



THE PASSAGE OF TIME

For 30 years Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado has captured Africa in its darkest moments. He looks back to see what has changed...

It's not the most uplifting of back catalogues, but it's certainly one of the most poignant, provoking and important. Since Sebastião Salgado first set foot on African soil for his debut reportage in Niger in the 1970s, his camera has been a solemn witness to the continent's most catastrophic events, both natural and political: the wars of independence in Angola, Mozambique and the Spanish Sahara; drought in Ethiopia, Sudan and Chad; genocide in Rwanda.

In this new book, Salgado himself has selected an extraordinary collection of images from all his African journeys. Some are filled with pain and suffering, some are sanguine, others capture moments of joy or serenity. I defy anyone not to be drawn into the images and consider the events and implications behind them.

Renowned Mozambican novelist Mia Couto was invited to write the text, an initially daunting task: "Unable to find room for words to go with these

images, I felt I had to abandon my task". Fortunately, Couto persevered – his poetic openings to the chapters are a fitting accompaniment: "The sense of many continents rolled into one is evident, by a stroke of genius, in the image of a man sitting at one corner of a refugee camp working at a sewing machine (see above). He is making clothes in a macrocosm of naked people who barely have

bodies to speak of, conferring order on a chaos which seems eternal."

Salgado also captures the beauty of Africa and its inhabitants. Stunning images of mountain gorillas and the Dinka tribe in Sudan sit alongside landscape shots of Namibia's dunes and the great migration. In his trademark black-and-white format, even these oft-

photographed subjects possess a unique elegance that is quintessentially Salgado.

Certainly, he is one of the finest photojournalists of our time.



AFRICA Sebastião Salgado

(Taschen, €39.99)