

Gabriele Gentile

THE CONSCIENCE OF ZERO

The project "The conscience of zero" is freely inspired by the last paragraph of the internationally renowned novel "Zeno's conscience" by Italo Svevo, published in 1923 and forever -like all classics- current: I have thus juxtaposed photography and writing, already inseparable etymologically.

The conscience of zero continues my previous photographic research in the furrow of the absence of the human figure symbolically represented by traces, in this case increasingly invisible until transforming such absence into lack, experiencing this in the genre of landscape. This project conceptually depicts precisely the ancient indo-european etymology of the word landscape, from the root *pak*, with the meaning of burying and sowing at the same time; in fact, it develops in an increasingly empty and light compositional space, uniting earth and sky in their virginity, exalting the natural element as a new starting point.

Only in this way, paraphrasing the novel's ending in imagery, the earth will be able to return to health, depriving itself of its diseased part in order to start again from scratch and regain that peace -terminal derived from the same etymological root of the word landscape- which is still a utopia in the world dominated by ordnance.

“Perhaps, through an unheard-of catastrophe produced by devices we will return to health. When poison gases no longer suffice, an ordinary man, in the secrecy of a room in this world, will invent an incomparable explosive, compared to which the explosives currently in use will be considered harmless toys. And another man, also ordinary, but a bit sicker than others, will steal this explosive and will climb up at the center of the earth, to set it on the spot where it can have the maximum effect. There will be an enormous explosion that no one will hear, and the earth, once again a nebula, will wander through the heavens, freed of parasites and sickness.”

