

A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters
CHAPTER SUMMARIES FOR PRESS TO CONSIDER

CHAPTER I The Living Dead

In India, Simon photographed a living bloodline in which several members are officially listed as dead.

Excerpt:

“While visiting the local land registry office, Shivdutt Yadav discovered that official records listed him and his brothers as dead. His land was no longer registered in his name. Land registry records documented the transfer of Yadav’s property to his father’s other living heirs, allowing them to inherit his share of the family’s ancestral farmland. Records officials are frequently bribed to have living people declared dead in order to redirect the hereditary transfer of land to new owners. ”

CHAPTER II Jewish Settlement

Simon photographed the descendants of Arthur Ruppin, who acquired land for Jewish settlement in Palestine, at the start of the 20th century.

“Arthur Ruppin was sent by the Zionist Organization to Palestine in 1907 to investigate agricultural and industrial development possibilities for Jewish settlement. In 1908 he moved with his wife, Selma Lewek, to Jaffa, where he established the Zionist Organization’s Palestine Office, tasked with acquiring land for Jewish settlements. As the office’s director, Ruppin worked toward the systematic settlement of land through the spread of self-governing Jewish communities.”

CHAPTER III Polygamy

Simon photographed all nine wives, thirty-two children, and sixty-three grandchildren of Joseph Nyamwanda Jura Ondijo, an herbal healer in Kenya

Excerpt:

“Joseph Nyamwanda Jura Ondijo treats patients suffering from a wide range of conditions, including evil spirits, infertility, and mental illness, as well as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. He is most commonly paid for his services in cash, cows, or goats, but sometimes his female patients are offered to him in marriage, by their families, in exchange for treatment. Two of his wives came to Ondijo suffering from infertility; both were cured and had his children. Three wives were brought to Ondijo suffering from evil spirits. Another had an asthmatic condition and severe chest pains. Ondijo claims he selected two wives for love, paying their families a total of sixteen cows. One of his wives deserted him, and another passed away during treatment for evil spirits.”

CHAPTER VI Test Rabbits

In Australia, Simon photographed over 100 rabbits that had been injected with a lethal disease generated by the government to control rabbit populations.

Excerpts:

“Twenty-four European rabbits were introduced to Australia in 1859 for hunting purposes on an estate in Victoria. Within one hundred years the rabbit population exploded to half a billion. European rabbits have no natural predators in Australia. They compete with native wildlife, degrade land, and damage native plants and vegetation.”

“Haigh’s chocolate Easter Bilby replaced Haigh’s Easter Bunny in 1993. Haigh’s stopped making chocolate bunnies and joined forces with the Foundation for Rabbit-Free Australia in an effort to counter the annual celebration of rabbits.”

CHAPTER VII Srebrenica Massacre

Simon travelled to Bosnia to document the impact of genocide on one family. Six of the twenty-one members of one bloodline were murdered during the Srebrenica Massacre.

Excerpt:

“In five days in July 1995, Bosnian Serb soldiers systematically executed approximately 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica. Muslim men and boys from the camp and surrounding areas were rounded up, beaten, and killed. They were buried in mass graves, some still alive.

The Srebrenica massacre is the largest mass murder in Europe since the Second World War.”

CHAPTER IX First woman to hijack an aircraft

In Jordan, Simon photographed Leila Khaled, the first woman to hijack an aircraft, and her children. Simon also photographed a Syrian prisoner released in a hostage exchange resulting from Khaled’s actions.

“Leila Khaled, a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), hijacked her first plane on August 29, 1969. After several plastic surgeries to alter her appearance, Khaled was involved in a coordinated series of hijackings in 1970 known as the Dawson’s Field hijackings.”

CHAPTER XI The Third Reich, Germany

Simon illustrates the complicated relationship with one’s family history through documentation of the descendants of Hans Frank, Hitler’s personal legal advisor and governor-general of occupied Poland

“Under Frank’s rule as governor-general of occupied Poland and Heinrich Himmler’s command of the SS, the Generalgouvernement conscripted Polish nationals into forced labor in Germany; closed Poland’s schools and colleges; arrested Polish academics and intellectuals; increased food contributions to Germany while the Polish population was starved; implemented forcible resettlement projects, including the development of Jewish quarters; required Jews and other minorities to wear identifying symbols; and initiated a program to exterminate Jews.”

CHAPTER XV The Office of Foreign Propoganda

Simon solicited China's State Council Information Office (SCIO) to select a multi-generational bloodline that would "represent China". The SCIO selected the family of Su Qijian from Beijing, for its large size. The office declined to provide further reasoning for its choice.

"Previously known as the Office of Foreign Propaganda, the SCIO researches, develops, and manages China's external publicity activities. It directs government departments, including those that oversee customs, finance, security, sport, and trade. Additionally, the SCIO instructs Chinese media on all potentially controversial issues, including Tibet, Xinjiang, ethnic minorities, human rights, religion, democracy movements, and terrorism. Its supervisory role includes monitoring foreign journalists in China, foreign research about China, and the Internet."

CHAPTER XVII Orphans

Simon underscores the absence of a bloodline through 120 portraits of children and their surroundings at one orphanage in Ukraine.

Excerpt:

"Children at this Ukrainian orphanage are between the ages of six and sixteen. Current orphanage records show that only one child was adopted in a twelve-month period. All children must leave the orphanage at age sixteen. It is commonly reported that when children leave Ukrainian orphanages they can be targeted for human trafficking, prostitution, and child pornography. Many are forced into crime for their survival, and high rates of suicide are recorded."

"The orphanage has an insufficient supply of beds and warm clothing. Children bathe infrequently, as hot water is not available until the gas is turned on in mid-October. The director listed the orphanage's most urgent needs as: an industrial-size washing machine and dryer, four vacuum cleaners, two computers, a video projector, a copy machine, winter shoes, and a dentist's drill."