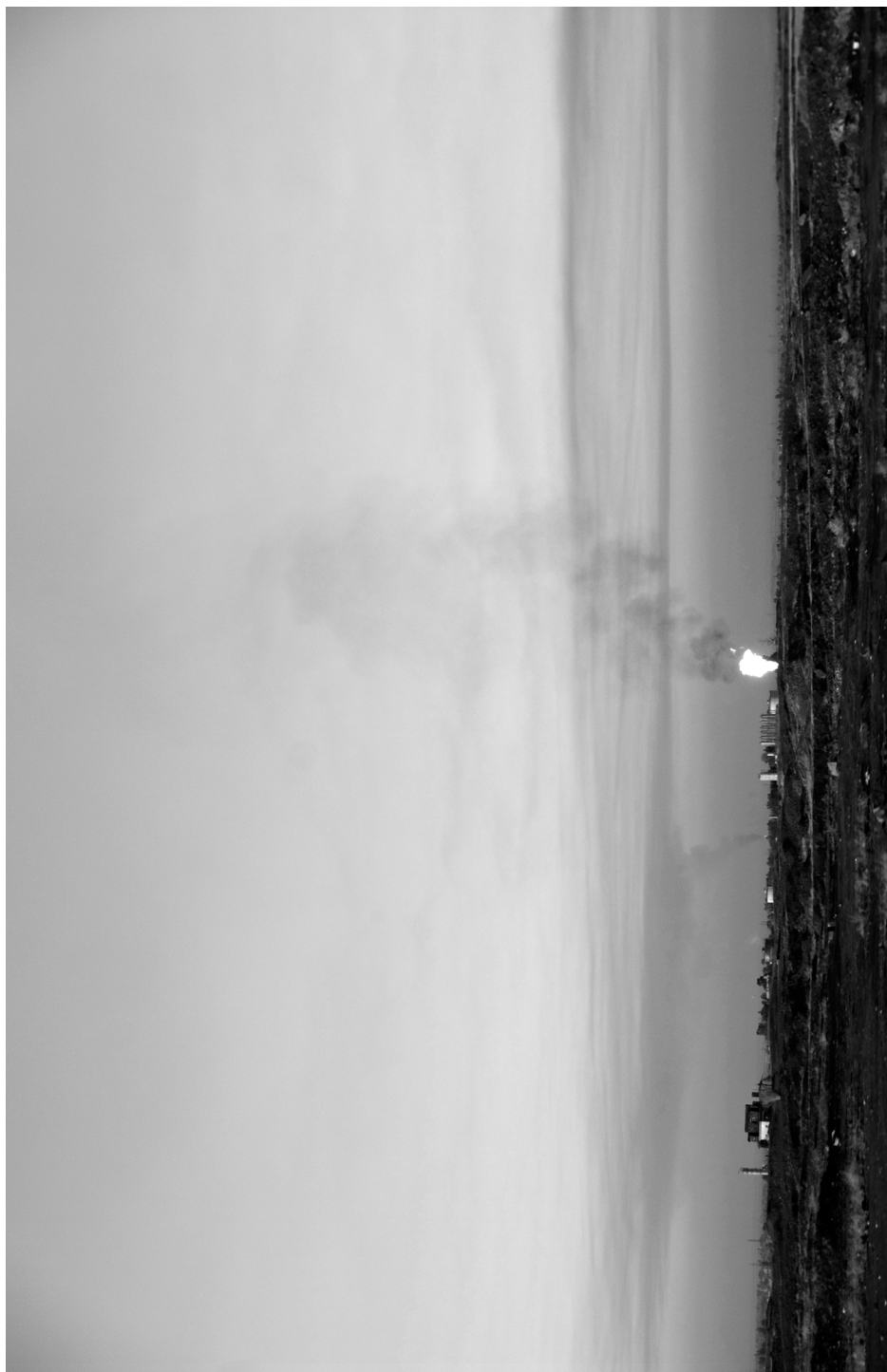


Photo Essay: A Glimpse of Kirkuk

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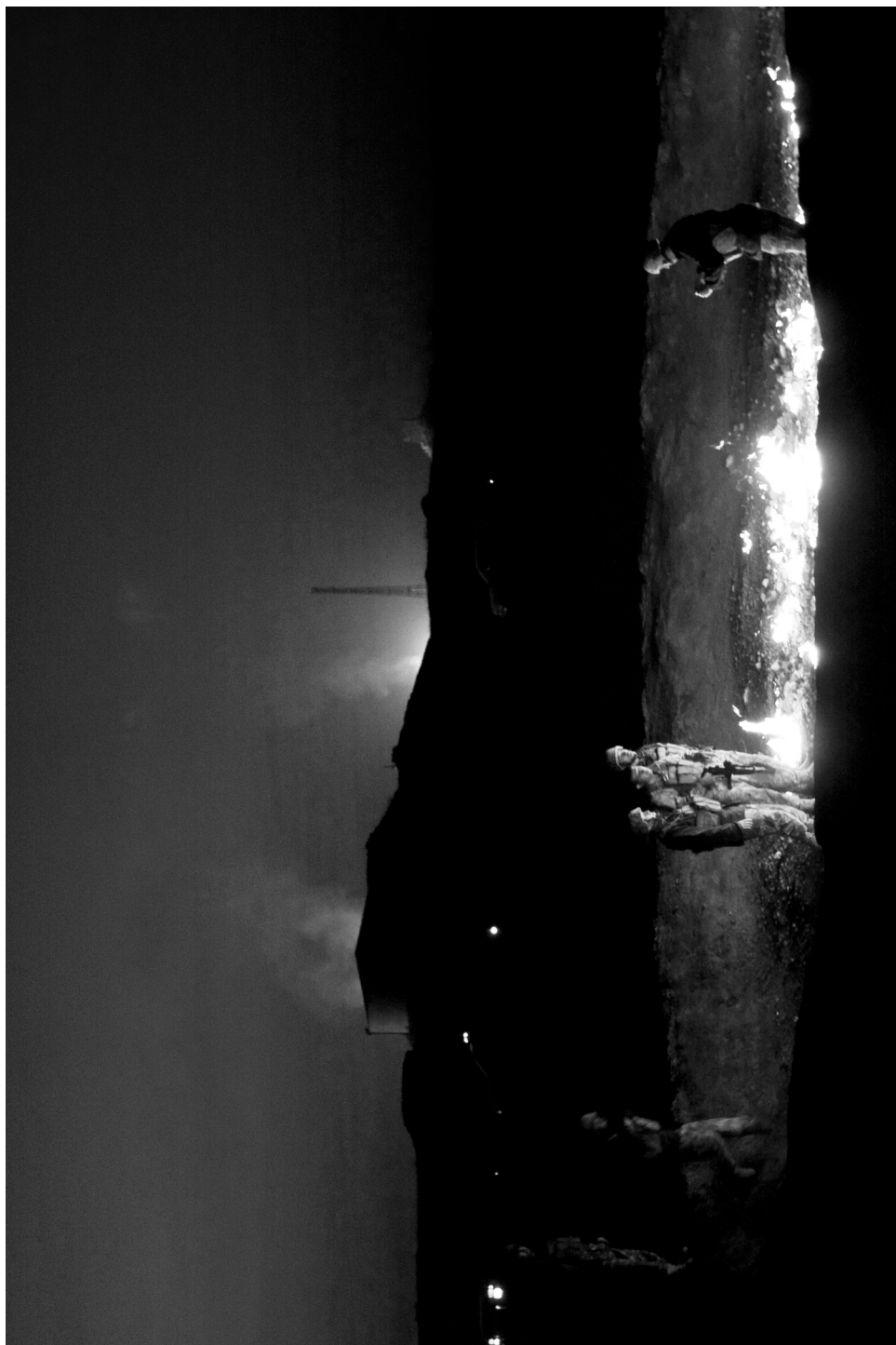
The view approaching Kirkuk. One of the most contentious issues for the KRG is the governance of oil-rich Kirkuk, a province currently not administered by the KRG. There is an argument that Kirkuk is both historically and culturally Kurdish.



Sunset through a hole in a decaying building in Kirkuk.



Young women walk home from school in Kirkuk.



Soldiers photograph one another next to the eternal flame in Kirkuk. The flame is a slow natural gas seep. The Kirkuk region has valuable natural gas and petroleum reserves, but due to a lack of investment, residents have power for only a few hours a day. Security is also a much larger concern in Kirkuk than Iraqi Kurdistan because of foreign intervention into the politics and ethnic tensions over the governance of Kirkuk.



A farmhouse outside of Kirkuk that was used as a prison to house Kurds during Saddam Hussein's regime.



The basement of a farmhouse outside of Kirkuk where Kurds were imprisoned by Saddam Hussein's regime.



The Ba'ath regime altered the ethnic composition of the Kirkuk governorate by bringing Arabs from southern Iraq to Kirkuk and evicting Kurds and Turkmens from their homes. Many villages such as this one, seen here at night, were flattened to wipe out the Kurdish presence in the region.