

THE PRINT AND THE WITNESS

by Emilio Vergani

In a duel, two adversaries of equal level confront each other, since one beats the other. However, in every duel, both opponents have the right to turn on witnesses who are neutral, observe and make respect the rules of the duel.

But, what happens if the duel is carried out, up to the last knock, on the witnesses' body? What happens if witnesses play this role because their body absolutely represents the geometry of the dying ritual?

Paying attention carefully and with courage to this fact, we become aware of witnesses being the real tragic figures of life. Moreover, witnesses are not only those who see and then report on what has happened, but also represent the challenge of the duel, that is, the real cause on what both adversaries-severe or pure- decide.

But, who are these opponents? The two faces of life: affirmation and negation, i.e. *conatus existendi* and death. Both challenge each other with loyalty, always deciding on what will happen to us, mortals, because we are and represent that duel!

"Leaf buds will blow up again,
grass will sprout shoots,
however your back is completely destroyed,
my dear, beautiful and dreadful century.

And with an absurd smile,
you look back at the past, weak and severe
as the beast once agile
looks at the past prints if its legs"

(by Osip Mandelstam, 1923)

After the last and dreadful century, nearly finished, the only way witnesses can forget the sadness of the lost future is remaining loyal to their homeland as well as strong and merciful, ready to face up life without fear and always prepared for searching home once again.

The future is in the speakers' hands.