
Title: Elvira Dones Novels. The Language of the Literature, The New Literary Phenomenon

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Abstract

The literature as a living organism, did not have a linear development. It has always been connected to social and political conditions with which it is faced. In the Albanian literature after '90-s is appeared a new phenomenon, more controversial, which is related to the language of literature. Albanian writer migrated to west, choose to write in the language of the country where they live. In their works, are embodied two mentalities, two cultures, and most importantly, two different ways of doing literature, rules of different expression skills. One of them is Elvira Dones that with her particular style bring to the reader hands, special stories of different characters and themes, from Klea, an autobiographical narrative, to Andrea with the theme of neuroses; from Hana, from north of Albania to the story of three women besieged in their house in Prishtina. The author write directly in Italian language perhaps in it she found all the expressiveness required that can worthily accompany her stories, in which she express herself no longer influences the profile of the characters. She writes a literature very close to critical realism. This tendency is also present in more amazing psychological and touching descriptions of her narrative.

Keywords: Elvira Dones; sworn virgin; autobiographical narrative; psychological; war.

Objectives: To analyze the Albanian literature written in Italian, especially the novels of Elvira Dones.

Methods: The methodology used is that of analysis and comparison of the style and language used by the writer.

Results: The results of the analysis speak of a writer who knows how to capture the inner world of a woman. In four novels, she brings characters with different characters, described in a language that, even though it is not her mother tongue, manages to bring out great emotions.

1. Introduction

Albanian literature in its journey has known different spirits and currents that have enriched it but also that at a certain moment have distracted it. Literature is not an abstract phenomenon, it is the result of many social, political, economic, cultural and literary phenomena that pervade a nation. After the 90s, Albania goes through perhaps one of the most difficult trials in its history. A country with a controversial development and then closed for about 50 years, appears before the world thirsty for knowledge, information, variety of opinions, quickly moving away from the characteristic uniformity that was often the basis of an average, even often mediocre literary production.

2. Objectives

First, everything systematized in the "file" of banned books is published, accompanied by a sales boom, for works that the Albanian reader is initially curious about due to the motivation as such, to then move to that typology of the reader who is really looking for quality. In writing, but also unknown topics and phenomena in the Albanian reality.

In addition to this phenomenon, there is also a tendency to translate any type of foreign book that falls into the hands of the translator, who is often not the professional who covered this sector until yesterday. The result: a variety of authors brought into Albanian, without a selection of typologies, themes and, worst of all, translated without professionalism and often with a pronounced lack of seriousness. Entire important passages of the book are missing, translations by unauthorized persons, etc. There comes a moment when whoever has the economic opportunity can publish what they want. The freedom of publication and the economic situation in which the Albanian intellectual falls, brings an extreme poverty of literary criticism.

Another step is the publication of Albanian dissident literature. The works of Albanian authors banned before the 90s are published. Despite the wealth they brought with their contribution, there is also a superabuse of the right, how often the right changes direction, and the author thus fades in the eyes of the reader.

Literature goes through a rush phase in writing, a significant amount of writing and writers, who seek to write their stories at lightning speed, without a critical reading and processing of their work that often leads to writings that are totally absent in quality, seriousness and nobility.

The fourth element is the development of a literature that tends to deal with "new", "forbidden" topics in Albanian literature. Topics such as: love, intimate relationships, phenomena unknown to Albanian society such as drugs, borderline characters are treated. The result: in my opinion, one of the weakest pages of a piece of literature is written.

Many Albanian writers emigrate all over the world. In the face of it, they often feel powerless, sometimes they marvel at the infinity of freedoms that the West offers, but on the other hand, the obligations they have to live with every day are manifold. Survival drives many of them to fall to the level of the simple worker and fail in their original project. But there are also some eyes that want to face the literature and the facts show that they have succeeded. Many writers cultivate a literature that cannot be called immigration. I can't call it that, as this designation would greatly limit the place they have in this field. Initially, their writings have autobiographical notes, often written as a kind of psychological analysis of the situation in which they find themselves, but from book to book they reach the qualitative jump that has made them often and prize winners among the most important.

It is interesting that these writers choose to write their stories in the language of the country where they live. So the languages of Albanian literature become diverse. The author often takes the place of translator while also being the main narrator of the story. Regarding the reasons why the writers choose a language other than Albanian in their narration, we can say that this is an important argument that deserves a serious analysis.

3. Methods

One of the main motives is the confrontation with a literature, with rules of the world of letters but also of publications, different from what they encountered in the Albania they left behind. Isolation from Albanian literature and the world often makes them find different points of reference, which

of course do not speak Albanian. The reader for whom they write is not only the Albanian reader, even these authors often feel the variety of typologies of the reader they are dealing with.

From these authors that I have chosen for analysis today is the Albanian writer Elvira Dones. Left Albania shortly before the great opening of the 90s, lives and works between Switzerland and America. As a writer, she comes to us in the Italian language with books such as: *Little perfect war*, *Sworn virgin*, *The seas everywhere*, *White offended day*, *Burnt sun*, *Without baggage*, publications of the most famous publishing houses in Italy such as Einaudi, Feltrinelli, etc.

Without baggage, analysis

The book can be summarized in some main points, which at first sight seem simple but which hide an interesting world within them, which is also stratified in the reality that surrounds the reader and which she expresses it in the characters of this book.

The temporal factor: the period of the communist dictatorship in Albania; the spatial one, intertwined with the dictatorship itself the symbol of the collective prison and the reality of the totalitarian regime; and the psychological one: made through the point of view, the impressions and of course the action - written in the third person, which during the course of the novel, try to be in the first person, personalized in the character of Klea Borova.

The very realistic process, with some slight lyrical infractions, in the form of memories (for the sea, her love and finally for her child - which give the novel freshness), tries to make the reader enter in a world that is directly connected with Klea Borova. This link wants to be so faithful between fact and fiction that sometimes the reader is immersed in the course of a reality.

The literary procedure in *Without baggage* is really and artistically the opposite of the "good life" written and programmed in the literary artistic pamphlets of Albania of the 50 years of the dictatorship.

The plot

The novel takes us back to Albania in the 1980s. The author tells the life of Klea Borova, a famous TV presenter, with a degree in foreign languages, on a business trip to Denmark, she meets the Italian-Swiss journalist, Yves Montalban, her love of her life. The adventure that began on June 8 is contrasted by the political situation in Albania. None of the Albanian representatives abroad was not to have contact with foreigners. So Klea absolutely can't talk about Yves with anyone. After returning to Albania, the protagonist's life goes from heaven to hell. As a divorced woman and mother of a child, she manages with difficulty to survive in a closed, superficial society and with the terror of the morrowind. She tries to spend a lot of time with her son, the only source of happiness, while in flashbacks (about four) she recounts her meeting with Yves, while to communicate with him, she writes a diary, a kind of internal monologue that helps her to overcome the absurd situation in which she lives. In it is described a country as opposed to everything that was represented out of Albania. The long queues in empty shops, the black market in meat, cheese and eggs, the loss of a friend who committed suicide, fear from the state, but also the subversive reading of Orwell, etc.

In the midst of all this darkness, a ray of sunshine suddenly shines the life of Klea, the invitation of Mifed of Milan. She writes a strange letter to Yves to inform him of her arrival. The meeting full of strong feelings leads the two lovers to make a big mistake. Yves takes Klea with him to Switzerland. This brings serious consequences in Klea's life. The confrontation with the police, her

life in the refugee camps, and then the most terrible of encounters, that of albanian "Sigurimi" agents, who threaten her that never can see her son again. For Klea these are difficult years in the absence of her son Toni, full of missed phone calls, unanswered official letters, states of depression, tranquilizers.

With the collapse of the communist regime, Klea's concern for her son becomes an obsession. Yves comes to Albania and interviews the students of the University of Tirana, and of course he meets Toni who also embraces him from his mother's side. Meanwhile, in desperation at not being able to enter her country, Klea translates for the first Albanian refugees, when she loses the creature she was carrying. In the midst of all her lost hopes, a phone call changes her life. Her ex-husband Giorgio telephones her from Athens to inform her that he has managed to cross the Albanian border, and so she can finally embrace her beloved son again.

All these memories and emotions, one day Klea decides to transform them into written pages, where the third person takes the face of the first and Klea Borova gives way to Elvira Dones.

This is the truth of Klea Borova a girl from Tirana, born and raised in Albania, who one day decides to cross "the wall", a happy choice in one point of view and a terrible one on the other side, living in the total absence of information about her son and land where she was once someone. One fine day when all things are settled with Toni's arrival at her house, she begins to write the story of her life, which is not only a good story, but a well written story.

Style

Without luggage, it is an autobiographical novel. The narrator plays an omniscient role. Klea Borova tells about her life, using the third person. Even the dialogues seem created to support the internal monologue of the protagonist. In certain parts of the novel, the story takes the form of the epistle that gives it, the nuances of a diary. Klea writes to Yves, although she doesn't know if she will meet him someday. Often the writer uses letters, diaries to better explain her feelings; she gives the diary to Yves to tell him the truth of her life; she writes a letter to her son, to create that linearity and tranquility in talking about her life choice.

The narrative simplicity, is understood as the adoption of an average and as far as possible uniform narrative language, is in turn attributable to the rhetorical and stylistic principle of legibility. Here the author is the one who, while guiding and mastering the sense, ensures motherhood of all the statements contained in the text, which can be traced back to a conscience and a culture

Sworn Virgin, Done's novel, published in 2007, is based on a detail of life. When she was a student in Tirana, while browsing through a photo album of her friend's family, she saw a girl dressed in a strange way and the explanations she received surprised the writer so much that they came back as the leitmotif of the book, winner of the important prize Grinzane Cavour.

The novel is developed in three main directions: Hana the English student, Hana-Mark, and Hana a woman finally freed from the medieval canons which have lost the best years of her life. These lines are combined with the *mise en abyme*¹ technique, realized through flash back. The author is the main narrator. It is the one that shows in detail the feelings of a woman who, due to the prejudices of a small village in the north of Albania, in order to take care of her sick uncle, decides to become a sworn virgin according to the "Kanun".

¹ In literary criticism "*mise en abyme*" indicates a special typology of "story within history", in which the narrated story can be used to summarize some aspects of the story it encapsulates.

Hana, a student, does her best to save her uncle, while attending university, but after the sudden loss of his wife, she is forced to leave everything, including her dreams and feelings for the french student, to devote herself entirely to a life of a strange woman who must behave like a man according to the “Kanun”²

The novel in retrospective tells the story of Hana, the girl from the north who at one point in her life is faced with a very difficult choice. The student of foreign languages in Tirana, while weaving her dreams and feelings, finds out about her father's illness (who is actually the uncle who raised her). In order to cure Gjergji's incurable disease, she must go down to Shkodër every month to receive the appropriate medication, which is extremely dangerous for a woman, especially during the winter. Her father wants to "fix" her before he dies, but she likes Ben and can't relate to anyone else. This is the reason why she decides to become a sworn virgin. The story is told through flash backs that connect the past with the present. The difficult months of his father's agony, feelings for Ben; the sympathy of the doctor who asks for her hand; drudgery in the cooperative, extreme poverty, are the key elements of Dones narrative.

At the beginning of the novel, a human being is introduced at the crossroads between Hannah and Mark. Mark represents the superficial side that has enabled him to survive among the mountains, while Hana embodies her being, she is a woman who has loved and stayed true to her feelings. Now Hana is a neglected creature, who only by moving away from the mountains begins to take shape.

Traveling and staying in the United States, makes her reflect on her new metamorphosis. Her relatives help her in this choice, especially the meeting with Patric O'Connor. Working in the bookstore allows her to talk and know better the journalist, and most importantly, to reveal her feelings. Misunderstandings, discussions, curiosities lead the protagonist to the final decision, her return to the real Hana, full of dreams and feelings like any other woman. The closing, with the detail of donating the diary to be understood by Patrik, is a little strained, but in function of the happy ending that the author will achieve.

Style

The book has a fluid and measured structure³ described by a stylistic warmth capable of playing with metaphors such as: Shtjefën smiles, a little bear, a little butterfly⁴; Hafia has tree eyes waiting for the ax blow⁵; up there, time and place lived together; Lila's letter is curled up in her gut⁶; as well as with a paratactical syntax, full of lively dialogues and at the same time extremely realistic. A simple language in accordance with the character's state of mind, which manages to realistically - in accordance with her character - lyrical or poetic parts.

The novel, at some parts, seems to fall into the traps of an excess of psychologism, but this tendency is kept in balance by the compositional skill, which manages to give us the story, piece by piece, responding to the narrative taste of the author.

² The Canon of Lek Dukagjini, book 12, chapter 24, § 1228. According to the Canon of Lek Dukagjini: “- If a girl, due to the lack of husbands in the house, must assume the role and duties of a man. She is a woman but she dresses like a man, she can participate in the most important assemblies of the country and make decisions. He cannot marry and have children”.

³ Pierre Lepori's interview with Elvira Dones for “ 4ème”, Sei domande a Elvira Dones 4. 01 2008.

⁴ Dones E., *Vergine giurata*, Feltrinelli, (2009, p. 30).

⁵ Idem, p.152.

⁶ Idem, p. 145.

One of the main characteristics of this book is its descriptive character. Dones likes to play the game of contrasts, but if in the novel *The seas everywhere* this game is held by two characters, here the contrast is within the single character Mark/Hana Doda. Although she did everything to have a masculine appearance, the reader always feels she is a woman. Hana's masculinity is superficial, it expresses a condition dictated by the "laws of the mountains", towards a woman who is faced with indisputable choices. What we said above is confirmed by lexical choices like: upon returning to the kulla it had become a piece of rock, her own grave. She had become a man; Mark Doda had been the product of her iron will. You can't tell about your own death⁷.

The psychological state of the protagonist Hana/Mark is not described as a physical but a spiritual torment. She is a woman, she loves as such; often in the book she expresses her strong desire to feel the presence of a man in her life. She makes a terrible choice; has strong feelings for Ben, the french language student. Unable to express sympathy, she signs her "death" in front of her sick father/uncle. This is the motive why she always seeks to gain time, a bad habit that has cost her fourteen years of life. He hesitates to get married, because he loves Ben; drags on for about a year, to finally change the course of her life by going to America. Her favorite sentence there's no hurry it is a signal of the character's laziness, or her strategy. She hides from the obligations of a married woman by choosing to be "a sworn vergin", just as she hides from her feelings. Because of this, at the end of the novel we do not find any sign of protest from Hana, when she decides to accept someone in her life. Nazim Hikmet's verses, which accompany Hana's refrain step by step, explain the reason for her choice:

And we leave as we came

Goodbye brother sea.

Finally she decides to be, what she has always been; a woman who chooses her own life partner, a choice always preferred by Hana, a choice for which she was willing to risk her femininity.

Dones decides to write the book directly in italian, and for this step she expresses herself as follows: "while writing the novel I realized that the language in which I express myself did not hinder me in the rhythm or the profile of the characters⁸. I had been thinking of writing directly in Italian for years. In this novel, I was clear about the atmosphere of the events, the profile of the main character, and I stitched the event with the words in Italian. Fortunately, there are minor differences in the syntax of the two efully grasp the expression, I left it in the Geg dialect, the language of northern Albania".

One of the first writers that tret the theme of this novel has a similar story is Alice Munroe, in the third novel *Albanian virgin of the Open secrets*⁹

The seas everywhere, another book by Elvira Dones, the only novel that does not end with a happy ending. The reader remains gripped by the event until the end, to then be part of Andrea's final act, the departure ad patres. The book was published in 2007 by the Interlinea publishing house.

The novel follows two main lines, that of Andrea's love for Eric Sterling and the terrible depression that has plagued her for years. Chapters alternate with titles bearing the names of the characters, perceptions about their relationship, or the most important dates. The novel begins with a beautiful couple's recovery trip to Ireland. The details of the woman's unmotivated tears, the unposted

⁷ Dones E., *Vergine giurata*, Feltrinelli, (2009, p. 157).

⁸ Pierre Lepori's interview with Elvira Dones for "4ème", *Sei domande a Elvira Dones* 4. 01 2008.

⁹ Munroe, Alice (1994), *Open Secrets*, is a book of short stories by Alice Munro published by McClelland and Stewart.

postcards in her bag, prepare the ground to talk about the illness of Andrea, of Argentinian origin, the daughter of a desaparecidos, who live in Switzerland for years. She is a writer, while Erik is a doctor. The narrative, broken into several flashback, helps to present this story. The fate of Andrea's father has negatively affected the protagonist's mental health. A ray of sunshine shines in her life the day she meets Eric. The happiness of the ideal couple alternates with periods of her illness. When Andrea feels good, she manages to fill Eric's days with endless joy.

The meeting with Natasha, the Albanian woman, helps her a lot. The confession of her sufferings in the totalitarian regime, the arrest of her husband, the sacrifices she makes not to lose him, the refusal of divorce; face these two women. Natasha has experienced the dictatorship firsthand, while Andrea has felt its consequences, as a grown-up girl without parents. But if Natasha comes out of this story victorious and strong, Andrea chooses the path of regression. Extremely fragile as she is, she feels guilty for the suffering she causes her husband with her illness. This is also the reason why she chooses Ireland to close the last chapter of her life and stop Eric's suffering. The sea and sky of Ireland is for Andrea the meeting point with her parents, whom she decides to join in Ballyconneely.

Style

In this novel I find many points in common with the film *The seventh seal* of Ingmar Bergman. On his return journey from the Crusades, Antonius Block is met at the seashore by Death, who has chosen the right moment to take him. The knight decides to challenge him to a game of chess. The match between Block and Death takes place at different intervals. Andrea experiences the same situation after arriving in Ireland, she is also playing her game, which she wins up to a certain point. But if Block sacrifices himself for the family of acrobats, Andrea makes her sacrifice for Eric. She loves him to the point that she will not involve him in her sufferings. For this reason and here, death does not win on equal terms, as Andrea creates the opportunity to modify the placement of the stones on the field. The card game, not posted for days, presents the last efforts of the protagonist to win her match of life; while their posting marks the surrendering to the fate. One point that remains underdeveloped in this story is Eric's place. He fights hard to keep his wife alive, but at the end when his mother, in a phone call, informs him of the arrival of a letter, from someone who has the same last name as Andrea's (an important element that can give her hope, is the fact that her father is alive; an essential fact for the woman's psychological balance), he did not do nothing. In the novel, this fact is only mentioned but not developed, thus not leading it in favor of an act of liberation and happiness for this couple. Speech signals, modal particles and exclamatory forms allow, highlight the measured character of the written discourse of the novel *The seas everywhere*.

The third novel analyzed is *Perfect little war*, published in 2011. It is a war novel, as Roberto Saviano says in the preface of the book, which tells the eighty days of the war in Kosovo. In the book, the narrator follows three main directions:

The first one focuses on the three women hidden at home in Prishtina, who, through phone calls with their relatives around the world, seek to understand what is happening outside the walls of the house, the situation in Kosovo. Done with the technique of being able to understand the essence from the outside, creates a special picture of the war today with bombs falling from the sky, phone calls and newspapers that recount the war step by step. In another perspective is shown, the war lived in the first person by characters such as the brothers Blerime and Fatmir, Bujar, Dardana, Bora, Halit, Halime. These human creatures are deported in the most inhumane way, but live to

their last breath with shocking dignity. Thus their story becomes a living testimony for all generations. Humiliations, rapes, which are in the order of the day, fail to defeat the characters, who face the situation with a spiritual strength that is breathtaking. The only thing they care about in the last minutes of their life is the testimony, one of them has to stay alive to tell the horror. The third point of view is presented by Ajkana, who recounts the war within state institutions. She escapes thanks to her profession as a gynecologist, but the sufferings, although different from others, are great and vital. Ajkana plays russian roulette every day, taking one of the girls to the hospital with her, so that at least the other one stays alive, a sad but necessary choice.

The novel tells the events of the Kosovo War, which started on March 24 and ended on June 12, 1999. On the one hand, the diplomatic war is described with real historical characters such as: Bill Clinton, Madeleine Albright, Tony Blair, Javier Solana, Slobodan Milošević, etc., and on the other hand, the story of three women trapped in Prishtina in the house of Nita Gashi, professor of the Department of Albanian Literature at the University of Belgrade, who, like her Bosnian and Slovenian colleagues, had stopped her activity for days academic because of the war in Serbia. In Prishtina among fear and chaos, the women decide to celebrate the birthday of Rea, a literature student. They get the news of the outbreak of war from the phone call from London of Nita's brother.

The novel develops in the form of rays. In the center are the three women who every day, through phone calls, attempt to learn about the development of the conflict and its consequences, while the stories of Arti, Ajkana, Blerime, Fatmir, Arlind, constitute a special journey of each one that is always intertwined with those of the women trapped.

In April, Nita's brothers and their wives, in an attempt to save their lives, were stolen and shot dead by serbian paramilitary troops as soon as they left Pristina. Meanwhile, Nita wants to see her grandchildren, her brother's sons, left by her grandmother. In the dangerous attempt to leave the house, she receives the news of the deportation of her grandchildren together with the Jashari family. The sad homecoming is accompanied by her long silence, as the children's mother is with her and is heartbroken.

From another angle of the story is narrated, the love story between Rea and Arti, the charming journalist of "Koha Ditore". Among them there is a strong feeling that remains so even after his departure to Macedonia in the refugee camp.

Meanwhile, women can no longer call, as the telephone line is cut off for Kosovo citizens. The escape route is the house of their friend Besa, where luckily for them, the phone number is in the name of a serbian citizen. After this small victory, the women go there every day to receive calls from their relatives and friends. On the other hand, the lack of food leads Rea to make long lines to buy bread, risking falling into the hands of the paramilitaries, miraculously saved by a serbian lady. From another angle, the war is narrated by Ajkana, the gynecologist from Gjakova. The arrest of her cardiologist husband by the paramilitaries, and the constant presence of soldiers in the hospital, the mother-in-law's illness, the sedatives she gives the whole family to overcome the shock of the bombings; are evidence of the difficult survival under siege.

The fate of Fatmir, Nita's grandchildren, is described during the terrible ordeal. The atrocities of the paramilitaries are detailed; torture, rape, hunger, cold, deep despair, are a vivid picture of the cruelty of hatred, of ethnic cleansing conceived and directed by Slobodan Milosevic. The life of the children, after the death of their uncles, becomes more and more complicated. Now they have to act

alone, an action that ends tragically for Fatmir, in the attempt to save his sister from the clutches of the paramilitaries. From a large family, only thirteen-year-old Blerime survives, bearing in her body the evidence of the madness and monstrosity of those called "people". The reaction of Arlind, her uncle who lives in Switzerland, when he sees her, is a symbol of human suffering caused by the madness of other "humans". It cannot be conceived how a human being is so capable of doing so much harm to his own kind.

The arrival of NATO tanks also marks the end of the suffering of the Kosovars, caused by a conflict that they did not ask for, not wanted, but unfortunately lived by them.

4. Results

Elements in common with Levi's novel *If This is a Man*.

In Done's novel *The perfect little war* we encounter various elements that match Primo Levi's novel *If This is a Man*. Here are some of them:

Deportees to concentration camps are obliged to hand over money and all personal belongings; the same detail is found in the novel *The perfect little war*, in which the deportees, just as it happens in the first chapter of Levi, are robbed of their money as well as their personal belongings, for example the case of Halim, Bejte and Berat in the sixth chapter¹⁰.

The character of Ajkana Berisha, Arti's sister, who works as a gynecologist in the Gjakova hospital, in the twelfth chapter, escapes from the clutches of the paramilitaries, thanks to the Serbian woman who comes urgently to give birth. This element reminds us of Levi in the chapter *Chemistry exam*: where after the test of the deportee, Dr. Pannwitz, allows him to work in the laboratory. This was one of the main factors of survival in the concentration camp, uprooting it from the so-called *Muselmänner*, those sentenced to death.

In Levi's chapter *The Summer facts*, there are many similarities with Done's chapter *About telephones, bread, and silk scarves*. Here are some parts:

"in August 1944 the bombing of Upper Silesia began,.... The new fact brought the tangle of hatreds and misunderstandings back to its elementary terms, and divided the two fields again: the politicians, together with the green triangles and the SS saw, or thought they saw, in each of our faces, the mockery of the revenge and the sad joy of revenge. They found harmony in this, and their ferocity redoubled"

with the episode in the bakery

So will you give us the bread? - Nita asks. Go to Blair and Clinton, - replies the saleswoman.

The twelfth chapter is very similar to the sixth of Levi. Done's reflections allow the reader to become one with the character by touching him on a human level. For this reason, reading the book is a strong experience for the reader, who experiences through the narrator a part of the hardships of those days. It is also about an experience that makes him reflect. The reader can often be surprised by the fact that in the book he hardly finds a negative moral judgment about the "enemy"; looks in vain for any expression of hatred (except Ajkana's outburst). Perhaps the author wants to maintain a rational approach, playing the role of a witness, thus leaving the reader to form his own opinion about the events. In this way, the reader perceives that the writing about the Kosovar world can show something deeper, the condition and human nature, as a source of knowledge about people and the world, victims of a gigantic, unrepeatable experiment, like that of "ethnic cleansing".

¹⁰ Done, E., *La piccola guerra perfetta*, Einaudi (2011, p. 46).

Elvira Dones also manages to give a linguistic panorama of different nationalities, of those who experience this war, Albanians, Serbs, Germans, English, etc. Regarding this diverse linguistic landscape, we can make a comparison with the third chapter of Levi where he talks about the Babel tower of languages. Here are some examples:

German words:

Es tut mir leid¹¹, ich, Deutschland...mein Vater...er ist...Bauarbeiter, Bitte, Mister Journalist danke, ich kann...erzählen...sie mir telefon, danke, mister journalist, Die Weltwoche tages Anzeiger.

Words in serbian

Kosovo je srpska kolevka¹², Kosovo je Srbija¹³kako si, šiptari ,želim te, smrdljivi šiptar, živela Srbija, dole Nato, dole Amerika, Evi ti Nato! Hocete Nato! Jebo vas Nato, nedostaješ mi, jebem ti majku šiptarsku.

Words in Albanian:

tung¹⁴, fis' axha turshi, raki, jelek të kam xhan, uh moj nana ime, shpirt i motrës, Allah¹⁵, t'kam loçkë¹⁶, burra sot u pa, kthehena nesër prapë, loçkë e motrës, shpirt, jam mirë, unë po besa, jelek, suxhuk, shkja, byrek, rroftë Bill Klinton, oj toka jeme, rroftë Kosova e lirë!

Engkish words:

Rea my love¹⁷, radical chic, Please, leave her alone, The war by proxy, are you done, listen dude, if everything bad happens to my brother, I'm gonna kill you.

Just as we also find latin words as Carpe diem¹⁸ in Spanish as tan bueno etc.

Another interesting coincidence between the two books is that Levi's manuscript was initially rejected by the Einaudi publishing house and published by the Francesco De Silva publishing house, which produced only 2,500 copies. The success and fame of the book made the novel republished by Einaudi in 1958. Elvira Dones publishes a book that deals with the theme of war precisely by Einaudi. Perhaps the publishing house, from the past experience with Levi's rejection, will no longer lose a successful writer to persistently search for after years.

The term "ethnic cleansing," which Dones ironically calls hygienic reasoning, corresponds to the annihilation field used by Levi; both reflect a cynical human experiment against "other people".

The opening verses of Levi's novel seem to describe the Blerime of The perfect little war. Here are two passages:

Dones

If it weren't for the broken teeth, for the crutch on the ground that supports her when she walks ... for the healing bruises that give all the colors of the rainbow to her face and arms¹⁹,

Levi

Consider if this is a woman,

¹¹ Dones, E., *Piccola guerra perfetta*, , Einaudi (2011 p. 114, 115, 116, 118, 118, 119).

¹² Dones E., *Piccola guerra perfetta*, , Einaudi (2011, p. 48).

¹³ Idem (p. 48, 52, 60, 74, 120, 77, 84, 127,131, 141).

¹⁴ Idem (p.22, 43, 38, 48, 34, 74, 88, 93, 95, 98).

¹⁵ Idem (p. 97, borrowed word from the time of the Ottoman Empire).

¹⁶ Idem (p. 98, 100, 104, 117, 14 e 136, 58, 155, 163).

¹⁷ Idem (p. 58, 59, 118, 85, 136, 149).

¹⁸ Idem (p. 137, 147).

¹⁹ Dones E., *Piccola guerra perfetta*, , Einaudi (2011, p. 156).

Without hair and without a name
 With no more strength to remember
 empty her eyes and cold womb
 Like a frog in winter.

In the chapter "Die drei Leute vom Labor", in Levi we encounter the detail of the difficulty to remember:

The pain of remembering. The old ferocious yearning to feel like a man, which assaults me like a dog the instant my conscience comes out of the dark. So I take my pencil and notebook and write down what I can't tell anyone.

This episode is similar to the chapter About telephones, bread, and silk scarves, exactly in Rea's words:

it is better that I start to write things down, - she reflects aloud, - otherwise with all this... what happens, we risk not remembering it anymore... someone will have to tell all this one day.

The sufferings of uncle Bujar, Dardana, Blerime, Fatmir, Bora, etc., bring to mind Levi's words:

That we are slaves, deprived of any right, exposed to every offense, doomed to almost certain death, but that we have one faculty left, and we must defend it with all vigor because it is the last: the faculty to deny our consent.²⁰

On some pages we also see a kind of anti-militaristic satire similar to that of Hašek's novel *The Good Soldier Švejk*:

excuse me but now I have to kill her, and this reassures you and you announce: please take a seat as well as: this is a perfect war, ... without dead soldiers. Thousands of civilians die, the land is emptied of its inhabitants and then filled with serbs ... it's a hygienic reasoning, not for nothing they call it ethnic cleansing.²¹

And when she imagines:

the bombs descend politely and in total silence, in mid-sky he sees them open small colored parachutes that advance unaltered gracefully until they land on the exhausted, muddy hump of Mother Earth without causing any fuss²².

This detail is very similar to Švejk's statement: Do they know that there are people down here?

This work belongs in a certain way to the realistic-descriptive current. The book is a testimony of barbarism, about cruelty not only physical, but also moral, which aimed above all to destroy the human substance of Kosovars. The strong point in the presentation of Elvira Dones is the emotional and rhetorical absence; restraint and clarity in writing, manages to fix a picture of indescribable cruelty in solid and essential lines.

5. Discussion

Perhaps literature is one of the most effective vehicles for communicating our moods, our emotions. Through a psychological analysis of the author, the reader sees himself.

In four different novels, Dones shows four different stories and characters. In *The Sworn Virgin*, and *The Seas Everywhere* there is an inner counterpart, or the long description of the characters, the character

²⁰ Levi, P., *Se questo è un uomo*, Einaudi, Torino, (1976, third chapter "Iniziazione").

²¹ Dones E., *La piccola guerra perfetta*, Einaudi (2011, p. 80-81).

²² Idem, (p. 5).

is always left alone in his choices. There is no chorality or decisions made by many people together. No, the character goes through all the bad moments of his life alone, and does not share them with anyone. The lack of an interlocutor depends on the character of these proud women who express anything but not who they are in essence. They are women of few words and very long internal monologues. This shadow-light is the technique used by Dones to describe these closed, shy characters. They are women who don't shout their sad story to the rooftops, but manage it on their own, wasting a lot of time and don't always come out as winners.

While in the Perfect little war, the women are all together, but even here, perhaps the character of the author herself comes out, each of them plotting their own life story. A female tale set in the midst of a terrible war.

In hoping for a rigorous critical study of this type of literary production, it must be clearly stated that the lack of an accurate selection and a benevolent and rhetorical critique towards those who "have experienced how hard it is to be an emigrant", has nailed down a large part of the authors who emigrated to a true cultural isolation.

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