

Final Work Report on the photographic book "Bluetide"

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*A casa que foi já não é; caiu e agora dorme.**The house that was is no longer; it fell into the sea and now it is sleeping.**Bluetide / Maréazul*

Bluetide tells, in photographs and text, about the power of the sea and its impact on the people in the little north-Portuguese fishing village Apúlia. The village is situated at the Western coast of Europe, which is hit by rough winter storms every year, when sand masses are carried away with the waves. Several houses have already fallen into the sea and in a couple of years the whole village will be buried in the Atlantic Ocean. Nature shows its superior power to the people in Apúlia and is therefore always in their consciousness. These people have a close relationship to nature - a relation that is alien to most of the people in Europe. The book was made in the period of 1995-97 and published in the Night of Arts 1997 at the INTO gallery. The intention of this report is to tell about the thoughts and ideas that form the background for the making of the photographic book. Also the report will illustrate the technical and practical process.

Information

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Portuguese and English text by Cia Rinne

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Introduction

The world is not always that perfect; pollution, violence and destruction have become part of the everyday on Earth, but as Louis Armstrong says: "It is not the world that is so bad; it is what we are doing to it." One could say that it would be wise to show what we do wrong on Earth and therewith try to change our attitude. I have not felt that this would be my calling though. I do rather feel that it is my task to show how fantastic the world is. The earth with all its life is an unique place that can amaze you incessantly. Its complexity is incalculable and endless.

Man has always had a special relation to nature. On the one hand he is part of nature, but on the other hand he stands separated from it and lives in a constant struggle to rule and control it. For man, technology is natural and the human being would not be able to live without the techniques that have become characteristic for human existence. Man and technology are dependent on each other, and as with nature, man, here, is in a conflict: where is the borderline, how much should man take control over nature by his technological means? Man has today succeeded in technologizing life to such an extent that fewer and fewer people need to deal closely with nature in their everyday life. The progress of technology goes hand in hand with the alienation of man from nature.

In my opinion, technology is necessary and, as to this necessity, also good. Still, I would like to set a limit for the goodness of man's use of technology in the phase where man forgets that he himself is a part of nature and that technology has the function of making human life on earth possible. If man forgets this, he will think of the pollution and destruction of the natural environment as of a merely technical problem that has to be solved by technological means. I think a solution for this problem would be a stressing of the "natural" side of man rather than that of his "technical" side, that is, man should comprehend himself s part of nature rather than of technology. (The distinction between

the "natural" and the "technical" side of man is rough and does not claim any scientific correctness. I merely use it to illustrate my idea.) I believe that, by forgetting one's "natural" side, one will lose oneself - one's nature. Maybe the new form of mankind will be a kind of fusion of man with technology? I am interested in people whose "natural" side outweighs their "technical" side. It is these people and their environment that I have photographed and shown in the books "Nordic Signs" and "Bluetide". I consider this "natural" side of man very important and human, but I do not think that mankind is developing into that direction; it rather seems to be so that the human is dominated by the enthusiasm for technological progress. The following text which is over 2000 years old shows that man has perfectly been aware of the risks that mankind is confronted with when handling technology.

Zhuangzi had been wandering in the state of Tsu and had returned to the state of Tsin. When he passed the area north of the Han-river he saw an old man working in his garden. He had dug ditches for the watering of his fields. He himself climbed down into the well and brought up a bucket filled with water in his arms, which he then poured out. He made a big effort and still achieved little. Zhi Gong spoke: There is a system with which you can water a hundred ditches a day. With little effort you achieve a lot. Don't you want to use it? The gardener rose up, looked at him and spoke: And what would that be? Zhuangzi said: You take a wooden stick that is light in front and heavy behind. In this way you can pull up water so that it starts sparkling. You call it a tap well. At this point, anger turned up in the old man's face and he, laughingly, said: I have heard my teacher say: If you use a machine, you handle your business machine-like; who handles his business machine-like gets a machine heart. But if you have a machine heart in the breast, you lose your pure intuition. Who loses his pure intuition becomes uncertain in the movements of his spirit. Uncertainty in the movements of one's spirit does not go well with the true SENSE. It is not so that I would not know such things: I feel embarrassed to use them.

(Ds Chuang Dsi, Das wahre Buch vom südlichen Blütenland, Buch XII, Kap. 11: Der Ziehbrunnen; Übertragung von Richard Wilhelm)

The Journey to OPorto. In the summer of 1995, Cia Rinne and I decided to travel to Porto without any other intentions than to discover the area.

The Mountains. Soon, the mountains were calling for us and we took a train up through the heat. The further east we got, the hotter it became. Here, in temperatures of 48°C, it was clear to us what we should do: return to the sea.

The Sea. We wanted to see the sea before nightfall. We had just arrived in the village. The Atlantic Ocean was magic. It was almost completely dark, and from far away we heard tractors. In the gleam, we could see fishermen working with their boats; we watched this until it disappeared in darkness. The following day, we decided to find Apúlia and, from the neighbouring village Fão, we started walking along the coast. It was entirely foggy, and we passed a castle. We thought that we were right next to Apúlia, but after eight hours of walking, we asked people for the way. They laughed, and we understood that we had been walking too far. On an old truck we returned to the village; the sand was flying around our ears. Behind the seashore, there were acres on which bended people were standing. We walked through the village, bought some food, and sat down at the sea. Suddenly, there was life, lots of boats, and people working. The tractors were driving the boats into the water and there was a ramp on which the boats were pulled up and down. We walked between the houses above the ramp that were built directly into the sand. Some were standing only a few meters away from where the dunes were cut down into the sea.

The Idea. Winter – we decide to return. Here, in the sand, we knew that this was a place we would have to come back to, to spend more time on going into details and on getting to know the people. We returned, and could not tell any other reason than... that it felt like that.

Winter. The first morning we wake up in our new room it is storming, and the windows are steaming over. There is no central heating; the temperature is the same inside as outside. It is incredible to see the sea in the morning. It is always different. The coast has changed completely. One day the beach is filled with oranges, the other day, there are dolls and clothes. There is always a lot of driftwood. Some mornings, the beach is covered with sargaço, a kind of seaweed that is used on the acres. There is a long tradition for collecting sargaço - it makes the vegetables taste good and sweet. Apúlia is one of the few places in Portugal where this tradition is kept alive. Every morning, we walk the same way

to the sea and always meet the man who collects driftwood; he waves at us and says "bonjour". Our first friend is called António; he is a big and strong fisher, nicknamed "O preto" - the Black - because his skin turns extremely dark in summer. In wintertime, the fishermen are mainly waiting since the waves are too high to go out fishing. António's mother Maria Fernanda, his grandmother Arcelina, the oldest in the village, and his son Daniele become my favourite persons, they are on many of the photographs in the book. We meet António every day when we walk around, and usually, he walks a bit with us. He tells Cia about the people who live in the village, how they fish, and shows us different things. One day, he invites us to eat with his family; it is pouring with rain, so we run the whole way to his house. It is a very special experience. António is sitting in the middle of the room of stonewalls; the bed behind him is filled with Daniele's teddies in all different sizes. On the opposite wall, there are birds in small wooden cages that António had built himself when he was young. He has had birds his whole life and can whistle exactly like they do. The house is built from very simple materials, and the roof is quite thin, so we can hear the rain dropping while we are there. Over the table, a little lamp is hanging, which, apart from the tiny window, is the only source of light. We are served *bagaço*, a homemade brandy with pears in the bottle. In the kitchen, António's wife Maria is pouring warm water over Daniele, who is sitting in a washing bowl on the floor.

We become friends with them, and they often invite us to have some fish or *bagaço*. The area we are interested in stretches about 400 metres along the coast; at the road there are restaurants that sell the fish. The first restaurant opened in 1964, when Fernando's father was smoking sardines in the sand. Now, there are five restaurants. Fernando's "Bar dos Mudos" soon turns into our rain-café, where we escape the daily rain for a *galão*, the milk coffee. One day, when it is pouring with rain again, we seek shelter in a wooden shed. While waiting there, a dog enters. At first a little afraid, it suddenly jumps up into our laps, where it is shivering like a child. We immediately fall in love with the dog that finally falls asleep. After this incident, the dog starts following us everywhere we go, gets hit by Fernando's sister with a stick (when we think what a cruelty to animals this is) and sleeps outside our house. We realize that we have made a terrible mistake; we can't take care of the dog. A new problem arises since the dog is walking into the picture all the time. We decide to chase it away, but our cruel actions do not lead to any solution and the last day, when we are leaving Apúlia with Senhor Francisco, the dog is running after the car, and we feel miserable.

Da Silva, who invites us home to have some smoked sausage and wine, tells us that the following year will be the last year he can live in his house because the authorities will no longer let the people live in the sand. They think that it destroys the vegetation on the dunes and so encourages the erosion. The people of Cedo-Vém are of a different opinion; they think that only the inhabitants can take care of the dunes since they live there and daily try to protect them with sand sacks, pillars, and through planting a special plant that will keep the sand together.

Litoral do Paisagem Protegida

After having heard of the situation of the village, we contact the Esposende Environmental Committee that is responsible for the area and agree to meet with Senhor José Gonçalves to ask him some questions about the village. He is so friendly as to sit down for several hours to tell us about the history of Apúlia, the problem of the erosion, and the future.

About hundred years ago, most of the people in the area were farmers who also fished once in a while. They lived further land-inwards next to their acres, and stored *sargaço* and fishing tools in wooden huts with thatched roofs at the sea. In 1940, the first farmers moved to the seaside and started to live on fishing. In 1948, more families moved there and built their traditional round houses. In 1953, the authorities started demanding a licence that allowed the fishers to live there. The farmers continued coming to the coast to collect *sargaço*. About ten years ago, the erosion began and a law was enacted that said you ought not live closer to the sea than 50 meters. The sand disappears quickly. Apúlia is situated just at the waterline, and every winter some houses fall into the sea. The authorities now want the people to move away from Cedo-Vém (the area of Apúlia that is inhabited by fishers), because they think that these destroy the vegetation of the dunes. Moreover, the water pipes and the sanitary systems do not live up to the standards set by the authorities. Today, 22 families are living in Cedo-Vém, and a couple of years ago they were told that 1997 would be the last year they would be allowed to live there. They are working on the construction of a housing area further land-inwards for the inhabitants of Cedo-Vém.

The problem of the erosion is one of both nature and mankind; many dams having been built in Spain keep back sand which actually should be carried off into the Atlantic Ocean, and use it as construction material. Portugal is a little country, and its coastal problems are of minor importance to Spain. 2.000.000 m³ of sand are removed every year during the stormy period from October to April. Normally, it should be replaced by new sand from the sea and the rivers of the Iberian Peninsula during summer, but for the last couple of years, there has been a lack of about 750.000 m³ of sand. Another major reason for this are the extraordinarily rough winter storms that have occurred since 1988. There are theories about the melting poles having an impact on this. During full moon, the erosion reaches its peak; then the tide rises up to four metres.

We are still waiting for the sea to calm down, so that the fishermen can go out fishing again. Every morning, I run out on the balcony to stand on my toes in order to see the sea. The last day of the year we go to the castle of which one half has broken off the year before. There is still a bar although the sea is right in front of the door. Foam clusters are flying to the windows, and there is a special atmosphere. Everybody is drinking champagne and eating twelve raisins the last twelve seconds of the year to wish something. Three days before we leave in the end of January, the sea starts calming down and the sky clears up. Everybody is longing for some fresh fish and finally, on the last day, the boats set out on sea again.

Easter

The "bonjour"- man is greeting again, and everybody is surprised and happy to see us again. The light and the atmosphere are different - bright sunlight and perfect fishing weather. We show the people pictures of the winter and continue our work, but after a week we feel that we are repeating ourselves and think that we now have all the material we need. After the Easter feast we say good-bye to Arcelina who, when she takes our hands, says, "Do not forget the people" and turns away with a tear in her eye. In Apúlia, close to the Atlantic Ocean, the movements of the waves and the power of the storm mesmerize me. They remind me of all the superhuman forces that I become part of for a while, and I notice that I am in the centre of the process that has created and continuously creates all life on earth.

From the Scrapbook

December 16th-23rd 1995 Lisbon, the smell of roasted chestnuts; we go to Belmonte in the mountains after the 22nd. 24th-29th When we arrive in Porto it is pouring with rain. At the pension, we meet a man who has lived on all of the five continents. It is Christmas eve, and we have two big bowls of tea. The next morning, we take the bus to Apúlia. As we arrive it is still raining and our mood is shifting since we do not know whether there is any place to stay. After a hot chocolate in a café, we continue to walk down the road where we see a sign that announces rooms to let. The man who opens the door says that the room is usually only rented in summertime, but since we wish to stay for a month, he tells us to return after two hours. It is stormy and there is a lot of driftwood at the beach. It feels strange to walk along the beach again, and to see the houses where the fishermen live. This is more interesting than summer. The sky is unbelievable; clouds, sun and rain, everything on a single day. The sea is a huge magic field, totally alive. Even when the wind is not that strong, the waves are enormous, rushing over the beach. The waves at the horizon do not look like a straight line, but rather like something living that is moving. Today we are inside, because it is raining too much. The windows are always steaming over with humidity. January 2nd 1996. The fishermen are now waiting for the storm to calm down, so that they can go out fishing. January 3rd. Yesterday, everyone was preparing for going to the sea again, the sun appeared after a long period of rain and storm; I even thought they might go, but now it has become cloudy, and the wind is blowing harder again. The people were standing together at the seaside, discussing whether they should go out or not. Everybody thinks it will be good weather at least one day this week. January 4th. We feel tired and not especially interested in anything. We are sitting in our rain-café, I hope we will get back into our good rhythm; it is also the wind, yesterday I thought they might go out fishing.

Question. Why is Apúlia so exiting for you? I have a feeling and an interest that I follow. I trust in intuition, and believe that luck will lead me into the right direction. My intellectual explanations about why and what the meaning is are mere traces that grow out of the brain. January 6th. The year of the Lord, 1996. On this solemn Holy day of the goddess Freja, the birds were singing even louder than the times before, because the forces wanted it this way! Imagine! That

the sun was reflected in the foaming waves. January 7th. Yesterday we were invited to have some port wine with José and Christina just after sunset. We tasted port wine of 1927 and stayed until 2 o'clock in the night. The roaring and foam spraying of the sea at night brings up incredible feelings. January 14th. Da Silva invited us to his house! It was the place we wanted to see most of all, and then he waved. Fernando's mother invited us to have octopus for tomorrow. January 16th. Who built the stonewall? Are the houses illegally built? Why is it damaging that people live there? January 20th. Cedovém is going to disappear, the sea is coming closer to the houses, faster than before. People say it is because the poles are melting. The round house fell into the sea yesterday. January 25th. The sea has been very rough the last 4-5 days, and has removed incredible masses of sand. The ramp is tied with ropes so that it won't be washed away.

City and Countryside

I love to go for a long walk. After a couple of hours the brain is cleared and the eye is sharpened, and I feel that I can experience glints of something great. This can be in whatever - the sky, the sea, the earth or faces. I believe in intuition and that there is a meaning in life. I want to be in position where these experiences are possible. Therefore, I prefer to photograph in the countryside, far away from the accumulation of buildings and people. In the city, I do not experience these glints of something great, the horizon is very often not visible, the seasons disappear. Nature is, if it causes problems, even a disturbing element that hinders man from living his "technical" human life. I think that this causes an alienation of man from nature that makes it less difficult for man to accept the destruction of nature. The people of Apúlia live a life in close contact to nature and have an understanding for it. I do not think that this kind of life is old fashioned or underdeveloped; on the contrary, I believe we have a lot to learn from these people.

Fiction and Reality

What I love in photography is the possibility to depict reality in a way that is credible. With the modern digital technology, one could hold that this part of the power of photography is no longer existent since it does no longer depend on reality. I am interested in this traditional form of photography, in which the pictures are not manipulated. The picture that you see is what once was in front of the photographer, and the photographer has been standing where the picture was taken; for me, the process is important. With photography, one can create one's own world; I love this: to collect material from the world, to create one's own, as true as everything else, and still mere fiction. This is what photography is about - ways that lead away from ourselves - to others' realities, or more precisely, to life. We, that is the least interesting. What is the reality outside us? Does a tree for instance have its own way of being, a value of its own that transcends the use by man and the tree's function in the whole? Is it possible to see this? Is there a value without that it is set by man?

Photographic Background

My interest for photography started in 1986 when my brother had learned to print pictures in school and we both tried to make it work. The pictures were grey and blurred, but still, I thought that this was exceptional, and from this day on I knew that I wanted to be a photographer. I was 14 years old and still at school. The first pictures I took do not differ much from what I am doing nowadays. I am born and have grown up in the countryside, and nature has always been my great interest. My grandmother lived in a house that was over 200 years old; she always told stories about her childhood in Sweden. Her garden was an adventure in itself, and she always had a lot that I could help her with - chopping wood, picking apples, flowers, strawberries, digging up potatoes, cutting trees, and painting. She got water from a well and a telephone very late. At my grandmother's house everything was understandable. The fire gave warmth, the house gave a shelter and the sky gave sun and rain.

After graduating from school in 1988, I became an apprentice at the Royal Court's photographer Rigmor Mydtskov. Here, we made portraits of famous persons in Denmark, and I learned that photography consists of a lot of different handicrafts. I continued to take my own pictures and started travelling in the North. When I had finished the education after 4 1/2 years, I did not know anything else than that I had to continue working with my own photography. A turning point was Ritva Kovalainen's exhibition in Copenhagen in February 1993. Here, for the first time, I saw Finnish photography. Apart from Ritva Kovalainen's own pictures, I saw books and portfolios by Jyrki Parantainen, Timo Kelaranta, Jorma Puranen, Ismo Hölttö, Pentti Samallahti, Kristoffer Albrecht and Pekka Turunen. All this Finnish photography was overwhelming to me. In Denmark, I only knew few photographers to whom I felt related,

and suddenly I realized there was a whole crowd of photographers that I felt connected to. I was immediately convinced that I had to move to Finland to get to know all these people. A few weeks later, I travelled to Finland, went to see Ritva Kovalainen and applied for the University of Art and Design to make the book *Nordic Signs*. As this did not work out, I travelled around for another year to photograph. The following year, I was accepted with the help of Jyrki Parantainen, who would be my tutor during the process of making the book. It took 1 1/2 years, and the book was completed in the autumn of 1995. Now, I had become even more interested in the process of making photographic books, and thought that this was something I had to continue to explore.

Photographic Book Art

The book is a perfect media for photography. Through reproducing the one fine print, you can make many at one time in an easy way, and if you make it well it can become even better than the silver print. Many people get the chance to see one's work, and it is no longer any fine art, but an article that is available to everyone. The most interesting in the photographic book are not the technical possibilities of printing though, but rather the artistic form of expression. By putting the pictures in a rhythm and a context with text and graphic elements, they are transformed into something new. It is now the entirety, and no longer the single print that matters; the book can express something that a single print is not capable of doing. In the book, photography is merely an element (the most important though). During the planning of *Nordic Signs* and *Bluetide* I realized that I often had to leave some of my favourite pictures out of the context in order to make the book work as a whole. In a photographic book, it is not sufficient that the pictures are good; they have to create a context and serve the context of the book, as the text and the graphics have to do, too. The content has to be made visible in an optimal way through the form, which should uncover all the blurring layers that prevent from seeing the meaning and the essential. If the form is optimal, one does not notice it.

Bluetide, June 1995 - October 1997

June 1995	<i>Nordic Signs</i> is printed
June–July 1995	first journey to Portugal; idea of <i>Bluetide</i>
August–Nov 1995	<i>Nordic Signs</i> is completed
August 1995–May 1996	Cia studies Portuguese
Since August 1995	António and Cia are in contact by letters
Dec–Jan 1996	second journey to Portugal
Feb–March 1996	working on the photo- and text- installation <i>Cedobém</i>
March–April 1996	<i>Cedobém</i> exhibited in Øksnehallen, Copenhagen
March–May 1996	third journey to Portugal; continued through Spain to Morocco
Summer 1996	sketch printing of the material from Apúlia
August–Sept 1996	applications for support of the project
Sept 1995–May 96	Cia works on the text
Sept–Nov 1996	picture layout
Dec 1996–Jan 97	printing of the original photographs
April–June 1997	reproduction and mounting
May 1997	text layout together with Cia
June 26th & July 1st	<i>Bluetide</i> is printed, 24h of work
July 1997	cover planning, reproduction and mounting
August 97	the cover is printed
August–Sept 97	the book is bound; the boxes are made
August 28th	<i>Bluetide</i> is presented at INTO gallery
Sept 6th	all the books are ready
October 1st	<i>Bluetide</i> is presented in Billedhuset in Copenhagen
October 1997	<i>Bluetide</i> is presented at gallery UP in Stockholm
October 1997	António sends his letter

In the following I will shortly describe the technical process of the photographing and bookmaking.

Photographic Equipment

Pentax 6 x 7 with lenses of 55mm and 135mm focal length

the school's Widelux

film: T-MAX 400

developer Kodak D-76

Many of the pictures were hand-held and I did not use any filters

Sketch Prints

In order to get an overview of the photographic material, I make contact prints of all the films. After having gone through them and marked the relevant pictures, I print these 250 pictures roughly in the size of 13 x 18 cm, using fibrous paper and toner, since it is uninspiring to me to look at the prints without having toned them.

The Opus Series

Bluetide is part of the Opus-series (opus, lat. work) that was initiated by Pentti Sammallahti in 1979 with the Ireland portfolio "Cathleen Ni Houlihan" (Opus 1). He has since then been working with the book media and published ten further books. The first photographer after Pentti Sammallahti himself was Jorma Puranen, who published his Lapland book "Maarf Leu'dd" in 1986 (Opus 7). Friends and pupils of Pentti Sammallahti now started to continue the series of Opus-books. It is characteristic for the Opus-books that the author himself is responsible for each phase of the book production, i.e. from photography, text and layout to the reproduction, mounting, printing and binding.

Cedobém Exhibition

In the autumn of 95, I am invited to represent Copenhagen at ArtGenda in Øksnehallen in Copenhagen. About 250 young artists from the countries around the Baltic Sea are going to participate in this group exhibition in March/April 1996. I decide to make an exhibition with my pictures and Cia Rinne's texts about Apúlia. It is called Cedobém.

The Picture Layout

The layout is one of the most challenging works in bookmaking and decisive for the outcome of the book. We have decided with Cia to make the picture layout first and to leave the text layout for later, because otherwise there would be too many loose elements.

During the process I go through all the pictures, and this is where the book is created. When the 250 pictures are spread over the floor I start to sort out those that tell a similar story as another, which is better. After a while there are only 100 prints left. Then I make a primitive book from folded sheets of paper, in which I try to bring an order into the pictures. Which would be a good beginning? Which a good ending? This is a very exiting part; quickly there is an sequence of pictures in the book. I try to combine the pictures, and sort the photographs in groups like sea-pictures, portraits, ect. First I make the big mistake - as my most important critic Jyrki Parantainen remarked - to repeat the layout idea of *Nordic Signs*; it is very easy to fall back into a certain way of thinking when once having got used to it. The layout in "Nordic Signs" does not follow any grid-system; the pictures can be wherever on the page, with or without margin, often a detail together with a wide view, since the size is very important. So, working on "Bluetide", I meet Jyrki when I am stuck in the layout and begin to reorganize the pictures without feeling whether I get any further or not. In these situations the best thing to do is to talk to somebody not involved in the project. I think that in this phase the most important in this phase is to be as open as possible. It is of use to know that, working that much with some material, you re most likely to become blind for it, so you constantly have to refresh your view and clear your brains; Tapio Vapaasalo is an inspiring person to talk to.

During the layout planning for "Nordic Signs" I got more confused through showing it to other people, while with "Bluetide" I feel reassured in what I am doing when talking to various people. Throughout the work, I discuss with Cia Rinne what kind of atmosphere we want to build up in the book. The strategy in the book develops in a way that differs much from that in "Nordic Signs": grouped portraits, the same atmosphere from one page to the following, a

picture of the sea may be followed by another, i.e. contrary to "Nordic Signs" where a surprising layout was essential. "Bluetide" should be more simple and systematic. The pictures, if big, fill the whole page; if small, they are 9 cm high and stretch out to the edges; the panorama pictures stretch over both pages to the edges. Groupings of small pictures have no white edges, and are combined, covering the page horizontally. This is the system that slowly develops, and more and more clearly will show to be the form the book shall have. The book has to be simple without repeating the traditional layout that leaves the photographs in the middle of the page, surrounded by a white frame.

I am searching for something that is not modelled on this tradition. I believe that, working for a long time with the layout, the form the pictures need will develop quite naturally. An idea that I have been carrying with me for a long while is to have handwritten text on the pictures; the impression of the book should be sketch-like and imperfect, with the feeling of a scrapbook. We make many sketches, and after a while this idea turns out to be wrong and unnecessary, but it brings up a lot of ideas that will hold, like the grouping of small pictures.

When I know which pictures to use I scan them on the computer and print them in a small size in order to copy them in various sizes afterwards. Then I start cutting and gluing. I could as well do this at the screen but it feels better to have the material in one's hands at the beginning of the process. To remember old ideas, I regularly draw a layout plan, also to see where the double arks fold. I plan the spreads in the size of the raster and on a page that opens, i.e. that not is a folding spread. I start to work on the layout in August 1996 and only by May 1997, all the details are in place.

The Making of the Text

After having gone through all the notes and listened to the sound recordings, Cia starts to work on the text. She makes many sketches before she finds the right style. Initially, the text is more of documentary character, containing facts, but this is not fitting the story we want to tell. The text now develops to be more imaginative; Cia considers it more important to reflect the atmosphere of the people and the village and to tell short sequences about their everyday life. I consider the text an essential element in the book; the photographs and the text together create a whole, and without the text the book would not come up with its full meaning. The idea is that the text shall tell stories that the pictures do not show. At first we think that the text has to follow the picture layout which is already made at this point, but it soon becomes clear to Cia that the text has to be a work of its own, and therefore cannot follow the picture layout. The text can thus relate to something which is not on the same spread, and also reads independently. Sentences from António's letters are in the text as well as what people have been telling us, so the people have to a great extent been contributing to telling the story. Filling the picture layout with the ready text is one of the most joyful parts in the process; it fits surprisingly well.

The Text Layout

Cia Rinne and I complete the text layout on seven days of concentration. The idea for the layout we get from the picture of the stakes at the sea (fig.4) Here, the sea and the land meet and flow together, and like this the text shall be. We arrange everything by PageMaker since the whole picture layout was on the computer already. Only now, the form of the book is being completed and we have to rearrange some of the pictures in order to find the right form.

The Original Prints

The original copies have to be printed as well as possible in size 1:1. I do not tone the prints because this is not of importance for the reproduction. It is good if the pictures look exactly like you want them to be. Most of the copies turned out best through split contrast printing (you use only filter 0 & 5). Three of the prints are impossible to make since they are underexposed, so I use 2-graphic-film-printing (a soft Gevarex for the highlights and a hard Ultra lit for the shadows).

Retouching

Due to humidity, rain and other damages the retouching is very challenging. It is preferable to retouch the prints before the reproduction since it is easier to see the mistakes and you are likely to oversee details on the graphic films.

Digital or Manual Reproduction

I choose to make the reproduction on an ordinary repro camera, to rasterizing the films with an unequalled irregular contact screen (see "SACRI - Photographs as Lithographs" by Pentti Sarmallahti) and to develop the films in bowls. The reason for why I prefer this manual process is that the pictures get a different expression through an unequalled irregular contact screen, and the process itself is one of physical work, i.e. the work is in one's hands. The scanned pictures become very sharp and have a technical expression. The manual reproduction work is done quickly if you know the system, and cheaper, too.

The Reproduction

Pentti Sarmallahti has for many years been working on the techniques of reproducing photographic images and has developed an unequalled irregular screen that has proved to reproduce the photographs in a beautiful way. It can be compared to Agfa's crystal screen, a digital screen. The reproduction process and the screen are described perfectly in SACRI. The reproduction is mainly a photographic work, where you have to consider questions like the making the highlights lighter or darker, if the shadow should be more separated than in the original photograph. The separation is a continuation of the printing process; here the possibilities are distributed to four films. I make the separations very free, and the full gray scale only on film no. 3, because it is difficult to do by looking at the mere print. No.1 and 2 I make by looking at the print and evaluating whether there should be more or less contrast, more or less light and then exposing according to this. Most often I cannot make the print totally perfect, as f.ex. the sea picture: here the problem is that the sea is not white enough, but there is no more contrast left to give. In the repro camera it is very easy to make the first two films a little steeper and thereby receive the tones you wish. For the grainy panorama photographs, I use a rougher sand screen with 90 L per cm. If the grain of the photograph is rougher than the screen's, it is advisable to shift to a rougher screen since the picture otherwise will turn out blurred. The screen is of the size 35 x 45, while some of the pictures are 23,5 x 59, so I have to reproduce them in two steps, which is difficult, because they have to look like one and the exposure time changes with the temperature of the lamps.

The Order of the Arks

In order to know where the pages should be on the arks you have to know the paper of the printing machine and the printing size. Erweko's 5 colour-printing machine has a maximum paper size of 74 x 53 cm and a maximum printing size of 72 x 51 cm. The Mohawk Vellum paper I use is of the size 58,4 x 88,9 cm. Four pages fit on either side of the ark, i.e. totally eight. This is a very difficult part since there are four pages with pictures on the ark that need a very precise reproduction because the same black has to produce the same tones on different pictures. If a picture requires more black than another you have a problem. This is why it is important to plan the order of the arks carefully, so that the pictures that need the same tones are placed on the same ark (see fig. 33). The book consists of 50 pages, which are 6 1/2 arks. You count 25% of spill paper when you print. We want to print 800 books; each book consists of seven arks. Totally we order 8250 arks of paper.

With Kristoffer Albrecht I make the order with the division sketched on a folio. There are two sides, the prima and the sekunda.

Stripping

I start to strip film no. 3, continue with no. 1, 2 and then 4. No.4 is difficult to strip on top of no. 3, that is why I turn it on top of no. 3 once it is roughly stripped; like this, it is easier to see whether it is in register or not (I use a loupe and tracing paper). First I strip all the clear films without the register marks, then I cut all the red masks. After this I make two register mark-arks, one prima and one sekunda, that first are exposed onto the plate. The texts are stripped in the tones they shall have: the English text on no. 3, the Portuguese on no. 2, and the headlines on no. 1. These text strippings need separate red masks. The stripping process requires precision and lasts for more than seven weeks.

The Paper

I adore the matt prints that you receive on uncoated paper. It becomes more like an original graphic print and feels better than glossy paper. On uncoated paper the sharpness and tonal range will not be as high as it is possible on coated paper, this is not the most important though; more important is the textual feeling you get when the ink is sucked

into the paper instead of staying like a layer on the surface. From the beginning I have a very clear idea what the result should be like: the paper should be more warm and yellowish than in "Nordic Signs", as matt as possible, and the ink should be warm in the highlights and cold blue in the shadows. I want a paper that is bulky and of a rough texture. After having informed myself about what kind of paper is available I choose Mohawk's Vellum, 176g. This paper has been used a lot and we like its feeling. The problem with many of the papers that we also consider interesting is that they are not available in the right thickness. A paper of 176g is thick enough that the pictures do not show through the paper and thin enough that it can easily be bound. I ordered the paper by fax (no. 516/733-2976) from P.L. Thomas Paper Co. Inc. in New York; the delivery time is about 3-4 weeks from the day of payment. Remember to check that the grain direction is the one you need!

Printing

Choosing Erweko is easy since it was here "Nordic Signs" was printed. Pentti Sammallahti, Kristoffer Albrecht and Jyrki Parantainen have during the last years developed a good cooperation with Erweko, so that you can follow the printing process and ask for more and less ink on the different plates; it is a process very similar to printing the photographs. With the same plates you can print totally different pictures. As a rule, the printer is always cautious with putting more ink on, because there is a risk for the ink to be spread over the other cylinders over the whole machine, which would take a long time to clean up. My experience is that the machine can take great quantities of ink, so you can certainly ask for more black. The initial order of the colours in the printing machine is 1, 2, 3 and then 4, but since the light colours get dirty, we change it so that the printing order is 4, 2, 3 and 1, which suits all the colours. The ink runs on small tracks of 10 cm which means that you can control the quantity of ink on the different areas of the sheets. It is very exciting and frightening to print since it proceeds very fast; it takes 24 hours to print, the preparations lasted for about two years. There are a lot of decisions that have to be taken quickly. Kristoffer Albrecht and Cia Rinne are there all the time and are an inestimable help. You constantly have to convince yourself of that this is the way it has to look like. Kristoffer has a long experience in offset printing, which calms me down.

The most difficult work is to find the colours - no. 1 is warm and yellowish, no. 2 grey-blue, no. 3 dark blue and no. 4 black; this is chosen from the Pantone-colour map. It takes about five hours of correction from this starting point to find the right mixture. The day before printing, Erweko calls to say that the registration marks are 3 cm outside the printing area: I have made a mistake when preparing the order, setting the edge of the printed area 9 cm instead of 6 cm, which resulted in a lack of 3 cm on the printed page. We have to make new punch holes on the upper edges of all the sheets. The new punch holes do not fit when turning prima to sekunda, which means that the plates are exposed with a slight slanting in relation to each other. The mistake is only discovered when we are about to print the sekunda and notice that the registration marks of the prima and sekunda do not fit together. The printing machine is able to correct this mistake, not completely though, so the sheets have to be printed with a slanting of 2-3 mm over a page. This mistake becomes really problematic during the cutting of the sheets and not least during the folding.

As the idea is to make as matt prints as possible we use matt colour, which has not been used for photographs on uncoated paper before, so I am quite nervous the result might become grey and boring. The tones turn out nicely though, and fit the atmosphere. The print is more even and matt than with glossy colour (matt black ink is more cold than glossy black ink). Moreover, matt colour is also more sensitive to scratches and greasy fingers, and does more easily come off with colour than glossy colour. When the sheets have been printed they have to dry for about a month.

Meknès and Træer

On the edge of the ark there is some space for the portfolios "Meknès" and "Træer", and a couple of postcards. "Meknès" (Opus 32) contains six portraits from a city in Morocco; "Træer" (Opus 34) is a portfolio with nine photographs of trees, taken in a period of several years in various countries.

The Bluetide Cover

Blue is the atmosphere in the book, as it seems to me, and one of twilight. Tide is moving in various heights, and this also is reflected in the cover. The cover is the result of a cooperation with Cia.

Silkscreen Printing

The silkscreen film has to be mirror turned, i.e. the right way when you look at the emulsion side, contrary to the offset films, which are turned the right way. From Pentti Sammallahti's screen, I make the reproduction so that they can be enlarged eight times in order to get a resolution that is rough enough. Silkscreen printing is a positive process, i.e. when printed on black paper the films have to be negative to finally reach the positive result.

Cutting the Paper Sheets

When the sheets have been drying for about month they can be cut. First, the portfolios are cut off the edge, then the two spreads are cut apart. This happens exactly in the middle of the sheet; otherwise everything will be slanting when the sheets are put together in the right order. It is a surprise to me that the sheets shrink variously and that the printing machine grabs the relatively thick paper variously, too, that means that a bunch of 800 sheets cannot be cut precisely. We cut as carefully as possible; the worst distortions I have to correct by hand after that the sheets have been folded.

Folding

Marko Hellman folds the sheets. He is a specialist, and that is needed for the job since the sheets have a slanting that allows only one side of the sheet to become completely straight. We have to put the sheets together to see where it shows less. We stand all night, checking and adjusting the machine while it runs. We mark every bunch so that we can see which of them do belong together. This is important because we have been changing the colour and the printing ink during the printing process, so one two sheets that form a picture may have different tones and therefore not fit together.

Assembling the Sheets

Now, all the spreads can be put together in the right order. The assembled book is pushed with the cutting edge onto a plain surface so that you can see whether the crossings are fitting or not. This is how the bookbinder does before sewing the sheets together. If there is any slanting as in *Bluetide*, it is possible to correct the wrongs by cutting of a bit of the sheet. This is very time-consuming, and soon one realizes that a little slanting is also part of bookmaking. 855 books in loose sheets are now delivered to the bookbinder Jokinen.

Binding the Book

We are very happy that Jokinen agrees to bind our book. The 852 books will be bound by hand, which means a lot of work. Jokinen usually only binds a few copies of the same kind; this is an exception for him, and we agree to help as much as possible.

There are a lot of books that do not open sufficiently; *Bluetide* should open well so that the pictures printed over the spread would not suffer from the binding. Planning the layout, you have to know how you want to bind the book. When I made "Nordic Signs", we tested many different ways to bind the book at Jokinen's to find out which would let it open best. "Bluetide" is bound the same way as "Nordic Signs". It is a question of finding the right thickness, glue, and the right press. If the book opens completely, it is possible to make pictures that fill the whole spread. We also consider to use a hardcover, but after having a book bound for test, we think that this heavy, ceremonious and awkwardly hard-to-handle cover does not fit the book. The book is bound as a paperback, in the same way as hardcover books are bound though, which makes the book more resistant. Cia and I are helping the bookbinder daily during two weeks. The day before the presentation at INTO gallery we succeed to make 40 books ready. On September 6th, all the books are bound. To make postage of the books easier, we order 600 mailing boxes for the books.

Epilogue

The book was presented during the Night of Arts (fig); the spreads of the book were shown chronologically, installed on wooden planks on the walls. In connection with this, there was a sound collage with the sounds of sea, thunder, sea gulls and a band from Apúlia, playing Portuguese music; the sound was recorded by Cia Rinne and edited by Sebastian Eskildsen. The same exhibition was shown in Copenhagen and Stockholm. The reviews have been positive as well as negative. Many people ask whether it always was that cloudy and want to know why it is so dark. Some people have said that they get a sense of a death experience. Others hold that it is an humanistic homage to life. Of all the critique we

received the most special is António's. Once the book was ready we sent a couple of books to Apúlia. Cia and António have had regular correspondence since the first time we were in Portugal, and he has been our most important contact person in every way. We asked him to give the books to the people in Cedo-Vém. I here want to finish this report with António's letter from October 13th, 1997.

Olá Cia and joakim.

I am writing to you to give you my congratulations. Congratulations. I liked the book a lot, the photographs, your power of will and the story. I also was very pleased to know that the story of our profession and of our life had an enormous success together with the book, the words and your space. I have some sad news for you and for joakim, that book that should be given to uncle Lino (da Silva) I could not give him because he passed away, and I do not know whether you want me to give it to his wife, tell me later. Concerning the handing-over, I gave one to uncle Clemente, who is the representative of the fishers of Cedo-Vém, one to Rui, I have one an that of uncle Lino I also have. When I gave the book to Clemente, he thanked smilingly and asked: "Who sent me this!" and I told him it was you and he said "thank you". And Rui asked the same, too, I had until then been there to give it to António, but he did not consider this a very good idea and decided to give it to Rui, that doesn't matter, does it? I want to thank you very much for the book you gave me, it was a lot of sympathy from your side. Thank you.

*Now I say good-bye to you with a big hug and a kiss,
greetings from your friend António*

(translation from Portuguese by Cia)