

## SHORT STORIES IN THE BALKANS AND CONTEMPORARY- SHORT STORIES IN THE WORLD

Larisa Softic - Gasal<sup>1</sup>

*Scientific review*

*High school of Electrical Engineering Tuzla*

Received: 01.12.2013.

UDC: 821.163.09-32

Accepted: 23.12.2013.

821.09-32

### ABSTRACT

*A comparative analysis of selected short stories in the Balkan countries, as well as contemporary short stories of the world, will show us that the key themes of those stories are very similar to the short stories written during the period of transition in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995-2010). For example, the story of the Soul Operation by an Iranian writer Mohsen Mahmalbafa, The Falcons by a Dutch writer Kader Abdolaha and On the Kitchen Stairs by a Polish writer Witold Gombrowic zinter connect with short stories by authors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as The Secret of Raspberry jam by Karim Zaimović or The Devilish work of Zoran Riđanović. A common thread manifests itself in the aforementioned stories, more specifically, a common theme which focuses on the need for eradication of the seeds of submission and compliance with the political system. Most authors focus on their domestic political systems; however, some portray and analyze systems in other countries as they see it, such as a Dutch narrator who focuses on a potential threat of infringement of human freedom. Moreover, Bellow Hubei by an Argentinian writer Anhelika Gorodis her underlines the importance of humanization within a political order. Faruk Šehić examines the political system in Bosnia and Herzegovina from a slightly different perspective. His collection of stories Under Pressure emphasizes the issue of pressure in the above war model of short stories in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These stories are the product of pressure and anxiety, with intent to latently promote new ways of spiritual survival, directly relating to the concept and the theme of the story The Past Age Man by Christian Karlson Stead. Further analysis of the alienation theme singled out short stories in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Plants are Something Else by Alma Lazarevska and Dialogues by Lamija Begagić, and pointed out their connection with some recent international short stories such as The Last Defence by Mahdi Šodžaija a contemporary Persian author who indicates the inappropriateness of spousal relations and the crisis of modern marriage. The alienation theme present in many short stories in Bosnia and Herzegovina also appears in a particularly impressive way in a short story Raggedy Africa by a Slovenian author Mark Švabič, which is clearly related to a short story The Seaside Fairy Tale by Miljenko Jergović from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Extremely interesting are the stories that suggest a crisis of legitimacy of culture and behavior, such as the story of Tito or Curriculum Vitae by a Slovenian writer Maja Novak, or Bankophobia by Ante Zirdum, demonstrating the individual culture of behavior and society in general in a regressive dimension manifested through addiction or phobia from banking institutions.*

**Key words:** *short story, exhaustion techniques, theme-ideological suitability, seeds of submission, canon appearances, anxiety, alienation, communication, transition syndrome.*

---

#### **<sup>1</sup>Correspondence to:**

Larisa Softić-Gasal, High school of Electrical Engineering Tuzla  
Izeta Sarajlića E B2/5, Slavinovići, Tuzla, Bosna i Hercegovina  
Phone: +387 62/015-674  
E-mail: larisa.softic.gasal@gmail.com, softic.larisa@bih.net.ba

## INTRODUCTION

The use of new methods of contemporary literary fiction involves the interweaving of various modernistic procedures inherited from the realism era, as well as the entire literary tradition from antic times to the present day. References to some texts from contemporary prose demonstrate that the themes that we find in them are interrelated with the themes of short stories drawn from the atmosphere of the transition period in our country during the period 1995-2010. (Faik, 2000, pp. 14 and 18 ).

One of the most important representatives of Polish literature in the 20th century, Witold Gombrowicz, in *The Stories on the Kitchen Staircase* portrays a sordid protagonist, psychologically and ideologically completely absent but trying to find himself in an unfamiliar, yet implicit realm of freedom (Danielewska, 2005, pp. 54 -73).

At first, Phillip boyishly defies and opposes the outside world of convention by being indifferent towards the world with witty mischief causing fright and distress in common law abiding citizens. However, while attempting to create an alternate world with his unconventional behavior, Phillip, in an unusual twist, turns it into a man without an identity. While fighting for his own identity, legitimacy of his views and attitudes, Phillip is unfortunately transformed into a negative disparity, person with pessimistic views and a man contradictorily left to the world against whom he fought.

Thus, the Cartesian protagonist of the avant-garde prose following meandering paths of fate wound up in the turnaround towards his origins: from the subject of manipulation he transformed himself into its object. The only untouched aspect was manipulation. In the middle of the road is "sheer apocalypse" of concentration camps, the experience of an inmate from the prose of Tadeusz Borowski suggesting totally opposing ideologies and life, which lead to a devastating realization: those who survive are right and great anxiety: there is a realistic possibility that the world may convert to a universal concentration camp (Malić, 1984, p. 16).

Pessimistic view of the world from the end of the story *On the Kitchen Staircase* presents an unstoppable carousel where everyone pursues everyone and everyone runs from everyone. Phillip's antinomian character is transformed into an image of the hunter who haunts those who persecute him (*On the Kitchen Stairs*), or the portrayal of an impaired hierarchical

system of human values where a man is a 'believer' if he is obedient to the authorities and not the man who does good deeds (Falcons), by a contemporary Dutch writer Kader Abdolaha relate to the position of "malinaš" in *The Secret of Raspberry Jam* by one of the most of the respected authors of Bosnian short stories Karim Zaimović. Zaimović's character "malinaš" did not turn into Phillip from *The Kitchen Staircase*, but constant fear and paranoia admonishes to the inescapable evil which indicates the attrition technique systematically carried out by anti-malinaši aiming to achieve determination to abandon the honorable intentions of their "otherness".

## SEEDS OF SUBMISSION AND FIGHT FOR HUMANIZATION OF SOCIAL ORDER

The ingenious short story *Falcons* and her theme is indicative of the transitional climate in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it speaks of a righteous man's powerlessness to resist the hypocrisy of "believers" dressed in political cloaks, of a patient search for a man, since finding a man has become an arduous task in a society where people have become copies of other people's aspirations. The story actually focuses on the father and son's search for a grave where they would be able to bury an opponent of the regime, son and a brother who was proclaimed a sinner just because he did not belong to the regime party and was deprived of a grave after his execution by the regime. The only choice a father had to keep a cool head against those who forbade the burial of an innocent young man was reading of the Book and looking for the places to shelter his son forever.

At one moment, he read the whole Book for the 113th time, but after brother's death he certainly read it more often. Such is he, and I, his oldest child, I did not dare ask, Father, why don't you take another book? ( ... ) It was impossible! Residents of the village were all extremely religious, and certainly all supporters of the regime. Should we be asking them to dig a grave? He said nothing, but it was clear that while at home he consulted the Book for guidance. ( ... ) They encircled us and silently watched us. Suddenly, my father broke the silence. He held out his hand towards them and shouted: "I beg you for one grave ... I have my son's body in the car". There was no reaction, no response. It looked as if they were made of stone, petrified people who watch us speechless. ( ... ) "Away with the sinner! No grave for him" cried one of them. (Abdolah, 2003, pp. 48-50).

The story *Falcons* contains a note of optimism: the appearance of man at the end of the story brave enough, who organized the funeral of the regime opponent shows the support to all those who seek to preserve the qualities disturbed by the brutal regime. Why is the story of a Dutch author presented in the research work that speaks of Bosnia and Herzegovina's short story of the transition period when transition has long disappeared from the Dutch social system? With which stories do the selected segments of the world's contemporary stories communicate with the Bosnian short stories of the transition period and with what purpose? The story *Falcons* as a legitimate form of communication replenishes and encourages the Bosnian artist (and his story) and the importance of its mission - humanization of the established political order.

The *Soul Operation* story by an Iranian writer Mohsen Mahmalbafa also interconnects (as well as other stories mentioned *Falcons*, *On the Kitchen Staircase*) with B&H short stories such as *The Secrets of Raspberry Jam* by Karim Zaimović or *Devilish Work* by Zoran Riđanović. The comparison of the above short stories with their theme and ideological expediency indicate the need to eradicate the seeds of submission to the political system, one in which we are currently or how authors from around the world see it (authors as the Dutch story writer) as a potential threat of infringement on human rights and freedoms.

The technique of killing is well described in the *Soul Operation* a rather 'dark story', as the author calls it speaks of a hierarchical system of power and others, or the technique of intimidation which in societies in transition is improved by planting the seed of submission and susceptibility of the individual and masses toward authorities. The author was an active participant of the Iranian Islamic Revolution. The accused from *The Soul Operations* *Soul* conveys a message that love makes sense for those who have not yet experienced how 'I' can be more important than 'we'. Representative inserts of insurgents crackdown and eradication of their resistance point out methods that interrogators use for the purpose of 'science', ironically showing the defendant's will index, while the story raises the question of what are the limits to human (in)ability (Ramadan, 2003, pp. 5-15). The story, in his introduction, is not a recommended reading for people under eighteen years of age and heart disease patients because the defendant, during psychological experiments by the investigator/authorities, unconsciously chooses his

own life against the life of his daughter, mother and wife.

I was not aware anymore of what they were doing to me. As if there were no batons, no drills, no electric shocks, no cigarette burning. I was no longer aware of my own existence. I felt as if I were giving birth to myself. Like someone who eats himself to be born again. ( ... ) A strange feeling of someone who has no feelings anymore. ( ... ) My daughter was lying lifeless, she was dead, and Susan was all bloody. I no longer had any feelings towards them, every corner of my soul was left empty with no empathy and compassion. ( ... ) Azudisaid: "This is just a conditional reflex! An average citizen changes as soon as he sees a police baton and will do whatever he is ordered," ( ... ) Interrogator continued, "We were able to change your rebellious soul. "Azudi said : " We accomplished washing of the heart. From now on you will love and hate what we tell you to love or hate. "(Mahmalbaf, 2006, pp. 175-177).

A group of stories that interconnect with the aim of eradicating the seeds of submission and fight for the humanization of political order is accompanied by the story *Bellow Hubei in Bloom*. Argentinian writer Anhelika Gorodisher in her short story *Bellow Hubei in Bloom* portrays an image of a very old man in the, a representative figure of most of the authorities of our time, the authority which commands indirectly, through stories-parables, stories that are actually story in the story, states that ranking of what is and the canon appearances, pocket size editions of code, have always been applied within the political structure of since the beginning of humankind until today. Canon of illusion is a directory with explanations with no sense, but all the regretful in mates of penitentiary establishments of various shapes and sizes, knew that it was not allowed to complain against the decision of the old teachers. That damn night again there was an assembly, because people wanted to fornicate and I did not go to bed, but was stayed with the others, and it seems that no one paid any attention to that fact. The old teacher again chose Percy and two others, but not the ones from last time. These two immediately stripped, but Percy cried and threw himself at the feet of a very old man, begging him for permission to be in the second group. ( ... ) The old teacher with his gentle voice told him that he is forgiven, because he is very young to distinguish proper from improper, but that he, Percy, should know he is not allowed to complain about his decision and that has to obey and listen (Gorodisher, 2001, pp. 132-133).

Story Below Hubei Blooming by Anhelike Gorodisher is actually a parable generally applicable canon illusions about authority, in this story, a fornicator, a sick old man portrays series of meaningful parables/story in a story with a very clear theme of the story as a whole, that one must find the courage to oppose 'authorities' if we want to live in a better world.

Although my fears for myself were justified, it was not because of the joy that I could feel that they reelected Percy, but because an eccentric old man chose me to be a woman to others. I told him with disgust that I have very little interest in what can and cannot be done, and that I am very masculine and that no one will use me. A very old man smiled and gave several pompous comments: it seemed, to be chosen for this was evidence of kindness, affection and respect. (...) "Ah, venerable sir, stranger and a friend," said the old man, "but who will then give you food to eat, who will provide you with shelter, who will let you enter their group, who will make life bearable in Sweet memory of Hubei in bloom" ? (...) He told a parable in there, with cut lips and a bloody nose, and I listened to him, waiting to finish, to go and hit him again (...) Then I realized that old teacher is not moving and I remembered that I killed him. (Gorodisher, 2001, pp. 137-139).

Defined by a Derridean language story by Anhelike Gorodisher Below Hubei in Bloom belongs to a group of stories that are in circulation in our Bosnian-Herzegovinian transition community, because its effectiveness is conditioned by the standard of judgment. Such a system of evaluation creates a system of hierarchy of transcendental significance much more attractive politically to recipients who see the idea of inferiority/superiority accept as an implied readership state. Although contemporary Bosnian story is far more adorned with neutral style when writing becomes narcissistic craft with a sense of guilt and uselessness in relation to society, 'war letter' as one of the models of estrangement of war and post-war reality initiates and refreshes through critical campaigns that will, in part, change of ideology.

When objects and events in the real world begin to be perceived as dull and alienated, when it starts to seem that history is lost direction and falls into chaos, the only thing left for us all to "put in parentheses," is to "suspend reference", and turn words into an object. (Eagleton, 1987, p. 154).

By choosing war story models with pressure as the dominant motif in Bosnia and Herzegovina's short story, I singled out the stories from the collection of

Faruk Sehic Under Pressure. Stories like the product of pressure, anxiety, latently promote new ways of spiritual survival and in that sense, communicate with Stead's story Man from the Last Era.

So, war stories with dominant pressure the model will be added to the story in which the man's victory/loss situation is a Sisyphean state with a new dimension. It's no longer a victory over the absurd, but something different. The answer to this question is contained in the best short story in the competition which was organized by the British newspaper The Sunday Times in 2010, the story of New Zealand writer Christian Karlson Stead Man from the Last Era (Stead, <http://www.velikabritanija.net/2010/03/29/najbolja-kratka-prica/>).

The plot of the story is located in Zagreb and Zadar and tells about the events in the famous GAVELLA theater, psychological war between the "young lions" represented by Tomislav Buljan and the "old guard" represented by his experienced colleague Mario Ivanda. Man from the Last Era is actually a paradigm of ingenious stories about each rejected man, in this case the man is Mario who devoted his lifetime to culture and the world of theater and then came upon a huge misunderstanding. In a small country like neighboring Croatia, with "narrow intellectual community," and if things go against you, such as for Mario, "you could be left behind, like a chicken in the yard against which all the other hens have turned, with bloody skin and lost feathers" (Stead, <http://www.velikabritanija.net/2010/03/29/najbolja-kratka-prica/>).

Stead at the same time asks the question and answers it, as a man under pressure, who is losing faith in the best judge of all-time, because "last twofaced people" will never fully be "muted". Why should we care, the idea of self-defense skillfully interwoven by Stead into the text, when it comes to others and their accidents, because we know that at any moment a feeling of pressure inhabits a modern man in the struggle for existential and spiritual survival and the struggle to preserve their identity. Wrapping identity with bloody aim to protect the primeval root of personality, the eternal struggle against evil, leads a man today in the "side chapel" where the Holy Mother begs the death of her business rivals, not worrying at the same time that such requirements might be blasphemous, leaving it to the Virgin to judge on "technical aspects" of his plea. Recipient felt in the ranks of the story, thanks to Stead, all the misery and humor as muddy cost of living that we continually pay, not knowing the way to a different life/survival.

Mario has long since abandoned the church, but he knew it was time to go in a side chapel of the cathedral, in the unusual hours to light a candle, which has always been careful to pay for, in the event that the magic does not work, and that would have added another light to a forest of lights at the feet of the image of the Virgin. There, on his knees, with his forehead in his hands, he would pray for the death of his enemies. "Holy Mother, if you could make Tomislav's end a long and painful one, I would be grateful. But if I did not deserve this bonus, if it must be sudden, from a heart attack, a car accident, at least I beg you, give me his death and please before his last moment let him know that I, the rival he tried to destroy, still lives and continues to write. Let him go to heaven if he earned a spot there, but make sure he knows his earthly failures" (Stead, <http://www.velikabritanija.net/2010/03/29/najbolja-kratka-prica/>)

But when he won, and the death of his business rival came, and his promotion was evident to the skeptics, vezir Mario felt Andrić's fear of life, fear that cast shadows that things seem more important than the things themselves (Gursela, 2001, pp. 23-30). Stead and the end of his short stories introduces a worthy recipient as the creator of *The Man from the Last Era* in last words: Finally, what all of us would agree on today's discovery was the perseverance and courage which has regained a place in the Zagreb theater world, but the place could still be safe. Criticism of his work were the type of "on the one hand, but on the other, "and when he met and talked to people, even good friends, among them would often float something unspoken – a cloud, delay, some vague aura of discomfort" (Stead, <http://www.velikabritanija.net/2010/03/29/najbolja-kratka-prica/>).

While researching motifs of alienation I realized that bosnian short stories such as *Plants* are something else by Alma Lazarevska or *Dialogues* by Lamia Begagić, communicate with some recent international stories, stories like *Last Defense*. The story by Mahdi Šodžaija representative of contemporary Persian literature, *Last Defense*, best shows marital relations gone wrong, the crisis of modern marriage in which for the public good 'framed' perceptions image spouse that is in line with social conventions, in fact lives an automated Kafkaian 'persona', which conscious partner fails to revive. Dramatic elements of the story such as the intensification of tensions through the chorus, "Basem late son Hassan", shouts from the courtroom, interruption by the relatives of the murdered, giving the story an ironic note that foregrounds the personality of the main character, indifferent and self-confident killer, who, "with-

out cause and suddenly plunged a knife into his wife" (Šodžai, 2006, p.132).

Basim explains the process of murder of his wife explained with his wife's perfect completion of tasks a teacher of French at work who children absolutely loved, exemplary housewife, faithful wife, but a woman who lacked feelings. One of the progressive world-views is based on a family model that involves mutual empathy and responsibility towards themselves and others. It remains an open question whether the violation of the natural order of human origin gives the man a role of the warrior/family breadwinner and the wife the role of a queen emotion and loyalty, and this model is again identified with the patriarchal model of "father", as its ultimate goal the destruction of feeling, and whether a world without emotion, is the world we seek. The defendant, therefore Basim Rahmati, son of Hassan, with a smile talks back to the lawyer: "It seems that this is news to you, is it?" "And then he said: "The main thing I wanted to say here is precisely that the victim killed herself! However, by me! Understand this and you will understand everything, even events concerning the introduction and motive of the murder. My wife, Menidži – hanum Sabeti, was twenty-eight years old. She was a teacher of French language, understood the tailoring business, was a homemaker and took care of the house. All this is well known. She was missing something, and none of you knows that it is so. And that something are the feelings. In the three years we lived together, we lived like two passengers in the same hotel. ( ... ) The two co-tenants who live in the same room, mutual respect and fulfilling their obligations. (Šodžai, 2006, p. 137)

Film editing technique whereby the merged images of the past and present, with the dominant motif of alienation, is presented in *Love On The Sidewalk* by a contemporary Persian writer Mustafa Mastura. Hungry and jobless a nameless big fan of the books on the recommendation of a relative gets a job in a bookstore. Although he longed to understand people and felt lonely, he avoided them, holding himself not to lose himself. Therefore, from this story it is clear that the author presented the problem of disposal of distrust in other people. Librarian of *Love On The Sidewalk* ends his life meaningless, due to a misunderstanding, at the hands of a brother of the girl he loved, and his 'I' that he so guarded he could now see a few steps away "from himself" on the bloodstained sidewalk. Mastur in his story tells readers that the fear of man from other men is pointless and results in misunderstandings.

**ALIENATION - EMBODIED HUMAN ENEMY**

Where the alienation as an increasing enemy become independent and become a reality in the life of modern man the answer can be found in the short story *Rag Africa* by a contemporary Slovenian short story author Mark Švabič (Osti, 2001, pp. 149-151).

Kind of ironic and parodying fairy tales through specific irresistible 'game' and enjoyment, which encourages and maintains a word, in all possible connections and combinations, in all manner of meaning and variability in the *Rag Africa* deals with dark humor human acrimony, fear and suffering of spiritual intimacy and trust as assistant to alienation, the only true embodied human enemy. The symbol of the alienation of the story is that the first tiger sneaks into the girl's cabin as a friend, in the form of a man (an allusion to *Little Red Riding Hood*) and spreads distrust, repeating the rhyme about a man who killed his best friend dog because the animal ate meat without the permission of the master, until he feels that the effect was achieved (the girl wondered why the man did not for one day withhold food instead of killing him, but she never asks the guest). Then he returns to the form of a tiger and closely monitors the girl in the game, while the seeds of distrust and fear grow in the actions of the child so that she digs the grave for her rag doll that had kept the tigers away from her. At the micro level syntax implementation of the principles of extended counter polling enabled the sentence structure. Almost every sentence statement in this text is rhythmically and structurally closed and self-sufficient, in the associative - semantic sense, does not need any updates. Such completion of sentence statements is reminiscent of the rounded one breath poetic record or completeness of the verse and the inner drive through which these statements compose the whole text which is in fact the same one with which it is made and ended the song.

Yes, he said: There was a man and had a dog and he fed him well, but the meat was stolen from him and the man became angry and killed the dog. He dug his tomb and he wrote: There was a man ... That's interesting, is it not? You could say that constantly and never end. So speaks a man when he is afraid. You and I are not afraid. ( ... ) Yes, you would fear if it were not for me, and if not for you, I would be even more afraid (Švabič, 2001, pp. 149-151).

The point of the story takes the reader in the scariest, creepiest way possible, through a word game, through the game at all, so that he realizes that people fear

the loss of love (in the story it is the girl's rag doll), unwittingly 'dig the grave' and bury your love, or alienate it.

The girl said to the bushes: "Tiger, is that you? Leave me alone I am playing." The tiger was waiting in the bushes and did not want to go because he wanted to see how she will continue to play. ( ... ) The girl slowly lifted her rag doll into her arms and carried it to a grave. She was crying. It was different. She put it on the bottom of the grave. ( ... ) Then she wept more and said, "Tiger, are you there? Why do you put fear in my bones?" (Švabič, 2001, pp. 149-151).

Fear and distrust as the greatest enemies of love presented were presented by Miljenko Jergović in Coastal Fairytale story that is actually a fragment of his novels *Courts of Walnuts* (published in a book story *Another Kiss* by Gita Danon). So Jergović Coastal Fairytale communicates with Švabič ingenious story *Rag Africa*, working against the greatest curse of embodied evil - alienation.

*It's Hard To Find A Good Man* is a story that I would single out when representing the motif of alienation from 'pictures' defacement of individuals and its grotesqueness (Suško, 1990, pp. 246-263).

Absurd is a conflict of optimism that the story symbolizes as the old woman, grandmother, as a last echo of a good time, tradition and mutual respect, renegade, murderer and robber, a symbol of a new, modern era, insensitivity and alienation. All rare moments of grandma's fragmented consciousness which she lost or returned at each new abduction of her loved ones in death, every time a shot terminated the life of her son and granddaughter, daughter in law with a baby in her arms and teenage granddaughters were a fight not to preserve own life but to preserve faith in humanity in general. Unable to start a flame of good in *Renegade*, the reader through the last spasms of the old woman consciousness gets the painful picture of the world in which she lives. *Renegade* reaction out-cast at his grandmother's gesture of kindness as the fear of the greatest evils indicates a worrying stage of the disease in which humanity is currently, the cry of despair, the last prayer.

Children's mother began to release gasping sounds, as not being able to catch her breath. "Missus", he spoke to her, "would you and your daughter like to go down with Bobby Lee and Hiram and join your husband?" "Yes, thank you," said the mother faintly. Her left arm was dangling helplessly, while the other was holding a sleeping baby. While alone with *Renegade*, grandmother revealed that she lost her voice.

The sky was cloudless and sunless. There was nothing around her except forest. I heard two shots from his pistol, and the grandmother raised her head like an old turkey thirsty and seeking water and yelled, "Bailey, my boy! "As if her heart would break. It looked like his voice would give up and my grandmother's head was clear for a moment. She saw a man with his face contorted as he was about to cry, and then muttered, "Well, you're one of my babies. You're one of my own children!" She reached out and touched him on the shoulder. The Renegade pushed her arm away as if it were a snake bite and shot her three times through the chest. Then he lowered his gun on the ground and took off his glasses and began to clean them (O'Connor, 1990, pp. 260-262). Violence and indifference as synonyms of a modern era are also present in a story *Babysitter*, story written in a film editing method where alternate 'shots' of wrecking awareness switch, imagination and television shows watched by a nanny while taking care of three children (Coover, 1990, p. 362). Such media 'messed up' space is actually living ambience of young generation and the rate of changing 'frames' is the pace of life that we have imposed on ourselves, so the result of the last scene in which children are killed while the children's mother states that she wants to see which movie is on the night program is expected.

Film editing techniques applied in the *War* story by Dario Dzamonja and *Last Days* by Alma Lazarevska, where, in relation to Robert's *Babysitter* with less narrative aggressiveness accumulates a number of flawless parallel destinies (Život, 1996, 3, XLIII, 47). Scenes of horror from *Babysitter* warn recipients that violence and indifference are elements of alienation and in this sense, therefore motives, communicate with Bosnian short stories. When it comes to the art installation it should be noted that this way of representing art images corresponds to more automated minds of men of modern times.

There is a significant model of short stories with the motif of dependence on the Internet and modern technology in general and representative 'sample' is the story of *Tita* or *Curriculum Vitae* by a Slovenian writer Maya Novak. *Computer*, "Monster" in which the spirit of the new century is embodied, deserves more attention than the real person which is reflected in the fact that it is named *Tita*, and *Tita* director/owner (although thanks to her *Tita* was purchased), does not 'deserve' a name and is called ma'am. As the communication

problem extends to Madame's lack of manners as a burning social problem exponent conflict of illiterate managers and educated working class, to the lack of patience of a young employee, resulting in the loss of her job.

(...) and then one day my beautiful lady, whom I adored, invited me to lunch. At the table I suddenly went mad and told it to her face: "In the name of God, do not slurp your soup, I cannot stand people who loudly slurp soup, and I cannot stand people who say *solata* instead of *salad*, you are hunched over as a gin girl, look at yourself and show little regard for the environment if you do not already respect yourself. For your sales director of an association of employers requires five thousand euros a month, and we are giving unpaid overtime, because you have to be a happy in a period of transition if you have a job, even though it still so weak: but at least we do not deprive me of my human dignity it is rude, vulgar behavior" (Novak, 2003, p. 71).

The spirit of the new century as a motif in the stories of the transition period in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkans (such as motive of dependence on the computer already mentioned the story of the Slovenian writer Maya Novak) is present in different 'versions', such as, for example, dependency and phobia of bank institutions. Such is the story *Bankophobia* by Ante Zirdum a story tells of a man who due to disagreements in debt payments received confirmation from a psychiatrist that he suffers from 'bankophobia' (Zirdum, 2003, p. 33). Culture behavior of reflexive state of individuals, groups, institutions or society can be regressive in its dimension, relying on the characteristics of the previous communication, causing a crisis of legitimacy categorical culture and behavior, as well as verbal communication categories. In addition, *Tita* or curriculum vitae establishes a dialogue with Bosnian short stories that portray the side effects of the spirit of the new century (*Plants Are Something Else* by Alma Lazarevska or *Dialogues* by Lamija Begagić) and motifs (communication problem), and conceptually, especially with story dialogues (conflict between uneducated and/or no manners capitalists and educated working class, which is a huge problem in Bosnian society). A dialogue is established between the above Bosnian short stories and stories from a group of gender criteria. Term survival is different for men and women the story *Miracle Times* conveys that in the best way where the husband of the heroine Anne for her and her son Sven is not functional just like an elevator.

Such a dysfunctional or unemployed and resigned man, when he realizes that the ' things ' in his family life went downhill, he is determined to " survive ", to fight for his place in the family, ignore the contamination from Ana's grandfather and use his son as an intermediary in reconciliation with his pregnant wife. This short story, in turn, communicates with the story *Plants Are Something Else* by Alma Lazarevska. The *Miracle Times* discovers that "she went there before there was silence," because the problem occurred in the meantime (Lazarevska, 2001, p. 48).

The problem is usually not in the actual events, but in that other area, which happens in the meantime. Such is the case with us and incinerators. The interval is a wondrous thing. ( ... ) I say, the thing with pregnancy is serious, serious as death. Everything around her is serious Ana, me, Sven, Ana's dying grandfather, but most of all that what is invisible: a child. I'm trying to cross over it in silence, as usual: I'm trying to escape. ( ... ) "Did you know what a man willing to endure in order to stay alive?", asks the old man. I do not answer, but I think I know. For example: silence, solitude, a child, the smell of incinerators in the neighborhood, the list is a little longer and could go for days and days, unfortunately we do not have enough days." He is ready to do everything," he says. "Especially men, men are weak to survive, this is the problem and that fish is certainly a man." ( ... ) This is a time of miracles and the two of us and we are the best we breathe the best polluted air in the world. (Bodrožić, 2006, pp. 403-407).

The " freedom of man who turns days into stones," the man who is liberated after his wife's abortion while she is on the verge of a nervous breakdown, the eternal difference, not only to the post-war, which could be called post-traumatic syndrome or transitional syndrome, between gender notions of happiness and sadness, life and death is found in the story *Requiem* by Zoran Ferić (Ferić, 2006, p. 411).

The man who digs next to the car. She rushed forward a few steps, almost ran, as if running away from something. When they turned around the footpath so that they could no longer see the man who digs, she said: "When I think it might have been alive, but now is not, I would eat these stones." It was at that moment that he realized that he could live without her, just like that. After fifteen years of living together it crossed his mind that he could live without her. For him, that was freedom of love, of duty, of fear. Freedom which sometimes brings death to someone who had not yet been born, and freedom which turns days into stones. (Ferić, 2006, p. 411).

*Story Requiem* by Zoran Ferić manifests interest for the so-called little people and events, marginal people, without a clearly defined membership in a particular group. This story reveals the disease of the moment, allegorical painting the space and time outlines the in which we are immersed: a woman is surprised to see the dignity which provides a young man with "such a look," with a tattoo on both his hands, shaping at the funeral of his dog a pretty deep pit, working its edges, and listening to Mozart, shook her even deeper. She realized that the love between her and her husband has become dreadful, because it does not contain adequate fidelity to their loss. Thus, in this story by Ferić, as well as in the so-called universal testimony of characteristic especially for stories by Miljenko Jergović stretches the occasional maximum that sums up the basic experience of the story. In this story a dog is a symbol of fidelity, runs the maximum that the key to any love is fidelity. It is an inevitable comparison of the stories *Requiem* by Zoran Ferić and *The Wounds from Early Passion*, a prime example of a gender discourse artist Lamija Begagić, which indicates the optional relation between man and woman which is, of course, only optional for men. The man in the *Wounds of A Women* requires tolerance, liberal conception of love, thereby refusing to accept any burden of everyday life.

In groups of stories with traditional gender criteria story *Street* by an Iranian writer Reza Amirhanija has a motif that communicates with stories by Zlatko Topčić (*Two Small Stories*), especially with the story *Garib*. It is, in fact, a story of different criteria for evaluating the female and male offspring. The main hero of the *Street*, Abbas, mommas son, lazy, rogue and a bachelor, who for the fun of it goes on the front lines and dies. But his soul cannot find peace in the after world and is still errant, and his discomfort gains in intensity when he sees his father/grandmother with his picture in hand entering the municipal building to ask the representatives of the authorities to name of a street after their son, ' martyrs ' to keep the family pride. Abbas as a dead man is haunted by things he did not do as a rogue, and worse still a false image of the his death that brought the sign with the name of the street in his name, typical traditional heritage of the Muslim/Bosniak families (story *Garib*), as in this case, impose a mark that remains even after death.

I cannot stand it. I raise my head and look at you. There is a white sign with a blue rim. The sign is written in black letters: Abbas Muhseni.

The red color is stinging eyes and red writes: martyr. In which language should I explain it to you! I'm not a martyr! I am dead! So many times I said it, and nobody cares. I went to the front lines to fight just for fun and it was not fun. The first day, I did not get to even see where I was a grenade dropped in the midst of our tents. I did not have time to say a martyrdom even Bismillah. ( ... ) The first mistake was that I was buried among the martyrs. As much as I was trying to say in the morgue that I am not a martyr, it did not work. ( ... ) My God , let Israfil as soon blow to the sur all imams speak of, so that I get rid of this miserable life. In fact, this is a miserable death. (Amirhani, 2006, pp. 158-159)

Traditional criteria become alegacy of understanding male/female values and mission of art is to change these attitudes .

### DISEASE INTERPRETOR

Two small stories by Zlatko Topčić and separate names of these stories (Gariband Hasanaginica), are therefore in a group of stories that in their names, as the authors signals of valuation, give clear instructions to the recipient to interpret the content of the stories. Efficient transfer of information when it comes to the name of the story or the story of the book, therefore prior information on the subject is a necessary commercial aspect in order to develop an interest of recipients. Previous awareness which stems from the title of the story or the expectations of its kind in plays, does not have to bind to anything , " but even where the text is modified and denied, it affects as a contrasting foil on information flows in the reception of the text." (Pfister, 1998, p. 80). It is particularly interesting, in this sense, the story *Temporary Break* from a collection of short stories, *Disease Interpreter*, in the first published book by an American writer Jhumpa Lahiri, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Literature in the 2000. Jhumpa Lahiri was declared one of the twenty best young writers in America, and her fiction has been awarded the prestigious prize for a short story. While Shukumar prepares doctoral dissertation, Shoba is having a hard time coping with the imminent premature birth of a dead child. Matching the heros from the stories *Temporary Break* (Shoba and Shukumar), which is characteristic of dramatic texts, reinforces the already complex emotional chords of Jhumpa characters, sending rhythmic sentence resonance somewhere between mild irony and warm sympathy. The

process of breaking the pain of for a child Shob are calls with ceremonies and recognition of the unspoken truth, which, in addition to hurting each other are also characterized by semantic space which is reflected in a temporary interruption of power supply. When the electricity finally comes back on Shukumar suggests to light a candle and turn the lights off.

*Temporary Break* by Jhumpa Lahiri in her previous title contains information and increases the dramatic tension in the reader, whether the spouses reconcile (while Shoba hoped to recover their marriage, Shukumar was looking for an apartment for herself), that is the communication breakdown spouse, as is symbolically portrayed by disappearances and the advent of electricity, temporary or permanent. The very end of story is open and after Shoba found out while persistently trying not to know, and that is sex of the child, as Shukumar told her just trying to hurt her even more, there is a culminating cap of the story and its open end at the same time .

"He was a boy," he said. "His skin was more red than brown. The hair was black. He weighed two and a half pounds. Toes were gathered, just like your toes at night. "Now she watched him with a face distorted with pain. ( ... ) I held him until the paramedic knocked on the door, and on that day I promised myself that I would never tell Shoba, because he still loved her and that was the only surprise that she wanted in her life. ( ... ) Shoba turned off the lights and went back to the table and after a few moments Shukumar joined her. They wept together because of what they now know. (Lahiri, 2003, p. 27).

From the story collection *Disease Interpreter* by Jhumpa Lahiri, a story of the same name which again uses the dramatic signals of valuation names with meaning and prior information in the title of the story. Mr. and Mrs. Das with children and tourist guides are on the road again to a place with a symbolic name given that their marriage is ' sick ' and is in the darkness; they are visiting the Sun Temple in Konarak. Taking advantage of her husband's departure Mrs. Das confesses to a stranger tourist guide Kapas , an eight year old secret which she hid from everyone, especially her husband, the first son, who is actually the offspring of the man's friends. Explanation of the disease is actually a story metaphor for all the dark secrets and misunderstandings spouse based on gender inequality in the perception of the world and different approach to the institution of marriage.

"No, stay for a moment," said Ms. Das. She climbed out of the back seat and slid into place beside Mr. Kapasija. (...) "Ray's, he is not Ray's son." (...) "No, of course not and nobody knows that. For the last eight years I keep it a secret. "She looked at Mr. Kapasija, inclining her head as if she wanted to see him from the other angle. "But now I told you." (...) He looked at her in her red pleated skirt and a shirt with a strawberry on it, a woman who does not yet have thirty, who does not like her husband or her children, who no longer loves her life. Her confession was depressing, saddened him more when he thought of Mr. Das at the top of the track, with Tin on his shoulders, making pictures of the old monk cells that were carved into the mountains to show them off to students in America who does not doubt nor is he aware that one of his sons is not fathered by him. (Lahiri, 2003, pp. 66-70) As well as its own name and the name of the collection states (Disease Interpreter) it refers the reader to the content of the story and its interpretation. Temporary Break communicates with Bosnian short stories featuring diseased marital relations and lack of communication in general, so you could say that this story is a kind of interpreter disease for all the stories from the group featuring alienation.

The motif of metamorphosis present in the stories/dramas by Zlatko Topčić (stories *Metamorphoses* and *Almasa* and a poetic drama *Refugees*) can be compared with contemporary stories of the world, where, as in the above stories, art finds its compensation escape from the anxieties of life. The story *Horse* by a contemporary Iranian author Reza Babe Mukaddama, exits the Kafkaesque atmosphere of despair, inner turmoil and despair and is precisely in metamorphosis. The plot of the story of the eponymous short story collection takes a place in the old Tehran and tells of sympathy with the weak, poor people and animals. The nameless boy with big, white teeth is used to his nickname *Horse* gotten at school age as a man would get accustomed to "dull pain" that never goes away. I decided firmly to master myself and not allow such opportunities to permanently destroy what life I have

left. Am I the only one who experienced something like that? Are these the people among whom I live and never have such thoughts? They do not have such memories? No! I am sure that some have experienced something similar. It would take months, maybe even years, if they were to tell it all. That is why I am not allowed to reveal my weakness. I cannot afford to have a feeling of a worm eating at the trunk of my soul and fall over like a rotten tree. No! It happened. The man became a horse. He ran away, he is gone. He is no longer among us and I lost a friend. It was fate and I have to continue my life. If that horse is free now, if he runs pastures or tows cargo or is being whipped - so what! It belongs to the world of horses and is a part of being a horse. It is how it is. I am in the world of people and people have to be with people, I have to walk and act like them, ride horses, harness them in the wagon. (Mukaddam, 2006)

Reza Babe Mukaddam and Zlatko Topčić display their art and those who do not find tranquility in the world and the way they change to coexist with the rest of the living world, which tells us again, that the cost of life is too high. Sensitivity or humanity in general are all lower on the scale of assessment and all of those who have "such thoughts," thoughts of transformation make moments of relief, because in the world of people there are rules that are more difficult to tolerate.

## CONCLUSION

By comparing selected the Bosnian short story with contemporary international stories and the stories of the Balkan countries, the following intertwining motifs and ideas were established:

Motives: pressure, anxiety, metamorphosis, the crisis of modern marriage/marital communication problems, fear, alienation, addictions, phobias, canons of illusion.

Ideas: Breaking the seed of seed susceptibility using art, the struggle for humanization of social order, countering bad 'authority', new ways of spiritual survival, categorical identification of the crisis of legitimacy of culture and behavior.

## REFERENCES

- Abdolah, K. (2003). Sokolovi. *Život*, 3-4, LI
- Amirhani, R. (2006). Ulica. In: Kodrić, M. i Zildžić, A., *Savremena iranska književnost*, Kulturni centar Ambasade I.R. Iran u B&H, Sarajevo/Al-hoda.
- Bodrožić, Roman Simić. (2006). Vrijeme čuda. *Sarajevske sveske*, 14.
- Coover, R. (1990). Bejbisiterka. In: Suško, *Antologija američke novele XX stoljeća*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša.
- Danielewska, L. (2005). Bijeli leptir. *Život*, LI, 1-3.
- Faik, S. (2000). Ne znam zašto tako radim. *Život*, 3-4, XLVII.
- Eagleton, T. (1987). Poststrukturalizam. U: T. Eagleton, *Književna teorija*, Zagreb: SLN.
- Ferić, Z. (2006). Requiem. *Sarajevske sveske*, 14.
- Gorodišer, A. (2001). Ispod Hubea u cvatu. U: Popović-Anđić, Lj. and Anđić, B., *Antologija savremene argentinske priče*, Novi Sad: Svetovi.
- Gursela, N. (2001). Suđenje. *Život*, Sarajevo, XLVIII, 1-2.
- Lahiri, J. (2003). Privremeni prekid. In: J. Lahiri, *Tumač bolesti*, Sarajevo: Sejtarija.
- Lazarevska, A. (2001). Biljke su nešto drugo. In: Janković, G., *Antologija kratkih priča ex yu 1990-2000*, Ljubljana: KUD France Prešern.
- Mahmalbaf, M. (2006). Operacija duše. In: Kodrić, M. i Zildžić, A. *Savremena iranska književnost*, Kulturni centar I.R. Iran u BiH, Sarajevo.
- Malić, Z. (1984). Između života i svijeta. In: Z. Malić, *Antologija poljske pripovijetke XX stoljeća*. Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša.
- Mukaddam, R. B. (2006). Konj. In: Kodrić, M. i Zildžić, A. *Savremena iranska književnost*, Kulturni centar I.R. Iran u BiH, Sarajevo.
- Novak, M. (2003). Tita ili curriculum vitae. *Život*, 7-8-9, LI.
- O'Connor, F. (1990). Teško je naći dobrog čovjeka. In: Suško, Mario, *Antologija američke novele XX stoljeća*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša.
- Osti, J. (2001). *Antologija novije slovenske pripovijetke*. Sarajevo: Buybook.
- Pfister, M. (1998). Naslov i očekivanje vrste kao prethodna informiranost. U: M. Pfister, *Drama. Teorija i analiza*. Zagreb: Hrvatski centar ITI.
- Ramadan, H. (2003). Dobri poznavaoči karata. *Život*, LI, 5-6.
- Stead, C. K. *Čovjek prošlog doba*. [online], Retrieved December 21, 2012. from <http://www.velikabritanija.net/2010/03/29/najbolja-kratka-prica/>,
- Suško, M. (1990). *Antologija američke novele XX stoljeća*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša.
- Šodžai, M. (2006). Posljednja odbrana. In: Kodrić, M. i Zildžić, A. *Savremena iranska književnost*, Kulturni centar I.R. Iran u BiH, Sarajevo.
- Švabič, M. (2001). Krpena Afrika. In: Osti, J. *Antologija novije slovenske pripovijetke*. Sarajevo: Buybook.
- Zirdum, A. (2003). Bankofobija. *Život*, 7-8-9, LI.
- Život, 3, XLIII. (1996). B&H: Sarajevo.