

Maša Haľamová

in the *Dar - Āervený mak - Smrt' tvoju ťijem* Triad



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Koőice 2021



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This monograph is an output of the APVV-19-0244 grant project Methodological Procedures in Literary Research with an Overlap into the Media Environment. Principal researcher: Prof. PhDr. Ján Gbúr, CSc. Research period: 2020-2024.

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Site: <http://unibook.upjs.sk>

Available as of 31 December 2021

ISBN 978-80-574-0049-3 (e-version)

ISBN 978-80-574-0061-5 (printed version)

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Introduction

Motto: **“Science has also its own story.”**

The poem *Dar (Gift)* and its two contradictory interpretations having been presented simultaneously in educational practice at the academia stood at the beginning of our research interest in the oeuvre of Maša Haľamová. Whilst one of interpretations reflected joyful feelings of the authoress about the period of peace after the end of World War I, the other emphasised the life situation in which the lyrical subject frees herself from grief and desolation due to the love experienced. With this duality at hand, the issue of exactness has increasingly been arising: to what extent the perceptual approach to text interpretation in literary research is acceptable.¹ This was the first impulse to follow in one of her poems. Another stimulus was in sporadic views on spirituality in the poems by Maša Haľamová which contradicted the hitherto established literary-critical view of the spiritual dimension of her oeuvre. The time has come for targeted material and heuristic research in the literary archives of the Slovak National Library in Martin and the search for answers to persistent questions: where are the still acceptable boundaries of reception or perception based solely on interpretation, what research method should be chosen by a perceptive to confirm or refute the interpretation of spirituality, what role does the relationship between interpretation and exegesis play in text research? Alongside with the above, the question arose as to what results a methodically guided analysis of spirituality in the poetry of Maša Haľamová would bring.

¹ The use of the terms reception, perception, and apperception is considerably fluctuating in Slovak literary studies. We specify their definition in the evaluation of the results of interpretation on p. 168.

Current literary research focuses on Maša Haľamová's poetry only sporadically because in comparison with other recognised poets of the interwar period in Slovak literature, it is currently perceived as less expressive, even peripheral. The objective of our archival research was to obtain authentic material on the life and oeuvre of the poetess and to confront the resulting findings with the outcomes of the analysis and (re) interpretation of spirituality in her three collections of poetry. The relevant stages of several years of research (more details: Hajdučeková, 2018, 2019; Hajdučeková – Bónová: 2016a, 2016b, 2018) has thus led to the creation of a personnel monograph which we present to the professional public abroad under the appropriate name of **Maša Haľamová in the *Dar – Červený mak – Smrť tvoju žijem Triad***.

After defining the research methodologies we present the life story of Maša Haľamová in the first part of the monograph as elaborated from personal documents and materials kept in the Slovak National Library in Martin. Within the framework of contextualisation, it focuses on turning points and key events that had left an indelible mark on her poetic narrative. These are arranged on a timeline in the calendar included at its end. The reconstruction of her personal history is followed by a view of literary criticism for over 70 years and the authoress' authentic manuscript notes, which reveal the source of poetic inspiration to the reader. The second component of the research consists of the analysis and (re) interpretation of three poetry collections: *Dar (Gift)* (1928), *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932), *Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* (1966), where we focused on uncovering differentiated spirituality, i. e. metaempirical dimension of reality. Subsequently – within the framework of semiotic poetics – we presented the expressive qualities of the verse structure in the next chapter. We focused not just on the metric verse plan as the intersection of the horizontal and vertical analyses of the verse, but also on other phonic means that constitute the overall rhythm.

The research into spirituality in the poetic text has become a challenge which is described in the motto: Science also has its story. It shows that

the seemingly negligible discrepancy in interpretation, which raises the issue of the accuracy of interpretation, may result in extensive research and examination and end in a conceptually constructed monographic unit which fills the hitherto gap in Slovak literary scholarship and in the database of Slovak bibliography. The publication is supplemented by photographs from the Collection of Documents of Personalities in the Literary Archive of the Slovak National Library and excerpts from the manuscript of Maša Haľamová and from periodicals.

At this point, we thank the owner of inheritance rights, Mr. Peter Haľama, the poetess' nephew, for his consent to publish the results of archival research, including preserved archival materials, and the heritage administrator, nephew JUDr. Dušan Roll († 2021) for his helpfulness in processing partial outputs of our archival research. Without their willingness and support, research into the oeuvre of the Slovak poetess Maša Haľamová could not be elaborated and published in such a comprehensive form.

We believe that the book will find its way to the professional public, especially to Slovakists or translators from Slovak literature.

Ivica Hajdučeková and Iveta Bónová
(Slovakia – Košice, November 2021)

Methodological Starting Points (Basis, Sources)

On the occasion of the poetess' eightieth birthday, authentic memoirs of the life of Maša Haľamová were published under the title of *Vyznania (Confessions)* (1988) and *Vzácnnejšia nad zlato (Rare Over Gold)* (1988). Five years later, JUDr. Dušan Roll compiled the (semi) bibliophile volume *Čriepky (Pieces)* (1993) from her private archive. On the occasion of the posthumous 90th birthday of M. Haľamová, he prepared a selection of her poetry called *Nepokoj (Unrest)* (Roll, 1998) which he divided into five sections: Faith, Love, Grief, Solitude, By the Grave. As he stated in the preparatory material for the 100th anniversary of M. Haľamová's birth, each stage of her life was special: 1) marked by faith instilled by her mother, 2) love for her husband, 3) grief over his death and her leaving Villa Marina in Štrbské Pleso, 4) solitude, 5) preparation for departure.² Similarly, it would be possible to classify personal correspondence, official documents, manuscripts, clippings from the periodical press, as well as an archive of photographs that display not just the image of everyday life, but also the turning points that immediately affected her poetic oeuvre. In Chapter 1, we transformed inspiration with key motifs into the knots of life in the sign of number eight, into the Tatra reminiscences, a view of the editorial work, and the period of well-deserved rest.

From the unprocessed collection of the Literary Archive of the Slovak National Library (6 boxes with add numbers) and other archival materials, we reconstructed important milestones in the life story of the Slovak poetess and uncovered the basis of her lyrical nature. The method of processing is not just based on a linear arrangement

2 Roll, Dušan: Haľamová Maša: *Vyznania (Confessions)* [Design and compilation from the archive of M. Haľamová, 2007 – 2008]. LA SNL (hereinafter LA SNL), Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

of the summary of facts chronologically arranged on a timeline in the context of positivist biography and sociology, but especially on the reconstruction of personal history. The methodological starting point chosen was therefore in the synoptic-pulsating model literature by Peter Zajac (Zajac, 2009: 33 – 47; 2016: 17 – 26), in which cultural-literary events, representative personalities and texts, represent nodal points in pulsating events and create a network of (sub) surface links and discursive lines on the synoptic map of literary history. In such a dynamic multilevel paradigm of the history of literature³, the known will always return with enrichment, i. e. it re-presents, re-updates and re-interprets itself. In the mapping of nodal points of the curriculum vitae of Maša Haľamová included in the period of Slovak interwar literature⁴, we therefore focused on events, relationships, feelings, and facts in accordance with her personal confession: "I lived that poetry" (Kollárová – Kollár, 1998).

A special place was taken by the self-reference notes of the poetess, in which we focused on the process of writing and on the way of aesthetic transformation of personal experiences in the manuscript concept. Applying a manuscriptological approach to the material highlights the process of the authoress' creative writing and thinking, but also the communication situation between the empirical author in a pretextual and prototextual situation and a model reader of her poetic

3 We may apply Zajac's explanation of the interference of literary history to personal history through the terms of polyfunctionality (it recognises a different functional configuration of texts in the time node, not just with the aesthetic function), polyfocality (dynamic changes in focal lengths, zooming), polyperspectivity (literary texts are part of the cultural archive which is subject to changes in a dynamic semiotic situation), polychrony (spatial concurrency of literary texts with emphasis on intertextuality and palimpsest nature of literary processes), and polyterritoriality (topographic configurations of different contexts). (Zajac, 2009: 34 – 37).

4 The period of Slovak interwar literature, traditionally defined by the years 1918 – 1945, is defined in recent history by the years 1918 – 1948, i. e. the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic and the communist coup, the so-called Victorious February (Sedlák, 2009: 6 – 17).

text. The script for the radio broadcast *Božie divadlo (God's Theatre)*⁵ was another material that we included in the Chapter. It uncovered the post-textual situation of several poems and opened the continuing “events of meaning” (the term: M. Jankovič); (in: Zelenka, 2002: 80 – 98; Eco, 1995).

In the Chapter focused on the responses by literary critics and theorists, we applied the stimuli of constructivism in the way of processing the archival material, according to which “... scientific contents have their origins exclusively in the social world [...], in the persuasion practices of the participating scientists.” (Knorr-Cetina, 1988; in: Mikuláš, 2016: 290). The reconstruction of opinions on the poetics and spiritual dimension of M. Haľamová’s three poetry collections presented mainly in the contemporaneous press enabled us to follow a stable reception framework and perception codes preferred, as well as consensus or contradictions in the 20th and 21st centuries. The established consensus and cognitive processes in the literary communication of the professional society have eventually resulted in a confrontation of established theorems and changes of opinion resulting from literary historical development, especially after 1948 (during ideological pressure with significant influence of atheism) and 1989 (during the rehabilitation of religious aspects in literature).

In the analytical-interpretative part, our main methodological starting point was in the hierarchical scale of differentiated spirituality which we present in a separate chapter. It was originally developed on the basis of a conceptual apparatus from interdisciplinary stimuli⁶ and conceptually refined in the research into fictional and poetic text

5 Bečvář, Anton – Haľamová, Maša: *Božie divadlo (God's Theatre)*. Radio compilation of poetry and music [screenplay, typescript, 9 p.]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

6 As a methodological approach to the analysis and interpretation of spirituality, i. e. metaempirical dimension of literary reality, it was first presented in the form of a conceptual apparatus in a journal study (Hajdučeková, 2013) and later made more precise in the monograph *Duchovnosť v (re)interpretácii diel slovenskej literatúry* (Hajdučeková, 2016).

up to the above scheme. In addition, we proceeded again within the framework of the synoptic-pulsation theory of P. Zajac (2009: 33 – 47). Within that framework, the background textual material was not just in the first edition of the *Dar (Gift)* (1928) collection, but also the archived manuscript of the collection and a photo document of the dedication poem, which were intended for a non-public domain. We proceeded similarly with the *Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* collection (1966), which we confronted not just with the archived manuscript of the *Predsavzatie a iné básne (Commitment and Other Poems)* collection, but also with the script of the radio broadcast *Božie divadlo (God's Theatre)* by M. Haľamová (in collaboration with A. Bečvář). In the respective analyses and interpretations of the poems, we employed the semiotic stimuli of Umberto Eco, adhering to his thesis: “... any interpretation of a particular part of the text may be accepted if it confirms it, and rejected if it is challenged by another part of the same text. In this sense, internal coherence of the text controls the otherwise uncontrollable motives of the reader.” (Eco, 1995: 67)

The confessional tradition of the hermeneutic method of contemplation acquired a key position in the interpretive part, the legitimacy of which was already confirmed in the stages of material research and then in poetry: Contemplation in the tradition of Protestant poetry follows the special function of songs that were to motivate to the dialogue with God (this is why they were formulated as prayer) and reveal the power of God’s Word (Vráblová, 2017: 89 – 109). The motif of the Trinity, which, however, was referred to indirectly, was one of the stimuli that stirred the imagination. Allusiveness has led to the reconstruction of semantic structures that have been revealed in meditation, e.g. natural phenomena, in conjunction with the text of Scripture, were a poetic expression of inner experience. Symbolic sceneries were to draw the recipient into the scene and subsequently, through a contemplative style, they opened-up and shaped the spiritual dimension of personal piety. (Ibidem) In this particular way of reading, we also followed other clues to justify the hermeneutic method and

then applied it in a targeted approach to the poetic whole which we concluded in the context of moving in a circle as a return to the beginning.

In the analysis of the phonic scheme of a poetic text, we start from the function and specific configuration of segmental and supra-segmental elements, especially at the level of rhythm (Sabol, 1983: 5 – 25, Harpáň, 2004: 120 – 122). In the verses, we observe both the multiple repetition of the sound-intonation element, as well as the functional disruption of the resulting “stereotype”, always in conjunction with the semantics of the verse, in which we observe complexity of the poetic text (Zambor, 2016). Since the basal differentiating rhythm factors of the verse include the dominant use of the elements of phonology of word or sentence, as well as the agreement or disagreement between the intonation of the sentence and the intonation of the verse (Sabol, 1983: 20), we observe the degree of regularity of the elements, i.e. metric constants or metric trends. Horizontal and vertical analysis of the verse is decisive in determining the rhythm of the verse, proceeding from rhythm to metre. The overall phonic tone of poetic texts creates and completes a number of diverse elements, and so other sound means also get in the centre of our interest, which by their nature participate in constituting the rhythm. These are mainly cases of sound instrumentation (euphonicly impressive arrangement of phonemes), as well as rhymes and their distribution within a stanzaically built-up verse unit.

It is clear from the above theoretical-methodological overview that the presented result of literary research is conditioned by a functional interconnection of several methods, which are in line with the idea of the perspectives of literary scholarship of the 21st century within the framework of methodological pluralism (Harpáň, 2009: 31 – 47).

Curriculum Vitae or in a Network of Life Events

Life Nodes in the Sign of Number Eight

Poetess Maša Haľamová (Blatnica, 28 August 1908 – Bratislava, 17 July 1995) herself drew attention to the sign of eights in her life.⁷ Their calculation is varied: Three eights may be found in the date of her birth, others include her eight siblings, her age of eight when she lost her mother, in 1918, when she returned from the Lower Lands to Slovakia, then the age of 18 when her first poem was published, and also in 1928 when her debut collection was published. The numerical circle of Mária Pullmanová née Haľamová finally concludes with a symbolic seven in the date of her death – 17 July 1995 at the age of 87.⁸

Maša Haľamová, a native of Blatnica from under Plešovica in the Veľká Fatra mountain range, transferred the “Garden of Turiec” in her writing (Haľamová, 1988: 23). Red poppy, thistle, heather, and motherwort were blooming in it, referred to in her oeuvre as heraldic flowers (e.g. Rúfus, 1981: 216; Bartko, 1983: 69, 118; Blahová, 1988: 66). But it was not just the above that touched upon the young authoress’ poetic imagery: “*Whoever raised their head to the steep cliffs from time immemorial, whomever spruce were rushing and mountain torrents were singing when falling to sleep, whoever had been woken up by bells of lambs, that person had been given a start with an added value – from the prime vigour of nature*” (Haľamová, 1988: 24 – 25). Maša’s childhood was painfully marked by the death of her mother (25 March 1916), with whom she dealt

7 Nodžák, Jozef: *Kto nebol v čítanke (Who was not in the reader)* [script]. Bratislava: The main editorial office of educational programmes, 1991. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

8 The funeral took place on 25 July 1995 in Bratislava (by the ceremonies of the Evangelical Church). The urn was transferred to the National Cemetery in Martin, where a reverential act was held on 28 August 1995. In: *Parte of Maša Haľamová*. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

for a very long time in her poetry. She dedicated several poems to her in even in the first collection of *Dar (Gift)*. She wrote of her mother with admiration: “*She was a beautiful and precious woman,*” she emphasised her dedication and bravery.⁹ Maša’s mother – Oľga Peniašteková¹⁰ – married a widower Jozef Haľama, who was a descendant of Czech exiles and a native of Blatnica. When he became widowed, he worked as a cloth maker and saffroner in Turkestan. He had six orphans from his first marriage: Jozef and Oľga, who were born in Katta Kurgan, Miloslav and Ľudmila, born in Kokanda, and Anča, Nadinka (who died a few months after her birth), and Vladimír were born in Turiec. After the birth of her third son, J. Haľama’s wife withered and died at the age of 34. His second wife Oľga (née Peniašteková) gave birth to children Mária and Ján, but she also died after her second birthing.¹¹ Despite the loss of her mother, Maša found support in her elder siblings, especially in her sister Oľga and her brother Vladimír. In her recollections, she characterised the unusual sisterly-fraternal relationship as follows:

“And one day I would like to write a story about a good half-sister and half-brother. Because when our mother died in the middle of the war, it was my so-called half-sister who replaced my mother. And one of the brothers, for whom I would go through fire and water, used to be infinitely good and gentle to me. Later, when I was a student at a girls’ grammar school in Bratislava and lived in a dormitory at the Dunajská Street, all the girls envied me having him. He never came to me without a bunch of flowers, and when they saw him

9 Ľapajová, Elena: *O červených makoch, láske a poézii alebo Dar okamihu (About red poppies, love and poetry or The Gift of the Moment)*. [Unspecified source, pp. 10 – 11.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

10 The spelling of her name is not uniform in archival materials and in professional sources; it oscillates between Peniašteková, Peniažteková and Peniažková. We will present the form of Oľga Peniaštek (-ová), which is recorded in the official document, namely in the birth certificate of M. Haľamová: In: Birth Certificate of Maša Haľamová. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

11 Roll, Dušan: Haľamová Maša: *Vyznania (Confessions)* [Design and compilation from the archive of M. Haľamová, 2007 – 2008]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

kiss my hand when he greeted me at the gate, they didn’t even want to believe that he was my brother.”¹²

In the plentiful archival correspondence addressed to Nový Smokovec, we also find a letter from Oľga Textorisová among the first letters¹³ who raised her after her mother’s death (since 1916) in Stara Pazova near Novi Sad (Serbia).¹⁴ She wrote in it that she was sending her a medallion, which she received as a gift from the Haľama family for her having assisted in her entering into marriage.¹⁵ She decided to give it to Maša on her eighteenth birthday. In the letter, at Maša’s wishes, she also mentioned her first meeting with her mother. Quiet, humble, and a believer whom they – the atheist – set her as example. But she also mentioned humility and love with which she cared for the six stepchildren, even though it was not easy for her. She also touched on Maša’s deep grief for her mother because she missed her very much in crisis situations:

“You feel a kind of emptiness inside – an unquenchable desire, and you think it would all be comforting in your mother’s embrace. [...] If she lived, she

12 Haľamová, Maša: *Ľahšie by sa hovorilo... (It would be easier to say...)* [memories, speech, typescript, p. 3]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

13 The first letter of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga written from Nový Smokovec is dated 2 September 1926. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

14 The data is available in a radio lecture on Oľga Textorisová. In: Pullmanová, Maša: *O vzácnej žene ... (About a rare woman...)* [manuscript note: 2 July 8:15 p.m., year unspecified]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, sign. No. 216 BI 39 [typescript copy with corrections], 4 pp.

15 In *Spomienky*, Oľga Grebeníková-Haľamová recalled the arrival of her father’s second wife as follows: “*Lady teacher of Blatnica, Izabela Textorisová’s sister, remembered her friend in Martin, Olinka Peniažková, who was preparing to become deaconess. She visited her and managed to convince her that she would do the same glorious deed when she took on six orphans as if she had devoted herself to the duties of a deaconess. And so it was not many months since my mother’s death when a young, pretty 27-year-old woman came to us. We quickly came to like her because she cared for us with love. She clung most, of course, to the youngest Vladko, and her love did not wane even in later years, when the jolly boy became a real naughty boy.*” Grebeníková-Haľamová, Oľga: *Spomienky. (Memories)*. p. 34 [typescript, 38 pp., dated: May 1985, with a signature *Maši Oľga*]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

would tell you that you can expect satisfaction of your mental desire only from the One who has got power enough to help."¹⁶

The evidence that the loss of the mother was still alive in her is mentioned in a letter she wrote to her sister Oľga half a year after the wedding: "My mother's death is such a clear and sharp borderline of my childhood."¹⁷ In 1934, she wrote the feature *Belasá písanka* (A Sky-Blue Copybook)¹⁸ and a commemorative feature called *Oblôčik do detstva* (A Peephole Into the Childhood)¹⁹ in which she highly vividly mentioned her mother's death:

"[...] She stroked me, by one last shiver. She had a beautiful smile on her face – as quiet and happy – as only those who slept in great faith. [...]"

And yet, when I got to my mother's room and found something from her, I stroked my face with it, took her little things in my hands, and made an altar out of them. [...] But even that did not last long, perhaps someone saw me through the window and then everything that was hers disappeared from the house, except for the huge Bible, which was locked in my father's vault – a Wertheim – and there were many mysterious and unattainable keys to it."

I have it today, this only reminder of her broken life. Many beautiful places of deep meaning were touched by her hand.

"And God shall wipe off the tears from all their eyes." [Manuscript added]

(*Oblôčik do detstva*).²⁰

16 Letter from Oľga Textorisová to M. Haľamová, dated 16/10/1926. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3541/2004 a 3455/03.

17 A letter from M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga, dated 23/3/1931 from Štrbské Pleso. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3541/2004 and 3455/03.

18 Haľamová, Maša: *Belasá písanka* (Sky-blue Copybook), [typescript No. 1, p. 2, no date]; the second, abridged version is dated March 1934. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

19 M. P. H. [Haľamová, Maša]: *Oblôčik do detstva* (Sky-blue Copybook). Memorial feature. [typescript, 4 pp., no date given]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

20 Ibidem.



Portrait of Maša Haľamová when a child.
Photographer Hódos, Martin

The mosaic of childhood is attractively complemented by written memories of Viera Baloghová,²¹ who worked in the *Mladé letá* publishing house and visited M. Haľamová in 1989. She explained a number of facts in them (albeit with some inaccuracies), in particular her relationship with her mother and the spiritual basis of her life story:

“Finally, the age-old Bible landed on the table, in which strips of paper are still inserted as if references to her child and a quiet conversation with her own heart. For the point of our conversation, the record on the 1st page of the Bible is also important: Bought in Prešporok 1813. At one cross a note in pencil – Once God Shall Dry up Their Tears – a photograph of a willowy and kind of beautiful young lad with a moustache is inserted: Chaplain Janko Obuch, the unhappy love of Olinka Peniažková. She studied in Germany at a girls’ school, he studied theology – they fell in love. However, the mother refused to have the underage girl married (she must have been twenty-four years old) and the young priest committed suicide. Although Olinka did not resist her mother’s refusal, she now decides not to marry and becomes a deaconess.”²²

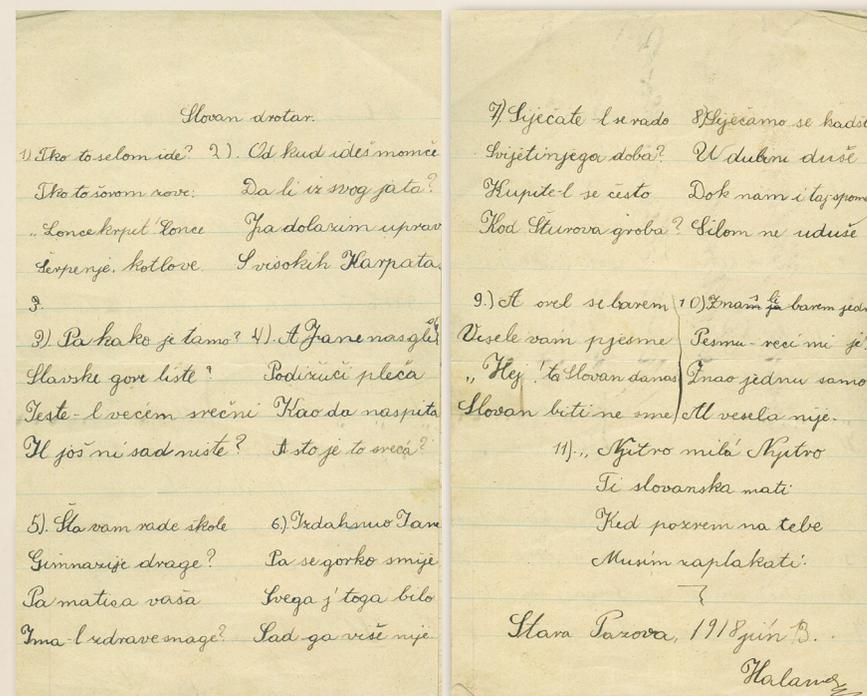
After the death of her mother, her eight-year-old girl was taken care of by her friend Oľga Textorisová, a talented writer who worked in Stara Pazova as teacher, because for the so-called pan-Slav the conditions were more favourable here in the period of ethnic oppression. In that milieu, Maša wrote her first preserved poem called *Slovan drotar* (*Slav, the Tinker*).²³

Let us remind that in her memorial confessions she briefly mentions the first poem she wrote in Slovak in response to the death of her grandmother (Haľamová, 1988: 16). But she talked about her first poem in some detail in a radio speech for young people:

21 Baloghová, Viera: Inc. *Prvého augusta som...* (On the first of August I...) Memories of M. Haľamová inspired by the visit on 21 February 1989. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

22 Ibidem.

23 Haľamová, Maša: *Slovan drotar* (*Slav, the Tinker*), 13 June 1918, [manuscript]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.



Manuscript of the poem *Slovan drotar* by Maša Haľamová (Stará Pazova, 13 June 1918).

"I remember an old apple tree with its two branches so tangled that they formed a comfortable seat and backrest in the treetop. Whoever sat on it was invisible. [...] I have appropriated this apple tree, and [...] I wrote my first poem in it. How old could I be then? About nine years old. The poem, of course, has not survived, but I remember writing it once in the summer, when I was very clingy to my grandmother, and when our mother left us forever, with the same fragrant pillow under her head, also covered with March violets from our orchard. I cried my first big grief out in that poem."²⁴

But let's go back to the first poem written in Serbian which the author said it was a "terribly long verse form" (E. Ā., 1978: 7). She recalled the extraordinary inspiration in one of interviews for the newspaper:

"I remember how a Slovak tinker was once singing the song Nitra, dear, Nitra, you Slovak mother, when I look at you, I have to weep. We invited him to come in and asked him what was new at home. At that time, I felt a very strong desire to return home as soon as possible." (Kovalčiková, 1988: 9)

Teacher Oľga Textorisová was a model of an unbreakable Slovak woman for Maša. This is evidenced by a four-page lecture (typewritten copy with manuscript corrections) to the radio programme about Oľga Textorisová²⁵ which she concluded as follows: "I would like the example of this precious woman, whom few knew for her great modesty, to shine on our paths."²⁶

She also mentioned her insight and talent in her forthcoming article *Book – the Golden Key in the Parent's Hand*, where she stated that she had read it right from various originals as fluently as if she was reading a perfect translation of a Russian, French, German or Hungarian original. Thanks to her, Maša got to know Czech fairy tales and Serbo-Croatian junky songs, which she soon didn't even have to translate for

24 Haľamová, Maša: Inc. *Milí mladí poslucháči...* (Dear young listeners...) LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file add No. 3476/04.

25 Pullmanová, Maša: *O vzácnej žene...* (About a rare woman), [manuscript note: 2 July 20:15 hrs, year not specified]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, sign. No. 216 BI 39 [a typescript copy with corrections], 4 pp.

26 Ibidem.

her.²⁷ A few years later, in the script of the educational programme, she once again wrote with gratitude: "She opened up the gate to the world of beauty for me. The fairy-tale and the realistic one that surrounds us, it only needs to be known and perceived. And this precious woman has taught me that."²⁸

Similarly, Oľga's sister, Izabela Textorisová – a postwoman in Blatnica and the first Slovak botanist, discoverer of the Alpine mildew and thistle (*Carduus Textorianus* Marg) – had an influence on shaping her relationship with the natural beauties of the Turiec region:

"I had a beautiful childhood under Plešovica on the edge of Gäder. Izabela Textorisová was taking me on her botanical expeditions. I collected flowers from the steep cliffs in Korský dol, Krížna, Ploská, in Gäder and Blatnická dolina valley in her herbarium. There was no rock I wouldn't have climbed when Aunt Bela showed me a rare flower by pointing her stick. These were my little universities'."²⁹

She remembered her with undisguised admiration and respect:

"[...] how much force was needed for the first Slovak botanist to grow out of her-self-taught – in the scientifically Austrian-Hungarian conditions, scientifically savvy, educated, insightful and nationally aware! Without schooling, only with her own will and perseverance, almost in poverty, day after day, strict with herself, she absorbed the knowledge like a thirsty flower catches dewdrops on a parched rock." (Haľamová, 1988: 13)

M. Haľamová became fully aware of her Slovak roots when she returned home. But it was not to her birth house in Blatnica, but to Martin. In 1920, her father Jozef Haľama (Sýkora, 1990: 86 – 87), who

27 Haľamová, Maša: *Kniha – zlatý kľúčik v ruke rodiča* (Book – the Golden Key in the Parent's Hand), [typescript, date not specified]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

28 Nodžák, Jozef: *Kto nebol v čítanke*. (Who was not in the reader), [script]. Bratislava: The main editorial office of educational programmes, 1991. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

29 Lehotský, Ivan: *S poetkou lásky a prírody*. (With a poetess of love and nature). (For the broadcast on Sunday at 16:00 hrs.) [Source not identified., Sunday 5 May 1963]. In: LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

had been separated from his family for a long time during the war, also returned to Slovakia. Oľga Grebeníková, his daughter from his first marriage, captured her father's return from Russia in her memoirs: "Sad was the arrival of my father from Russia. He used to import crates of various goods; they were gifts for our entire family in Blatnica, now he carried a ragged suitcase with some clothes. Russia has overcome a bloody revolution, ours have managed to save at least their bare lives. [...] My father suddenly became an old man, broken in spirit and body."³⁰ In the post-revolutionary atmosphere, Maša began to study in the temporary conditions of the Martin Grammar School (1919):³¹

"Well, in our *prima*, there were about a dozen of us, we sat on boards for the first months, laid on barrels, which were lent by the Martin brewery. We wrote on our knees. And yet it was the most beautiful classroom, because it was free to carry the words of our dear mother tongue."³²

At the grammar school, she became acquainted with the poems of K. J. Erben, I. Krasko, and P. O. Hviezdoslav. She admitted that the closest to her was Ivan Krasko, because his verses "seemed to run smoothly and spoke to a girl's ripped-open heart."³³ During that period, she published an assignment from the admittance examination (1924) entitled *You Know The Bird by the Feathers, Man by His Speech* for the first

30 Grebeníková-Haľamová, Oľga: *Spomienky. (Memories)*. p. 34 [typescript, 38 pp., dated: May 1985, with signature *Maši Oľga*]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

31 The year is given e.g. in a TV show script: Nodžák, Jozef: *Kto nebol v čítanke (Who was not in the reader)* [script]. Bratislava: The main editorial office of educational programmes, 1991. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03, and also in the interview: Vrbková, Veronika: *Ako tá limba... S Mašou Haľamovou. (Like that stone pine ... With Maša Haľamová)*. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

32 Haľamová, Maša: *Inc. Milí mladí poslucháči... (Dear young listeners...)* LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

33 Haľamová, Maša: *Rámcové otázky pre rozhovor s poetkou, zaslúžilou umelkyňou M. Haľamovou (Framework questions for an interview with a poet, merited artist M. Haľamovou)*, [typescript, questions 3 pp., manuscript 15 pp. of answers]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

time in the proceedings of the Martin Grammar School.³⁴ In Bratislava, where she continued her secondary school studies, her first poems published in magazines were written. Maša Haľamová spoke of them as timid attempts and revealed: "[...] they were circulating among our classmates at times, for some of which we composed a tune, some of which the boys made parodies – I had many bitter moments because of them. But several poems that I wrote at the age of sixteen were included in the first collection *Dar*."³⁵ Her secondary school first fruits got into the hands of Andrej Mráz and from him to Štefan Krčméry, who as editor of *Slovenské pohľady* has been constantly encouraging her to go on writing. However, their correspondence has not been preserved, because during the Slovak National Uprising the poetess lost her archive. Only one letter has survived (dated 1 March 1930),³⁶ in which Štefan Krčméry apologised for preferring a poem by Viera Szathmáry-Vlčková (*Za otcom*) (*In Memory of My Father*) in the new issue of *Slovenské pohľady*. The author's shy beginnings in connection with the ballad poem she wrote after the death of her sister Anna Haľamová († March 14, 1921) remained in the author's memory:

"I wrote the above-mentioned ballad for myself, as the girls write in their diaries, without literary ambitions. I healed my sorrow in it over the loss of my sister. For more than a year, *Balada o klamných ružiach (Ballad of Deceptive Roses)* was hidden in a notebook among school notebooks, until someone recited it at a student party, and so it got into the hands of the editor of *Slovenské pohľady* – Štefan Krčméry. And since then, whenever Štefan Krčméry asked me for a text, it was binding for me."³⁷

34 Haľamová, Maša: *Vtáka poznáš po perí, človeka po reči (You Know The Bird by the Feathers, Man by His Speech)*, [manuscript, dated: 14/10/1924]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

35 *Boli ste veľmi mladá... (You were very young)*, (interview). [Source not identified.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

36 Krčméry, Štefan: a letter to Maša Haľamová dated 01/03/1930. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

37 Roll, Dušan: *Haľamová Maša: Vyznania (Confessions)* [Design and compilation from the archives of M. Haľamová, 2007 – 2008]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

She later wrote about her first creative attempts:

"I began to write poems when still too young, and then, longing for the tenderness and love that I was cut short of as a child and especially at the time of maturation, I expressed what was affecting [me] the most at that moment."

[Added by I. H.]³⁸

Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, thus became an artistically creative milieu, where in the bustle of cultural life after the establishment of Czechoslovakia (1918), thanks to Štefan Krčméry, the literary salons of Hana Gregorová and under the influence of lectures by Albert Pražák,³⁹ the talent of Maša Haľamová developed. In this turbulent period, her poem *Zo sanatória (From the Sanatorium)* was published for the first time in *Slovenské pohľady*⁴⁰ under the pseudonym of Zornička (Haľamová, 1925: 384 – 385).

38 Haľamová, Maša: *Rámcové otázky pre rozhovor s poetkou, zaslúžilou umelkyňou M. Haľamovou (Framework questions for an interview with a poet, merited artist M. Haľamovou)*, [typescript, questions 3 pp., manuscript 15 pp. of answers]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

39 In the preserved letter, Albert Pražák praises her poems and encourages her to continue her work: *"Your verses are a painful fraction of your moods, highly personalised, not impersonal, but a fraction truly poetic, full of awareness of poetic excitement and discipline."* In: Correspondence of A. Pražák to M. Haľamová in 1926 [manuscript]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

40 The poem was dated in the magazine: Bratislava, May 1925 (Haľamová, 1925: 385). The information in the archival materials is not unambiguous, but the available remarks indicate that during the postgraduate study (economic course) she went on a field training in a sanatorium. In: Ľapajová, Elena: *O červených makoch, láske a poézii alebo Dar okamihu. (About red poppies, love and poetry or The Gift of the Moment)*. [Unspecified source, pp. 10 – 11.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04. According to another document, she worked part-time in a precisely unspecified law office in Bratislava, where she wrote a poem, complaining at her desk, *I complain: "Good people pulled me out of this Bratislava law office, and fate took me to the High Tatras."* In: Haľamová, Maša: Inc. *Milí mladí poslucháči... (Dear young listeners...)* LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file add No. 3476/04.

Tatra Reminiscences

Living in the High Tatras was an important stage in the life of Maša Haľamová. In many of her poems, therefore, it is not just the environment of the Sanatorium, the house by the lake that resonate, but also the natural conditions which she depicted in her memoirs without embellishments:

"One thing is to come to the Tatras for a short time, to enjoy the unique beauty in the most favourable summer or winter period, and the other thing is to live there permanently. It is necessary to adapt to the harsh climate, not to succumb to depression, when a thick fog lies on the hills for as long as weeks and the whirlpools are whipping and uprooting the spruces from the roots, until they take your breath away [...]" (Haľamová, 1988: 24 – 25)

She lived in the Tatras for thirty years. Life experience was naturally transferred, e.g. to the title of Haľamová's portrait – in the folk costume of Dačolom near Krupina – *"Tatranská pieseň"* ("Tatra Song") by František Hofman⁴¹ or in the title of the newspaper article *"Škovránok Tatier"* (Skylark of the Tatras) by J. Tatran.⁴² Both were concise and close-fitting. Nový Smokovec and Dr. Szontágh Sanatorium (specialising in the treatment of lung diseases) was her fateful crossroads. After graduating from the secondary school in Martin and Bratislava (graduate of lower and upper grammar school classes)⁴³ and after a one-year course at

41 Hofman, František: Inc. *Bylo to v roce 1933... (It was back in 1933 ...)*, (fictionalised memories). LA SNL, sign. 181 CH 14a. According to a letter to her sister Oľga of 5 January 1933, she received a painting from Hofman on New Year's Eve 1932. LA SNL, add No. 3455/03. The portrait of the poetess (according to the confirmation of receipt of the fee of 31 January 1985) was also painted by the academic painter Emília Urbanová. LA SNL, add No. 3455/03.

42 Tatran, Jožo: *Maša Haľamová recitovala v Prahe na večere mladých Slovákov. (Maša Haľamová recited at an evening of young Slovaks in Prague)*. In: LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

43 Information on her education is ambiguous. The burgher school in Martin and the girls' school in Bratislava are also mentioned in another source (e.g. Kovalčíková, 1988: 9). There is no document in the archival materials that would specify the data.

business school⁴⁴ she entered life here on 1 June 1926. Therefore, as she stated in one of her interviews, leaving after her husband's death (1956) was not easy at all:

*"I have spent most of my life in the Tatras and during that time a stone pine roots deep into the Tatra granite. If I were to compare myself to this tree, transplanting would be like extinction. What can I thank for finding the conditions, the soil that still caught the fine capillaries of the roots? Of course, I still found enough love in and around me, in the circle of my closest collaborators."*⁴⁵

The first Tatra letters addressed to her sister Oľga⁴⁶ (02/09/1926) testify that during the first months of her stay, when she started working in the Sanatorium Admissions Office, she struggled with health complications,⁴⁷ but at the same time, the emotional shackles experienced in the bustle of Bratislava resounded in her. She mentioned her first meeting with MUDr. Ján Pullman,⁴⁸ her husband-to-be, in an interview in which she also mentioned her plans to earn some money and study medicine:

44 In a letter from Nový Smokovec (4 June 1926), M. Haľamová thanks Samuel Búľovský, a pharmacist from Martin, for his personal care and the job in the Tatras where she has been working since 1 June. (Rusnáková, 2001: 17)

45 Vrbková, Veronika: *Ako tá limba... S Mašou Haľamovou. (Like that stone pine ... With Maša Haľamová)*. LA SNL, add No. 3476/04.

46 Oľga Haľamová, married Grebeníková, was a sister from her father's first marriage. Until the end of Oľga's life († 31 December 1991 at the age of 97), Maša maintained sensitive contact with her. As she said herself, in the difficult moments after the loss of her mother, she replaced her: *"Because when our mother died in the middle of the war, it was my so-called half-sister who replaced my mother."* In: Haľamová, Maša: *Lahšie by sa hovorilo... (It would be easier to say...)* [memories, speech, typescript, p. 3]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

47 Correspondence of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga of 2 September 1926. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03. In some interviews, apparently unauthorised, there was talk of her struggle with tuberculosis. She refuted this distortion in a letter to her sister Oľga of 2 September 1926, where she mentions an examination by Dr. Kubík, who did not confirm her health concerns half-broken by tuberculosis. In: *Ibidem*.

48 After graduating in 1925, he went to Nový Smokovec, where he worked until 1928 in Dr. Szontágh Sanatorium and as of 1929 he worked in the State Spa in Štrbské Pleso, where he devoted himself to the climatic treatment of lung diseases and bronchial asthma. (Sýkora, 1990: 86 – 98)

"I arrived in a poor condition. My elder sisters were also telling me to eat, to recover. So I went to the out-patient at the beginning. And there a ten-year-old doctor was standing there in his white coat, a curly head, a black moustache, 47 kilogrammes, miss, that's not enough, you have to put on some weight," he said." (*Ibidem*)

Their moments spent together in sports brought them closer and in a few weeks she received a bouquet of red roses on her eighteenth birthday, and three years later they got married on 29 September 1930. As she said: *"A love for life. Unfortunately, then death came."*⁴⁹ However, it was a time when she found her home in the Tatras which she had missed since her mother's death:

*"It wasn't until I was standing on my own feet when I was eighteen that I got a small attic room in the Tatras, where I planted the roots of my future home, that was the biggest gift for me ... The Tatras are my home."*⁵⁰

That was especially because her bond with the Tatras as mentioned in her *Vyznania (Confessions)* was not common:

*"There I was spinning my girl's dreams in the attic, and down on the ground floor in the Sanatorium out-patient under the white armour of the medical gown, the warm heart of a good man was beating. It was beating in an approaching way and in harmony with mine – you and me – me and you, you and me – me and you. Forever. Forever? It seemed incredible, mysterious, and miraculous. But at that time, I didn't know all about the power of love. I was at its very beginning, enamoured and happy."*⁵¹

49 Dr. Ján Pullman died on 28 September 1956 at Štrbské Pleso at the age of 58 (he was buried on 30 September 1956 in Nový Smokovec by a Roman Catholic ceremony). In: *Parte Jána Pullmana (Obituary for Ján Pullman)*. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03. According to a letter from Rina Hálová, he was transferred to the National Cemetery in 1984/1985. In: A letter from R. Hálová to M. Haľamová of 20 February 1985. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

50 Ľapajová, Elena: *O červených makoch, láske a poézii alebo Dar okamihu. (About red poppies, love and poetry or The Gift of the Moment)*. [Unspecified source, pp. 10 – 11.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

51 Roll, Dušan: *Maša Haľamová: Vyznania (Confessions)* [2]. [From archival and published texts by M. Haľamová prepared for the 100th anniversary of her birth; typed, Xerox + PC output]. LA SNL, add No. 3724/2009. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

A fateful memory of the expressed desire emerges from the context of life reality:

"When I was a young secondary school student, I guess in the tertia, I went for a school trip for the first time at Štrbské Pleso, we were passing a detached house by the lake. I was looking at it in the moonlight, as if it was from a fairy tale. I said to a classmate, "One day I would like to have a home here."⁵²

She also remembered her husband with respect and happiness in later conversations:

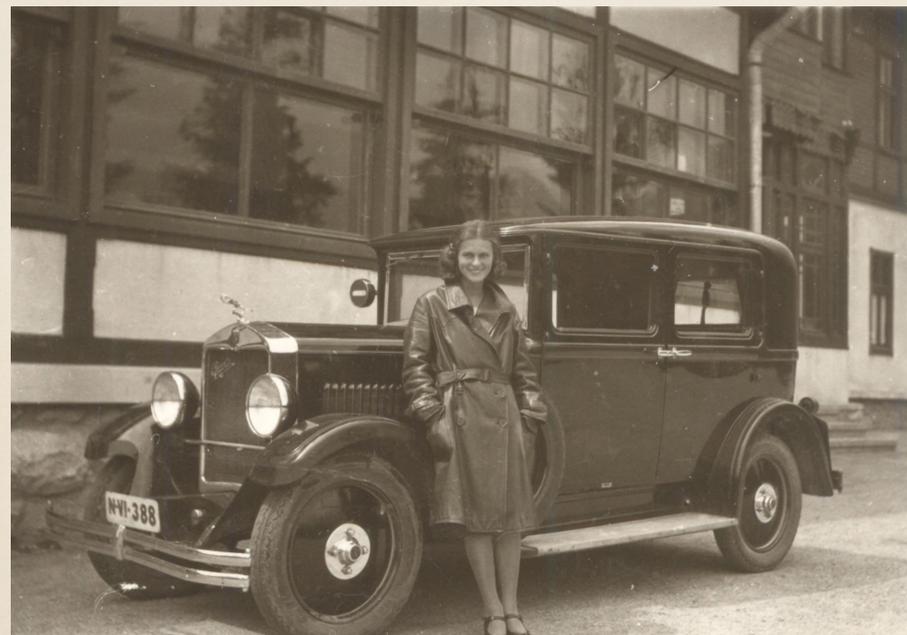
"I fell in love at eighteen, got married at twenty, and was overwhelmed by a feeling of amazing support that I had never experienced before or since for many long years to come. At that time, I also fell silent, only writing on rare occasions because I was completely engaged in my husband's work. As a doctor in charge of a relatively large Tatra area, he had to work as a nurse and a driver himself, and I was happy to be of help to him. He was an excellent man, selfless, self-sacrificing, and a good physician."⁵³ (Kovalčíková, 1988: 9)

Maša Haľamová interrupted her creative writing at Dr. Szontágh Sanatorium for a time. She vividly commented on the unfavourable situation in one of her letters: *"I don't write poems at all and for the time being I don't even have any hope of inspiration, I am working hard now as a horse ..."*⁵⁴ In the Sanatorium, she encountered the tragic fates of the people, which did not go unanswered. She wrote about her experiences in the manuscript of the interview being prepared: *"I saw so much suffering that it broke me and made me desperate."* And it was at those moments that she read the poetry by the Czech poet Jiří Wolker.⁵⁴

52 Haľamová, Maša: *Maša Haľamová – sama doma so svojou poéziou...* (*Maša Haľamová – Alone at Home with Her Poetry*) (Broadcast on the Czechoslovak Radio on 24 May 1967). [Source not identified.]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

53 The first letters state that she worked on a journal for clients of the Palace together with Dr. L. Izák. In: Correspondence of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga of 7 September and 21 September 1926. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03

54 Haľamová, Maša: *Rámcové otázky pre rozhovor s poetkou, zaslúžilou umelkyňou M. Haľamovou* (*Framework questions for an interview with a poet, merited artist M. Haľamovou*), [typescript, questions 3 pp., manuscript 15 pp. of answers]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.



Maša Haľamová having a rest.

Despite the difficult situation, her debut collection *Dar (Gift)* was published in 1928, for which she received an award – a six-month stay in Paris (3 October 1929 – 15 January 1930),⁵⁵ where she could attend a French language course at the prestigious Sorbonne. In her letters addressed to her sister Oľga, she shared her experiences in more detail. In them, we read that she spent time not just in the lectures of the course, but also in the theatre or in the museum of fine arts. In the article *Cesta za inšpiráciou (Path to Inspiration)* published in Ján Smrek's journal *Elán*, she recapitulated her stay after two years from a critical perspective:

"I expected a lot from that trip, but I would make myself unnecessarily interesting if I told you everything I found in Paris. Because I did not find anything there for my inner world. It was a few impressions that every young girl experiences for the first time in the world, it was a longing for love, a few social observations, something of visual perceptions. Nothing more. My own, deepest creative force seemed to have left me here and stretched far into the mountains to wait for me there." (Haľamová, 1932: 2)

Let's now go back to family ties and look into the network of interpersonal relationships. At Štrbské pleso, the Pullmans were distant from the cultural and social life, but during the alpine wanderings who used to be their guests, for example, were Karel Čapek and Oľga Scheinpflugová (probably also in the company of Josef Čapek), patron of young talents Štefan Krčmery and his wife, but also the Czech writer Marie Majerová, who was humanly very close to her.⁵⁶ Villa Marína on

55 In a letter to her sister Oľga of 15 October 1929 (i.e. in the second in order, because the first one has not been preserved), she writes that he has been staying there for twelve days. From this we may conclude that the first day of stay falls on 3 October 1929. The letters from Paris are preserved until December 1929. In a letter dated 15 November 1929, she writes that, due to financial problems, she would remain in Paris only until 15 January (1930). From their correspondence, we learn that in the Louvre she was captivated by the painting of St. Anna by Leonardo da Vinci, but also from the golden colours of Rembrandt. Madame Récamier is also mentioned. In: Correspondence of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga of 1929. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

56 Haľamová, Maša: Inc. *Keď si spomínam na zjazd slovenských spisovateľov. (When I recall the Congress of Slovak Writers)*, [typescript and manuscript with correction marks,

the shores of Štrbské pleso was also honoured by visits by her long-time friend Margita Figuli⁵⁷ and her husband and friends from Bratislava, painters and writers, e.g. Milan Pišút,⁵⁸ Andrej Mráz, and Dobroslav Chrobák, with whom they weren't taking trips, but also Zoltán Palugyay and František Votruba. The Swedish poet Erik Blomberg was among foreign guests; he translated Haľamová's poems into an anthology of Czech and Slovak poetry.⁵⁹ From among the famous personalities, the Czech poet Jiří Wolker (1900 – 1924), had an exceptional place in the Tatra list; he was treated in Tatranská Polianka, but unsuccessfully. Even though M. Haľamová was humanly related to his tragic fate and social feelings, she did not know him personally. In her poems, e.g. *Jiřímu Wolkerovi, Sen (To Jiří Wolker, A Dream)*,⁶⁰ she just addressed him in her imagination. As she herself stated, she sacrificed half of her first salary for a leather-bound book of Wolker's poetry, which had a profound effect on her.⁶¹ The author's commentary on the poem (inc. *Sedem dní tvojimi stopami (Seven Days in Your Footsteps...)* published in the radio broadcast *Maša Haľamová – sama doma so svojou poéziou (Maša Haľamová – Alone at Home with Her Poetry)*:

incomplete, 2 pp.]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

57 A personal thank you for a sincere friendship can be found in the book of memories *Vyznania*. (Haľamová, 1988: 54 – 55).

58 In the Tatra environment, Milan Pišút dedicated his poem to Maša Haľamová *Za tvoje verše (For your verses)*, [dated: at Štrbské Pleso on 27 August 1936]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

59 Ľapajová, Elena: *O červených makoch, láske a poézii alebo Dar okamihu. (About red poppies, love and poetry or The Gift of the Moment)*. [Unspecified source, pp. 10 – 11.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

60 The poem was written during her stay in Paris at the Sorbonne (1929), where M. Haľamová was improving her French.

61 Ľapajová, Elena: *O červených makoch, láske a poézii alebo Dar okamihu. (About red poppies, love and poetry or The Gift of the Moment)*. [Unspecified source, pp. 10 – 11.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

*“Memorial ceremony for the beloved poet. With a book of his verses in my lap at the turning point behind Tatranská Polianka. Encounter with poetry. Shivering and dizziness!”*⁶²

Some archival documents mention their indirect encounters during their lifetime, e.g. Viera Baloghová⁶³ wrote in her memories of her visit to M. Haľamová (dated 21 February 1989) that Haľamová did not know J. Wolker personally, she only saw him sitting on a bench in Tatranská Polianka. However, the authoress herself clearly denied their meeting. Among several articles, where she responded more broadly to the question about her relationship with Jiří Wolker, we select the following:

“When Jiří Wolker died, I was sitting on the bench of the Bratislava girls’ grammar school and I was a little over fifteen years old. It was not until three years later in the Tatras that I met J. Wolker in his poetry and in the memories of his nurses, a doctor, and a maid in Tatranská Polianka. Everyone still remembered him vividly and answered my questions emotionally moved. So I composed a portrait of a poet who came into this world to build up his life according to the image of his heart.” (Nižnánsky, 1978: 6 – 7)

Imrich Vaško captured this fact in literary history in a factual way:

“In the Tatra environment, she followed in the footsteps of Jiří Wolker, on a mountain path from Smokovec to Polianka, and from the still fresh memories of the people who stood by him in the last months of his life; she composed a picture of Wolker a man who completely matched the picture of Wolker the poet.” (Vaško, 1984: 589)

The Czech artist Ján Hála also took a place of honour with the Pullmans⁶⁴ with his wife Rina (Rinaldina) née Marie Chlupsová,

62 Haľamová, Maša: *Maša Haľamová – sama doma so svojou poéziou... (Maša Haľamová – Alone at Home with Her Poetry)* (Broadcast on Czechoslovak Radio on 24 May 1967). [Source not identified.]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

63 Baloghová, Viera: Inc.: *Prvého augusta som... (On the first of August I...)* LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

64 Ján Hála (1890 – 1959) – Czech painter, graphic artist, illustrator, originally from Blatná (southern Bohemia) – lived in Važec since 1923, where his wife, the promising pianist Marie Chlupsová, also joined him. He was fascinated by the life of the sub-

(Rusnáková, 2001: 119). Captivated by the Tatras, he lived with his family in Važec for many years.⁶⁵ Haľamová was associated with him by the same source of inspiration – Tatra nature, but also people from the distinctive Važec. After his death, they maintained written communication with R. Hálová when she left Slovakia. Slovakia, as she herself admitted in a letter, was associated with the best years of their lives. Their children were born here, and works of art inspired by the distinctive Važec were created here, from which a gallery was later established.⁶⁶ On the occasion of M. Haľamová’s 70th birthday, Rina Hálová wrote a short medallion in which she introduced Maša as an exceptional person: *“Her poems are a mirror of a pure soul – her warm heart, which has always been full of love for man.”*⁶⁷

The mountaineer Martin Lehotský was one of the Pullmans’ personal friends. His climatic observations (since 1873) were followed by Ján Pullman in the treatment of asthma. The meteorologist Anton Bečvář was also their close friend,⁶⁸ who set up an observatory with an observatory dome at Skalnaté pleso (Sýkora, 1990). Their rewarding conversations left visible marks in the poetic oeuvre of M. Haľamová.

Tatra people, whose colour he immortalised in his paintings. At the end of his life, he returned to his native region. In: *Pyramída* (an encyclopaedic magazine of modern man), p. 1224 [press media cut-out section]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

65 J. Hála came to Slovakia with a friend of his, but when he was supposed to return home after a month, he stated: *“One needs to be here and live with these people. I decided to stay.”* His wife, the author of the article, completed the memoirs: *“So I joined him and experienced all that beauty with him in Važec.”* In: Hálová, Rina: *Maliar Važca*. [Source not identified.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

66 In her letters to Maša Haľamová, Rina Hálová appreciates the activities of the Prime Minister of the SSR, Peter Colotka, who helped establish and expand the J. Hála Picture Gallery in Važec and organise exhibitions in Bratislava and Prague. In: Correspondence of R. Hálová to M. Haľamová dated in Blatná on 6 August 1978 and 26 April 1983. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

67 Hálová, Rina: *Maša Haľamová – moja priateľka (Maša Haľamová – my a friend of mine)*, [typescript, dated 01/08/1978 – the date is written on the underside of the letter in pencil]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

68 He published the results of starry sky mapping in both English and Russian.

Skiing has become an integral part of M. Pullmanová's Tatra life. She relaxed or travelled distances to patients in her husband's circuit on skis. The most convincing proof of her sporting commitment was in her participation in the World Ski Championships – FIS – at Štrbské Pleso in 1935, where she was the youngest referee in the field of ski jumping. She wrote an article on her experience, especially on the unexpected turn of events and the smiling conclusion, which was published in the periodical press. A typewritten version is available in the archive, from which we select the following as an example of her storytelling talent:

“It could not have been worse. The whirlwind grew stronger every minute, taking a breath away. It was throwing people in the snowdrifts. The road from Mlynice to Štrbské Pleso, this small walk almost along the plain, turned into a terrible maze. Once the strong wind twisted, man lost his/her way and wandered in a vicious circle. The tracks became snowbound instantly. I returned home around the lake; it was throwing me from tree to tree. These familiar spruces brought me, albeit stunned, but still safely to the house on the shore of the lake where we lived.

Soon after, the corridor of our apartment was crowded with frail people who could no longer walk to nearby hotels. And so, instead of scoring the skiing style, which I was so much looking forward to, I pit a large samovar in the hallway and fed the poor travellers with hot tea...”⁶⁹

The Pullmans lived through World War II at Štrbské Pleso and actively participated in the illegal resistance in the Slovak National Uprising.⁷⁰ We may learn about the difficult times partly from personal correspondence, but especially from the dated records that Mária Pullmanová kept about the situation and activities of the illegal guerilla

69 Haľamová, Maša: *Spomienky rozhodcu. (Referee's memories)*. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

70 *The Certificate of Participation in the SNU*, issued by the Ministry of National Defense in 1974, is preserved in the archival materials. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

group, or from some interviews published in the press.⁷¹ Together with her husband, they helped the guerillas with food supplies and with the necessary medical treatment (Kusendová, in: Rusnáková, 2001: 77 – 78). This tense period at the end of World War II was captured by M. Haľamová in her handwritten memoirs of guerillas Ján Rašo and Štefan Morávek.⁷²

In the Bustle of the Editorial Work

After the death of her husband, Maša Haľamová's trip was to Martin. Memories of leaving Villa Marína evoked nostalgia in her even after three years (1959). She shared her feelings in a letter to a female friend of hers:⁷³

“Today, it's been three years since a moving truck left from the front of Marína – leaving Tatriška behind, in the truck frightened Petrišorka, Rudo at the steering wheel and me by him, outraged and embarrassed. So we disappeared into the fog and silver thaw just in an evening as it is today. Well, this is the jubilee. Years and dreams are irreversible /Pushkin wrote this/.”

She worked at the *Osveta* publishing house in Martin since 1956⁷⁴ and then moved to Bratislava, where she worked in the editorial office of the original literature of the *Mladé letá* publishing house as of 1958. In the team of well-known personalities – Mária Ďuričková, Mária Jančová, Eleonóra Gašparová, Jana Šimulčíková, Ján Turan or

71 Pullmanová, Mária: *Zpráva o činnosti*. (Report on the participation of the Štrbské Pleso settlement in the SNU; from 31/08/1944 – 29/01/1945). LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

72 Haľamová, Maša: *Prednesené v TV* [manuscript, dated XI/1988]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

73 Correspondence of M. Haľamová with Dagmar Blechová [pediatrician; a letter dated: Martin, 16/11/1959]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No.3455/03.

74 She had moved to her sister Ľudmila and she already spent Christmas in the family circle (Rusnáková, 2001: 123).

Rudo Moric⁷⁵ – she focused mainly on original children’s literature. She published several successful books, e.g. adaptation of the folk tale *Mechúrik Košťúrik s kamarátmi* (*Mechúrik Košťúrik with Friends*) (1962), the short fiction *Petrišorka* (1965), the folder *Hodinky* (*A Watch*) (1966), the fairy tale *O sýkorke z kokosového domčeka* (*On a Tit From a Coconut House*) (1976). In 1968, she was awarded the title of Merited Artist for her contribution to literature and culture. The last editorial work in December 1973, before retiring, was *Knihá rozprávok* (*The Book of Fairy Tales*) by Milan Rúfus, which was not published as a book until the pre-Christmas period in 1975. Haľamová received it from M. Rúfus with the dedication: “*To the godmother of this book (and not just this one) with the Christmas wish M. Rúfus.*” As she stated in the margin of the book, she was the first reader and critic of his “*boy’s verses handwritten in a copy book*” (Rusnáková, 2001: 73).⁷⁶ She was joined with Rúfus by a personal friendship. A brief mention in the letter shows that in the days of “*when my world collapsed so suddenly*” (the death of her husband) he was staying close by.⁷⁷ She also felt mutual understanding in his critical evaluation of her poems: “*And I greatly appreciate the poetic afterword by M. Rúfus, who, like few others, can understand the secret of simplicity. His words are an encouragement and a safe plan for me in the fragile world of poetry.*”⁷⁸

75 A poem dedicated and signed by thirteen colleagues on the occasion of her 55th birthday in 1963 has been preserved. In: *Mladé letá*, Bratislava: Inc. *Dobrá víla... báseň venovaná M. Haľamovej* (*The Good Fairy ... a poem dedicated to M. Haľamová*), [typescript, 1 p., 1963]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

76 Haľamová mentions her departure from the editorial office in more detail in the book *Vyznania* (*Confessions*) in the part *Na rozlúčku* (*Farewell*). (Haľamová, 1988: 57).

77 Haľamová, Maša: *Rámcové otázky pre rozhovor s poetkou, zaslúžilou umelkyňou M. Haľamovou* (*Framework questions for an interview with a poet, merited artist M. Haľamovou*), [typescript, questions 3 pp., manuscript 15 pages of answers]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

78 In the presentation, she responds to the publication of the collection *Básne*. In: *Úkp: Opýtali sme sa. (We asked)*. [Source not identified.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

M. Rúfus wrote the farewell poem *Jazero* (*The Lake*) (Rúfus, 1988) after Maša Haľamová’s death which he ended with thoughtful three verses:

„Stíchnite, slová:
ryby spievajú.
Už bola vyvolaná po mene.“

(“*Silence, words: / the fish are singing. / She has already been called by name.*”)

“By the Will, Free, Free Will”

In an interview with Stanislav Gajdoš entitled *I had a nice life* (in: Rusnáková, 2001: 76) she answered the question, how was she in the period “*after the Mladé letá*”:

“*I live by the will, free, free will. [...] Well, how do I live? I skied a few years ago, not now. Five years ago, I was on cross-country skis in the Tatras for the last time. And not just across the lake. That was a few more kilometres a day. And then it’s over. Knowing when to leave is also an art*” (ibidem).

However, even after leaving the editorial office of the *Mladé letá* publishing house, she did not retire. The archive keeps interviews, scenarios of television and radio programmes, invitations to various ventures in which she personally participated. She was an active member of *Živena*⁷⁹ and the Association of Slovak Writers. She remained in contact with her supporters, who thanked her for the beauty of the poetic word or kept sending her their own poems with dedication or a request for opinion.⁸⁰

79 The proof is in the correspondence of Luba Pavlovičová – President of the LO of *Živena*, Association of Slovak Women – M. Haľamová of 20 March 1991. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

80 E.g. J. Rybák, M. Malá, P. Stančíková, M. Šugová, J. Karol. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

Seven re-editions of the collective work during her lifetime were a proof of her special position in cultural life (1955 – 1983).⁸¹ She was a role model for many, but with a profound reach in the line of beginning female poets. She followed the literary scene and was also interested in her successors. Among the personal notes, we find a handwritten opinion on a small piece of paper:

*“It is strange that such a sing-song nation with such an ample culture of folk literature, in which women mostly participated, did not have many poetesses. [...] In the consciousness of poetry adorers, e.g. Lýdia Vadkertyová firmly rooted, Gizela Slavkovská recently made her promising debut with a cultivated chamber collection, and in the verses of the youngest Božena Trilecová, and there is also a glittering spark that suggests talent. Surely we all want nothing to obscure the sources from which Slovak modern women’s poetry begins to flow.”*⁸²

She was similarly positive about the poetry of Magda Baloghová in her collection *Zrkadlenie (Mirroring)* (1983). She agreed with the words of the critic V. Turčány that it is *“one of the most sensitive depictions of love in the oeuvre of Slovak female poets”* and added that her oeuvre *“is mature, polished in both content and form”* (Vrbická, 1987: 6). In Slovak culture, she was a sought-after literary authority, a poetess respected by readers of various ages, and cultural officials and political leaders sought her not just on their anniversaries.⁸³ She was awarded the award of National Artist in 1983 for her life-long oeuvre and contributions to building Slovak national culture.

81 The seventh edition was published in 1983 [compiled and afterword written by Milan Rúfus, illustrated by Jana Kiselová-Siteková], when Maša Haľamová was awarded the title of National Artist.

82 Haľamová, Maša: *Poznámky (Notes)*, [manuscript]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

83 Official congratulatory letters from several State and public officials are available in the archive. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

She completed her way of life as a *“living testament of the heart”*⁸⁴ (Babín, 1995: 20) by her own epilogue:

*„Je čas
zaspievať pieseň vdľaky.
I za ten chodníček krivolaký,
po ktorom bolo prejsť.“*

(“It’s time / to sing a song of gratitude. / And for the crooked sidewalk, / which was there to go through.”)

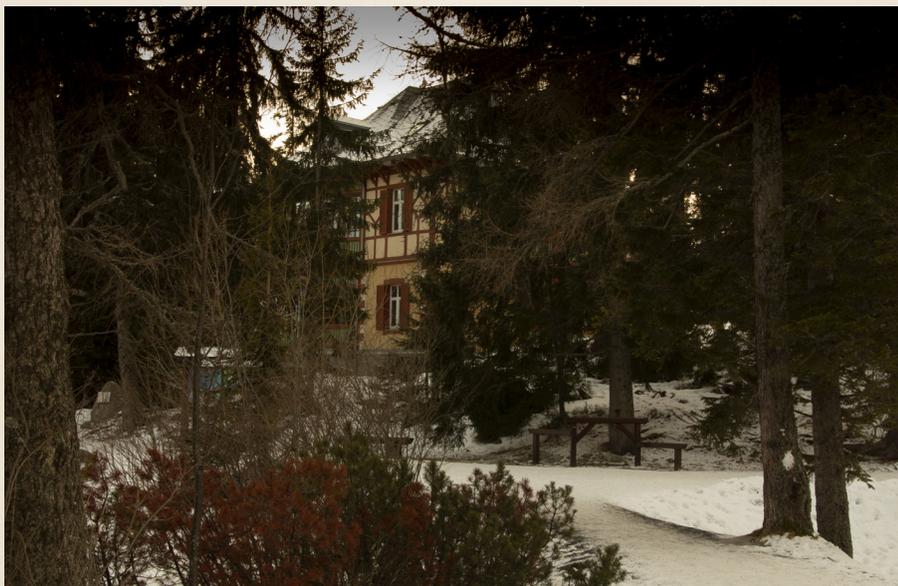
In honour of the poetess M. Haľamová, a memorial room was established in 1998 in the Blatnica church, and on 4-7 July 2002, a memorial plaque with a symbolic edelweiss and verse was unveiled at Villa Marína in Štrbské Pleso:

*„Na konci
mojej
križovatky
stojí dom
na brehu jazera.
Skutočný,
nevysnívaný.“*

*(“At the end of / my / crossroads / stands the house / on the shores of the lake.
“Real, / undreamt of.”)*⁸⁵.

84 This is a concise statement by M. Haľamová. These verses, published in an article by E. Babín (1995: 20), are a reminder of the poet’s dedication in a book of 1983. However, they are also part of a personal postcard dated May 1983 with an illustration of a red poppy flower by L. Fulla. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

85 The venture took place on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the city of the High Tatras in cooperation with the *Tranoscius* publishing house in Liptovský Mikuláš and Matica slovenská in Martin. In: Zimániová, T. (interviewer): *Z úcty k poetke. (Na Štrbskom Plese pribudne tabuľa na pamiatku Maše Haľamovej.)* Out of respect for the poetess. (A plaque will be displayed at Štrbské Pleso in memory of Maša Haľamová.) [Source not identified, dated: 23/05/2002.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.



Villa Marína in Štrbské Pleso (2021)
Photographer: Renáta Novotná Markovičová, Košice



Villa Marína in Štrbské Pleso (2021)
Photographer: Renáta Novotná Markovičová, Košice

Notes on Poetic Inspiration (Self-references)

*"I know I put not just a bit in my verses,
but my whole heart.
Every poem, it's me."⁸⁶*

The key to the interpretation of a poetic text can also be offered to the reader by the author him/herself. In the imaginary dialogue, open the questions of the genesis of the text, its authorial and contemporaneous context. The available archival materials also include M. Haľamová's authorial comments on some poems of the post-war years.⁸⁷ She makes available in them the stimuli that led her to writing and reveals the source of poetic inspiration. She writes at the outset that she is not sure whether the reader is interested in the poem's inspiration or author's intention, i.e. *"what the author meant by that"*, but she is still asked to reveal the everyday, prosaic impulse from which the poem is born. The impetus for her was the time of World War II, which *"took us by surprise – as a whirl"*. The notes are evidence that in her writing she relied on a model reader, and the arc of communication or the hermeneutic circle was a legitimate part of her creative gesture. She writes about her inspiration in notes with undisguised awe:

"I think if the poem came out in a blessed moment, when what we have emerges from the depths, from the singing of its lowest rivers – poetry – even the subjective one – acquires its universal validity."

86 Nodžák, Jozef: *Kto nebol v čítanke (Who was not in the reader)* [script]. Bratislava: The main editorial office of educational programmes, 1991, p. 11. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

87 Haľamová, Maša: Inc. *Nie som si istá... (I'm not sure...)*, [manuscript comments on the poems]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

By carefully reading the poetess' words, we reveal the spiritual dimension of her lyrical inspiration. She offered her readers a guide to choosing the right interpretive approach that would allow him/her to discover the hidden message of her poems. Such a methodological platform was also confirmed in a short article *The Road to Inspiration* in the journal *Elán* (Haľamová, 1932: 2). She pointed out the authentic source of her poetic word and revealed a lyrical-spiritual dimension:

"It appears that the mountains simply captivated me completely. They bound me with their white shackles of a magical winter and tied me to them with the music of forests and waterfalls. This is where I work best. Inspiration comes into my soul all of a sudden, whenever I expect it least. I'm walking under Solisko. First through the forest, then higher, where the subversions and rhododendrons begin. And I am coming to a pleasant place. The rhododendron, which had never been hampered in development, grew here up wide, free, beautiful, and sprawling. Gentle white gentians grow around it. The mountains are clean – and spiritual as the face of a saint – and down the valley bathes in the sun like a happy whimsical child. I can't listen to the whispers of the mountains and the wave rises to my heart. A wave of inspiration, sacred emotion. And I have to put that feeling in my heart and carry it sometimes for weeks before I get an expression for it. Creation. This is a match. Struggle for words. Inspiration comes to me easily, excites pleasantly, while creative writing sometimes binds me into such a small ball, from which it is difficult for me to get out. I fear that the word will kill the fragile construction of inspiration. During such a struggle, when I search in vain for an expression, then comes the purest and clearest moment.

The presence escapes, there is a certain dematerialisation and the words themselves flow from the pen." (Ibidem)

She exposed the source of her poetry, which resisted avant-garde influences in a similar way in another interview:

"A spring, hidden deep in the ground, suddenly springs from under the rock. It penetrates the surface, makes its way to the sun, flows and cleans itself on sand and rocks. That it can also flow into muddy waters? It can, but as long as it flows through its path defined by nature, it remains pure, murmurs,

and sings its song. This is something I feel like that was also the case with my poetry, which spontaneously sprang up and came from my pure heart.”⁸⁸

But it was not just the poetess’ subjective vision, because this is how contemporaneous literary critics saw it (more details on pp. 49 – 59). For all of them, let us quote at least a concise excerpt from an article by Ján E. Bor: “Poetry is here an autobiography, the offspring of holy springs of lyricism, of essential boiling, of the soul”. (Bor, 1932: 3)

In the archival records we follow, we gradually come up with poetess’ comments on individual poems: *Bludný balvan*, *Zemi*, *Nepokoj*, *Na vietor polož sa*, *Pieseň pre mŕtveho vtáčika*, *V predjarí* (*The Wandering Boulder*, *The Earth*, *The Unrest*, *Lay Down on the Wind*, *A Song for a Dead Bird*, *In the Early Spring*), which were published in the collective edition of the Poems (1972, 1978, 1983) in the section Recent Poems.⁸⁹ According to the author’s accompanying words in the poem *Bludný balvan* (*The Wandering Boulder*) she still was “where the *Smrť tvoju žijem* (*Living Your Death*) collection ended”⁹⁰ and added, but then she stroke across: „~~Ťto som ju v sebe nosila~~ – (*I carried it in me for a long time*)”. Based on the preserved correspondence of M. Haľamová with the Czech translator Otto F. Babler⁹¹ we know that this poem was translated into German and published in the Zurich daily DIE TAT (No. 220, 22. 9. 1973, p. 27) under the title *Der erratische Block*. We learn that it was not just a one-

88 Lehotský, Ivan: *S poetkou lásky a prírody*. (*With a poetess of love and nature*). (On the broadcast on Sunday at 16:00 hrs.) [Source not identified., p. 14, Sunday, 5 May 1963]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

89 There were also other poems in the collective editions of the collections: *Dva dni po slnovrate* (*Two Days after the Solstice*) (In memory of L. Zúbek), *Pamäť rúk*, *Zabranej zemi a Bezmennému* (*Memory of the Hands*, *Taken Land*, and *To Nemo*) (Haľamová, 1972, 3rd edition); in the following editions (4th and 5th editions are not available in the library system), the last two poems have been omitted and replaced by others: *Videné zblízka nad jazerom*, *Nevyspievané do jarných vôd a V neskorej jeseni* (Haľamová, 1978, 6th edition; 1983, 7th edition).

90 The poem’s manuscript is dated: On All Saints’ Day 1968. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

91 The first letter was dated: Kopeček 25 September 1973 and the second letter: Kopeček, 21 January 1975. In: Correspondence of Otto F. Babler to M. Haľamová. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

time interest in her oeuvre; we know this from the second letter, in which O. F. Babler informs the authoress about the translation and publication of another poem – *Der Baum* – in the same newspaper. He also informs her of his intention to publish an anthology of Slavic poets in the German language, where she would represent the poetry of the Slovak nation and its language.⁹²

In auto-interpretations, M. Haľamová revealed that she had transformed the psychic trauma of the war into the verses of the poem *Zemi* (*To the Earth*). It was preceded by an impulse of catharsis from Dobšinský’s fairy tales, within the framework of the idea, “*He who speaks takes the burden off*,” and therefore she confirmed: “*I, too, had to utter what I felt when I looked at my native, iron-scattered Earth*.” She attributed an analogy to the poem *Nepokoj* (*Unrest*), in which she revealed the power of the subconscious – just as children, premature adults, were walking around Bratislava with kittens and puppies in baskets and bags, longing for the warmth of life and protecting defenceless creatures, so she was walking in those days of unrest with words. As she further stated, the poem *Na vietor polož sa* (*Lay Down on the Wind*) was created from similar unrest.

Of particular interest is the impetus for the poem *Pieseň pre mŕtveho vtáčika* (*A Song for a Dead Bird*). It is linked to the earlier experience of Koloman Sokol, a Slovak graphic artist living in Mexico at that time, who painted the painting of the same name – “*captivating*” – according to Maša Haľamová: “*The painting came from a strong emotional experience, you could say, from a shock*.” There used to fly a bird around his studio, which he named *chichikilot*:

“[...] *For a long time, the bird was a daily guest in the artist’s studio. It was before World War II that a catastrophe was brewing over his old homeland. One morning, the painter found his bird dead on the doorstep. When he turned*

92 May we note that Otto F. Babler was particularly interested in spiritual and religious poetry. In this example, as in E. Blomberg’s translation, it can be seen how the work of the Slovak poetess crossed the borders of the homeland.

on the radio later right after / that day, there sounded was a rumble foreboding an apocalypse of the war that had just turned into reality."

Let us recall that this leitmotif also appears in another poem: *Bolo to dávno? (Was It a Long Time Ago?)* of the collection *Smrt tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)*, but in it squirrels die in pairs. In the archival correspondence, there is a letter of thanks from Koloman Sokol, in which he confirmed to the author that she had correctly remembered the name of the painting and added to the circumstances of its creation "it was a piece of a terrible tragedy of life".⁹³

On the poem *V predjarí (In the Early Spring)*, Maša Haľamová confessed:

"I used to like early spring second best after autumn, when you only sense life under the snow and feel it coming from an icy grip; there is strength and promise, hope and faith in it."

In a profound commentary, she mediated the conjunction into her own mental gusts, which she then transformed into a poem: "No býva i tak, že človek ,pribitý na kríž nostalgie, zrazu nevládze a vyjde mu vzlyk zo zadrhnutého hrdla, keď sa ozve strach a on sa bojí o svoju jar." ("But it's also usual that man 'nailed to the cross of nostalgia' suddenly cannot move and a sob comes out of his throat when fear sounds and he's worried about his spring.")

... and she lyrically transformed the metaphor at the end of the poem:

„Ústam je ťažko:
Po slove
tak nemo
vstúpiť do jari.“

("It's hard for the mouth: / After a word / so dump / to enter in the spring.")

⁹³ Correspondence of Koloman Sokol to M. Haľamová from Bryn Mawr, 20/07/1976. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

The motif of spring interpreted by the authoress, its symbolic spiritual development, is repeated as a leitmotif in her poetry (for example, after the death of her husband in the poem *Tú kantilénu zaspieva mi vták... (A Bird Will Sing That Cantilena to Me ...)*).

Although Maša Haľamová's self-referential remarks end here, we find their confirmation in several published interviews, in articles, but also in the television and radio programmes scripts kept in the archives. They confirm what the poetess said about her own creative inspiration in different ways: "I wrote all, almost all the poems from a sudden impulse, and along with the impulse, the form stood out at the same time, inseparably and immutably. Somehow by itself, and if it happened that it was not in line with the idea, I never managed to squeeze the idea into a constructed form again."⁹⁴

The relationship between the text and the author's interpretation has, in addition to the observed self-referentiality, also the function of self-presentation in archival materials. We find it in the script of the radio compilation of poetry and music *Božie divadlo (God's Theatre)*, which the poetess wrote in co-authorship with Anton Bečvář.⁹⁵ It incorporates verses by P. O. Hviezdoslav, O. Březina, and M. Haľamová herself. The musical component consists of works by C. Debussy, L. van Beethoven, and A. Bruckner. An accompanying word is an important link in selected excerpts from poetry. From the reflexive divisions arises the question of the sensory perception of the world, its demarcation by time and matter, in the embrace of light, behind which lies the masterpiece, whom we do not understand, only sense and reveal its secrets, each in a different way: "Eternal desire for immortality, the essence of any belief, and

⁹⁴ Haľamová, Maša: *Rámcové otázky pre rozhovor s poetkou, zaslúžilou umelkyňou M. Haľamovou (Framework questions for an interview with a poet, merited artist M. Haľamovou)*, [typescript, questions 3 pp., manuscript 15 pp. of answers]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

⁹⁵ Bečvář, Anton - Haľamová, Maša: *Božie divadlo (God's Theatre)* Radio compilation of poetry and music [script, typescript, 9 pp.]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

eternal hunger for knowing the mysterious, the essence of all science, are also only two sides of the same thing."

The basic questions of cosmology and the central idea – the *God's Theatre* – is a secret mystery – gradually unfold into the considerations of the show script:

"The greatness of the God's Theatre to which we have been invited is infinitely high above every content and meaning of human words, because with our words we can express only the terms we have contained: but reality is uncontainable! And that's where all its beauty is!"

The musical-poetic reflection was closed by Hařamová's poem, which was published in the collection *Smřř tvoju řijem (Living Your Death)* under the title *Na konci diařky (At the End of the Distance)* (there is also the title *Hovory s tichom (Conversations with Silence)*) in the manuscript (more details on pp. 122 – 123). The authoress introduced it with a final statement:

"Living on this Earth is being a witness to events and miracles and a thanksgiving prayer. For this divine theatre, here my conversations with silence:

The heart fills with immense distance ..."

In addition to the aforementioned poem, however, the show *God's Theatre* is carried in the ideational aura of another spiritually tuned poem from the collection *Smřř tvoju řijem (Living Your Death)* – *Dnes v noci novorořnej (New Year's Eve)*. It is her radio adaptation in which the authoress transformed the original lyrical form of the poem into spiritual, cosmology-reinforced reflections.

The self-comments and the script of the *God's Theatre* show (through an intertextual network of meanings) are another important key to the interpretation of the spiritual dimension – the spiritual depth in the oeuvre of Mařa Hařamová, which must be taken into account when choosing a research methodology.

Consensus and Its Disruption in the Responses of Literary Criticism

Review-critical views in literary journals reflecting the cultural boom after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic (1918) were markedly opinion-forming. They reflected the distinctive features of the authors' poetics, adjusted the perspective of the readers' reception and influenced the cultural and social status of the artists. The reconstruction of M. Hařamová's views on poetry represents a contemporaneous picture of her reception and, in confrontation with the current prism of perspective, focuses on changes in time and their causes.

Three years after the publication of the first poem in the *Slovenské pohřady* journal (1925), the debut collection of poems by Mařa Hařamová's *Dar (Gift)* (1928) was released on the literary scene. It was illustrated by Jaroslav Jareř and compiled by Ján K. Garaj, who gave it an apt name. In it, he presented not just an emblem poem, but also the motivic core of a poetic statement, hiding a unique thematic and value potential. Sixty years later, Anna Blahová praised his deed in her essay *Polně kvety Maře Hařamovej (Mařa Hařamová's Wild Flowers)*:

"Today, however, it seems to us that the opening poem of this collection embraced the entire later Hařamová's poetic world, home, orphaned childhood without mother and youth (at the time of the debut she was twenty years old), and even that these introductory, seemingly modest verses foreshadowed still another form of her poetry." (Blahová, in: Hařamová, 1988: 66 – 70)

A review by Josef Dvořák, who was praiseworthy to M. Hařamová's poetry, was published in the contemporaneous press about the debut collection. He considered it exceptional in comparison with other Slovak writers: *"Her book of poems Dar, the book of the most personal poetry, true to bloody and poetic even in fragments, the human, cordial, and penetrating book, is a gift that surprises. [...] It is, in*

fact, a confession, and one most sincere and warmly spoken that it is truly unique in Slovak literature" (Dvořák, 1928: 5). In the following lines, he underlined emotional tenderness, courage, Evangelical simplicity, love, and sincerity. In the review, he also mentioned Wolker's and Březina's tones, but at the same time he stated that the authoress did not remain in the shadow of those Czech poets, but reworked herself to new images and her own creed.⁹⁶ Finally, he highlighted the design, which, according to him, no Slovak book has ever received. In another review – *Kúzelná kniha (The Magic Book)* – J. Dvořák (abbreviated as *Jdv.*) sought⁹⁷ analogy between the positive response to Milo Urban's novel *Živý bič (The Living Whip)* and Maša Haľamová's collection *Dar (Gift)* (Dvořák, 1928: 4). He repeatedly emphasised the artistically impressive arrangement and unconventional act of the woman-author: "[...] she sings in it about herself, about herself-man, but in a different way than women sing about them. No, there is no selfishness here [...], there is not that bloating and phrasing that we – unfortunately – meet so often in women" (ibidem). He appreciated her ethical dimension, the heroism of a poet who does not despair but accepts the blows of fate with a smile. Andrej Mráz (abbreviated as *am*) evaluated her in a similar way⁹⁸ in the post *K jednému debutu (On a Debut)* (Mráz, 1928: 10). He enthusiastically expressed "endless artistic joy" of a work that finds itself on the book market. He did not hide his enthusiasm in another review entitled *Básnický dar (Poetic Gift)*, which he published in the Christmas issue of the periodical *Slovenský denník (Slovak Daily)*: "My pen is swinging into joyful outpourings while writing about the collection of poems by Máša

96 J. Dvořák was the author of the anthology *Tvár mladého Slovenska (The Face of Young Slovakia)*, in which the poet M. Haľamová was also included. From the work of 12 young poets: Smrek, Lukáč, Guoth, Nižnánsky, Hečko, Poničan, Novomeský, Okáli, Kráľ, Brezány, Žarnov, he wanted to create a spiritual profile of the young generation from Slovakia. Without fiction and drama or philosophical, scientific, and religious context, according to F. X. Šaldu it was not possible (Šalda 1933 – 1934: 365 – 366).

97 According to the *Dictionary of Pseudonyms*, this is an abbreviation of Josef Dvořák (Kormúth, 1974: 73).

98 According to the *Dictionary of Pseudonyms*, this is an abbreviation of Andrej Mráz (Kormúth, 1974: 21).

Haľamová" (Mráz, 1928: 4). He perceived the poetess as an exceptional phenomenon. Although he evaluated the activities of other educated women very critically, he praised the quality of Haľamová's poetry: "Not a single trait of beginner's shortcomings cried out from it, but perfection and maturity spilled out." or: "There is not a single pose and theatrical attitude in it" and underlined the contribution of the poet to post-war poetry, for which, according to him, it was "the biggest promise" (ibidem). Andrej Kostolný also evaluated the *Dar* collection with undisguised emotionality. He presented the review with a painting of the Tatra idyll with spiritual connotations, which he also brought to the characteristics of the collection: "The gift is accepted as a piece of the heart, and no one asks about its material value, one only thinks of the tenderness of the hands that sanctified it by touch. He thinks at what cost of the soul it is worth, how many heartbeats there are, how much it is fused with the mental life of the donor." (Kostolný, 1928: 826 – 828). Despite the review, the author's lyricism did not fall into sentimentalism because it was sensitively "incarnated" in the verses. He devoted himself especially to the melodic flow of verses, reaching after the naming of musical terminology: "All the music, colour and feeling of these poems merge in some verses directly into a miraculous symphony of aesthetic elements." He supported it by the analysis of the rhythmic euphony of a particular verse ("I'll weave a white dove into the lace snow.") He was impressed by the musical perfection of its structure, he saw in it a musical motif and a comprehensive image at the same time, which evokes Rimbaud's poetic art (using the vowel *e*). In the poems, he noticed the manifestations of lyricism, symbolism, and impressionism, as well as free verse, while he considered the bound verse in some poems directly virtuoso (*Milému, Legenda (To My Beloved One, Legend)*). In the final synthesis, he finally sought a connection between the poetic expression of M. Haľamová and Modernism in the poetry of I. Krasko (ibid). The *Dar* collection was also highly praised by Ján E. Bor, who wrote in the *Elán* magazine a few years later: "*Dar*" (Gift) is a book that is completely feminine, I'd rather say girly, in the most auspicious sense of the word. It is a poetry from which some figures (*Dar, Láska, Balada o hre slnka*

a vetra, V marci, Agónia) (*Gift, Love, Ballad About the Play of the Sun and the Wind, In March, Agony*) directly recall the liturgy in front of the noblest altar of beauty, where the sleepy girl embodied the charm, cute sensibility of female grace, volatility and mountain bluet which so humanly gracefully and snowily associates with the bells of subtle tenderness and nobility" (Bor, 1932: 3). At the end of his paper, he specifically underlined her exceptional position in Slovak poetry and originality without imitation: "Not a single Slovak poetess wrote anything more feminine, nor sounded the song of her destiny and love and pain like Haľamová, who did it without the shadow of artificiality, sentimentality, and betrayal of herself [...]" (ibidem).

However, not in all literary-critical articles was the poetry of the beginning poetess received favourably. An example of this was the article by Stanislav Mečiar *Maša Haľamová: Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (published under the abbreviation – ik.).⁹⁹ In the second collection of poems, evaluated against the background of the first one, he did not spare criticism. He blamed her for straightforwardness of her expression, the absence of a hint, the weakening of rhyme. He sharply contradicted the critics who highlighted her poetry and did not recognize the authoress' creative potential: "However, she has got nothing penetrating, inventive, nor is there a new coin in the treasure trove of ideas. [...] She lacks the eyes of discoverers and lacks the erudition of an artist."¹⁰⁰ Rudo Brtáň became an indirect successor to Mečiar, who sent a critical review of both collections to *Slovenské pohľady*. (Brtáň, 1932: 591 – 592).¹⁰¹ He questioned the quality of *Dar* in an ironic undertone: "She guessed more than just one new sound, not just one primitively effective and

99 – ik. [Mečiar, Stanislav]: *Maša Haľamová: Červený mak* [manuscript]. LA SNL, Stanislav Mečiar file, sign. 164 Y 24.

100 Ibidem. Contrary to this view, we can cite the opinion of Milan Rúfus: "She has just confirmed what turned out to be finished and clear even in her debut. The same string, a little more balanced, calm, but just as urgent, just as sensitive" (Rúfus, 1964: 158).

101 The criticism was published under the acronym rbr., but since the author apologised for this criticism after years in personal correspondence with M. Haľamová, we may attribute the authorship to R. Brtáň. In: A letter to Maša Haľamová of 28 August 1983 [typescript]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

hard-bought point" also in *Červený mak (Red Poppy)*: "About twenty fragile, selected short poems of faded colours and sounds." He openly criticised the verse construction: "At places, she is capable of solid construction (11 – 15, 21); now and then she would fall into half-prose and non-lyrical mannerisms. There she sounds too blunt (19, 23)" (ibidem). He concluded the critical stance by comparing Haľamová's poetry to a vicious circle, to the poetry of a "summer evening, a light pulsation" that is not a confession, just a reflection of the soul, which at times would stir the still waters of today's poetry (ibidem).

On the other hand, we may cite the opinion of Michal Gáfrik, who on the occasion of the publication of the collection *Básne (Poems)* (*Slovenský spisovateľ*, 1955) commented on her non-artificial poetry with recognition: "From the beginning, it was accepted as a simple-sincere word of the heart, as concise and simple as possible, but to which the whole worlds of meaning and emotion are bound." (Gáfrik, 1955: 4). He underlined not just the ethical dimension, the high moral value and the sincerity of her statement, but also the uniqueness of the lyrical heroine: "She is a beautiful female soul, sincerely human, tender, loving, surrendered, without the appearance of prudence, often wounded by the pain and helplessness of her desires, by social conditions" (ibidem). He appreciated that she was not subject to fashionable literary deposits and, like R. Brtáň, he pointed out parallels with I. Krasko, because she de-pathetised poetry and freed it from verbosity. The verse, he said, is characterised by almost colloquial fluency and naturalness. He considered the authoress' positives in her oeuvre with a hint, a covert, in favour of the radiant power of emotional flashes. In conclusion, he emphasised again that the unobtrusiveness, sincerity and subtlety of emotion and expression, pure, unobserved lyricism are the advantages that make it a permanent place in the development of Slovak poetry (ibidem). We come across a similar statement by Milan Rúfus, who figuratively indicated its timeless value: "It is not a fragment of a twig, a bit on a hat and for a possible holiday, it is part of a trunk of Slovak poetry, an oeuvre that has a permanent place in it, because at one point it touched the universe." (Rúfus, 1964:

147). František Votruba, a critic of poetic modernity, also expressed his opinion on Haľamová's poetry of a pure heart: "It is a two-stringed instrument that evokes this solid, discreet poetry of a young Slovak poetess, too narrow is the area in which it moves, but it is remarkable how much faithfully lived, under the sordina of a roaring silent tragedy there shakes and reflects in it, and how delicate and without a pose and sentimentality it is pronounced here." (Votruba, 1955: 126). Referring to the authority of F. Votruba, the sensibility of Haľamová's poetry was also emphasised by J. Břoch: "[...] love is the focal point of her whole oeuvre, it is the alpha and omega, the angle through which she looks and through which she judges herself and the world," it forms a thematic and expressive unity of the oeuvre, which honestly retains its popularity with its sincerity (Břoch, 1958: 10). It is clear from the archival materials that Maša Haľamová attracted the attention by her poetry from the beginning. This fact was also confirmed by Miloš Tomčík, who pointed out the "harmony between the poetess and those who waited for sincere, human and simple words of poetry" and emphasised the favourable acceptance of Haľamová's poetry among all the layers of readers. (Tomčík, 1955: 88). Such was e.g. personal experience of the editor Jana Šimulčíková, who recalled an exciting private discovery in a home library: "Poetry was almost exclusively the domain of men and women entered it as a source of inspiration, seen mostly from the outside. Here, however, a sensitive female soul, passionate and tender, opened up before us. Words and things unspoken were speaking. It was what adolescence was longing for. Emotional education without pathos and teaching. Confidential tone – with unusual sincerity" (Šimulčíková, 1983: 6).

On the occasion of the 70th birthday of M. Haľamová, R. Brtáň wrote an article about the uniqueness of her poetry in the third collection *Smrť tvoju žijem* (Living Your Death), in which tones of bitter sadness were heard after the death of her husband: "She was not a poet of quantity, of a whole series of books, but the abbreviated poetic quality of heavy grain and lyrical charge prevailed over it. This was and remains her unique strength and unique importance." (Brtáň, 1978: 6). Even on her 75th birthday, he touched upon her extraordinary destiny and said with admiration: "In

the *Mladé letá* publishing house, you lived your third youth in the autumn of your life. You have built a memorial to your husband in 11 poems (*Smrť tvoju žijem*) (Living Your Death) from new pure marble to your *Dar* (Gift) and *Červený mak* (Red Poppy), and you spoke in newer poems (*Bez teba a Novšie básne*) (Without You and Newer Poems) ..." (Brtáň, 1983: 7) and added that she had been recognised as merited artist and now (May 1983) was awarded the title of National Artist. Two other Brtáň's articles from previous jubilee years have also been preserved in the archive: the first was published under the title *Maša Haľamová jubiluje. Zdravica slovenskej poetke* (Maša Haľamová's Jubilee. Greetings to Slovak Poetess) (probably in 1958),¹⁰² signed by R. B. In it, he highlighted the parallel between her two published collections and the poetic oeuvre of I. Krasko. He pointed to "pleasing abbreviated and musically and visually saturated reflexive poems, delicious rhythmic songs, sad melancholic ballads, and relaxed verse rhythmic confessions of one's own interior," but also to those "relaxed and rhyme-free verses," speaking of "new expressive outbursts," under symbolic and impressionist props.¹⁰³ In his second article entitled *Mášenka Haľamová jubiluje* (*Mášenka Haľamová is celebrating*)¹⁰⁴ he opened up the context of the oeuvre of female authors and included Haľamová to L. Podjavorinská-Riznerová and Zora (Anna Lacková Domková), who preceded her, until she became one of the well-known poetesses after 1918 with her first collection. According to R. Brtáň, "has not had a competitor for a long time", but he immediately softened his position by mentioning the merits of M. Rázusová-Martáková and K. Bendová. In the personal tone of the article, he also revealed some of the generational responses: "And most importantly: *Mášenka* was our

102 R. B.: *Máša Haľamová jubiluje. Zdravica slovenskej poetke* [press clipping, source unidentified]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

103 Ibidem.

104 Brtáň, Rudo: *Mášenka Haľamová jubiluje* [typescript article], written in 1968 [according to the clue from the text: "she was born 60 years ago"]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04. Rudo Brtáň wrote an explanation on the typescript margin: "Such an article, written in a different way, was sent to *Práca* and *Večerník* in July. They probably didn't come out. B."

poetess, our peer, closest to us, femininely soft and gentle, she also expressed our pessimism and we listened eagerly to those tones in which Wolker and Toman (short!) spoke unobtrusively, in which we found oases that neither Smrek, Lukáč, Novomeský, and Poničan or Fraňo Král had, nor our other peers with Guoth, Hečko, and Bezek, Plávka and I don't know who else was in charge ... Smrek and Lukáč could play us erotic, but Mášenka was our second Marína." (Ibidem)¹⁰⁵

Let's go back to the articles about the collection *Smrť tvoju žijem* (*Living Your Death*) and follow up on the mapping of the opinions of literary critics. In the article *Nová poézia Maše Haľamovej* (*New Poetry by Maša Haľamová*), Daniel Okáli sought his own context and found the harmony of a woman's emotional experience, aesthetically effective, which our poetry could be proud of (Okáli, 1966: 2). In difficult years, "at a time when part of our poetry is sweeping, in the convulsions of raped metaphor and pouring into the den of expressionless subjectivity," in the poetry by M. Haľamová he revealed the universal dimension of the most personal emotional seizure with "emotional intensity and depth, sometimes dizzying, tragic artistic mastery and greatness of thought" and at the end of the reflections he finally acknowledged that "in this timeline lies its timeless value" (ibidem). On the occasion of the poetess' 80th birthday, Pavol Števček also spoke favourably about the *Smrť tvoju žijem* (*Living Your Death*) collection. He saw in her oeuvre "an effort to promote the moral act of loving in poetry and in its perception" and thus "grow into man" (Števček, 1988: 1). In his empathic reflection, he penetrated her uniqueness: "The poetry by Maša Haľamová, in particular, has therefore become a proof and example of heroism in the fateful human drama of pain" (ibidem). Miloš Tomčík (1973: 11) drew attention to the ethical dimension, simplicity, naturalness and immediacy of the poetic statement, but especially to the moral altruism contained in the entire scope of Haľamová's oeuvre. Five years later, he shared his personal impressions of the encounter with a poet who, through her personality,

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem.



Portrait of Maša Haľamová of 1924 - 1925.
(Photographer: Vinci Dlouhý, Bratislava)

knew how to break the barrier between the author and the reader while maintaining constant contact with all the generations (Tomčík, 1988: 6). At the same time, he pointed out that any reduction only to self-reflection or a certain kind of feminism would bring about a narrowing of the semantic dimension of her poetry, because both feminine and masculine elements are present in it. According to him, it is not just a picture of the female world,¹⁰⁶ but “of a multidimensional representation of life” (ibidem). He underlined the authenticity of the poems, which are a kind of projection of one’s own life destiny: “In this case, the poles of the creation and perception of poetry really come as close to each other as possible. There comes a time when everyone can feel like a poet and when no one needs to be convinced of the need for poetry” (ibidem).

We can conclude an overview of contemporaneous reviews and essays on the poetry by M. Haľamová in accordance with the opinion of M. Tomčík: “[...] Maša Haľamová’s poetry has quite often been the subject of analysis and interpretative interpretation in the last sixty years. No one questioned her artistic persuasiveness” (ibidem). What is evident to us from Haľamová’s poetic word and from the evaluative attitudes of literary critics of the 20th century was probably most pronounced by the editor Jana Šimulčíková: “But it can be most accurately characterised by the word nobility” (Šimulčíková, 1983: 6). Michal Bartko’s essay bearing a telling title *Poézia prostoty* (*Poetry of Simplicity*), also fits into this literary-critical view, in which he came to the conclusion that “the poetry by Maša Haľamová is the poetry of her life, of its intense staggering, in which her poetic power is concentrated in the focus, as if it radiated from it” (Bartko, 1983: 137).

106 In this context, she is also briefly presented in the synthesis of the history of Czech literature from 1995, where the first two collections are characterised by classically simple melody and emotional rise “From erotic distrust to full-blooded love womanhood” (Novák, J. V. – Novák, A., 1995, p. 1528). (Let us state on the side-lines that the poetess is mentioned here with the wrong first name Alexandra, instead of Mária or Maša, as she was familiarly named not just in the family circle, but also in literary writing.)

Finally, the reconstruction of the spectrum of opinions within the 20th century shows that the imaginary radiant “focus” was the lyrical focus – the “singing heart” of Maša Haľamová. Perhaps most aptly, her own words spoke of this: “I lived the poetry.” (Kollárová – Kollár, 1998). As if it confirmed by itself the legitimacy of the hermeneutic prism of the view, which is repeated in several motifs of the inner word (*verbum interius*) and heart poetry (*verbum cordis*).

Inter-literary Inspirations and Opinion Confrontations

Just as Maša Haľamová was perceived in the 20th century as a starting point of Slovak chamber poetry (Bartko, 1983), so at the beginning of the 21st century she is presented as a prominent representative of female poetry (Čúzy, 2005) and a poetess of supremely lyrical orientation (Harpáň, 2009). She continued to be a model of “discreet, in stylisation of girlish poetry” and a representative of “poetry of nobility” (Bokníková, 2000), which gained a significant impact on the further development of poetry in the line of female authors.

Several literary scholars have sought generational parallels in her poetry (Tomčík, 1974; Plintovič, 1988; Bokníková, 2000), e.g. M. Bartko found them between Haľamová and Ján Smrek, Vladimír Roy, Štefan Krčméry and Ľudmila Podjavorinská (Bartko, 1983: 61, 68) and they agreed that Haľamová’s poetry fed on modern poetry and followed the legacy of Ivan Krasko’s symbolism, or Czech poets Jiří Wolker and Karel Toman, but did not succumb to contemporaneous fashion influences. In assessing the intertextual context, they came to a similar conclusion as Miloš Tomčík, who emphasised that Haľamová “aimed at her own means of expression, a special understanding of external and internal events (sometimes too overobjectivised) and an original mastery of verse elements” (Tomčík, 1955: 89). He first stated that the various stages of development of the two poets were not the same (ibidem), and then he clarified his opinion: “However, Haľamová

is not mechanically dependent in all the components on J. Wolker. Her oeuvre resonates with a special atmosphere and in the concept of the ballad, Krasko's and Wolker's impulses constantly intersect in it" (Tomčík, 1974: 118). Similarly, but already in spiritual contexts, Štefan Drug also wrote: "In contrast to the Old Testament harshness, Krasko's Jehovah, in contrast to the Baroque style of Lukáč's religious element, what a Protestant simplicity, pure and poetic this is! What a child-like emotion! What a myth-formation! In her first volume, she was already like that. And she hasn't changed here. Only social feeling has become more programmatic for her, if the frequent reminders of "suburbs" can be called that. That's from Wolker. But her world is not a city, but a quiet night under a wide, starry sky." (in: Gavura, 2017: 364). Milan Rúfus also commented on this issue, pointing out its ontological nature: "Wolker is also mentioned. But it was more about similar lives and a similar humanism. And, of course, the powerful reading experience of Wolker's poetry, which manifested itself in minor matters – in several similar images and comparisons. But it did not affect the essence of Haľamová's poetic type, and it did not form it" (Rúfus, 1964: 152). He emphasised the unique nature of Haľamová's poetry in contemporaneous literature in still another place: "Certainly, simplicity, immediacy, the absence of any literary stylisation had to draw attention in a time of gestures, adorable literature, which she considered so important to imitate foreign customs, to look thoughtfully, demonically, intellectually, in short, stylise." (Rúfus, 1964: 150; cf.: Bžoch, 1961: 14 – 15) and repeatedly confirmed her position as solitaire: "In addition, the poetry of this authoress has gone so far, so far beyond the alternation of literary tastes and so independent of them that it actually loses its significance to name and characterise them... [...] This oeuvre has lived and continues to live outside the rooster-like alternations of literary manifestations just by virtue of its decisive participation of its existence." (Rúfus, 1981: 219).

From the above opinions, it is clear that literary scholarship has highlighted the authentic expression of Haľamová's poetry. The emotional core of the poetic statement was the same as the "most personal confession", in which the author dealt with existential fluctuations not

intellectually, but above all with the heart (Tomčík, 1974: 216 – 217). It was pointed out that she drew on the tonality of the folk ballad and its tragedy, but not in a unilateral way. Balladness mentioned by several experts (cf. Plintovič, 1988: 7) penetrated the emotionality of the lyrical subject and balanced it with the tones of a folk song. According to M. Bartko, balladness was the "basic element and tone" of her oeuvre, and even kept convincing that without a "balladic undertone" we would not find any poem in it, because it is full of nostalgia "with wonderful fragility desires for brightness", always wishing for something, longing for something in its "infinitely kind love" (Bartko, 1983: 68, 75). In her ballad, M. Tomčík emphasised the sense of economical form, the sound tuning of the verse, and the hint of the plot components (Tomčík, 1974: 118 – 119). On the fringes of the ballad, however, he noted that it had a special position in modern Slovak poetry at the beginning of the 20th century. It fit into the so-called Krasko tradition, manifested in the oeuvre of Smrek, Lukáč, Beniak, Novomeský, and others. It expressed generational feelings, an inner emotional drama and a tragic experience of social reality (ibidem: 114). In the definition of M. Haľamová's poetics, in addition to common theoretical views, there are also specific observations, e.g. M. Bartko mentions rhapsodicity with the potential of the chorale, evocations of pancalism, which combine love and the beauty of reality (Bartko, 1983: 113 – 114).

Milan Rúfus drew attention to the significant influence of song and folk poetry a little earlier: "Haľamová succeeded in synthesising a non-stylised folk element with achievements of modernity and modern poetry, while she took from the latter exactly as much as needed" (Rúfus, 1964: 153) and according to Ladislav Čúzy they can be perceived in relation to each other: "However, both genres appear similar. The ballad changed from an epic form to a lyrical form, the song lost its freedom and sophistication, and turned into a lyrical formation with serious content" (Čúzy, 2005: 102). Michal Harpáň expressed a similar opinion on her in his latest synthesis of literary history: "It is no coincidence that her most characteristic ballad tone was so clear and springing from the grief of Slovak folk ballads that it is

unparalleled until M. Rúfus' poetic appearance in Slovak poetry" (Harpáň, 2009: 123 – 124).

As part of the confrontations of opinion, let us focus now at the research of Andrea Bokníková, who follows the poetess in the line of female authors, from L. Podjavorinská and L. Groeblová to their successors: L. Vadkerti-Gavorníková, M. Grznárová, G. Slavkovská, A. Ondřejková, M. Haugová, D. Hivešová, D. Podracká, V. Prokešová and others, having been formed in the 1960s and 1980s under the significant influence of the charisma of M. Haľamová. Following the literary-critical views of her predecessors, Andrea Bokníková reassembles the basic hermeneutic concept (*verbum cordis*): *"Since the 1960s, M. Haľamová's oeuvre has acted as a model of female, heart poetry', which is accepted outside of contemporary fashion, but at the same time its affiliation with the authors of the literary field centre is reflected"* (Bokníková, 2000: 48). She also points out that *"the authoress is an original in the expression of abbreviation, while processing traditions, she is modern and at the same time independent of the avant-garde trends of the time. Her female character is liberated by movement in the open space of nature, but at the same time she conforms to the traditional notion of a woman's sacrifice"* (Bokníková, 2001: 334 – 335). She adds new meanings to the interpretation of Haľamová's poetry, e.g. Eros – hidden in the symbolism of the red poppy, culminating in the last collection as Thanatos – Eros is discreetly tabooed in nature, but covered by the ethos of the gift of love, directed not just to the man but to the whole universe. She notices the function of nature, which is characteristic of folk literature and modernity, while she understands nature as a function of the medium in the movement from me to you and connects it with the mythical-magical belief in pantheism. In addition, it reflected the musicality of cultivated verses in contact with the transcendent, the elegance, and the harmonising power of silent pain (Bokníková, 2000: 34 – 36). In semantic associations, she came to the conclusion that the poetry of Maša Haľamová *"radiates civility, even though it has a fairy-tale-pagan colour, or innovates a folk ballad. It creates a fiction of the flow of everyday life, even with overlaps into the*

magical-natural concept, by which it expresses emotions, because it always speaks of a contemporary woman, moreover with moderation in expression" (Bokníková, 2010: 37). She drew attention to the essential statement of the poetess, which she anchored in the tradition of Symbolism and acquired an original expression in her poems. She expressed the opinion that Haľamová's symbolism in connection with neo-Romantic sensitivity is changing qualitatively and the traditional synecdoche of Symbolism is dematerialising in the post-symbolist outline (ibidem: 22). Defining the contribution of her oeuvre, she pointed out the archetypal nature of Haľamová's poetry: *"As if the life-literary legend were connected with the pattern, the timelessness, i.e. with the essence of poetry"* (Bokníková, 2000: 19 – 20). At present, she emphasises *"the poetry of modern, albeit discrete individuality"* and the fact that it *"transformed the elements of Symbolism and folklore into the aesthetics of silence and hint"* (Bokníková, 2017: 46).¹⁰⁷

Following the reconstruction of opinion conjunctions and differences, we may summarise the observed literary-critical discourse across nine decades (from 1928 to 2017). It turned out that generationally close evaluators of M. Haľamová's poetry found and at the same time refuted Wolker's, Tomanová's, Březina's inter-literary inspirations, but also Krasko's, poetry close to their human and spiritual beliefs. They equally affirmed the solitary nature of her subtle poetry, which did not succumb to fashionable artism, but stood out with the sincerity of the profound word in personal, spiritually tuned lyricism. In the field researched, they repeatedly reflected the emblematic natural motifs,

107 Finally, the most significant departure from the established evaluation framework was brought by the study by Mária Birošíková, who in the interpretation of selected poems presented the opinion that some spiritual motifs in M. Haľamová's work are just an expression of contemporaneous lexicon without any spiritual ambition or intention. In her reasoning, she argued by the poetess' lack of spiritual belief, which shifted her attention to non-literary contexts (Birošíková, 2013: 1051 – 1062).

their Impressionistic, neo-Romantic,¹⁰⁸ even the decadent message, poetic abbreviation, musicality and rhythmicity of the verse, which are fed from the lyrical source of the folk song and ballad. The intimate dimension of the poetic statement was interpreted in part through the prism of female optics, but in its lyrical nature it expressed a more multidimensional facet of life. Finally, the processed material showed that the perception of spirituality in Haľamová's poetry was stable in the contemporaneous literary society, and weakened only on the axis of time. Direct mentions of Evangelical simplicity, love and sincerity or of "poetry of the heart" with the potential of locality were replaced by indications in which the interpretive key to Protestant poetry gradually disappeared from readers' awareness (more details in: Vráblová, 2017: 89 – 109). After ideologically forced periods of silence, especially after 1989, interpretive reflections have already deviated significantly from the tradition of contemplative reading, which the generation of M. Haľamová knew so close.¹⁰⁹ This also follows from the obituary of Ján Greš, an Evangelical theologian, in which he thanked for profound poems: "Poems marked by the breath of unceasing eternity. Poems that arouse the desire for a pure heart. Poems that show, not just in the epilogue, that only a pure heart and what comes from a pure heart gives meaning to life. It is a spiritual legacy, its spiritual heritage" (in: Roll, 1998: 65).

108 J. Bžoch denied the opinion of post-Romanticism in her work, arguing that "In her conception, nature also becomes an integral part of man; she has a direct physical feeling of the earth and what could be called attachment to one place" (Bžoch, 1958: 10).

109 In the character of the main sources of Haľamová's poetry, M. Pišút pointed to personal pain, suffering, and love, which left a deep mark in her poetics, while her Evangelical faith also helped her maintain her mental balance. (Pišút, 1931: 50)

In the Footsteps of a Poem... (Interpretation and Exegesis)

The emblematic poem by Maša Haľamová *Dar (Gift)* (Haľamová, 1928), which was first published in the *Slovenský denník (Slovak Daily)* in the supplement *Nedeľná beseda (Sunday Talk)* dated: in Bratislava, 10 May 1926 (Haľamová, 1926: 9), was the impetus from which extensive archival research emerged. The research problem – as we mentioned in the Introduction – brought two different interpretations of the poem: one with an emphasis on a life situation in which the lyrical subject emerges from grief and desolation thanks to the experienced love and the other, ideologically motivated, which preferred the joyful feelings of the authoress from a period of peace after the end of World War I. The semantic turning point in which the central meaning of the poem changed fundamentally in favour of the ideological level was in the verses „Kus slovenského neba strhnem / do oka nevädze“ (*I will tear down a piece of Slovak heaven / into the eye of a mountain bluet*) and also the symbol of the white dove. In an ideologically motivated interpretation, the eye of the Slovak sky was the synecdoche of the Slovak nation, which spread national significance, and the white dove, which was a symbol of peace, and therefore not of the Holy Spirit or biblically connoted love of lovers. Perceptually, the interpretation thus deviated from the subjective-intimate confession of love for the cultural-ideological context of the post-war Czechoslovakia. Therefore, after a thorough analytical-interpretative explanation of the functional motifs and semantics of the symbols, their thematic concatenation, formal representation and outcome, we followed in the footsteps of the poem *Dar (Gift)* and looked into its genesis.

We searched the Literary Archives of the Slovak National Library in Martin. A bibliographic record on the index card showed that the first

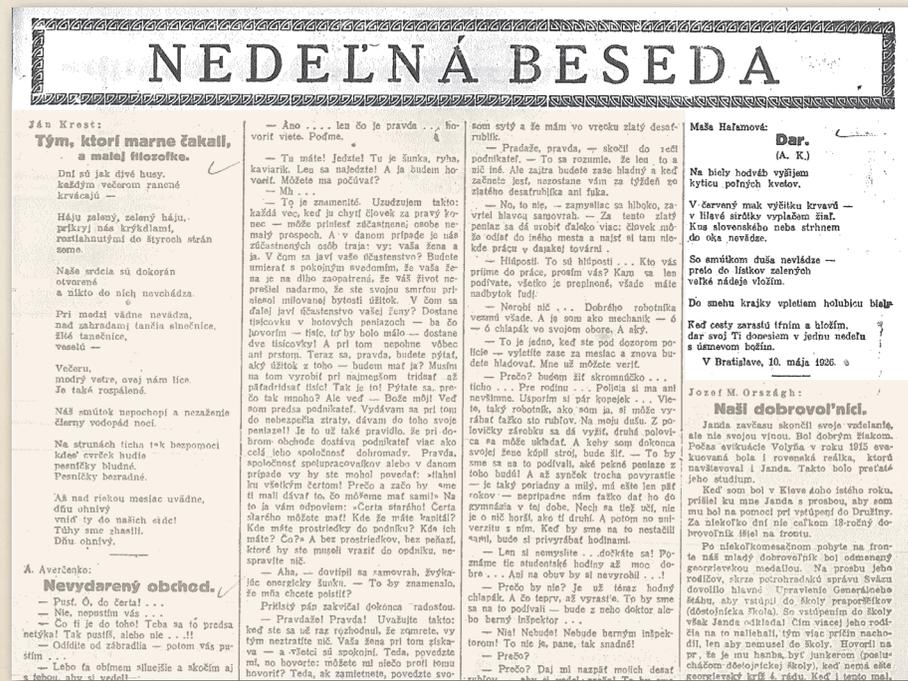
edition of the poem was supplemented by a dedication – a subtitle with initials (A. K.). The mystery that arose before us revealed that someone specific was hiding behind the initials. Although we did not know his/her identity, he could shed light on the authoress' intention and determine the interpretive meaning of the poem. We assumed that the ideological interpretation of the celebration of peace would be broken. Heuristic research continued in the next stage, with a thorough study of archival materials. Careful reading of personal correspondence and newspaper articles brought further findings.

Literary scientist Rudo Brtáň was one of those who shared a shared past in the period press. Among the many clippings we found his memories, written on the occasion of M. Haľamová's 75th birthday:

"You remember the cover of your debut Dar (Gift) (1928), which was published by Umelecká beseda (Art Talk) when you were twenty years old. And the admiration of Votruba, Mráz, Oňoš, who recited your ballad Zo sanatória (From the Sanatorium) at the Matica festivities (1926) (Anička, dušička, nekašli ...). You read criticisms of your debut and Červený mak (Red Poppy) (1932). I don't know why and how, perhaps because you were from Turiec and lived in the Tatras, you were close to us five Liptáks, Kostolný, Pišút, Chrobák, Okáli, and me. How we criticised and magnified you!" (Brtáň, 1983: 7)

Maša Haľamová's contacts with young poets went back to her secondary school years in Bratislava, because, as we learn from the clipping of another article, Andrej Mráz and Andrej Kostolný (Šimulčíková, 1983: 6) took place in the same building where they were students of the Faculty of Arts. It was during this period that Maša Haľamová began to write. Earlier, at the grammar school in Martin, her literary school assignment was published in the anthology, an essay with a lyrical gradient *Vtáka poznáš po perí, človeka po reči (You'll Know The Bird by Feathers, Man by Speech)* (in a manuscript dated 14 October 1924).¹¹⁰ Her first poem was given a place in Krčméry's *Slovenské pohľady*

110 Haľamová, Maša: *Vtáka poznáš po perí, človeka po reči*, [manuscript, dated: 14/10/1924]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.



The first edition of Maša Haľamová's poem *Dar* in *Slovenský denník*.

(*Slovak Views*) (Haľamová, 1925: 384 – 385) under the pseudonym *Zornička*. “Father” Štefan Krčméry revealed many poetic talents and helped them make a name on their own. Maša Haľamová convinced him so much that in a sense he favoured her. This is evidenced by e.g. a rebuke of Valentín Beniak, which he gave to him in a letter when he received a new issue of *Slovenské pohľady*, but he did not find his poem in that journal. He was stopped by the poem by Maša Haľamová *Pri telefóne* (*On the Phone*), which they had previously published in *Slovenský denník*:

“Man is sad about that, so why write, send, beg, and wait, a new star came out, who really ordered it by phone from Slovak magazines when Sl. P. were in a hurry to print her poem out from the daily journal.” (Drug, 2001: 23)

Maša Haľamová and Štefan Krčméry had personal and later family friendships. It wasn't until time later that she learned how he had faced Emil Boleslav Lukáč in her defence,¹¹¹ when he wrote an ironic poem about her, known as *Balada o speve kolies* (*The Ballad of the Singing Wheels*) or also *Balada ex voto* (*Ex Voto Ballad*), on a dying one with the subtitle: *Márii* (*To Mary*).¹¹² On the margin of this poetic act, Š. Krčméry wrote:

“Even the ballad about singing wheels seems to me to be quite arty, and at the same time – cruel. I understand that it concerns Maša Haľamová. Mášienka must not read such poems! It's ruthless. Such poems may be written about girls you don't know or who don't know they are about them. It is ruthless to write almost funeral poetry to the living. [...]”¹¹³

Let us add that despite the express reservations of Š. Krčméry, the poem was still published after a year in *Národné noviny* (Rusnáková,

111 In her letter dated 9 January 1927 [8] to E. B. Lukáč she wrote indignantly: “No one can stop a poet from coming from the environment in which he lived. – But it is tacky, disgusting to dispel to the public the feelings about a particular person – who the public can easily guess. Krčméry, whom I am not particularly close to at last, has persuaded you not to publish the Ballad in *Pohľady*. [...] You couldn't help but know that the poem would get into my hands. I reason: with full consciousness you wrote that ballad or published it now, after two years – when everything has been forgotten and calmed down”. (Rusnáková, 2001: 19).

112 In the collection *Dunaj a Seina* dated: 1924 Paris (Lukáč, 1925: 56 – 60).

113 Krčméry, Štefan: Correspondence with E. B. Lukáč of 4 October 1926. LA SNL, E. B. Lukáč file, sign. 126 F 28.

2001: 18; note). It is no secret to experts of sociological chains in the history of Slovak interwar literature that the relationship between Maša Haľamová and Emil Boleslav Lukáč was marked by deeper friendly ties. Her poetry was known to be a creative inspiration for Lukáč. Rudo Brtáň recalled this in his jubilee article as follows:

“I had a bad luck that Krčméry put my criticism in the illegal issue of *Slovenské pohľady* (9 B 1932): ‘Criticism, a few people have brought it (the *Dar* collection) to the heights and is returning to it ... Tenderness and pollen of the girl's soul fought over those tragedies of life, love and death, sprinkled with tears, like the virgins of the dew conceived. The sounds of Wolker and Krasko touched her strings and struck the painful keys of loneliness, grief out of agony and the painful pleasure of love ...’ Kostolný was jealous that Lukáč writes a poem on each of your letters and – he publishes *O láske neláskavej* (*On Love Unkind*).” (Brtáň, 1983: 7)

And this is the answer in which we learn why some of E. B. Lukáč's poems overlap with the themes in Maša Haľamová's poems, and also – to whom some of her poems were addressed. But *Dar* (*Gift*) did not have the initials E. B. L in the subtitle (!). However, it was important at the time that Rudo Brtáň named the pair of main actors. Andrej Kostolný was not mentioned himself in this relationship. His initials A. K. strike the eye and force a clear answer (!). After this finding, we skilfully combined a note from the manuscript clipping, on which Maša Haľamová had marked the outline points for further processing under the name *Čriepky*. Among them the point: “*Kostolný – Lukáč. Súboj v Petržalke*”¹¹⁴ (...*Duel in Petržalka*). From the information obtained, we can only deduce that A. Kostolný and E. B. Lukáč were rivals in the fight for Maša's favour. We can also hypothesise that the poem *Dar* was originally dedicated to Andrej Kostolný. Immediately after studying the personal bibliography, we found out that Andrej Kostolný also reviewed the *Dar* collection (Kostolný, 1928: 826 – 828).

114 Haľamová, Maša: *Čriepky*. (*Fragments*), [manuscript notes]. LA SNK, fond Maša Haľamová, add No. 3724/2009.

When we started with the review published in *Slovenské pohľady*, it was impossible not to see the emotionality of the expression, especially noticeable in the introductory paragraphs: *“In one corner there are small, almost children’s ash skis. They are waiting for a gentle touch of hands. Then they will escape through the frozen snow to the forest, into a great white fairy tale, and the two belts will be as light as if an angel were pulling a tree sleigh there. With the sky straight to the ground with gifts under the tree.*

The gift is accepted as a piece of the heart, and no one asks about its material value, one only thinks of the tenderness of the hands that sanctified it by touch. One thinks at what cost the soul is worth, how many heartbeats there are, as it is fused with the mental life of the donor. The authoress of the book put a discreet fragment of the lyricism of young life into her poems.” (Ibidem: 826)

Although the initials of A. K. are identical, we lacked authentic proof. We therefore looked again at the correspondence of the sisters, Maša and Oľga. Further findings are given in the chronology of research.

When Maša Haľamová came in the Sanatorium in Nový Smokovec, in addition to health problems, she also dealt with emotional bonds from the days of Bratislava. Sister Oľga in a letter dated 21 September 1926¹¹⁵ confided that Ondro had visited her before her leaving for France (in the following letters she gave him the nickname Oňoš; it was also mentioned in an article by R. Brtáň) with an unexpected request. He came *“for the word”*. But the end of the visit was not favourable for the admirer: *“I told him that I did not like him with such love that I could tie my life to him.”* In the following letter¹¹⁶ she explains in her light tone, and apologises for it to her sister: *“I think I wrote about Ondra in a slightly light tone in the previous letter, which I then regretted because you now think I talked to him like that. I did not break up with him so banally, but as such the so-called lives end. Perhaps precisely because there was no love between us, that it was, at least on my part, only sympathy and friendship, everything*

115 Correspondence of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga dated in Nový Smokovec on 21 September 1926. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

116 Correspondence of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga dated in Nový Smokovec on 28 September 1926. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

remained unchanged, we correspond in the same tone, only I had to tell him when he came to me with such an idea (“an idea” added by the translator) and I feel that I acted correctly “and continues in the letter, she adds: “And then Olžinka, Oňoš will never be healthy again, I am also not a strong person, say, would it make sense?”¹¹⁷

She concluded this sentimental episode of her life in a letter dated 26 May 1927, where she mentioned Oňoš in addition to Andrej Mráz: *“He has been in Paris since February [...] if I loved him as much as he loves me, I would be the happiest woman in the world. He has an unbreakable solid character and a nice soul.”¹¹⁸*

Who was Ondro or Oňoš? From the information we obtained in the individual letters, we deduced that the most likely rejected man was Andrej Kostolný. Judging by the dates, it was supposed to be almost half a year after the dedication of the poem *Dar* (?!). Although it is not directly stated in the examined correspondence that Andrej Kostolný hid under the nickname “Ondro” or “Oňoš”, he completed his stay in France (Lyon, Paris – Sorbonne) in the years 1927 – 1928.¹¹⁹ Maša’s mention in a letter in which she wrote to her sister Oľga about the death of Anča Kostolná was convincing enough.¹²⁰ It states that she died very young, which hit “Oňoš” because he loved her “extremely much”. This short excerpt from the letter confirmed us in the assumption that Andrej Kostolný was not only the brother mentioned in the letter, but also the admirer to whom Maša should dedicate the poem *Dar* in 1926. It would seem that the result of research in archival materials is unambiguous: the initials (A. K.) in the subtitle of the poem *Dar* belonged to Andrej Kostolný, so his was also a declaration of love.

117 Ibidem.

118 Correspondence of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga dated in Nový Smokovec on 26 May 1927. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

119 Unlike A. Kostolný, E. B. Lukáč studied at the Sorbonne in Paris from 1922 to 1924. (Slovenský biografický slovník, 1989: 195, 437 – 439).

120 Correspondence of M. Haľamová to her sister Oľga dated in Nový Smokovec on 10 June 1930. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

Well, let's first recap: with the date Bratislava, 10 May 1926, *Dar* is published with the subtitle (A. K.), in September 1926 Maša writes to her sister about the so-called love for Oňoš ("there was no love between us that it was, at least on my part, only sympathy and friendship"), which is confirmed by a letter of May 1927. Nevertheless, in 1928 Kostolný published an emotionally engaged review of the *Dar* collection. These findings, conflicting information, an unconvincing dedication, pointed to Kostolný's one-sided emotional manifestations. For this reason, we continued to verify the facts and contexts...

When we started re-reading Maša Haľamová's personal correspondence, we found a letter addressed to Ján Smrek. Perhaps a certain degree of self-criticism or self-reflection caused her to send an article and a poem to J. Smrek in *Elán* magazine on 13 September 1932 (she did not specify the titles or content in the letter), but she withdrew the unnamed poem in two days with the words: "Sorry, but I can't publish it, I've changed my mind."¹²¹ Based on the personal bibliography, it was probably an article published under the title *Cesta za inšpiráciou* (*The Path to Inspiration*) (Haľamová, 1932/1: 2) and also the poem *Verš októbrový* (*October Verse*)¹²² published a month later, from which it is clear that the former emotional bonds were still being concluded in a personal lyrical statement after years (Haľamová, 1932/2: 4). Again, we asked ourselves, to whom is the poem dedicated?

Maša Haľamová's letters to Emil B. Lukáč dated 9 January 1928 and 19 January 1928 (in: Rusnáková, 2001: 19 – 21) brought a new prism, after which we re-evaluated the connection between the poem and the initials. In the first of the letters, Maša responded indignantly to the publication of the poem *Balada o speve kolies* (*Ballad of the Singing Wheels*) (ibid), as anticipated by Š. Krčméry some time ago, because it directly

121 Correspondence of M. Haľamová with J. Smrek of 13 September 1932 and 15 September 1932. LA SNL, sign. 181 CH 14a. Based on the author's personal bibliography, it was an article *Cesta za inšpiráciou* (*The Path to Inspiration*) and probably the poem *Verš októbrový* (*October Verse*) published a month later (Masárová, 1978: 22).

122 The poem was published with a date: Prague, 13 October, 1932, (Haľamová, 1932: 4).

revealed that it was about her. She concludes their mutual verbal shootout (Lukáč's answer is followed by a second letter) by alluding to the poem *Tragika obapolná* (*Bipolar Tragic*)¹²³ which E. B. Lukáč dedicated to her three years ago: "My eyes are young, young and clear, and my heart is like born today, not poisoned by paper 'bipolar tragedies.'" (in: Rusnáková, 2001: 19 – 21). But the second letter, written ten days apart, was already conciliatory and confidential open (it follows on from the previous letter from Lukáč). In it, Maša returned to the duel of competitors, E. B. Lukáč and A. Kostolný, about which they both informed her. It explains in more detail the unpleasant circumstances in which she rejected Kostolný's proposal: "Because of his words came various threats and vague allusions to 'I know what I will do' and I, in the naivety and goodness of the seventeenth spring – I was frightened, I was forced to answer his question: 'because-because' – if not quite positively – at least slightly and in his favour. I was forced to take his hysterical grief in my hands and calming him like a mother, even though male tears have always resented me" (ibidem). At the same time, she clarifies legitimate concerns about Kostolný's health¹²⁴ and thanks Lukáč in particular for not having exacerbated the situation: "In fact, I am very grateful to you for not being willing to go with him and confront the feelings of the three of us." (ibidem). The other lines show open sincerity, when she admits that as was the unnatural answer to Kostolný, so was her hatred for him. But what is worthy of special attention for us, she added a reminder to the final apology: "Long, long time ago, on one fragrant early spring Sunday in 1925 he preached the text 'seven times the righteous will fall and rise again' [...] it was a nice discipline, it has stuck in my soul to this day – and so we have been falling and more than seven times a day" and in the final paragraph he adds: "I greet you and believe that I do not wish you evil; at the memory of the purest

123 Lukáč, Emil Boleslav: *Tragika obapolná* [typescript, dated i Bratislava on 30 September 1925]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

124 She literally writes in her letter: "Well, as you well know, K. was extremely upset, resigned, desperate, etc.; I was afraid for his poor health, and my fear was also supported by the statement of a good friend of mine – a physician." (Rusnáková, 2001: 20).

Sunday of my life, which I have just mentioned to you, believe me!" And at the same time, verses from the poem *Dar* come to us associatively from the poem *Dar*: "When the roads are overgrown with thorns and bush- / I will bring my gift to you on a Sunday / with the smile of God.//"¹²⁵ (Ibid.) It follows from the said letter that the said section of the poem may have been a response to that commemorative Sunday. We may therefore make a hypothetical assumption that the initials (A. K.) in the subtitle when the poem was first published were only an additional, perhaps situationally enforced "measure". However, despite the above findings, the authoress' intention has remained unconfirmed.

Let's briefly recapitulate the facts found in chronological sequence: inspirational discipline by E. B. Lukáč (spring 1925), Lukáč's dedication of the poem *Tragika obapolná* to M. Haľamová (Bratislava 30 September 1925), publication of the poem *Dar* (Bratislava May 1926), rejection of A. Kostolný (Nový Smokovec September 1926), a letter with information about the duel of the "competitors" (January 1928), publication of the poem *Verš októbrový* (Prague, 13 September 1932).

The key surprise – it did not appear in other archival-preserved articles – was the authoress' unique accompanying word to the radio show: *Maša Haľamová – sama doma so svojou poéziou* (*Alone at Home With Her Poetry*),¹²⁵ in which the poetess revealed not just to her readers and listeners:

"[...] *It used to be such a custom that a girl sewed a silk head cloth to the one she loved. She must have been singing at it. I sang my first shy confession in a poem, symbolised by such a head cloth.*" (Ibidem.)

These words were followed by the poem *Dar*. In addition, the poetess attached a code to it, by which she said the as yet unspoken: „*Hodváb sa dávno rozpadol – báseň pretrvala -. I láska.*“ (“*The silk has long since gone – the poem has survived -. And so has love.*”) Based on the above facts, we may state that the intention and the inspiration and with them

125 Haľamová, Maša: *Maša Haľamová – sama doma so svojou poéziou...* (... alone at home with her poetry...) (Broadcast on Czechoslovak Radio on 24 May 1967). [Source not identified.]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

also the legitimacy of one of the interpretations are proven, even if the initiative to add the initials remained undetected. To the margin of the genesis of dedication, let us add that the subtitle was not found – unlike the poems *Balada o klamných ružiach* (*Ballad of Deceptive Roses*) (to Anča), *Horniaky (Z vlaku)* (*Uplands*) (*From the Train*), *V marci (J.)* (*In March*) (J.) – or in the manuscript collection *Dar* dedicated to her sister Oľga at Christmas in 1927,¹²⁶ and also in its first edition in 1928.

As it turned out, even a poem can have its own story with a secret. There were mental gusts behind the lyrical statement, and therefore the poem *Dar* can be accepted as a "living flame" of love radiating from the heart of a girl enamoured. A celebration of peace¹²⁷ based on the author's statement and the findings, can be ruled out and we may mark it as over interpreting, because at the level of apperception (i.e. research methodologisation) it is not desirable. However, in terms of the accuracy of literary research, it has been confirmed that revealing the relationship between a text and its context is productive. The material research in the archive enabled us to reconstruct the genetic context and verify the analytical-interpretative conclusions.

126 Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

127 E.g. in the poem *Mladá ulica* (*Young street*), which is included in the collection *Smrť tvoju žijem* (1966).

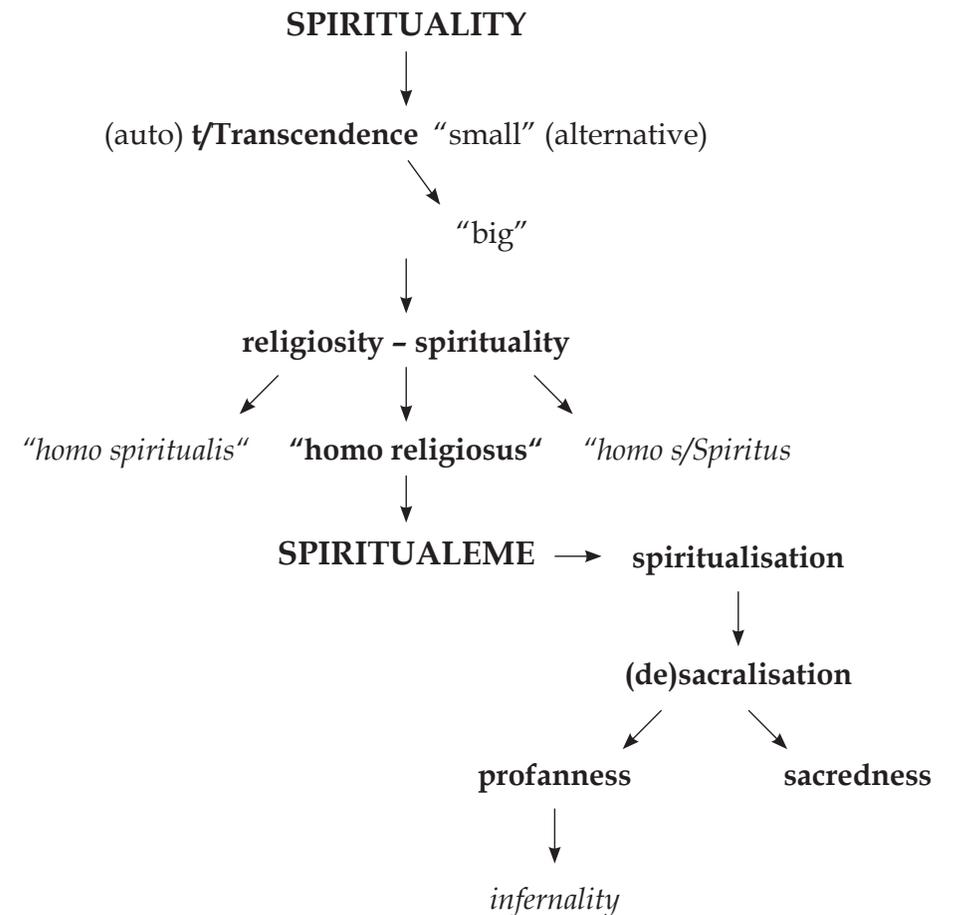
Scale of Differentiated Spirituality

(Methodology)

Literary-critical responses published in the contemporaneous press showed that some experts directly, others by way of indication, pointed out the synergistic focus of Maša Haľamová’s poetic statement. Michal Harpáň continued the perception employed for decades, recalling the spiritual dimension of her poetry and essentially experienced spirituality in the History of Slovak Literature in 2009: “From the cognitive point of view, her entire poetic oeuvre can be characterised as invoking God and finding a way to humility.” (Harpáň, 2009: 124)

Our (re) interpretative intention will be to follow the implementation of the spiritual dimension in the structure of the poetic text through a differentiated and hierarchical range of concepts. In creating the methodology, we used interdisciplinary stimuli from philosophy, psychology, theology, religion, and philology.¹²⁸ The basic axis of differentiated spirituality is a chain of terms: transcendence – religiosity – spirituality. At the level of personal experience of religious faith, the term of “*homo religiosus*” has a central position, which was later extended to the modality of “*homo spiritualis*” and “*homo s/Spiritus*”.

Spirituality is the basic concept (Plašienková, 1997: 1 – 14) defined as an anthropological constant and existential attitude of man, i. e. readiness for a certain kind of behaviour, action, thinking and direction of life, which is based on personal inner experience based on intuitive knowledge and full acceptance of the *Summum Bonum*. We can understand spirituality as a process in which we seem to be trying to



Scheme of hierarchical terms used in the research into literary text

128 The studies by Z. Plašienková, M. Stríženec, J. Komorovský, P. Liba, J. Sabol are the starting point here. We use the terms defined in them in an analytical approach to the research into differentiated spirituality.

“touch the eternity.” Its signals can be emotional expressions of respect, fear, honour, adoration, empathy, etc.

Transcendence (ibid) has an important initiation function, which we understand as a person’s ability to transcend him/herself and open him/herself to everything that transcends him/her (others, being, God). In self-transcendence we distinguish the “great” Transcendence, i. e. Divinity in the sense of a personal or impersonal God, theistic, pantheistic, and panentheistic one,¹²⁹ and “small” transcendence, i. e. a realm that “transcends” us, a fact to which we can “open up,” even though it has no focus on divinity. Thus, spirituality can be religious or non-religious, which means that different forms of spirituality and spiritualities (ibid.) may be distinguished. In connection with transcendence, we can also talk about the concept of spiritual development (Plašienková – Kulisz, 2004; Plašienková – Bizoň, 2016),¹³⁰ in which the subject through Transcendence can become a spiritually mature personality and cross the line between the profane and the sacred worlds.

The personal and positive attitude of the subject to religion and to God is expressed by the concept of religiosity (Stríženec, 2005, online).¹³¹ It manifests itself in thinking (in religious beliefs), in experiencing (in religious feelings), and in action (in cult, rituals and activities in a religious community). It is mainly related to an affirmative relationship to a specific religious community, i.e. to an organised Church or religious institution. Spirituality differs from religiosity, which as a “*multidimensional psychological construct*” cannot be separated from the experiencing person (and therefore not from the lyrical or epic subject).

129 Unlike pantheism, in which everything is identical with God, panenteism emphasises that everything is in God (Plašienková – Kulisz, 2004: 78).

130 Zlatica Plašienková addressed issues of spiritual development in more detail in monographs on the philosophy of P. Teilhard de Chardin.

131 We draw on the research of Michal Stríženec, who defined the concepts of religiosity and spirituality and the relationship between them on the basis of a study of professional theological and psychological literature and the results of our own empirical research.

The peculiarity of Christian spirituality is the faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ, while its highest form is in mystical experiences. The relationship between religiosity and spirituality is dynamic: while religiosity is more socialistic and dogmatic, spirituality is individual and personal with the sacred. Although spirituality is a necessary core of religiosity, it goes far beyond it, both of which are united by the recognition of the metaempirical dimension of reality.

Closely related to spirituality in the artistic text is the concept of *spiritualeme*, which was defined as a sign-aesthetic unit, which is characterised by the “*connotative energy of a higher, transcendental message*” (Sabol – Sabolová – Sersenová, 2010: 92). The main distinctive symptom of spirituality is in internality. Among other symptoms, faithfulness, humility, generosity, compassion, remorse, kindness, receptivity, sacrifice, justice, care, conscientiousness, honesty, selflessness, morality, truthfulness, humanity, perseverance, warmth, kindness, benevolence, etc. have been abstracted (ibidem: 95-96). *Spiritualeme* refers to a processual phenomenon significantly interfering with the semiotic nature of the text. It is associated with the category of time, as it takes place through “*chronos*” and in contact with “*kairos*”.

In personal experience of faith, the term of “*homo religiosus*” makes it possible to express spirituality and religion as an anthropological constant (Komorovský, 1997: 15 – 21). It refers to a special type of religiously disposed entity, which by developing intellect and imagination has arrived at the creation of religious values, religious structures. “*Homo religiosus*” is thus man in the depths of his/her soul oriented towards the infinite Transcendent with a sense of the sacred and “*sensus numinis*” (R. Otto’s term), and religion has become an essential part of his/her life. Since the centre of his/her life is God, he/she can be both theocentrically and Christocentrically oriented. In his/her life he/she promotes religious ideas, proclaims ideals, is characterised by apostolic zeal, but also renunciation and asceticism. His/her path to a deep experience of faith is often marked by trials,

crises or even conversions. Let us add that religiosity can develop but can also stagnate.

Within religious dynamism, we can also mention the typology of individual religiosity (ibidem: 21):

- a) *intellectual type* – understands religion as an issue of truth that needs to be known,
- b) *voluntary type* – religion represents the value that governs the whole behaviour of man, while each act of will is conditioned by an adequate act of intellect,
- c) *affective type* – religion is subject to emotional experience of what is known intuitively; within the subtypes it also distinguishes between euphoric, melancholic, and aesthetic modifications,
- d) *harmonic type* – represents an even combination of all the psychic abilities involved in religious life.

The main starting point of our research will be J. Komorovsky's thesis: "... a person becomes a personality of the *homo religiosus* type when he/she attains knowledge of the transcendent Being and establishes personal contact with this fact, so he/she participates in God's life, ontically connected with God, acts from his/her perspective; presence", and therefore "it can be said that he/she is truly *homo religiosus* in the full sense of the word, that he/she is a religiously integral personality, is the realisation of the God-man ideal." (Ibidem.)

Previous research on literary texts has required a more precise distinction of the entity's spiritual potential. We have added the terms "*homo spiritualis*" and "*homo s/Spiritus*" to the term "*homo religiosus*", with which we have extended the range with new modalities. (Hajdučková, 2016: 59 – 82; 2016: 139 – 162):

"*Homo spiritualis*" – refers to the phenomenon of the entity's spiritual disposition with the ability to perceive the metaempirical dimension of reality, which is primarily conditioned and initiated by auto transcendence. Since the characteristic accompanying feature of spiritual awakening is the act of enlightenment, it takes place as an ontological transformation, the so-called *methanoia*. The religious form is one of the

possibilities of its implementation (in the distinction between "small" and "large" transcendence).¹³²

"*Homo spiritus/Spiritus*" – refers to the phenomenon of spiritual maturity (enlightenment) characterised by individual spiritual experience (even mystical) experienced within the lines of Christian spirituality recognising the Trinity of God.¹³³ It is characterised by an active response to God's initiative, so the result of the action of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual is a creation-evolutionary being. In this sense, it is already a degree of spiritual maturity in which the spirituality takes on a numinous form.

Symmetrical inversion can also be productive in the analysis of spirituality (Liba, 1995: 238).¹³⁴ By its definition, it allows to observe the sacred as the epiphany, i. e. an event that takes place in exceptional space (*genius loci*) and exceptional time (*kairos*), (Heriban, 1998: 560). Ontological basis of symmetric inversion of sacral – profane¹³⁵ can be seen as the difference between a "*creation-evolutionary completion that directly 'touches God' with its creation activity*" and a "*being that is closed before this completion*", and thus: "'sacred' is in what living formation God participates, while 'profane' is when it really isn't – and reality closes in enclaves." (Liba, 1995: 183)

132 This term is not new in foreign literature. The term was defined by the American historian Steven Ozment (1969) in a special comparative study: *Homo spiritualis: A comparative study of the anthropology of Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther (1509-16) in the context of their theological thought. Studies in medieval and Reformation thought.*

133 One way of knowing faith and mystical experience presupposes transcendence inherent in divine virtues. It is grace as a created participation in the divine life: The transition from one mode to another takes place through the movement of the Holy Spirit, which is the creative principle of the spiritual man and within the New Testament. And the theological man is usually prepared to be thus controlled by the Holy Spirit, because he has in him those special passive active habits, such as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. (*Slovník spirituality*, 1999: 550).

134 Research into this aspect of spirituality in Slovak literary studies (after 1989) is associated with the name of Peter Liba.

135 Infernality, as part of the ternary relationship, we do not include it in the conceptual set, because we have not sufficiently verified the expression category in the previous or in this research into the text.

We are convinced that the chosen research methodology will allow us to (re) interpret three poetry collections – *Dar (Gift)* (1928), *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932), *Smrt tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* (1966) – to prove spiritual, i. e. metaempirical message of the poetry of Maša Haľamová. Based on previous research, we can hypothesise that the development of spirituality, i. e. metaempirical dimension of literary reality is characterised by the phenomenon of “spiritualisation”.

Spirituality in (Re) Interpretation of Three Poetry Collections

Dar (Gift)

*Dar (Gift)*¹³⁶ is a collection of a young debuting 20-year-old authoress who has successfully established herself in favourable cultural conditions since the founding of Czechoslovakia. Let us recall the fact that the reward for her successful entry into the literary scene was her stay in Paris (October 1929 – January 1930), where she improved in French.

Most of the poems included in the debut collection were written between 1924 and 1928. They are associated with her studies at a grammar school and a business school in Bratislava (since 1924), including an internship at the sanatorium in Nový Smokovec, where she finally worked (1926). In addition to her studies, she attended lectures by Albert Pražák, the literary salon of Hana Gregorová, and improved her poetry writing skills. In the milieu of Bratislava, according to the dating in the archived manuscript collection, she wrote several poems: *Zo sanatória (From the Sanatorium)* (May 1925), *Riadok z kancionála (A Line From the Hymnary)* (September 1925), “*Buď wúle Twá*” (“*Thy Will Be Done*”) (October 1925), *Z obloka (From the Window)* (September 1925),¹³⁷ *Balada o klamných ružiach (Ballad on Deceptive Roses)*, (March 1926), *Dar (Gift)* (May 1926), and also *Z knihy žalmov (From the Book of Psalms)* (Bratislava, December 1926). In Nový Smokovec, where she worked since June 1926 in the Dr. Szontágh Sanatorium, other poems were

136 We are based on the first edition of the collection. We respect the order of the poems (Haľamová, 1928).

137 The poem *Z obloka (From the Window)* was included in the collection *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932).

written: *List (A Letter)* (We do not know the date of the manuscript, but it was published in July 1926), *Agónia (Agony)* (July 1926), *Balada o hre slnka a vetra (Ballad of the Game of Sun and Wind)* (autumn 1926) and a year later: *V marci (In March)* (J.) (March 1927), *Horniaky (Z vlaku) (Uplands (From the Train))* (November 1927). In the year of the first edition of the collection, the poems *Balada o veľkom žiali (Ballad of Deep Grief)* were also published (Nový Smokovec, January 1928), *Pieseň (Song)* (Bratislava, March 1928), *Legenda (Legend)* (we do not know the date of the manuscript, but it was published in March 1928). Finally, the poems *Láska (Love)*¹³⁸ and *Milému (To My Beloved One)* became part of the collection, which were not contained in the manuscript collection, but were not published in magazines before the release of the debut.

In several poems, she returned to her childhood in her native Blatnica, surrounded by the natural beauties of the Turiec, to cope with the death of her mother at the sensitive age of adolescence. In her memoirs entitled *Vyznania (Confessions)* (in the typescript in the section entitled *Z môjho denníka (From My Diary)*¹³⁹, she revealed:

“There are tears that fall like a stone to the bottom of the heart and shed, and there are liberating tears, they wash away the pain so that joy and reconciliation can enter you. So were mine suddenly fallen away, and when I wiped them away, a feeling of quiet gratitude for the life my mother had given me, a desire to repay her for everything, to glorify her in her poetry, to be worthy of her love” (ibidem), and therefore in many of the poems of the first collection she erected “monuments to her motherly love” (Haľamová, 1988: 29).

The poems also reflect memories of children’s experiences, including an incident with the writer Elena Maróthy-Šoltésová, a family friend (of the grandmother and mother). In the manuscript of the address (unspecified date), she mentioned her visit just before her mother’s death (March 1916), during which Maša went to the cellar

138 First published in: *Obrana ľudu* 28, 1969, No. 7, p. 7 (Masárová, 1978: 31).

139 Roll, Dušan: *Maša Haľamová: Vyznania* [2]. [From archived and published texts by M. Haľamová prepared for the 100th anniversary of her birth; typewriting., xerox + PC output]. LA SNL, add No. 3724/2009. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

instead of the maid, where a bad BOBO was supposed to be, which she did not doubt, as the adults said so. Disappointed, she burst into tears in the arms of Aunt Elenka when she returned. Against the background of unpleasant experience, however, she realised that her mother never deceived them, but led to the truth.¹⁴⁰ This personal memory with a special atmosphere seems to be associatively captured in the dramatically tuned poem *Z večera (From the Evening)* (this is indicated by the acrosities of Bo-Bo-Bo and the anaphora in the last two verses of Bo-Bo ...!). Finally, as she herself acknowledged, her mother’s work became very urgent later: *“My mother’s influence on me as a child must have been profound. It wasn’t until the threads hidden in the subconscious began to unwind the threads that I realised what she had given me in the short time allotted to her. Above all, a sense of truth.”*¹⁴¹

Another sad event that hit her at the age of thirteen came to the poetic memory book. In the poem *Balada o klamných ružiach (Ballad of Deceptive Roses)* (it attracted the attention of Š. Krčméry, editor of *Slovenské pohľady*), she dealt with the death of her sister Anna Haľamová († 14 March 1921). We can confront her poetic elaboration with the memories of sister Oľga Grebeníková (née Haľamová), in which she captured the end of her life when Anča fainted after the flu, and therefore, on the recommendation of doctors, sold part of her property so that she could be treated in the Tatra Dr. Szontágh Sanatorium. Well, *“after a few months, Anča returned home nicely recovered, her cheeks filled, but the suspicious roses on them! And when the doctors advised us to isolate her, it was clear to us what that meant. Tuberculosis is contagious and we have been weakened by malnutrition and the flu.”*¹⁴² Anča was sharing bed with

140 Haľamová, Maša: Manuscript speech record [identification data not specified]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

141 Haľamová, Maša: *Rámcové otázky pre rozhovor s poetkou, zaslúžilou umelkyňou M. Haľamovou (Framework questions for an interview with a poet, merited artist M. Haľamovou)*, [typescript, questions 3 pp., Manuscript 15 pp. answers]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

142 Grebeníková-Haľamová, Oľga: *Spomienky (Memories)*. p. 34 [typescript, 38 pp., dated: May 1985, with a signature Maši Oľga]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

her dog in the back room, where she was visited by a young student, “a well-built Platon Paulíny”. Oľga recalls that it was “an reciprocal pure love that beautified our Anča’s miserable days.” And then came March, the month in which both mothers died of tuberculosis, and took their eighteen-year-old sister with them. (Ibidem) These connections suggest that the individual poems had an irreplaceable place in poetess’ life.

There are twenty-one poems in the first edition of the *Dar* (1928) collection, which was edited by J. K. Garaj and illustrated by J. Jareš. They are divided into four sections according to thematic focus: *Dar*, *Z kancionálu*, *Zo sanatoria*, *Epilog* (*Gift*, *From the Hymnary*, *From the Sanatorium*, *Epilogue*). In a representative analysis and interpretation, we present sixteen of them.¹⁴³ We will enter the poetic statement with the methodology of differentiated spirituality and with the hypothesis resulting from previous material research that the spiritual dimension as an inner attitude of life is implemented in it in the process of spiritualisation.

From the point of view of the study of spirituality, the introductory text of the *Dar* manuscript collection (dated at Christmas 1927) dedicated to her sister Oľga is interesting¹⁴⁴. The poet revealed in it the author’s intention and self-contained source of lyrical statement, when she sincerely thanked her for initiating the inner perception of the word, i. e. *verbum interius*:

“I threw a handful of poems for you on white paper.

They are all experienced deeply by me, and according to my conscience I can believe that there was no false sound in them.

143 Not interpreted poems: *Z večera* (*From the Evening*), *Západ marcového slnka* (*Sunset in March*), *Sekera v lese* (*Axe in a Forest*), *Jiřímu Wolkerovi, Za Dušanom Kardossom* (*A Farewell to Dušan Kardoš*).

144 Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* (*Gift*) [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

They are the cleanest part of my life. They accepted the greatest pain and confusion of my soul – and for the quiet joy and pure happiness they repaid me with the most beautiful music of the human word. “

“And Olžinka, my sister, I owe you so much for the awakening of the inner sight of the soul in me!

Your grateful Maša”

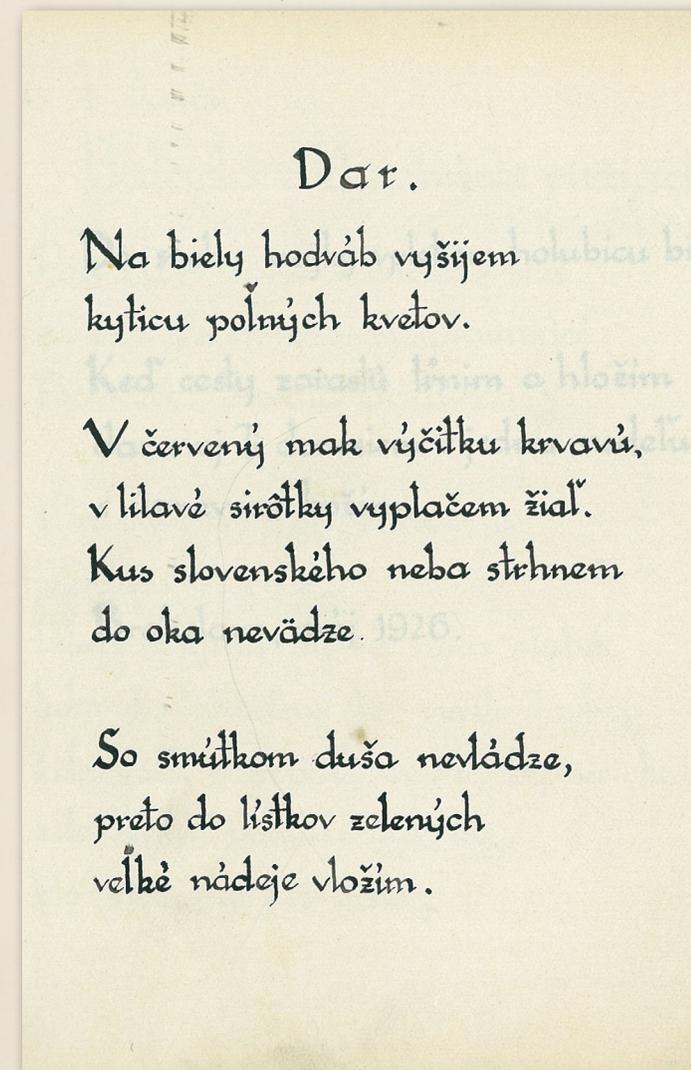
In the emblematic poem *Dar*¹⁴⁵ in the creative principle of embroidery, an exceptional material (silk) is combined with the natural beauty of a field bouquet. The colour scale, expressed explicitly and implicitly, includes red (poppy), light purple (lilac orphans), blue (ignorant) and green (petals) with a dominance of white (white silk, snow lace, white dove). The core of colour motifs is formed by mental gusts: painful suffering, orphanhood with vertical anchorage in the Slovak sky, i.e. with an overlap to the transcendent, and in the eye of the ignorant, symbolically representing the soul, the timeless value of home – homeland – is internalised. After the anti-climactic chain of motives (bloody) remorse, grief, sadness, there is a turn in the survival of the lyrical entity, which is represented in the symbolism of green leaves, in the motif of youth and hope. In the connotation of the green branch (as an allusion to the spring rebirth and Green Thursday), the axiom of spirituality thus opens up in the field of meaning. An imaginary balance with the “middle” function is represented by a separate verse: “*I will weave a white dove into the snow of lace.*” The white dove (also understood as a symbol of peace) acquires Biblical connotations here. At the edge of the embroidered painting, it symbolises the transition to a new life in the sign of the Holy Spirit and at the same time, in the connotations of the Song of Songs, it is a sign of love. It foreshadows spiritual reconciliation as an act of accepting the necessary fate – suffering from love, but also revival. The lyrical fluctuation closes detensively in the final three

145 In manuscript collection dated: Bratislava, May 1926 (ibidem), no dedication. First published with initials in the subtitle: (A. K.) (Haľamová, 1926: 9).

verses: "When the roads are overgrown with thorns and May bush – I will bring my gift to you on a Sunday / with the smile of God." The imaginary fairy-tale-mythical journey thus acquires spiritual significance. Religion is represented by a sacred time in it – Sunday, which in Christianity is associated with the rite of sacrifice, reconciliation, and God's grace. Embroidered picture – a gift – is a self-transcendent creative gesture in which a lyrical subject deals with an emotional break: the revitalisation of life attitude and emotional ties takes place through a relationship with God, to the so-called. "Great" Transcendence. The Trinity Axis – progressing from allusion to the Jesus' message of hope through the symbolism of the Holy Spirit to the gesture of reconciliation in the symbolic sacrifice of the gift of love – lyrically encoding the spiritual message. The poetess foreshadowed her further work here not just motivically-symbolically, but also ideologically and axiologically. In it, the synchronisation of the natural image and the mental state with the spiritual significance took a permanent place: the lyrical fluctuation has a spiritual solution and acquires a mystical meaning. Its focus – the unifying Centre is God's love.

Another poem, *Balada o veľkom žiali (Ballad on the Deep Grief)*¹⁴⁶ confirms this path. The lyrical conflict of disappointment from betrayed love has a spiritual solution: the lyrical subject seeks solace in the vertical of space, near the clouds. The desolation of the soul – being developed in a ballad-like gloomy natural parallelism against the background of contrast with the white colour (abyss, trees) – wants to entrust into the hands of God through a gray cloud: „Ťažkým žiaľom oči moje / vyhlodané, / oblak sivý, / mäkko polož / v božie dlane“ ("Softly lay / my eyes gnawn with heavy grief / a grey cloud / in the palms of God"). Nature (trees, rhododendron, forest, storm, cloud) is the means of transcendence with which she would first want to merge, but through the cloud (synecdoche of heaven) she eventually desires to transcend it

146 In the manuscript collection dated: Nový Smokovec, January 1928. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 44, 1928, No. 2, p. 73 (Masárová, 1978: 19).



Manuscript of the poem *Dar*

(within the framework of pan-en-theism). In the mediated contact with eternity, she expresses the degree of internalisation of her relationship with Transcendence, in the sign of a four-level climax: „*Smelé víchre, nehrajte sa / s tmavým lesom, / čakám vás ja / štyri noci / nad útesom* //” (“*Bold storm, don’t play / with the dark forest, / I’ve been waiting for you / for four nights / over the cliff* //”). The lyrical conflict, experienced tragically, thus resulted in the spiritual distension of the Centre.¹⁴⁷

In the poem *Pieseň (The Song)*¹⁴⁸ the gloomy atmosphere of disappointment continues, but transcendence has been replaced by resignation. Shyness, self-closure have weakened the self-transcendence that is a necessary condition in experiencing the “I and you” relationship: „*Nespialy sa ruky moje, / pomoc neprosily, / len ovisly pozdĺž tela / bez vlády a sily.* //” (“*My hands did not clasp, / they did not ask for help, / they just hung along my body / without control and strength.* //”). The prayer unuttered as a covert expression of religiosity reveals its silent spiritual core: „*Nezamrelo srdce moje / v zurážanej hrudi, / len sa vtiahlo do kútika / keď tušilo ľudí.* //” (“*My heart didn’t paralyse / in the chest down beaten, / it just pulled into a corner / when it sensed the people.* //”). And so the tacitly experienced disappointment and deficit of love, accompanied by dull pain, reveal in the semantic antitheses (gradually distributed in four stanzas) its anthropocentric focus – the heart.

After the poem *List (A Letter)*,¹⁴⁹ in which the cloud is a herald of love, the lyrical subject expresses the desire to write the innermost feelings into the sky even in the poem *Láska (Love)*.¹⁵⁰ Through the eye of the sky, it evokes the constant presence of God, to which the soul

147 The feminine principle of number four symbolically ends with the Centre, i. e. the fifth element forming a pentagram at the intersection of the cross (Biedermann, 1992: 52 – 53).

148 In the manuscript collection dated: Bratislava, March 1928. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published in the magazine *Slovenka*, 1948, No. 2, p. 16 (Masárová, 1978: 26).

149 The poem is not in the manuscript collection. First published in the Sunday Talk section of the magazine *Slovenský denník* 9, 1926, No. 152 a, p. 10, 4. 7. (Masárová, 1978: 18).

150 The poem is not in the manuscript collection. First published in *Obrana ľudu* 28, 1969, No. 7, p. 7. (Masárová, 1978: 31).

entrusts itself with its experience. Pure love is the axis of meaning – the spiritualeme – uniting the soul in a personal relationship with God. The image of the enthusiasm for love implemented through the initiated word, hides a secret – a testimony of God’s spark in a flaming heart – accessible in contemplation, in the relationship “I in y/You.” The poem’s spiritual semantics, its exalted confession in the explicitly: “*I love!*” is enhanced by the colour of gold and silver, evoking the nobility of emotion and moral purity.

The flip side of love is represented by the poem *Balada o hre slnka a vetra (Ballad of the Game of Sun and Wind)*.¹⁵¹ In the anthropomorphised game of nature “*with a golden curl on a young forehead*”, the fleetingness of love stands out in the faith of the moment of love jag, which resonates like a delusive Indian summer in autumn. A contrasting image of love with a hint of tragedy – extinction, denial and desecration – is encoded in the extinct lights of the stars. What makes the poem exceptional is its own self-transcendence: at first glance a pantheistic rendition of the love story in the image of nature, it points to what transcends it (in the sense of panenteism) – to the sanctifying focus (in the evocation of the golden colour).

The poem *Horniaky (Uplands)* was published in the magazine with the subtitle: */Z vlaku./ /From the train.*¹⁵² However, it was no longer mentioned in the first edition of the collection, nor in its subsequent editions. A dynamic view of the sacred framing of villages behind the window of a passing train: „*Pred každou dedinou kríž. / Za každou dedinou kríže*” (“*A cross in front of each village. / Crosses behind every village*”) represents the religious archetype of village life. At its beginning, there is a common sacred cross “at the torments of God” – a symbol of

151 In the manuscript collection dated: High Tatras, autumn, 1926. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published in the magazine *Slovenské pohľady* 42, 1926, No. 11, p. 671 (Masárová, 1978: 17).

152 In the manuscript collection mentioned with subtitle and dated: November 1927. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published in the journal: *Slovenské pohľady* 43, 1927, No. 11, p. 736 (Masárová, 1978: 19). The poem subtitle and dating were listed identically.

Sacrifice and Suffering from Love, and at its end, there are multiplied crosses in individual destinies. The Cross of God and the human crosses represent a unifying and unified focus in the spiritual life of a Christian. This is the image of a young girl praying for her loved one, an old man in the autumn of his life, as well as families living in hard work and small expressions of love. In the end, the lyrical subject creates its own analogy – it resembles the praying girl in front of the cross and adopts the model of Christocentrism of her own free will into the image of love for the loved one.

In the poem *V marci (In March)*¹⁵³ the existential attitude is also placed at the centre: “Žiť život – je veľká zodpovednosť. –“. (“Living a life is a big responsibility. –”). The spring ritual of land reclamation takes on a metaphorical meaning: it is not just a period of natural life boom, but also a parallel coexistence of woman and man. In the traditional gender stereotype of the peasants ploughing the field, it testifies to the attitude of a woman who has taken the difficult task of accompanying her husband in their daily struggle for livelihood. Both of them are united by the prayer for the harvest. The request for God’s blessing as part of the rite not just completes the active work, but also testifies to the religious act and the degree of spiritualisation. Their active life set in the natural cycle is anchored in Transcendence. Therefore, it is possible to point out here that pantheism is only a mediating image of another quality of spiritual life, its dynamic pendant – panenteism.

Two poems were included in the second part of the collection, with the distinctive title *Riadok z kancionála (A Line from the Hymnary)* and *Z knihy žalmov (From the Book of Psalms)*. They have an exceptional place in the work of M. Haľamová, because they are a poetic memory of her mother.

153 In the manuscript collection mentioned in *March* in the subtitle J. and dated: Nový Smokovec, March 1927. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. Also published: *Slovenské pohľady* 43, 1927, No. 3, p. 168 (Masárová, 1978: p. 19).

*Riadok z kancionála (A Line from the Hymnary)*¹⁵⁴ is a poem about a religious tradition that is passed down from mother to daughter. The book of spiritual songs (*Cithara Sanctorum Transcius*) is silenced in a problematic life situation, and over time comes to life again in the hands of a young woman. In contemplation over the communion cup, the sensitivity for spiritual-personal spirituality is renewed in it. In remorseful contemplation of the Hymnary pages, she fearfully accepts her mother’s message and, through it, the Christian’s religious rite. In the explicitness of the poem, it is transformed into a sign of a five-point aposiopesis:¹⁵⁵ „Sila v ňom veľká a krásna! / Posvätila ho matkina neha: / Kdo jen na Boha se spoléhá.....“ (“The power in it is great, and the beauty! / The mother’s tenderness sanctified it: / Whoever relies on God”) However, another message emerges from the text of the poem: The archetypal function of the mother, which conveys a spiritual message of religion with a characteristically sacred female tenderness.

„Ja stretla som sa s dušou mojej matky!“ (“I met with my mother’s soul!”) sounds enthusiastic incipit of the poem *Z knihy žalmov (From the Book of Psalms)*.¹⁵⁶ And in it, again, a situation that restores the continuity of the daughter’s spiritual life through the mother. The animated prayer (in Biblical Czech) connected the mother’s past with the daughter’s presence: „Srdce čisté stvoř mi, ó Bože, / a ducha přímého obnow / u wnitrnostech mých...“ (“My heart pure create, O God, / and the spirit direct renew / within my insides...”) and in it the power of spirituality made

154 In manuscript collection dated: Bratislava, IX. 1925. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published: *Nový rod* 5, 1925, No. 2, pp. 6 – 7, in the column Belletria (Masárová, 1978: 16).

155 Working with the punctuation mark of aposiopesis, i. e. the aesthetic signal of the form of expression is targeted. The authoress uses two dots as if in representation of double consciousness – remorse, four dots are a female sign – they represent here the inner voice of the mother and five dots are a sign of a “living” theocentric anchor. By aposiopesis she evokes a pause of silence or a dash of varying semantic value and thus evokes the strength of a spiritually tuned poem.

156 In the manuscript collection dated: Bratislava, XII. 1926. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. However, first published: *Slovenský denník* 8, 1925, No. 293, p. 3, in the annex Christmas Supplement dated: 25 December with a modified title *V knihe žalmov* (Masárová, 1978: 16).

sense for a transcendent encounter, the religious core of which is formed by sacred love: „*Poslednou jej modlitbou dávnu / dýchla mi do duše lásky žeh sladký.*“ (“By her last prayer so long ago / she breathed a sweet flame into my soul of love.”) Even in this case, the lyrical subject is characterised by an emotional experience of spirituality and, in relation to God, creates its own pattern: the mother’s prayer as a spiritualeme is the initiating flame of love that guides her on the spiritual path to God. At the same time, the thematic psalmism is a self-expression of a lyrical subject who resolved the lyrical contradiction born of loneliness and abandonment, in a detensive way, in the overwhelming power of prayer.

The third section of the *Sanatorium* consists of the Tatra circle of poems written between 1925 and 1926. In addition to nature and love, the fighting tones of life and death resound in it.

The poem *Zo sanatoria (From the Sanatorium)*¹⁵⁷ raises an ethical issue: the way in which a verdict on irreversible death is pronounced – in the form of a merciful lie or bare truth. The borderline contradiction is resolved against the background of gender differences (male prudence versus female hypersensitivity in the opposite sense: implicitness – explicitness, action – subjectivity, figurativeness – affectivity): the physician euphemically suppressed the patient’s death report and said prosaically: „*Odišiel, odcestoval súrna povinnosť to asi.. / on iste príde späť, / keď povinnosti vyrovná si..*“, (“He’s gone, it must have been an urgent duty.. / he will sure be back, / after settling the obligations..”) protecting against an emotional outpour. But the female lyrical subject proceeded on the contrary, in a self-contained borderline situation in an effort to achieve emotional balance, at first spontaneously uttering a modified formula and speaking in a poetic word, but then still a sad cry erupts from her soul: “*God! Oh God!!!*”). In the given situation, the female lyrical subject won with her affective experience of faith, thus completing the gender contrast. At the same time, it may be seen as if enraged

157 In manuscript collection dated: Bratislava, May 1925. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 41, 1925, No. 6 – 8, pp. 384 – 385 (Masárová, 1978: 17).

emotionality directly demanded an adequate form of expression – the word of the heart in the psalm accent. In the last verse, the affectivity of experiencing the borderline fluctuation thus resulted in the imaginary limit of utterability, where she found an adequate expression for the inner lyrical condition.

We also encounter the dominant motif of life and death in the poems *Agónia*, *Balada o klamných ružiach* a “*Bud’ wüle Twá*” (*Agony*, *Ballad of Deceptive Roses*, and “*Thy Will Be Done*”):

Contemplation on death in the poem *Agónia (Agony)*¹⁵⁸ it is focused on the heart, like the synecdoche of the soul, which grows in silence and then gives itself in devotion and silent humility to a higher will, descending under the cross. It transcends beyond the boundaries of the body and the hospital space, it accepts death as the fateful certainty of man – the mystery of life: „*Tichosť je najkrajšia hudba, / tma najpestrejších farieb dúha, / smrť – najvernejšia sud’ba.* //” (“*Silence is the most beautiful music, / the darkness of the most colourful colours of the rainbow, / death – the most faithful destiny.* //”)

In the ballad on lovers with a tragic ending – dedicated to her sister Anna Haľamová – with an apt name of *Balada o klamných ružiach (Ballad of Deceptive Roses)*¹⁵⁹ love in the imaginary centre of the poem, after 33 verses (evoking the life of Christ) receives the lyrical form of a 6-verse song (syntactically divided into 3 + 3 verses). Love, which unites me and you, to which a lyrical subject also joins in harmony, thus becomes, through a sung song, a spiritualeme that “acts” – loves: „*Piesňou ju miluje, / piesňou ju prosí, / tľmočí zakríknuté city. / I lásky akord nežný / i bôľu výkrik skrytý / v jednej je piesni.*“ (“*He loves her with a song, / he begs her with a song, / he interprets shouted feelings. / And love’s gentle chord*

158 In manuscript collection dated: Nový Smokovec, July 1926. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 42, 1926, No. 6 – 8, p. 424 (Masárová, 1978: 17).

159 In manuscript collection dated: Bratislava, March 1926. The title of the poem is preceded by: + *Anči*. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 42, 1926, No. 3, pp. 144 – 146 (Masárová, 1978: 17).

/ and the scream of pain hidden / is in a single song.”) In the song of love, the word heart (*verbum cordis*) acquires a special lyrical expression – it sounds rhythmic-melodic, musically. Such a song-confession (with a chant potential) is “a living manifestation of the soul”, “spiritual organism” with an eidetic core – meaning.¹⁶⁰ The above-mentioned numerical symbolism woven into verses with a melodic “centre” underlines the spiritual meaning of the poem. The overall atmosphere of the ballad is completed by the symbolic colour of the red rose, the polarity of day and night, but especially the natural scenery of spring, which hides the existential principle of life: the eternal cycle of birth and ruin, but with the sacred love of the living centre – the spiritualeme.

The poem “*Bud’ wŭle Twá*” (*Thy Will be Done*)¹⁶¹ also has a ballad gradient, but the conflict between life and death ends in victory. The decisive moment is the will and intention of man who, at the last hour, symbolically at four o’clock in the morning, surrenders with faith to the will of God. The spiritual problem posed again depicts death as a mystery – the mystery of the Will transcending man. An interesting feature of the poem is the magical game of numbers, in which the tension (fourth hour, first floor, room fifty-four, three-quarters of an hour, third arc, four strokes of the clock and their duplication) gradually progresses, then culminating in three words that are a sign of fullness, here of spiritual awakening and surrender to a higher will: „Zrazu tri slová, zaznané slová / prenikly dušu hladnú // Na zbledlé sadly si pery / tri slová veľkej viery: // “*Bud’ wŭle Twá.. // A vôľa stala sa svätá. //*”). (“Suddenly three words, suppressed words / penetrated the hungry soul // They sat down on the faded lips / four words of great faith: // Thy Will

160 In the hermeneutic interpretation, the inner form of the lyrics in the song is understood as “living tissue pulsating in the rhythm of the heart”, i. e. as the musical affectation of the word and its expressive instrumentation, which turns the verses into “musical poetry” – confession. In this case, the song is just an affinity in which the soul sounds its own language and reveals the eidetic core – its meaning (Mikulášek, 2004: 65 – 68, 72 – 85).

161 In manuscript collection dated: Bratislava, X. 1925. Haľamová, Maša: *Dar* [manuscript collection]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009. First published: *Nový rod* 5, 1926, No. 5, pp. 133 – 134 (Masárová, 1978: 17).

Be Done.. // And the will became holy.//”). The fourth hour, the central time rhythmically measured by the strikes of the clock (highlighted in capital letters in the text: “ONE – TWO – THREE – FOUR -”), thus becomes not just an existential milestone of life, but also a symbol of victory in spiritual struggle (“four strokes beat the heart”) that was born on the verge between life and death. Duplicate strikes from two towers (eight of them altogether) resemble a double image of life. In addition to the visible (empirical), they also reveal its invisible (metaempirical) side, and therefore, in addition to the temporal meaning, they also have a sacred meaning (similarly, they use the number of points in aposiopesis): they herald a new beginning – a spiritually revived life.¹⁶²

The love sung out, as in *Balada o klamných ružiach* (*Ballad of Deceptive Roses*), has its existential limits not just in the borderline situation of life, but also in separation, as in the poem *Milému*¹⁶³ (*To My Beloved One*). However, even this may not sound solely in a tragic tone, because in the rhythmic playfulness of a love song, reminiscent of a counting-out rhyme, there is a paradox of meaning – the joy of separation, and perhaps more fitting: leaving “out of the circle.”

There is only one poem in the last part of the *Epilog* (*Epilogue*) collection *Legenda* (*Legend*).¹⁶⁴ It is both the first and the last one. It closes the collection in a magical palindrome movement, i. e. “keying”.

162 Number Four clearly acquires spiritual meaning here. In the “harmony” of numbers, we can reveal mystical meanings: the number four has archetypal qualities by doubling the dual system and making it “the right one.” According to C. G. Jung, the Four is in the Assumption of the Virgin Mary by accepting the feminine element into the Trinity. Number Eight is associated with the interpretation of the New Testament, the eighth day of creation, which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It marks the beginning of a new era for humanity (Biedermann, 1992: 52-53). In the interpreted poem, the individual meanings are associatively reflected in the individual destiny of man.

163 The poem was not included in the manuscript collection. As it is not even mentioned in the personal bibliography, we conclude that it was first published in the *Dar* (1928) collection.

164 Dating is not listed in the manuscript collection. First published: *Živena* 16, 1928, No. 1, p. 77 (Masárová, 1978: 19).

In *Legend*, the lyrical subject speaks of a gift of love that people have wasted, and therefore he blames them: „*Posúď, Bože, / tú žaloba / človeka: // že mu srdce / – choré láskou – / preteká!*“ (“*Consider, God, / this accusation / of man: // that his heart / – sick with love – / overflows!*”)¹⁶⁵ He asks for God’s punishment for his ungratefulness – the withdrawal of the gift of love. The lyrical core of the legendary story thus acquires a cadence of incantational psalm.

However, we may also observe the semantic closure of the collection in its framing, in relation to the final and introductory poems *Dar* and *Legenda*. The antithesis of love in their thought message reveals a unifying meaning: love is a sacred gift of God that one can celebrate and profane, but the fundamental question is what his heart will be like. The semantic paradox – hidden in the connection between the beginning and the end – forms the starting point in which the spiritual sense is revealed and the lyrical parabola closes: love is born of a “living” pulsating heart (focality).

However, the poetic ensemble of the *Dar* collection did not completely close with the poem *Legend*. As archival research revealed, the text manuscript poem *Nadinke* (*To Nadinka*) (photo dated: Nový Smokovec, May 1929), which was created ex post as a poetic dedication to his friend Nadja Hejná in one of the copies of the collection, belongs marginally to it.¹⁶⁶ As in the dedication of the manuscript collection to her sister Oľga, the motif of gratitude for *the human word* resonates in it:

Nadinke.
Na Tvoje dobré, dievčenské ruky myslím,
a zlaté vlásky
ako ma pohladili a potešili kedysi,
ako dva biele papršťečky
v tmavý neprijemný
ťažký podvečer.

–
Dnes mi svetlo ráno
Plné milosti –
Z ktorého vďačnosť nesiem Ti
Za krásne – drahé ľudské slovo.
Vtedy – Nadinka!

Tvoja Maša Haľamová
Nový Smokovec, May 1929

(To Nadinka. // I think of your good, girl's hands, / and golden hair / how they caressed and / comforted me once, / like two white rays / in the dark annoying / hard evening.// - It dawned on me this morning / Full of grace – / Of which I am grateful to You / For a beautiful – dear human word. / Then - Nadinka! // Your Maša Haľamová)

In the monitored dedication framework, it has been confirmed once again that the internalised word, i. e. *verbum interius*, is the source of M. Haľamová’s subtle poetry.

Synthesis: The methodically guided partial analysis and interpretation of selected poems from the *Dar* collection pointed to the presence of spirituality (i.e. an existential attitude based on intuitive knowledge and full acceptance of a moral ideal) in its differentiated forms. In the interpreted poems, it turned out that the condition for the development

¹⁶⁵ The verse of the poem *Legend* from the first edition of the collection “*this accusation*” has a modified wording in the selection of poetry: “*here accusation*” (Haľamová, 1968: 27).

¹⁶⁶ The identification of the dedication was possible thanks to the correspondence of Nadja Hejná of 1 June 1983 with M. Haľamová, in which she confirmed the acceptance of a photograph (by F. Jiříček from Matica slovenská in Martin) of the manuscript of the poem in the book *Dar*. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

of the spirituality of the lyrical subject is auto transcendence. An active role was played by active spiritualeme, which acquired its rhythmic-melodic (musical) form through the song word. This is one of the reasons why the lyrical phenomenon of love in its various forms (exalted feeling, disappointment, tragic ending, or even desecration) resonated in the central position (in the function of the centre) with a focus in the heart (e.g. *Dar, Balada o klamných ružiach, Pieseň, Agonia, Milému*) (*Gift, Ballad of Deceptive Roses, Song, Agonia, To My Dear One*). Spiritualeme, as the mainstay of spirituality, initiates the self-transcendence of the lyrical subject to Transcendence, clearly anchored in theocentrism, Christocentrism, or in the Trinity (e.g., *Horniaky, Dar, Z knihy žalmov, Zo sanatoria*) (*Uplands, Gift, From the Book of Psalms, From the Sanatorium*). Spirituality brings a satisfactory solution to lyrical fluctuations (or contradiction, problem, conflict). The semantic axis of the poetic statement is in personal spirituality, in which Evangelical religiosity (religion, religiosity) is a determining attribute of thought, experience, and action. Based on the typology of individual religiosity, the lyrical subject is gradually defined: it tends to the affective and voluntary type, oscillating between melancholic, aesthetic, and euphoric variants (e.g. *Láska, Zo sanatoria, Riadok z kancionálu, Z knihy žalmov*) (*Love, From the Sanatorium, A Line from the Hymnary, From the Book of Psalms*), but with a strong intellectual potential. By living life situations in personal connection with God, surrendering to God's will in moments of crisis, acting from the perspective of His constant presence, the lyrical subject profiles himself within the framework of religious integrity defined by the term "homo religiosus". In the process of personal spiritualisation, the sacred centre of which is love and a word initiated by an effective tool – *verbum cordis* (e.g. *Balada o klamných ružiach, Láska, "Bud' wúle Twá"*, *Legenda*) (*Ballad of Deceptive Roses, Love, "Thy Will Be Done", Legend*), the lyrical subject opens up in the spirit of Christian spirituality to the creative evolutionary being. The image of nature also corresponds to the process of spiritualisation, by synchronising psychic processes with spiritual significance as it moves from pantheistic to

pantheistic representation. The transcendence of nature in it leads to a dynamic understanding of Transcendence, which is characterised by processuality in a self-creating dialogue with God (e.g. *Dar, Balada o hre slnka a vetra, Balada o veľkom žiali, V marci*) (*Gift, the Ballad of the Game of Sun and Wind, The Ballad of the Deep Grief, In March*). The one in the *Dar (The Gift)* poetry collection took place in religious forms of prayer, spiritual song, elegy, psalm or in aesthetic forms of ballad and song, which acquire the attributes of spiritualeme. But besides them, some of the poems (in whole or in part) tend to be more pronounced towards the form of contemplation, e.g. *Láska, Balada o hre slnka a vetra, Riadok z kancionála* (*Love, Ballad of the Game of Sun and Wind, A Line from the Hymnary*), etc. By way of explicitation, they confirm not just the presence of differentiated spirituality, but also the legitimacy of the hermeneutic approach, by penetrating the initiating point of the closing circle in the connection of the introduction and conclusion, which in the semantic paradox revealed a mystical secret – the initiated word comes from the heart, i. e. *verbum cordis*.

Finally, even the marginal intertextual space of dedications predicted the key position of the inner word, i. e. *verbum interius*, which is the starting point for the poetic expression of the spiritual experience of life experience.

Červený mak (Red Poppy)

After returning from Paris, when Maša Haľamová and her husband settled in the High Tatras on the shores of Štrbské pleso in Villa Marína, she did not have time to write. She helped in her husband's out-patient department, in their first car – "Tatrovka" – they visited patients in nearby villages and lived outside the city's cultural centres. That's why some poetry enthusiasts may have thought that the *Dar (Gift)* debut collection would become unrepeatable. But as J. Tatran wrote in his article: "At that time, they predicted that this beautiful collection of verses of classically pure form, unique sound painting and simplicity would remain the only one of its kind, that Haľamová would not ever write a similar collection again. However, with the second collection of *Červený mak (Red Poppy)*, Haľamová marked an even greater success"¹⁶⁷ and became an attractive role model for other poetesses.¹⁶⁸ Milan Rúfus evaluated the collection in a positive spirit over the years, seeing its stable qualities: "She only confirmed what turned out to be finished and unambiguous in her debut. The same string, a little more balanced, calm, but just as urgent, just as sensitive" (Rúfus, 1964: 158).

The closeness between the symbolic title of the collection and its emblem poem was also reflected in the title of the documentary film on Maša Haľamová made in 1978 by director Igor Lembovič under the distinctive name of *Červený mak (Red Poppy)*.¹⁶⁹ The field flower

167 The author of the article captured an event with a recitation of poems that M. Haľamová personally performed at a party of young Slovaks in Prague. Tatran, Jožo: *Maša Haľamová recitovala v Prahe na večere mladých Slovákov. (Maša Haľamová recited at an evening of young Slovaks in Prague)*. [Source not identified.] In: LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

168 The reviewer's approach was unique, comparing the success of the *Červený mak* collection with the *Muscat* collection by Ria Valé [in her own name: Valéria Reiszová]. [- och -]: Každú nedeľu literatúra. VERŠE (Literature every Sunday. VERSES) (Ria Valé: *Muškat (Muscat)*), [source not identified]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

169 Lembovič, Igor: *Červený mak*. Script for a documentary. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

from the poem *Dar (Gift)* became the coat of arms of her subtle poetry, a symbol of fragile, pure love. And this is exactly what Ján Turan expressed aptly in the afterword to the collection *Komu dám svoju nehu (Who Will I Give My Tenderness)*, where the poems from the collection *Červený mak: Červený mak, Balada, V zakliatej hore, Májová (Red Poppy: Red Poppy, Ballad, In the Cursed Mountain, the May One)* (with the reference "and others") included among the jewels of Slovak love poetry, appreciating almost filigree work of Maša Haľamová: "She captures even the smallest vibrations of the girl's soul in crystal-precise and clean shapes, which resemble the work of old goldsmiths by their fragility" (Turan, 1968: 69 – 70).

The first edition of the *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* collection (1932)¹⁷⁰ was not illustrated. Twenty-two poems are classified into six numbered sections. We have selected seventeen of them for a more thorough analysis. As in the *Dar* collection, here we also find the theme of love (that between lovers and maternal one), loneliness, nature, life and death, but also memories of the mother (e.g. *Žalujem!, Za matkou, Svadobná (I Accuse!, In Memory of My Mother, A Wedding Address)* and impressions from Paris (*Sen, V ulici v St. Jacques, Père Lachaise, Večer, Jeseň (Dream, In the St. Jacques Street, Père Lachaise, Evening, Autumn)*). The majority of selected poems were first published in the period 1929 – 1932 in *Slovenské pohľady*, except for the poems *Žalujem! (I Accuse!)* and *Z obloka (From the Window)*, which according to indications from archival materials were written in 1925 in Bratislava, as well as poems *Elegy and Curtain*, which were not published in periodicals before the collection was published.

I) Thematic syncretism in the emblem poem *Červený mak (Red Poppy)*¹⁷¹ connects the image of Tatra nature, its alpine climate, with

170 In the whole subchapter we proceed from the first edition of the collection (Haľamová, 1932). We maintain the order of the poems, but with regard to the issue observed, we omit the poems from Section V, which are related to her stay in Paris, and the poem *Pohreb na horách (Funeral in the Mountains)*.

171 First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 46, 1930, No. 6 – 8, pp. 362 – 363 (Masárová, 1978: 21).

love and with the dimension of spirituality. The life-giving sun, its creative power in the beauty of the flower, is received as an expression of grace: „Keď slnce vykúzli / zo skalnej zeme kvet, / je to milosť.“ (“When the sun conjures / a flower from the rocky earth, / it is grace.”) In the eyes of a lyrical subject, the natural world is a manifestation of God’s acting love. The red poppy, traditionally understood as a symbol of transience, temporality, finiteness and also fragility, is an extraordinary guest of blood or love (implying the saying: *Guest in the house, God in the house*). By allusion to the sacrifice of Christ and God’s gift of love, she brings sacred value to the perception of the beauty of the world – *pars pro toto*. In the continuing parallel, she contrasts the symbolism of the poppy with the love of a loved one – a physician, a saviour of life representing the ethical dimension of hope. It represents a prudent male counterpart (intellectual type) to the undisguised female emotionality, which through its prism offers a different view of life: „Hľad’ dnes mojimi očami, / pohraj sa s makom červeným, / a prijmi moju lásku.“ (“Look through my eyes today, / play with the red poppy, / and accept my love.”) Sensory perception of floral beauty and acceptance of a woman’s love evoke a synchronised parallel and initiate (emotional) openness to the various forms of *Dar* (Gift). The combination of beauty and love is the key to the integrating unity of aesthetically and emotionally experienced spirituality, thus creating the creative potential of spiritualism. The self-transcendent spiritual dimension of life seems to unite both “small” and “great” t/ Transcendence into a single multidimensional whole.

The poem *Jar (Spring)*¹⁷² it is a picture of the cyclical parallel of the rebirth of nature and man. The bird song, the waiting branches and the sky that does not move are a harbinger of a new beginning. The mysterious tension of the thickened vertical, the laughter of the sun in the young meadows, the trembling willow buds by the stream create the impression of natural sprouting. Man is also part of the new life

172 First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 46, 1930, No. 4, p. 209; dated: Tatro, March 1930 (Masárová, 1978: 21).

cycle: „Zem vonia a človek by s jarou / rozhodil po zemi ruky. // So srdcom obrodenným / rozdal sa celý / a začal znova / s láskou i s utrpením.“ (“The earth smells and one would throw the spring on the earth. // With a heart revived / he gave himself up whole / and started again / with love and suffering.”) However, his rebirth has a spiritual basis – a pattern in the love and sacrifice of Christ, from which he draws his life force. With a synergistic focus in his heart, he re-accepts the fate of his selfless and enthusiastic follower, because together with the spring he restores spiritual energy – apostolic zeal. The image of spring thus hides the secret of the epiphany – the spiritual revival of man in the sacred penetration into space-time (*kairos*). Encoded at the heart of the poetic statement is the image of the revitalisation of personal spirituality in the depths of Christocentrism.

The poem *Stesk (Nostalgia)*¹⁷³ brings a change in emotional mood. The lyrical picture of the hidden trajectory of love in the vertical contrast of the earth and the stars brings with it the issue of auto transcendence: disorientation and closure to the world. There is no lyrical fluctuation in it over either the (post) terrestrial or terrestrial solution. The paradox without a starting point is expressed in the verses: „Nedôjdem / so srdcom / a láskou / odovzdanou.“ (“I will not go / with a heart / and love / surrendered.”), after which only the feeling of hopeless distress remains: „A ja dnes / jedinej / cestičky / neznám. // Ani do mesta / kamenného, / ani k pokojným / hviezdám.“ (“And I do not know / the only / paths / today. // Neither to the city / of stone, / nor to the peaceful / stars.”). Similarly in the poem *Máj (May)*¹⁷⁴ we encounter the paradox of the unfulfilled desire for love, which contrasts sharply with the space-time of the rejuvenated city, with the rainbow in the background of the Danube, because: „Môj máj – je večná / túlavá túha / a srdce moje vták, / čo v kameň hniezdo vije.“ (“My May – is an eternal / wandering desire / and my heart is a bird, / which winds the nest in stone.”)

173 First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 45, 1929, No. 9, p. 549 (Masárová, 1978: 20).

174 First published: *Slovenský denník* 15, 1932, No. 113, p. 10, 15. 5., in the Sunday Talk section; dated: Bratislava, May 1932 (Masárová, 1978: 22).

II. Fairy-tale-like nature in love with a loved one is depicted in the poem *V zakliatej hore (In the Cursed Mountain)*,¹⁷⁵ which by its name evokes a fairy-tale-ballad colour. But the magical power of the confession of love under the white fir is liberating, and so the initial anticipation of the ballad changes to its opposite – romance, the expected meaning of which, in conjunction with the materialised expression, has the effect of paradox. In the archetypal image of the woman finding her man, but in the footsteps of his skis, the principle of synchronized unity “I in you” is expressed in a special way.

The atmosphere of lyrical pensiveness can be found in the verses of the poem *Elégia (Elegy)*.¹⁷⁶ The sequence of maturation in the penitent questioning of conscience and in the knowledge of hurtful sinfulness is expressed not just by questions and exclamation (in the third verse, stanza): Are you sorry? – Do you promise? – Be wise!, but also natural-spiritual parallelism. The emphasis on the cyclical return of the silence („*Tak ako vlani...*“) (“*As last year ...*“), of spiritual internalisation has its turning point in the conscience: „*Budeme sami / a zlomiš pýchu / v hrdý stud.*“ (“*We will be alone / and you will break the pride / into proud shame.*“). The dialogical process evokes a spiritual conversation in which the awareness of imperfection and the acknowledgment of sin is the power of wisdom – the self-awareness that matures in humility to God. It is there where the deepening of the ontological dimension of spirituality (in the process of metanoia) deepens.

The imaginary “betrayal” of oneself, but in the name of the victory of love, is developed in the lyrical-epic poem *Balada (Ballad)*.¹⁷⁷ We meet in it the rebirth of the ballad into a song-confession. The turn of the genre increases the aesthetic effect of the allegory of defiant eyes. Secret love turns into surrender: „*A keď mi ich podal / silnou mužnou / dlaňou, // Nebola som ja viac / vlastných očí / paňou.*“ (“*And when he handed*

175 First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 45, 1929, No. 2, p. 71. (Ibidem.)

176 According to the personal bibliography, the poem was first published after the collection was published: *Pero* 1, 1932 – 1933, No. 5, p. 10. (Ibidem.)

177 First published: *Slovenské diela* 1, 1929, No. 2, p. 89 (Masárová, 1978: 20).

them to me / with a strong manly palm, // I was no longer / my own eyes' / master.“) After all, not only balladism or song writing, but also the synecdocheic representation of lived love are close to folk poetics. Through the chosen methods, the poetess expressed an inclination towards traditions, which also indirectly underlined the function of culturally established gender stereotypes.

The poem *Májová (May)*¹⁷⁸ evokes even in its title a time of natural flourishing and love. The central pillar in her depiction is the sacral space of the churches built of visible matter. A temple built from the sanctity of the feeling of love perceived as a numinous phenomenon is its spiritual pendant.¹⁷⁹ And so the double essence of the sanctity is expressed in the opposite space: the church gives it a visible religious form, and people’s love as a hidden spiritual core forms a pendant. Therefore, the conclusion is clearly in favour of the manifestations of active love, which can be seen in the harmonious interplay of *eros* and *ethos*: „*Chceme si / z bozkov / postaviť / kostol // a z lásky / oltár / mramorový.*“ (“*We want / to build / a church // out of kisses / and altar / of marble / out of love /.*“).

III. In addition to poems about love, the poem *Cintorín pod Tatrami (Cemetery Under the Tatras)* has a special character.¹⁸⁰ The image of the chained mountains depicts the imaginary boundary of eternity – Transcendence, which has no mercy for life: „*a vrchov reťaz tvrdá / sem večný pohľad vrhá / zo skaly.*“ (“*And the chain of mountains hard / throwshere its eternal view / from the rock.*“) The lyrical subject copes with the intractable borderline contradiction – the meaning of the tragic

178 First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 45, 1929, No. 6 – 8, pp. 337 – 338. It was published together with the poem *Žalujem! (I Accuse!)* under the common heading *Dve básne (Two Poems)* (Masárová, 1978: 20).

179 J. Turan cited the poem *Májová (The May One)* as an example of love poem, in which, like every youth, bows to love “*as the value and authority of the highest,*” but in his opinion: “*This simplicity of twenty words, crystallising into a single metaphor is worth of the whole metaphoric druses of young poetry and accepts it with respect and humility.*” (Turan, 1968: 69 – 70).

180 First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 45, 1929, No. 3, p. 129 (Masárová, 1978: 20).

death of young people – with the psalm of the accusation: „*Žalujem hory / pre srdce kamenné a vzdor.*“ (“*I accuse the mountains / for their heart of stone and defiance.*”). While the aesthetic effect of the poem increases the anesthetic framework, which is dynamically enhanced in the last stanza: „*Bezmocný vietor / ku plotu zlostne sa derie / a biely závej snehu / zhladí poslednú nehu / v holotu.*“) “*A helpless wind (Helpless wind / is blowing angrily towards the fence / and a white snowdrift / smashes the last tenderness / into bareness.*”), in the core, through the polarity of beauty (natural scenery) and emotions (mourn over the deaths of loved ones), the tension between the emotional-aesthetic and anesthetic side of life gradually escalates. Finally, the anthropomorphic motifs of wind, snow, and tenderness on the relentless frontier of life and death represent a conflict between the elements of the natural-human world. Lyrically experienced disproportion has a spiritual point expressed in psalm procedures that emphasise the situation of a helpless person against the will of God.

The ideological intent of the poem *Pohli sa ľady (The Ice Moved)*¹⁸¹ is an anticipated motto by the Czech poet Karel Toman. The month of May, in conjunction with the religious symbolism of the Virgin Mary – Mother of God, emphasises the natural-spiritual dimension. In parallel with the Czech nature, the Tatra Mountains and the North are in contrast to the South. Blooming apple trees, sun and fertile soil in contrast to the stony and coniferous zone with a fragile miracle of flowering crocuses and firs are a contrast of fruitful abundance and modesty. Against the background of the unique beauty of spring, the paradoxes of life stand out, behind which there is a deeper meaning: „*Hej, v horách chudobných / ľudia sú láskou bohatí.*“ (“*Hey, in the mountains poor / people are rich in love.*”) The last couplet thus declassified the tribute to human love: God’s gift of love – spiritualeme – multiplied in the forms of human

181 First published: *Vysoké Tatry* 1, 1931, No. 1, p. 3; dated: at Štrbské pleso in May 1931 (Masárová, 1978: p. 22).

natural and mental wealth, these are two forms of the same spiritual essence, which hides evolutionary-creation potential.

IV. Returns to psalmism, but also to the personal motive of the loss of the mother, are in the poems *Žalujem!* and *Za matkou.* (*I Accuse!* and *In Memory of My Mother*). The contradictions in the soul of the enamoured young girl, the absence of the mother’s female role model as a source of life wisdom and consolation, is the cause of the self-pity and despair with which the lyrical subject copes in the psalmic accusation.¹⁸² „*Keby som mala matičku, / dobrú, statočnú matičku – / i slnce by bolo moje.*“ (“*If I had a mother, / a good, brave mother – / even the sun would be mine...*”). In the poem *Za matkou (In Memory of My Mother)*¹⁸³ she pays homage to the motherly love, selfless sacrifice, and humility with which she conceived and accepted the child as God’s miracle and blessing. In the gradually themed idea of the mother as the giver of life, the image of a sacred being emerges. Despite the fact that emotionality is the goal and its intention is explicit, the poem confirms the author’s current value direction. The sequence of poems closes with the poem *Svadobná (On the Wedding)*¹⁸⁴ in which the lyrical subject realises that at the decisive moment of personal life – when making a marriage vow, at the moments of the initiating transformation of a girl into a woman, the absence of the mother is irreplaceable. Without her blessing, one of the established rites disappears from the wedding ceremony – the initiation of the daughter into the unknown side of love (*eros*) and the archetypal role of a woman-wife or future mother.

182 The poem is a poetic trace of a real-life situation, when a young poetess suffered behind the walls of a certain Bratislava office. It was probably written in 1925, when she wrote poems from the thematic area of the Sanatorium (included in the *Dar (The Gift)* collection). First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 45, 1929, No. 6 – 8, pp. 337 – 338 (with the poem *Májová (The May One)* under the title *Dve básne (Two Poems)*); (Masárová, 1978: p. 21).

183 First published: *Slovenské pohľady* 46, 1930, No. 9, p. 577 (Masárová, 1978: 21).

184 According to the personal bibliography, the poem was first published after the collection was published: *Pero (The Pen)* 1, 1932 – 1933, No. 5, p. 10 (Masárová, 1978: 23).

The focus on spirituality does not disappear from the natural world of Štrbské pleso even in the poem *Z obloka (From the Window)*.¹⁸⁵ The scenery of the Tatra lake and wild geese has found a place in the idyllic image of home. The visual view of the exterior is replaced by a sudden emotional interiorisation in the final stanza: „Srdcia dokorán otvoríme, / okná do noci roztvoríme, / len oči zavrieme, / aby sme lepšie uvideli.“ (“We’ll open our hearts, / we’ll open the windows into the night, / we’ll just close our eyes, / so that we can see better.”) The transcendence of love in self-transcendence into the natural world carries with it an unspoken message of faith, love, and hope: „Budeme dobrí a tichí, / aby sme ich nevyplašili. / Bez nedôvery a pýchy / od okna odídeme.“ (“We will be good and quiet, lest we frighten them. / Without distrust and pride / we will leave the window.”) - However, the discovery of deeper connections is conditioned by humility towards the world and spiritual immersion with supersensible perception of phenomena, which opens up the dimension of metaempirical reality in antithesis alongside sensory reality: „len oči zavreme, / aby sme sa lepšie uvideli.“ (“just close our eyes, / so that we can see each other better.”)

She also follows up on the theme of home with the poem *Záclona (Curtain)*¹⁸⁶ which obscures the privacy of the newlywed couple, forming an imaginary boundary between the sacred and the profane worlds. The lyrical subject welcomes God’s presence in his abode with fear as in a sanctuary: which obscures the privacy of the newlywed couple, forming an imaginary boundary between the sacred and the profane worlds. The lyrical subject welcomes God’s presence in his abode with fear as in a sanctuary: “Vystlali sme mu / izbicu celú / srdcami. // Aby si oči / nepourážal / o tvrdé veci dňa, // cez oblok / závoj prevesíme /

185 First published: *Slovenský denník* 8, 1925, No. 265, p. 3, 22. 11., in the Sunday discussion section; dated: Bratislava, September 1925. The poem *Z obloka (From the Window)* – published in *Slovenské pohľady* 46, 1930, No. 3, pp. 153 – 154 – it also had a subtitle */Jankovi (To Janko)/* and the dating was different: Štrbské Pleso, February 1930 (Masárová, 1978: 16, 21).

186 The publication of the poem in periodicals is not mentioned in the personal bibliography.



Wedding photography of M. Haľamová and her husband Ján Pullman.

lahunký ako hmla. ("We have cushioned him // the whole room / So that he does not / hurt his eyes / over the hard things of the day, // through the window / we'll a veil / light as a fog.") The sacred atmosphere of home is completed by the flame in the fireplace as a symbol of God's constant presence with the connotations of eternal fire. Personal practice of the spiritual life ("living faith"), recognition of its sanctity, as well as surrender, respect and fear, are manifestations of religious experience, which is based on specific acts of spiritualisation.

VI. The last poem in the collection is called *Tulácka (Wanderer)*.¹⁸⁷ There is an unattainable desire to cross the boundaries of space (in a boat on a lake) and go out into the world (by sea to the edge of the world). Fairy-tale-mythical motifs evoke an intellectually expressed lyrical issue, and it has a spiritual message in its contradiction – man is bound by love on the earthly pilgrimage: „*Človek si srdcom ukuje okovy / a v nich žiť musí.*“ ("Man forges the shackles with his heart and must live in them."). The oxymoron of self-transcendent and at the same time self-limiting love is a testimony of spiritual maturation, which interferes with the thinking, experience and action of the lyrical subject. Awareness of responsibility in an ethically rooted attitude is a manifestation of the rebirth from the predominance of affective experience of love to a balanced harmonic type.

Confronted with the introductory emblem poem *Červený mak (Red Poppy)*, love in the poem *Tulácka (Wanderer)* is no longer just a pancalically experienced feeling (with the predominance of the emotional-aesthetic side of faith), but is an ethically firmly entrenched love with responsibility for the shackles it has created, i. e. *storgé* (this is also why it does not fly away with wild geese, but still returns to the shore after the boat ride). Movement in the hermeneutic circle once again unites framing poems into a meaningful whole and reveals the depth of knowledge in wisdom: „*Človek si srdcom ukuje okovy / a v nich*

187 In the magazine *Elán*, the poem was published under the title *Tulácka (Female Wanderer)*; dated: Štrbské Pleso, August, 1931 (Haľamová, 1931: 4)

žiť musí.“ ("Man forges the shackles by heart and has to live in them.") In the acquired wisdom of life, the mystery of spirituality is made visible and opened in diaphania (i.e. the transcendence of the Transcendent) – the love of bound hearts in response to the mystery of the epiphany reveals in space: home is a *genius loci* and in it sacred love is the event of sacrifice. It confirms that the red poppy is God's "guest" and a symbol of Love at the same time. She emblematically expresses the Christocentric knowledge that love is Alpha and Omega. From the mytopoid structure of the poetic whole, a mystical message emerges (in the framework of hermeneutic communication) to act as a lyrical phenomenon, i. e. *verbum cordis*, in the mind of a spiritually receptive reader.

Synthesis: The initial assumption that the lyrical gesture will deepen in the *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932) collection and that the differentiated scale of spirituality will open up to new possibilities in the process of spiritualisation has been confirmed. Within the analysis and interpretation, the spiritual maturation of the lyrical subject was proved, which in the process of spiritualisation gradually reached from the emotional-aesthetic experience of God's grace to the intellectual knowledge of its depth (*Červený mak, Tulácka (Red Poppy, Wanderer)* gradually. In the combination of beauty and love, various manifestations of T/transcendence and its evolutionary-creation potential were revealed. The deepening of personal spiritualisation took place in connection with the image of natural rebirth (*Jar (Spring)*) and the two spheres were united by the spiritual process of resurrection (*methanoia*). The dual essence of lyrical reality also corresponds to this duality, i. e. diaphania.¹⁸⁸ With the change in the lyrical subject's ideas about the spiritual nature of the world, the inner experience of the

188 Diaphania is a term expressing the translucent transcendence into reality (Teilhard de Chardin, 1996: 99, 123).

religious faith deepened: from feelings of loneliness, hopelessness, through the desire for love to its spiritual fulfilment, the lyrical subject underwent a transformation in relation from “I and you (with Him)” to “I in you” to “we in Him” (e.g. *Červený mak, V zakliatej hore, Záclona*) (*Red Poppy, In the Cursed Mountain, Curtain*). In the adoration of love, the inner relationship with God also changed: it was an initiating path to “self-awareness,” i. e. to the awareness of one’s own spiritual integrity (e.g., *Jar, Máj, Elegia, Májová*) (*Spring, May, Elegia, May Song*). In various forms of love, the sacrificial to sacred love of the mother – the gift of life – occupied an exceptional place. Against its background, the Christian pattern of femininity is present by way of allusions – Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, even with a semantic overlap to the mystical notion of womanhood.

As in her debut collection *Dar (Gift)* (1928), in the collection *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932) the authoress did not abandon her traditional genre techniques, and therefore the ballad, song, and psalm (or psalmism) found a place of meaning in it. The lyrical subject dealt with emotional fluctuations in them through spiritual detention. On several examples (e.g. *Jar, Máj, V zakliatej hore, Pohly sa lady*) (*Spring, May, In the Cursed Mountain, Ice Moves*), the revival or the liberating power of love stands out, which as a semiotic unit – spiritualeme – is a dynamic shaping component acting on the surface of the whole collection (not excluding indications of its erotic potential). Spiritualeme thus not just affects the spiritual meaning of the word, but also initiates the eidetic form of the poem – the lyrical parable.

The lyrical subject re-presented itself as “*homo religiosus*” (e.g. *Červený mak, Svadobná, Záclona, Tulácka*) (*Red Poppy, Wedding, Curtain, Wanderer*) with its attitude, thinking and actions throughout the collection, but in the process of spiritualisation a new quality of his/her personal relationship to the sacred as specific mode of thinking and cognition.

Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)

Maša Haľamová returned to the literary scene with her third poetry collection *Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* (1966), illustrated by Jozef Šturdík, only after a thirty-four-year period of silence, so that she, deeply struck by the loss of her husband, transformed her grief into poetry. Milan Rúfus figuratively expressed life break: “*the terrible swing of the magic wand had to open this long-silent poetess and reissue her to the song again*” (Rúfus, 1981: 227). In an interview with Jozef Nižnánsky, the poetess offered an authentic statement, which may be considered the key to the semantic message of the collection: “*A lot of time has passed since the publication of my first and second collections, until the third one came out: Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death). I bought reconciliation by it.*” (Nižnánsky, 1978: 6) Accordingly, it is in the first edition of the collection¹⁸⁹ the following motto from L. Novomeský’s poem *Triumf (Triumph)*, with which the authoress exposed the core of the idea: “*... except for the twitch that is called love, just love, though by it, only by it life prevents from being hurt.*” We know that in the life of Maša Haľamová there were two close people – her mother and her husband, with whom she had to deal with death: her mother died when she was eight years old (25 March 1916) and her husband after twenty-six years of their living together (28 September 1956). It was these two breaks that resonated particularly strongly in her poetry. She dedicated several poems to her mother in her first and second collection, and to her husband as well, but on the 10th anniversary of his death, she paid tribute to his memory with her third collection.

189 We are based on the first edition of the collection and preserve the original order of the poems (Haľamová, 1966). We did not include all the poems in the interpretation selection.

A manuscript version of the collection is available in the archive¹⁹⁰ which allowed us to compare it with the published version. The poetry collection consists of two parts: *September* (13 poems) and *Bez teba* (*Without You*) (14 poems), at the beginning of which a poetic question is its motto: „Akou mierou bolesti/premeriam hluchý priestor, /čo ostal po tebe?“ (“What measue of pain / should I use / to measure the dead space / what’s left of you?”). The first part of September includes several poems (11), which form part of a manuscript collection dated beginning on 1 January 1943, namely: *Vyznanie, Leto, Biela noc* (*Confession, Summer, White Night*),¹⁹¹ *Post scriptum, Na Silvestra, Balada (Za Sv. Hurbanom)* (*Post Scriptum, New Year’s Eve, Ballad (On St. Hurban)*)¹⁹², *Kruhy na vode, Jarnej zemi, Na konci diaľky* or *Hovory s tichom* (*Circles on Water, Spring Land, At the End of the Distance or Talks with Silence*) (the title given in the manuscript), *Výkrik*, resp. *Báseň* (*Scream or Poem*),¹⁹³ and *Predsavzatie* (*Commitment*).¹⁹⁴ The poems *V deň septembrový* and *Večerná pieseň* (*On a September Day* and *The Evening Song*) are also included to the above titles in the collection *Living Your Death*. The third poem, forming a thematically indivisible whole with them, was originally published under the title *V noc septembrovú*

190 Haľamová, Maša: *Predsavzatie a iné básne*. (*Commitments and Other Poems*). [Manuscript collection, dated: 01/01/1943]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

191 In addition to the published version, the poem *Biela noc* (*White Night*) has two others in the collection: one is manuscript [dated: 6 October 1934]; the second one is typescript with the subtitle: (original text – 6. X. 1934) and is part of the prepared publication: Roll, Dušan (ed.): Maša Haľamová: *Vyznania* (*Confessions*) [2]. [From archived and published texts by M. Haľamová prepared for the 100th anniversary of her birth; typed, xerox + PC output]. LA SNL, add No. 3724/2009. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3724/2009.

192 In the published collection it has the title: *Balada o utopenom hercovi* (*Ballad of a Drowned Actor*).

193 The title *Báseň* (*Poem*) is listed in the manuscript collection [dated: 10 March 1948]. Another book’s editorial note states that its dating coincides with the date of death of a close friend, Ján Masaryk. (Roll – Baloghová, 2008: 56).

194 The poem [dated: 10 January 1943] is written in the manuscript collection as an introduction in the form of prose, poems in prose, but the form of verses can be recognised in line spacing.

(*On a September Night*),¹⁹⁵ but in the published collection it is called *V tú noc* (*On That Night*) as the first poem of the second part.¹⁹⁶ There are three other poems in the manuscript collection that are missing in the print version: *Zabranej zemi, Bezmennému, Starý park / V starom parku* (*To the Land Taken, To the Nameless, The Old park / In the Old Park*).¹⁹⁷ In the second part of *Without You*, in addition to intimate lyrics, there are also poems that the poet wrote as a tribute to close people, e.g. the poem *Strom* (*The Tree*), which according to archival materials was originally dedicated to her brother at his dying, with the personal title of Vladimír Haľama.¹⁹⁸ *M. R. M.* was another poem dedicated to the writer Mária Rázusová Martáková and the poem *Vtedy tiež limby kvitli* (*Then the limbs also flourished*), which was also mentioned in the press under the title *After Years*, with a telling commentary by the authoress herself: „Bodka za dlhým úsekem života. Či výkričník?“ (“A Full Stop After a Long Stretch of Life. Or an Exclamation Mark?”)¹⁹⁹

We select from the *September* part the following poems: *Vyznanie, Leto, Biela noc, Kruhy na vode, Na konci diaľky, Výkrik, Predsavzatie, V deň septembrový, Večerná pieseň*; and from the part *Bez teba* (*Without You*): *V tú noc, Monológ, Imaginárny príhovor, Dnes v noci novoročnej, M. R. M., Snívali sa mi ruky tvoje, Istota, Boso po tráve, Vtedy tiež limby kvitli, Tie machy pili z tvojich žíl*. (*Confession, Summer, White Night, Circles on Water, At the End of the Distance, Scream, Commitment, September Day, Evening Song; and partly Without You: That Night, Monologue, Imaginary Speech, The New Year’s Eve, M. R. M., I Had a Dream About Your Hands, Certainty,*

195 The poem is preserved in the literary archive [1] together with J. Pullman’s obituary notice: *Parte Jána Pullmana*. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

196 Three thematically connected poems: *V deň septembrový, Večerná pieseň* and *V noc septembrovú* (*On September Day, Evening Song, and On September Night*) were published together in the *Kultúrny život* periodical (Haľamová, 1957: 1).

197 The second name is given in pencil in the manuscript as a proof of the first one.

198 It is kept in the archive together with the obituary notice: *Parte Vladimíra Haľamu*. [*27. 6. 1904 – † 11. 10. 1962]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3541/2004.

199 Lehotský, Ivan: *S poetkou lásky a prírody*. (K relácii v nedeľu o 16.00 hod.) *With a poet of love and nature*. (On the broadcast on Sunday at 4 p.m.). [Source not specified; p. 14, Sunday 5 May 1963]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

Barefoot on the Grass, Then the Pine Trees Were Also Blooming, The Mosses Were Drinking From Your Veins) for the analytical-interpretative part of the study.

The name of the first part of the collection – *September* – is significant, it is the month in which Maša Haľamová and Ján Pullman got married and in which her husband died after twenty-six years. In the times of expected preparation for the publication of the third collection, the author revealed: “It’s hard to talk about a new collection. [...] These are the verses which, after a long time, seemed to close the Red Poppy...,”²⁰⁰ thus confirming the continuity of her work. In this framework, we may delve into the individual poems and follow the materialisation of differentiated spirituality and the principle of diaphania in the lyrical parable, which we pointed out in the previous collection.

The beginning of the first poem *Vyznanie (Confession)* brings not just the contrast of the seasons (winter – spring), the beginning and end of the cycle, but also a parallel between the natural and human cycle of life. Spring rebirth is associated with emotional rebirth and the desire to fulfil self-transcendent love. The tension of an unanswered poetic question in the first stanza – „Komu dám svoju nehu?“ (“To whom will I give my tenderness?”) – intersects the contrast built on the mountain vertical – valley, air – ground (rhododendrons, valley, bird, train). In the indicated perspective of the alpine scenery, the whistling train is a signal of both challenge and expectation. It thus multiplies the dynamic movement in space and the motif of the journey also implies a personal experience, initiation. An anaphoric question voiced in both the second and third stanzas – “Where shall I go?” – makes three travel alternatives of pilgrimage stand out (“East? West? South?”). First, in the image of a crossed valley („Kam pôjdem? Dívam sa zhora, / dolina preťatá.“) (“Where shall I go? Looking from above, / valley crossed.”), the mythical choice of two paths may be sensed: left – right, then a third emerges from the vertical axis up – down: „Hlbiny lákajú zdola / dôverou dieťaťa.“

200 Ibidem.

(“The depths attract from below (by a trust of a child”). The depths evoke not just mystery, but also the assumption that the choice in the values of moral purity will be right, because behind the attractive trust of the child we can see an inconspicuous biblical allusion to the born Jesus, to believe in the mystery of Christmas. This turning point into spirituality culminates in the theocentric image of the fourth stanza: „Hory sa vĺajú v slnca / a orol kolotá. / Boh varí v ohromnom hrnci / elixír života.“ (“The mountains are rolling in the sun / and the eagle is spinning. / God cooks in a great pot / the elixir of life.”). In contrast to the depths, the image of the personified mountains with the motif of the brightness of the sun is a symbol of the majestic heights, representing the imaginary centre, the focus. Amplified by the flight of an eagle, the king of birds – they form a place of intersection from the earthly into the spiritual space. And it is on the heights – given by God in the spring rebirth to nature and man – that the spiritual energy of life is created. Figuratively speaking, at the top of the Confession, a mystery is revealed: Everything is included in God’s creations. The lyrical image confirms the phenomenon of faith, so that a repeated promise is made in it: „Za tebou pôjdem, ako prv, / zas plachá ako laň.“ a „Za tebou pôjdem, nenáhli, / mám v očiach tisíc túh“. (“I will follow you, as before, / shy like a doe again.” And “I will follow you, do not rush, / I have a thousand desires in my eyes.”). Symbolically encoded femininity (the doe implies surrender and at the same time is a biblical symbol of love) has the potential for fulfilment thanks to the tenderness of the partner (synecdochically the warmth of the palm represents kindness, goodness). The ethical mode of love thus acquires a subtle erotic coloration. In the last stanza, desire and expectation escalate to unite in the symbolism of the rainbow – hope. The sought-after space of reciprocity finally becomes the rainbow vault in the sky as a symbol of the promise: „Na našom nebi po daždi / farbistej dúhy pruh“. (“In our sky after the rain / colourful rainbow stripe.”).

The motivic dominants of the lyrical image: faith, love, and hope form the three pillars of spiritually oriented life. In the survival of the lyrical subject, with a predominance of emotionality, the semantics of

Confession show theocentrically anchored religiosity and spirituality with a Christocentric base.

The first poem in the cyclical of the seasons is followed by the sensualist poem *Leto (Summer)*²⁰¹ which M. Haľamová wrote under the impressions of the treatment in Sliač. In a letter to her sister Oľga, she enthusiastically described: “*The region is beautiful here. Something completely different from the Tatras. Fragrant hay meadows – agates – I haven’t seen them bloom in years. A rose garden – which is just developing. Grain – with lots of cornflowers and red poppies.*”²⁰²

The poem is full elation by nature – agates, sunset, the scent of linden, the pulse of the earth, the womb, fire – and signs of fertility. The magical time of the summer solstice, ceremonies associated with Christian and pre-Christian symbols of burning locust fires and love magic, adds mystery to the first stanza. Impressions of silver waves (as a sign of spiritual purification), a trembling wild poppy express the fragile vibrations of desire and love. It is an open challenge from heaven: „*Do očí napadalo hviezd. / Oh, pod’ sa podívať!*“ (“*Stars have fallen into my eyes. / Oh, come and see!*”), which in the third stanza detensively concludes in the motifs of silence, the light of the St. John’s wort and dream in the wild thyme. Their arc of meaning leads from elation of the senses and longed-for tenderness to love. The mysterious treasure of Midsummer Night’s dream is the magical power of attractive love – spirituality.

*Biela noc (White Night)*²⁰³ follows the time after the solstice. The aesthetic dimension of artistic beauty enters its symbolism by evoking the love poetry of the Symbolists, P. G eraldy, P. Verlain, E. Ady. It is completed by the romantic atmosphere of Tchaikovsky’s melody. Pathos, euphony with the theme of love, represents the syncretic effect of word and music, a lyrical phenomenon that resonates in

201 First published: *Slovensk  smery* 2, 1933 – 1934, No. 1, p. 13 (Mas rov , 1978: 23).

202 Correspondence of M. Haľamov  to her sister Oľga of 18 June 1933. LA SNL, Maša Haľamov  file, add No. 3455/03.

203 First published: *Slovensk  smery* 2, 1934 – 1935, No. 3, p. 90. (Mas rov , 1978: 24).

the expressions of empathy and tenderness of the lyrical subject. The aesthetic experience of love is a central modality. The independent verse: „*Sme sami v bielej noci*“ (“*We are alone in the white night*”) with its subtlety deepens the intimacy of pure feelings and creates a temporal centre in the poem. It is the initiation of a new beginning, when from an exceptional moment of emotional affinity, mutual trust is born, represented in the symbolism of the golden aurora. The motif of golden colour not only forms the semantic pendant of white, but also adds to the symbolism of pure beauty and the attribute of nobility, representing the ideal of spiritual values. Lyrical rebellion, affective experience is in the last stanza full of life optimism (vitality) and the promise of hope: „*Mne sa narod  / srdce vesel , keď moje  sta nesmel  / povedia tvojim – //  no!*“ . (“*A heart will be born to me / a happy heart when my timid mouth / says to yours – // yes!*”) The *White Night* thus becomes a symbolic landmark of sacred emotion and mutual promise.²⁰⁴

*Kruhy na vode (Circles on Water)*²⁰⁵ is a poem about a relentless song – prayer. It is built on the metaphor of the contrast of uniform, metric movement and anaphorically shaped rhythmic emphasis: the constant movement of the rippling water surface evokes the image of an endless stream of life. The impression of the foamed waves renders it a sign of transience. Emphasis on visual-auditory perceptions, the importance of colour symbolism (green waves) and eternal variations of song melodies imply a lyrical phenomenon of hope, gradually increasing in gradation of meaning: born of spring rebirth, flourishes in beauty, unites with love, penetrates in desire to stars, to heaven, to culminate in a sacrifice of redemption. In an allusion to the synergistic principle of Sacrifice (in the anaphoric repetition of the vocals o), the lyrical phenomenon of the

204 In a letter to Sister Olga of 11 February 1929, there is a mention of the realistic situation when Maša became ill and was helping her time pass by reading Ady’s poetry in the original. At the same time, she boasted that the string “swayed” in her and sent several poems to *Pohlady*, *Mlad  Slovensko*, *Živena* and *František Votruba*. In: Correspondence of M. Haľamov  to her sister Oľga of 11 February 1929. LA SNL, Maša Haľamov  file, add No. 3455/03.

205 First published: *El n* 4, 1934, No. 7, p. 3. (Mas rov , 1978: 24).

infinite song of life acquires a central (concentric) Christocentric point (*Omega*) and thus completes its transcendent dimension. Part of the transformation of the metaphorical image of undulating life is in the anticipation of a catastrophic end (in a stream of ruin) and rebirth (in a jet of renewal). The cyclical movement (“*Kruh v kruhu sa uzaviera...*”) (“*Circle in circle closes ...*”) becomes a symbol of the cycle of life, a lyrical depiction of an eternal parable.

The penetration of the lyrical subject in the dynamic essence of life (to the principle of evolutionary creationism), to its mystical source through the lyrical parable, is a clear proof of the intellectual search for answers with a desire to clarify the hidden mysteries of the faith.

In the introspectively tuned poem *Conversations with Silence*, or according to the published collection – *Na konci diaľky (At the End of the Distance)*,²⁰⁶ metaphorically developed motifs of cordiality, enthusiasm of a zealous soul dominate, as well as lyrical atonement and pure (ringing) tone, evening deepening (with a hint of vertical), natural silence, human locks in pure melody or desire to reach the horizon – they offer penetration into the inner experience of increasing development. Self-transcendence in the assigned metaphors is gaining in intensity, going from the heart to the extra-terrestrial cosmic distances: „*Za čiaru hmoty*“ (“*Beyond the Line of Matter*”). The lyrical subject finds himself imaginatively on the threshold of the numinous, while his idea of the extra-terrestrial dimension is based on a mythical-biblical image of cosmic strings, celestial chant and etheric spheres. The acoustic phenomenon acquires a central function. The paradox in the final stanza finally reveals the hidden meaning – crossing the threshold of spirituality is not in the physical strength of man: „*Na koniec diaľky / čo v srdci rastie –//nedôjdem*“ (“*At the end of the distance / what grows in the heart – //I will not go*”), but in the intensity of transcendent spiritualism. After all, the sparkling energy of enthusiasm based on pure desire is

206 First published under the title *Hovory s tichom (Conversations with Silence)* (dated: December 1933): *Slovenský denník* 16, 1933, No. 292, 24. 12.; (Masárová, 1978: 23).

a source of growing spiritual zeal. The poem is a lyrical parable on the spiritual essence of (auto) transcendence, in which the condition of gradual spirituality, its increasing intensity, is an enthusiastic desire. On the margin, it can be noted that such a lyrical representation of spiritual growth testifies to the depth of religious belief (conscious innerisation of faith) and also to the developed ability to meditate. On the margin of the interpretation, let us recall that its confirmation was in the script for the radio show *Božie divadlo (God's Theatre)*, which states: “*For the closed eyes of the sighted one, time loses all its earthly significance. Clairvoyant suspicions of the seeker of the most recent past and the most distant future shake hands in this present. His view of space is not limited by distances or waves of light, his soul speaks to God without earthly words.*”²⁰⁷

Psalmism returns to the poetic statement of M. Haľamová with the poem *Výkrik (Scream)*, which is characteristic especially for her first collection *Dar (Gift)*. The individual stanzas of the poem are carried in the invocation of the turbulent elements of heaven and earth (water, air, fire, wind) and in allusion to the Biblical parable of the miracle of Christ walking on the surface of the sea (parable of control over the elements). The psalms' cry hides the anxiety of a helpless man who screams for help to the silent clouds in the belief that they will transfer his request to heaven. The reason is the lyrical subject's desire for the initiating power of God's word and the belief that his word can soften not just the hard earth, but, in terms of metonymic confusion, also the human heart. The meaning of the psalm's call to God testifies to the awareness of the sacred power of the word, its creative potential. Spiritualeme as a spiritual phenomenon is here associated with the noble ideal of cultivation as an act of overcoming oneself.

In the poem *Predsavzatie (Commitment)*, the lyrical subject identifies with the Christian example of the Virgin Mary, a suffering mother who humbly accepted her destiny – a cup of bitterness and eternal thirst for

207 Bečvář, Anton – Haľamová, Maša: *Božie divadlo (Gods Theatre)*. Radio compilation of poetry and music. [Script; typescript, 9 pp.]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

life – with humility. In it, she seeks a parallel with her fate as a woman who was coping with an unfulfilled desire for motherhood. After overcoming grief, hopelessness, despair, and pain, she found an inner, spiritual strength that grew in humility. Accepting the necessity of the deal, finding the meaning of suffering passes as a sacrifice to a child who never received it. The turning point in life is reconciled by the female lyrical subject thanks to a conscious attachment to a religious ideal. She accepts unfulfilled motherhood as a permanent sacrifice of love: „Z bolesti v silu rást. / Vystačíť s pokorou. / I keď pre úsmev dieťaťa, / čo nikdy // nepatrilo mi.“ (“Grow out of pain in strength. Being humble is enough. / Although for the smile of a child, / that never // belonged to me.”) The turning point in life – the fate not to be a mother – interferes with the life sense of a woman who is suffering in essence, but at the same time matures spiritually. The ability to consciously accept suffering as a sacrifice testifies to the fulfilment of Christian love – agapé that strengthens in self-sacrifice, for no apparent cause or purpose. The poem has a key position in the manuscript collection, where it does not have a strophic division of verse poetry (three stanzas of the published version), but is written as a prosaic text, a poem in prose, reminiscent of two-line verses. But even here, the two-line conclusion extended by the gap is crucial, because in the form of wisdom it expresses in-depth spiritual knowledge: „Z bolesti v silu rást. Vystačíť s pokorou. / I keď pre úsmev dieťaťa, čo nikdy nepatrilo mi.“ (“Grow out of pain in strength. Being humble is enough. / Although for the smile of a child, / that never // belonged to me.”).

Another poem is already part of the return to the motifs of love, but with enrichment. The culminating summer, the fruitful time, is exposed in an erotic mood in the sensual metaphors of the poem *V deň septembrový* (*On a September Day*). In the natural motifs of trembling longing, it draws a parallel between man and woman. “Pradivo jesene” (“Spring Web”) floats like a strand of love and completes the fleeting impression of the impression. Love also matured in her as it brought a quiet settlement. By closing in its cycle, it seeks safety in natural

parallelism. But in the human sphere, it is heading in terrestrial reach to the stars: „A pieseň večernú / dospieva hviezda / nad nami.“ (“And the evening song / will be finished by the star / above us.”) And so spiritual life and love in it, like nature, also has its cycle: from unstable desires or physical attraction – eros – sings to affinity – ethically strong emotional bonds of mature love – storgé. It is like a prayer, a song of songs, like a hymn to God’s love – agapé. And so the metamorphoses of love permeate the genre variant of the psalm to sound in choral variations.

Večerná pieseň (*Evening Song*) not only motivation-wise, but also genre-wise and liturgically, it builds on the previous poem and at the same time closes the first part of the collection. The intimate tone, the semantic impression of progressively tuned motifs (words – whispers – caresses, silver metal – lamp light – evening imaginations, etc.) sounds like a personal prayer at the end of the day, like a declaration of love. Despite her time, she did not lose her tenderness, she only matured for years in the storms of life. The time of maturity is reflected in the changes of its internal manifestations, therefore it is characterised by mutually achieved balance, surrender, and depth of trust: „Prijímam z tvojich rúk / s pohárom života / i čašu dôvery.“ (“I accept a cup of life / from your hands / and a cup of trust.”). And so lived love is a living adoration of two hearts – initiated by the word, received with tenderness in the attraction of the other, in silent internalisation, in spiritual deepening – knowing and professing the mystery of its sacred Christocentric depth. The evening song as the rite of communion brings a lyrical picture of the closing circle of love in life. In the individual phases of spiritualisation, it gradually acquired, in the natural and personal spheres, its ideal – Christocentric meaning. Because incarnate love ennobles man, it is the sacred meaning of human life and the central principle of the eternal parable.

In the spiritual framework, in the last poem, *Večerná pieseň* (*The Evening Song*), the beginning of the first Confession ended and closed in an imaginary circle: the circle of two hearts united by love in the theocentric Confession closed polyfocally in *Večerná pieseň* (*Evening Song*), in the liturgical rite of Vespers. The central focus – the source

of love – is the Heart. His Christocentric confession was developed on the poetic axis of three poems: *Vyznanie – Kruhy na vode – Večerná pieseň* (*Confession – Circles on Water – An Evening Song*), on which the immanent principle of spiritualisation was gradually revealed in the natural and human image of life. It culminated in a moment of symbolic acceptance of the mystical mystery of Love and knowledge of its creative meaning.

Movement in a circle implicitly accentuated the semantic sequence of poems: the promise of love in the connotations of sanctity (*Vyznanie*) (*Confession*), in its irresistible attraction (*Leto*) (*Summer*) to the sealing of the promise (*Biela noc*) (*White Night*), in the depth and height of the parable from which the stream of life springs or emanates (*Kruhy na vode*) (*Circles on Water*) and in the boundless distance that transcends spiritualism (*Na konci diaľky*) (*At the End of the Distance*). Similarly, it erupted from the human heart (*Výkrik*) (*Scream*) to understand the meaning of sacrifice (*Predsavzatie*) (*Commitment*) and reached affinity (*V deň septembrový*) (*On a September Day*), when it sounded in a double voice in the liturgical prayer (*Večerná pieseň*) (*Evening Song*) and intensified in the sacred chant. The gradual spiritualeme, as a spiritual phenomenon, conditioned and created the religious experience of the lyrical subject within the framework of “*homo religiosus*” up to the interface of the next stage of spiritual maturity.

In the second part of *Bez Teba (Without You)*, the authoress with her motto – “*Akou mierou bolesti / premeriam hluchý priestor, / čo ostal po tebe?*” (“*By what measure of pain / do I measure a dead space / what is left of you?*”) – indicated an internal state of disturbed balance. With the missing *you*, lyrical self is suffering and looking for a way to reconcile.

In the first poem *V tú noc (That Night)*²⁰⁸ (originally *V noc septembrovú (On a September Night)*)²⁰⁹ into the three times exclaimed: “*Je noc, je noc!*” (“*It’s night, it’s night!*”), three images of deepening grief are embedded: the first one is the desire for the comfort of mother’s hands, for a hug, combined with the idea of a loving mother who in life wisdom can take the burden of pain with faith in God’s will. Instead, the motif of the loss is layered up: the loss of the mother, her permanent absence, and the current loss of the husband multiplies the painful wound. In the second call, there is the same impatience with which the moment of death is presented synecdochically as the immobilisation of the hand and face. In a couplet with the tension of a poetic question: “*Čo zbudne ešte z odhodlaní? / Len málo kladiem na oltár.*” (“*What else is left of determination? / I put little on the altar.*”) the lyrical subject suggests a weakening of life energy and with it a hidden spiritual perspective – hopelessness. After the third call, the last manifestations of both inner and outer life (smile and hand), which reveal kindness, care, and dedication to others, stagnate. The last three verses are brought by the anti-climax: the connotations of death from the psalmic call through a break to the subjective, they eventually sink into resignation in a three-stage detension: “*Aká je biela! / Aká biela / a veľmi ustatá.*” (“*How pale she is! / How pale / and very tired.*”) Fatigue from the struggle of life implies a euphemism of peaceful death, but at the same time it testifies to the mourning of a lyrical subject. The contrast between night and white colour is a symbolic expression of the dual course of the initiation phases of “here” and “there”: from the continuing desolation of death and the transition to the afterlife. The contrast is also a symptom of the clash of two dimensions of life – the terrestrial and the extra-terrestrial

208 The poem is also available in the literary archive as part of the obituary notice with a photograph of J. Pullman – 28 September 1956. In: LA SNL, add No. 3541/2004. First published: *Kultúrny život* 12, No. 7, 1957, 16. 2., title page. (Masárová, 1978: 27).

209 In a letter of condolence from Melania [surname not given; dated: Žilina 7 October 1956], mention is made of a similar poem by Petöfi to his deceased wife *Szeptember végén*, which ends with the words: “*Ki téged még, akhor is, ott is, örökre szerel.*” In: Correspondence for M. Haľamová. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

ones. Coping with the loss of a loved one thus acquires a psalmic, elegiac tone.²¹⁰ Thus, in addition to strong spirituality, religiosity in the form of genre does not disappear from the basis of the poetic statement.

Lyrical reflection on the mountain cemetery in the fourteen stanzas of the poem *Monológ (Monologue)*²¹¹ is a contemplation that presents emptiness after the death of a beloved being. In the inner conversation, a subtle hint of the problem emerges in the motifs of two paths, an animal pair of roe deer and a doe, which contrast with personal loneliness, recalling the ritual of the last journey leading to the sacred temple of nature. In conjunction with the oxymoron, they express a turning point in their life: „*Odvtedy / smrť tvoju žijem*“ (“*I’ve been living your death since then.*”). The image of the loss of a beloved being is enhanced by the already known symbolism with new meaning-forming associations, e.g. birch – formerly a symbol of love and desire is represented in the symbolism of the cross, whose attribute include perseverance and surrender in the adversity of fleeting time; the wind – the symbol of pleasant or new stories repeats the old theme, as if it brought only faded memories; a stone pine – the symbol of tenacious perseverance and love is in the wreath connected with the symbolism of the closed cycle of life. Meaning layering, exceeding conventional meanings, has an unobtrusive effect on intensifying the aesthetic impression of updated lyrical images. A poetic question arises from reverent meditation: „*Počuješ vtáka jemnú kantilénu?*“ (“*Can you hear the bird’s gentle cantilena?*”) The lyrical phenomenon of the song is like an unexpected upsurge (in the 5th stanza), a burst of desire for another person who is no longer there. The subsequent image of natural immobility, an interrupted song, which hides the receptivity

210 The following indicators are relevant in the textual structure of the psalm statement: 1) The position of the psalmist (the author), 2) the message (event), 3) the idea and role of God in human events, and 4) the position of the recipient (co-creator), (Liba, 2001: 17).

211 First published: *Kultúrny život* 15, 1960, No. 26, p. 4. (Masárová, 1978: 27). This is confirmed by a clipping from the press, where the poem is dated: Nový Smokovec, May 1960. [Source unidentified.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

of the sensitive soul, acts as a counter-movement, which is confirmed by the metaphors of fog, the stone pine, and gentian and connoting bleakness: „*Závoj hmly ovisol / v limbe zaklesnutý, / jarný encián / má slzu na líci.*//“ (“*The veil of mist hung / stuck in the stone pine, / spring gentian / has a tear on its cheek .//*”). The insoluble inconsistency is also transferred to the sharp paradoxes in space-time: In the time of May, snow-capped mountains, instead of reborn love, an alpine cemetery. Tension also enters the choice of the lyrical subject who chooses a new direction at an imaginary crossroads – descent from the mountains to the valley – and zealously, with varied epanastrophes, demands through nature (wind, bird) a sign of the correctness of the decision. Finally, she accepts the irreversibility of destiny, entering the irrational space of communication through natural symbols and their hidden, layered meanings (clay – flowability, transience, stone – strength, permanence), which come to life in mythical-Biblical connotations (doe, clay, stones). Strophically independent (11th) verse: „*Srdce pochopí.*“ (“*The heart will understand.*”) is the key to spiritual solution. In contemplative reflection, the lyrical subject demands the substitution of words in the symbolic language of the sign. And so the receptive heart finds its way beyond the boundaries of earthly life. Filled with love, it wants to form a bifocal unity of hearts even in an extra-terrestrial milieu of the sacrum. In the psalm of affliction, there is remorse: „*Koľko len lásky bolo medzi nami, / úbohé srdce! / Dnes je jar...*“ (“*How much love was between us, / poor heart! / Today is spring ...*”) and with it, as if in aposiopesis, a desire was born for the renewal of sacred love through an allusion to the Easter mystery of the Resurrection. The final quatrains of the monologue (4 + 4) close detensively not just in the recapitulation, but also in the determination to repeat the act of confession of love until the time of sacrifice in the personal life cycle is fulfilled. The whole poem thus carries a spiritual problem: the crisis of the subject from the loss of love and the effort for its spiritual restoration – resurrection.

Evening time of stars falling – flying stars – in the poem *Imaginárny príhovor (Imaginary Speech)*²¹² implies the promise of fulfilled dreams, desires and wishes. The three wishes as in a fairy tale present in a vivid imagination common moments in a couple: a sunny morning and a trip to cranberries, noon and rest in the shade of nature as an aesthetic peak of illusion (dragonfly in hair, butterfly on the cheek) and then idyll early evening in the silence of the forest (with a doe above the spring and a bird in the pine), and here the fairy-tale dream and the illusion of fulfilled reality resonate. The phenomenon of the mythical unity of the natural, human, and celestial worlds, with hints of the mysterious forces of the universe, harmonises the inner world of the lyrical subject and balances the deficits of life. The falling meteors initiated a mental transcendence into the metaempirical dimension of life, and in the super sensible imaginations, the myth of immortal love was born as a surrogate (aesthetic) modality.

New Year's Eve as the initiating point of the new annual cycle in the poem *Dnes v noci novoročnej (Today at New Year's Eve)*²¹³ is full of magical energy. It begins with the incipitation: "Vysoké hory" ("High Mountains"), in which she emphasises the majesty of the earthly vertical towering to the clouds as if anticipating contact with the Transcendent. In the image of the mountains, it first develops a counter-movement in an imaginary sinusoid: as the eternal ice slides down, the green rhododendron pulls towards the life-giving sun, and then it stubbornly makes its way into the impenetrable "living centre" of the stone. Similarly, a wandering boulder falls from snow-covered peaks, to green mountain lakes (hidden in a sea of rocks, planted in the fairy-tale-like giant palms), to where the spring of water flows out. The conditions of life are formed in the interplay: „Hrsť zeme / v hľbokej vráske žuly / korienkom drží / trpezlivý vres“ ("A handful of earth / in deep wrinkle of granite / by the root is holding / patient heather"). Similarly, the

212 First published: *Slovenka* 18, 1965, No. 33, p. 2. (Masárová, 1978: 29).

213 First published: *Slovenské kúpele* 8, 1966, No. 1 – 2, p. 1. (Masárová, 1978: 29).

terrestrial light of the hoar frost is combined with the extra-terrestrial in the reflection of the stellar heights to find one in the other: „Nehu belostnej inovate / posýpa hviezdny prach“ ("Tenderness of the whiteness of the hoar-frost / is sprinkled by stardust") – Likewise, the luna's attraction rules the foaming river Váh, the fate of the mythical geniuses (Ikaros, da Vinci connected by the desire to fly), the shepherds' home (bearers of Biblical Gospel)²¹⁴, but in the past the luna shone into personal struggles, which were struck by the magical power of the tides. The light finally converges to this day, so that from the life-giving power of the sun through the attractive energy of the moon, it reaches the enlightened image of a white child who, under New Year's Eve allusion, gets his name on New Year's Eve – Baby Jesus. And so the initial sinusoid closes in a continuing parable. In it, the sacred time of New Year's Eve becomes a new milestone not just for the rule of the forces of nature, hidden in the symbols of the sun and moon,²¹⁵ but also for the human power of love in the New Testament symbol of Christianity.²¹⁶ The final mention of the lunar Sea of Peace: „Raz dotkne sa ťa / lúč Mora pokoja.“ ("One day / the ray of the Sea of Peace will touch you") opens a new axis of meaning – the dimension of the cosmic mystery: the cyclical interplay of the cosmic energy of light which controls earthly life from the higher realms in the form of enlightenment, is a sacred penetration of the sacrum integral into human life. The parable of man, therefore, closes with the explicitness of "Ty dotkneš sa hviezd" ("You will touch the stars,") in which she expresses prophetically the belief that he will attain the coveted cosmic goals, both in scientific and theological significance. In

214 The pages of the screenplay state: „View, shepherds' fires bigger and smaller, closer and farther, form similar constellations!“ In: Bečvář, Anton – Haľamová, Maša: *Božie divadlo*. Radio compilation of poetry and music. [Script; typescript, 9 pp.] LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04.

215 On the day-and-night cycle: "It is the eternal rhythm of earthly life to which we are all subject against our will." (Ibidem.)

216 In the script: "We do not know who looked with greater amazement and admiration at the depths of space above us: whether those immemorial people who saw their mythology personified and immortalised there, or we who only see matter and radiation, space and time, size and distances, numerals and equations!" (Ibidem.)

a spiral of final significance, the initial anticipation of the Transcendent in the final explicitness acquires a “higher” symbolic sense: the lyrical subject not just penetrated the intellectual interplay of the adjacent cosmic spheres with his intellect, but also reached the theological knowledge of life and consciousness of religious integrity. Adequacy of our interpretation is confirmed again in the broadcast *God's Theatre*. In it, M. Haľamová stated that “every human soul has different limits of its ideas about the facts to which it has managed to penetrate. The star vault and silence of the night, the solitude of the late hours and the silence of solitude are the temple in which the secret talks to us in the most suggestive way.”²¹⁷

By the initials encrypted poem *M. R. M.*²¹⁸ was dedicated to Maria Rázusová Martáková. F. Hrubín's motto opens it: „...všechno je v našej moci / i to vytrhnout sa z osamělosti / a být jasným a třpytícím sa křemínkem / ve velké vlně života...” (“... everything is in our power / even to break free from loneliness / and to be a clear and shimmering quartz / in the great wave of life...”) Its central idea is the idea of the spiritual development of each person. In the poem, the initiating idea develops further: the home's twig is a symbol of certainty, security, surviving childhood and traditions, memories of one's native Liptov will be felt and tears of pain (in an illusion to experience hardships) will prepare a place of joy: „... a vypadnú Ti slzy. / Odplavia kus bolesti, / aby si mohla prijať radosť” (“... and tears will fall out. / They will wash away a piece of pain / so that you can take pleasure.”) Metaphorical comparisons – first to the body of a chisel excavated violin and then to the delicate shape of a fired goblet – have a deeper aesthetic meaning: an emotional melody made of shaking strings and a clear stream of sparkling wine are a beauty that resonates deeply and springs from pain. Thus, symbolic transcendences reveal the meaning of human suffering – its creative potential and mystical meaning. The poem is not merely a tribute to the suffering woman, the

217 Ibidem.

218 The poem is included only in the poetry collection. It was not published in a periodical. (Cf Masárová, 1978).

writer, but also a spiritual parable inciting to contemplate the hidden mysteries of the human destiny that link man to the Sacrifice of Christ.

In a poem from the circle of intimate lyrics, *Snívali sa mi ruky tvoje (I Had a Dream About Your Hands)*²¹⁹ – the motifs of the hands and sensitive fingers of a blind person enter the irrational space of a dream and express a hidden desire for the manifestations of the tenderness of a close person. Through a face, the dream evoked new gusts of the soul, and through the mouth, which betrays pain and suffering, it revealed contradictory sadness. The wonderful dream finally brought relief – it restored the feeling of safety and security. The symbolic sign of the initiating rebirth of the mad soul was in the smile with which the lyrical subject awoke to a new morning.

*Istota (Security)*²²⁰ is a poem about an imaginary return to a place that is a focal point for a lyrical subject at a crossroads in life. He/she longs to see the need to overcome the crisis, find a way out of disorientation and start alone again. Therefore, he/she projects an idea with a motif of a night train journey and in it the alteration of people at the crossroads of destiny, which evokes a symbolic return in reversible time as *déjà vu*, while touching the handle of a house no longer owns “tangible” evidence of irrefutable reality. After it, the gray braking symbolically represents the interface between night and day as an internally experienced disorientation on the threshold of a new beginning. The enhanced temporality of the image is a plot of lyrical significance: the night leading to a wake is a symbolic image of the initiation – search and finding – of a new life orientation.

The poem *Boso po tráve (Barefoot on the Grass)*²²¹ brings an imaginary conversation with the missing partner. Noon represents the

219 First published: *Roľnícke noviny* 21, 1966, p. 6, 16. 9. (Masárová, 1978: 30).

220 The poem is not in the manuscript collection. First published: *Slovenka* 25, 1973, No. 35, p. 17 Masárová, 1978: 33).

221 The poem was not published until the collection was published. First published: *Lud* 25, 1972, p. 8., 23. 3., alongside with the poem *Vtedy tiež limby koiľli* (Masárová, 1978: 33).

moment of the highest point of the sun, not just without shadows, but also without wind, and therefore without imaginary “new messages”. The subtly indicated problem of communication silence on the etheric waves has an alternative solution, the so-called small transcendence formed by direct contact with the earth: „Ak pôjdem za tebou / boso po tráve – / hlina mi povie, / čo vietor nedovial.“ (“If I follow you / barefoot on the grass – / the clay will tell me / what the wind did not tell.”). It thus reveals the experience of substitution in the relationship between pantheism and pan-en-theism.²²²

In the poem that inspires contemplation, *Vtedy tiež limby kvitli* (*Then the Stone Pines Also Flourished*) the lyrical subject presents images of common moments in the couple at the beginning of the affection, which are encoded in a non-verbal floral emblem – the stone pine flower. As a symbolic sign, it represents the memory of the confession of love of a man who removed the suffering of a young, adolescent woman. But the image of the tree with its Biblical connotations initiates contemplation and revealing a hidden spiritual meaning: just as the beauty of a flowering stone pine in harsh alpine conditions is fed by granite due to the tenacity of still thirsty roots, so the thirsty man in the sufferings of life thanks to tenacity of the heart drinks from the eternal spring of love and is refined thereby. The tomb in the green valley, which evokes the hope of eternal life, is a sacred place – the genius loci, where a red poppy blossomed as proof of the woman’s faithful and immortal love: „Šla s tebou láska, / čo hory preklenie. / Šla do skonania. // Ešte tu je údolie zelene. / Hrob kvitne na dne. // Zakvitol najpro / makom červým. / Láska moja!“ (“Love was going with you, / that moved the mountains./ She went to the end. // There is still a valley of greenery here. / The grave blooms at the bottom. // Firt the red poppy blossomed / My love!). In the ballad core of the myth, the previous stage of life, symbolically represented in the self-contained floral emblem, pays homage to the sacred power of love

222 In pantheism, unlike panenteism, it is an alternative way of transmitting a spiritual message that is conditioned by sensibility.

and is being locked. The alternative title of the poem *After Years* also offers its close-fitting genre variant – the legend of the red poppy.

The last, highly contemplative poem, *Tie machy pili z tvojich žíl* (*Those Mosses Were Drinking From Your Veins*)²²³ completes the poetry collection *Smrť tvoju žijem* (*Living Your Death*). It is characterised by subtlety of expression built on allusions with spiritual meaning (gender-differentiated) and mystical legacy: in the posthumous transformations of his body, love is transformed into the beauty of flowering mosses, which keep their shape in its flame of love with their “sparks”. Sacred love is still alive in it, it just changed its current form. Love still retains the form of the sacralised essence, because despite many metamorphoses, it remains “in its image.” The poetically portrayed mystery of the epiphany and the mystical nature of the Incarnation refers through allusion to the mystery of the Sacrifice.

If we compare the spiritual message of the last poem *Tie machy pili z tvojich žíl* (*Those Mosses Were Drinking From Your Veins*) with the first poem *V tú noc* (*That Night*) (originally *V septembrovú noc*) (*On September Night*), we will reveal the testimony of the initiating rebirth of a lyrical subject who broke free from the desolation of death and passed into the light of hope restoring his religious integrity. The final sacralisation of the scene, in contrast to the motive of death, is thus an antithetical return with enrichment, which opens a new stage in life: I live your love in “His image”. The new emblematic confession is also proof that the spiritual maturation of the lyrical subject resulted in a process of spiritualisation to a qualitatively different level of religious life within the framework of “*homo spiritus*”, which is characterised by special spiritual experiences – charisma and corresponding knowledge of mysticism and its confessioning.

223 The poem is included only in the poetry collection. It was not published in a periodical. (Cf, Masárová, 1978).

Synthesis: In the first part of *September*, in a poetic statement, two motivational foci intersect: the image of love and life. Love is born in harmony with nature, in the characteristic time of awakening spring and May, culminating in summer and maturing in autumn. In the natural environment, in addition to width, height, it also acquires inseparable depth. Subtlety of the expression is the dominant symptom of its survival. In the evolutionary arc of love, we may observe several stages, running in parallel with the natural cycle: from enthusiastic desire (*Vyznanie – Confession*) it passes into magical attraction (*Leto – Summer*) and intimacy of rapprochement enriched by the aesthetic dimension of the beautiful (*Biela noc – White Night*). Love is God's energy – spiritualism – which is characterised by creative potential. It matures in autumn, in strong emotional bonds, and culminates in prayer with the adoration of the sacred force *V deň septembrový (September Day) – Večerná pieseň (Evening Song)*, closing with it the arc of transformation: *filie – eros – storgé – agapé*.

The parabolic picture of life also brought deepening: in it we may observe the phenomenon of waves, image and its reflection, the endless melody of alternating songs, movement in a sinusoid in circles in a spiral with a central axis – a spiritualeme, which has a Christocentric culmination in the mystical image of the *Sacrifice (Kruhy na vode) (Circles on Water)*. The idea of the cosmic spheres of the Numinous has a mythical-biblical nature, while the acoustic phenomenon plays a shaping role in it. However, the mysterious threshold of extra-terrestrial life can only be reached by the intensity of transcendent love, i. e. gradual spiritualeme (*Na konci diaľky) (At the End of the Distance)*. In crisis situations, too, the lyrical subject turns to God here in the psalm mode (*Výkrik) (Scream)* with faith in the initiating power of God's word, which creates and through love ennobles man.

In the second part of the collection *Bez teba (Without You)*, however, the initial life situation of the lyrical subject gradually changed. The initial desolation from the loss of the other (*V tú noc) (That Night)*, transformed into psalmic-elegiac manifestations, found its spiritual

solution: faith and hope in the power of love were strengthened (*Monológ) (Monologue)* and the lyrical subject gradually accepted the irreversibility of destiny. Through the conscious intensity of love, the potential of the intellect, it penetrated through natural-psychic parallelism into a triad of spheres: the natural – human – celestial worlds (*Imaginárny príhovor) (Imaginary Speech)*, while the active axis of penetration was formed by the spiritualeme and its creative potential. The original imagination presented a parable-like picture of life. The terrestrial and extra-terrestrial worlds have a Christocentric anchor in symbolic points of beginning and end like Alpha and Omega. Therefore, the motion of the sinusoid, closing in a circle, doubles at the collision of the beginning and the end, and it is here that it acquires a visible and invisible – material and spiritual – empirical and metaempirical dimensions. In the integral interplay of spheres, the lyrical subject thus came to know the theological model of life (*Dnes v noci novoročnej) (Today, on the New Year's Eve)*. The aesthetic dimension of suffering also took its place in it. The beauty of the higher – mystical sense came from the depths of pain (*M. R. M.*). Spiritualeme thus gradually revealed its triple potential. It is an uplifting and deepening vector of spiritual life, i.e. in accordance with the Sacrifice, the sacred power of love is born of pain and in hope it develops into a noble beauty. In the elegiac atmosphere of the *Bez teba (Without You)* section, an initiation arc was built from the motif of hope, which was the source of the revival and a new spiritual stroke (*Snívali sa mi ruky tvoje, Istota, Boso po tráve, Vtedy tiež limby kvitli) (I Had a Dream About Your Hands, Security, Barefoot on the Grass, Then Stone Pines Also Bloomed)*. It culminated in the last poem *Tie machy pili z tvojich žíl (The Mosses Were Drinking From Your Veins)* in the Image of the Epiphany, which revealed the knowledge of the sacred essence: Trinity, as the gift of the Holy Spirit, is constantly alive and present in the h/Heart – in His image. However, the revelation of the mystical meaning – the focus of sacred love – initiated by the word – is conditioned by the perception of allusion and its diaphonically doubled image – the emblem in which

the imagination of the apparent and hidden forms of Transcendence are created.

The poetry collection *Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* hides the subtle secret of Maša Haľamová's crossroads of life. It represents the search for a new orientation after the death of the husband and the initiation process, which was a spiritual challenge. The poetic expression and solution of the personal crisis in the evolutionary-creation process in two parts was connected with the lyrical depiction of spiritual maturation, the deepening of the effect of the initiated word and the knowledge of the mystery of the Trinity. At the metaempirical level of lyrical statement, previous conclusions about the personal process of spiritualisation, which is in line with the Christian understanding of panenteism, were confirmed. The final charismatic confession of love in the subtle allusion to the Trinity is a manifest manifestation of the spiritual rebirth (*methanoia*) and depth of religious knowledge in which the lyrical subject of the intellectual type has reached the level of "*homo spiritus*."

Finally, let's approach a double cycle of poems and look at the meaning that emerged from the double conclusion and confirmed in the poems *Večerná pieseň* and *Tie machy pili z tvojich žíl (The Evening Song and The Mossed Were Drinking From Your Veins)*. The poem *Večerná pieseň (The Evening Song)* was not just a lyrical image of the liturgical conclusion in the first circle of poems, but also a testimony to a certain degree of spiritual maturity, expressed by the term of "*homo religiosus*". The lyrical subject here came to the spiritual materialisation that sacred love is the meaning and fundamental principle of the Christocentrically anchored spiritual life.

The last "keying" poem *Tie machy pili z tvojich žíl (The Mossed Were Drinking From Your Veins)* not only concludes the spiralling movement of the double circle, but also conveys testimony that the lyrical subject recognised in the process of spiritualisation the mystical effect of the initiated word that is understood in the Christian tradition as a gift of the Holy Trinity – charisma. The charisma of the initiated word makes

it possible to penetrate into the essence of the mystery of the Trinity – the focus of God's love and to recognise the mystical meaning of the beginning and the end in the Christocentric core of the Heart. The lyrical subject in the mythoid structure of the parable mapped the spiritual path to Cognition throughout the collection and presented it in a poetic form: the focus of Love pulsates in us and, through the principle of spiritualisation, ennobles (immanence). And not only a lyrical subject can mature in its circles when he embarks on an initiating pilgrimage for the mystery of the Word...

After the third partial synthesis, we can not only ask ourselves what is new after more than thirty years with the collection *Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)*, but also to answer it: the allusive play of meanings plays an important role in lyrical-spiritual imagery. It is as if the poetry of Maša Haľamová was speaking to us in the symbolic language of signs, which in Biblical overlaps create a mechanism of spiritual dialogue with a serious semiotic message (Valček, 2006: 16 – 17). Thus, we may say that the appealing power of Maša Haľamová's artistic testimony – her personal testimony – lies in the initiating effect of the internalised word (*verbum interius*) and in its creation-evangelistic function (*verbum cordis*), which evokes a subtle experience of nibble beauty of charismatic spiritual poetry.

Phonic-Rhythmic Elements of Verse Structure

Literary-scholarly Reflections

The starting point for thinking about the sound structure of the verse will be in the literary-critical views of scholars of the 19th and 20th centuries, who, although not united, point together to certain specifics of Haľamová's poetry. At the same time, as follows from the letter to A. Prařák²²⁴, the authoress was critical of herself in the beginnings of her literary writings: *"I am trying to devote here my attention to prosody as much as I can. And now I'm starting to feel very vividly the loss caused by my not being able to study. I often feel deficiency of technique in my writing. I replace it by reading fine poems, perceiving their rhythm, listening to their music and noticing the colour of words and tones. That's how a lot of things may be learned."* (Ibidem.)

In his review of *Dar (Gift)*, her first collection of poems, Andrej Kostolný, a contemporaneous literary critic, highlighted the music, colour and feel of her poems, which in some verses directly merged into the "miraculous symphony" of aesthetic elements (Kostolný, 1928: 826 – 828). On the contrary, Stanislav Mečiar's²²⁵ manuscript critically states that the authoress lacks the eyes of the discoverers and erudition of the artist: *"As to the former, what our authoress has in her is shared by many women – the latter only have a few persons."* He suggested to critics that they admit that *"these here are toys or non-poetic expressions of, say, a poetically tuned-in soul."* (Ibidem.) In a literary-theoretical synthesis of M. Haľamová's oeuvre, which not only pertained to its content, but also its formal and sound design, Miloř Tomčık pointed out that

224 Correspondence of M. Haľamová to A. Prařák in 1926 [manuscript]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, sign. 29B1.

225 – ik. [Mečiar, Stanislav]: *Maša Haľamová: Āervený mak* [manuscript]. LA SNL, Stanislav Mečiar file, sign. 164 Y 24.

although her poetry was influenced by Slovak Modernism of the beginning of the 20th century, as evidenced by *"her abbreviated language, impressionistic variety of contents and versatility of forms, a ballad devoid of its epic scheme and the ringing, light rhythmic gradient of the verse"* she was following her own means of expression, to the subjective vision of the external and internal worlds and to her own original mastery of rhythmic structures (Tomčık, 1955: 89). Twenty years thereafter, retrospectively mapping poetry from Romanticism to the end of World War II, M. Tomčık stated that in her work, in the concept of the ballad, Krasko's and Wolker's impulses *"permanently intersect"*, hence her *"sense of economical form and sound tuning a verse"* (Tomčık, 1974: 118). The positive response to the melodic power of her poems also resonates in the opinions of M. Růfus. He emphasised that song and folk poetry played an important role in her oeuvre: *"I notice – it is not stylisation of song and machine-like rhythm of song, no, but the grip of song at its most tangible thing, at its psychic essence."* (Růfus, 1964: 153). It was resounding in him as a cantilena that reminded him of *"a wild thyme – the coat-of-arms flower of the Slovak ballad and the song by which this authoress had been baptized even before she was born"* (Růfus, 1981: 217). M. Bartko evaluated her verses in a similar vein. He confirmed that her poetry *"grew out of the Slovak ballad, the elemental and life ballad-like nature of the crisis of Slovak life in the 1930s and the sadness of the heart of the half-orphan. She combined both of these in the fortunate form of a classically pure and simple melodic verse with which she entered Slovak poetry as a special creator"* (Bartko, 1983: 132).

Andrea Bokníkóvá, who observes and confronts women as female authors and at the same time observes the theme of women in Slovak poetry from the 1960s to the present, points out that poetess' lyrical miniatures or dialogical ballads are economical, muffled expressions that correspond to the *"short, song-bound or freed verse with an irregular, sometimes even sporadic rhyme"* (Bokníkóvá, 2000: 19).

After the analysis and synthesising interpretation of selected poems from the collections *Dar (Gift)* (1928), *Āervený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932)

and *Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* (1966), we will try and confront the above-mentioned inconsistent literary-critical views and generalisations with our own findings.

Dar (Gift)

When selecting the poems of her first *Dar (Gift)* collection, which we analyse in terms of their sound structure, we take into account interpretations of poetic texts that confirm that the internalised word, i. e. *verbum interius*, is not just the source of M. Haľamová's subtle poetry, but it is also the starting point for the poetic expression of the spiritual experience of the authoress' life experience (more details on pp. 85 – 86). From the poems interpreted at the level of the sound-formal structure of the verses (*Dar, Balada o veľkom žiali, Pieseň, Láska, Balada o hre slnka a vetra, Z knihy žalmov, Milému, Bud' wúle Twá, Legenda*) (*Gift, Ballad of the Great Sorrow, Song, Love, Ballad of the Game of Sun and Wind, From the Book of Psalms, To My Beloved One, Thy Will Be Done, Legend*) in addition to the poems *Dar (Gift)* and *Legenda (Legend)*, which frame the collection, we also representatively select the poem *Pieseň (Song)*²²⁶. This poem, like *Legenda (Legend)*, has been translated into English and so may be interesting to the reader in terms of translation when comparing the formal rendering of its semantic message. In it, the internally experienced feelings of disappointment, immurement oneself, alternate with the state of resignation until complete surrender to fate (more details on p. 90).

In its simplicity and imagery, the deeply “experienced” emblem poem *Dar (Gift)* represents a seemingly rhythmically incoherent formation. The tendencies after the periodic rhythm in the first two verses with a dactylic-trochaic pattern, through which she enters the depths

226 As part of the analysis of the rhythmic structure for those interested in comparing the similarities and differences of sound means, we present the texts of those Slovak poems that have been translated into English.

of life knowledge through her own experience, is alternated by a sound structure with a loosened, not so tightly bound structure. M. Haľamová used it to express feelings stemming from the uncomfortable reality of life, while in the first two verses of the second stanza: „*V červený mak výčitku krvavú, / v lilavé sirôtky vyplačem žiaľ*“ (“In red **poppy** bloody remorse, / in violaceous pansies will I cry out my grief”) assonance is applied. The peaks of one-syllable words (*a, ia*) in the middle of the first and at the end of the following verse are phonically united by an identical vocal timbre. In the 2nd and 3rd stanzas, she reaches for words with a similar phonic structure: *nevädze – nevládze*, thus increasing the sound effect of the verses, which, although across the boundaries of the two stanzas, create a rhyme typical of folk poetry. The freestanding verse, which expresses reconciliation, is a peaceful return to the tendency of the seemingly dactylic-trochaic feet organisation²²⁷: „*Do snehu krajky vpletiem holubicu bielu.*“ (“I’ll weave a white dove into the lace snow.”) In addition, the musicality and euphony of the first couplet and the free-standing verse are enhanced by the words with the dominance of the leading vowels (*i, e, ie*). The lyrical fluctuation in the last stanza of the poem with a religious-spiritual reach is manifested in the sound structure by equal number of syllables in its first two verses: „*Ked' cesty zarastú trnám a hložím – [11] / dar svoj ti donesiem v jednu nedeľu*“ (“When the roads are overgrown with thorns and bush – / I will bring my gift to you on a Sunday” [11] with the identical number and distribution of metres, after which in the finale of the poem “*s úsmevom božím.*“ (“with the smile of God.”) the culmination of de-tension occurs, rhythmically following the last verse of the third stanza, “*veľké nádeje vložím,*“ (“I will **put** great hopes,”) supported by a rhyme.

At first glance, the intuitively and spontaneously created – only seemingly incoherent and resembling naive art – sound structure is in harmony with the content: thematically, the author connects images

227 In fact, it is a dactylic-trochaic overhang within the non-foot iambic metric plan (more specifically cf. Sabol 1983: 62)

of natural scenery with spiritual significance through the gusts of the human soul. Semantically through its simplicity and at the same time its depth, the text sounds like a monolithic whole, which rhythmically sounds subtle.

The poem *Legenda (Legend)*, whose poetic expression in connection with its translation into English, M. Andričik (2021: 99)²²⁸ (Kramoris, 1947: 125) characterises as economical and minimalist with natural diction, sensitivity and urgency of utterance, consists of eight three-verse stanzas (with trochaic foot in the first two verses and dactylic one in their conclusion). In fact, apart from the graphic form, there are 4 pairs of 11-syllable sections in Slovak, which end in a false masculine rhyme, i. e. by sound concord of trisyllabic groupings at their end: *pod horou – s pokorou; na dlane – oddane; človeka – preteká; do neba – netreba*. The simple, almost banal song structure of the poem, is a support (or “balance”) of its semantic – psalmic – component on the wasted gift of love, for which the lyrical subject demands God’s punishment (more details on pp. 97 – 98).

Legenda

Legend

*Od Gerlachu
Pán Boh ide
pod horou.*

*From Gerlach town
Has God long gone
Into the wood.*

*Na kameni
Čakám Naňho
s pokorou.*

*Here on a stone
I wait for him
In pilgrim mood.*

228 When evaluating the translation of the poem *Legenda (Legend)* into English, M. Andričik states that “the change of the trochaic metric plan, which complements the dactyl in the third verse of the stanza, in the iambic in translation and the unification of the number of syllables in all the verses to four is understandable and is in the interest to maintain their smooth, harmonious flow.” (Andričik, 2021: 99 – 100).

*Žaloby tiaž
Položím si
na dlane*

*I hold the score
Of my complaint
Plain on my palm.*

*A keď dôjde,
Odozdám ju
oddane.*

*And when He comes
I’ll hand it Him
Resigned and calm.*

*„Posúď, Bože,
tu žaloba
človeka:*

*„Review, O Lord
The sorry case
Of lowly man:*

*že mu srdce
choré láskou
preteká!*

*Behold his heart
– No love within
Doth it contain!*

*Vezmi nazad
dar svoj dávny
do neba*

*Take back from him
The heart he now
Doth use no more:*

*už na svete
ľuďom srdce
netreba.“*

*The human heart
The world today
Has no need for.“*

In the poem *Pieseň (Song)* on the area of four simply tuned quatrains, it is an allusion to a wistful folk song, in which an 8-syllable verse regularly alternates with a 6-syllable verse, while the undemanding sound structure of the poem is accentuated by an caesural rhyme: „*Nezamrelo srdce moje / v zuráženej hrudi, / len sa vtiahlo do kútika / keď tušilo ľuďi.* (“My heart didn’t paralyse / in the chest down beaten, / it just pulled into a corner / when it sensed the people./”). The state of the soul in *Pieseň (Song)* is announced by monotonous regularity: *Nekričaly ústa moje / o velikej trýzní, / len sa ticho spytovaly: / kde tie city zmizly. –* (“My

mouth did not cry out/about the great torment,/they just asked quietly:/where those feelings disappeared – ") M. Haľamová probably unconsciously, but impressively, balances through the lyrical subject the complexity of the depicted inner experience and mental state with the lightness and triviality of a folk-conceived rhythmic structure, which, in contrast to the difficult semantics, has a de-tension effect.

Pieseň

*Song*²²⁹

Neplakaly oči moje
vo dne ani v noci,
len zatordly a nespaly
mnoho čiernych nocí.

My eyes did not weep
neither day nor night
just hardened, did not sleep
over many black nights.

Nespjaly sa ruky moje,
pomoc neprosily,
len ovisly pozdĺž tela
bez vlády a sily.

My arms did not fold
did not stretch out to plead,
just by my sides they hung down
without strength or control.

Nezamrelo srdce moje
v zuráženej hrudi,
len sa vtiahlo do kútika,
keď tušilo ľudí.

My heart did not die
inside its insulted breast,
it just took to a corner,
did not welcome a guest.

Nekričaly ústa moje
O velikej trýzni,
len sa ticho spytovaly,
kde tie city zmizly.

My mouth did not cry out
in unbearable pain,
it just asked in silence
where these feelings had gone.

from Gift (1928)

229 The poem *Pieseň* translated into English by Viera and James Sutherland-Smith (Chrobáková, 2000: 41).

Červený mak (Red Poppy)

From among the poems of the second collection of poems, *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932), which we analysed at the level of sound and rhythmic structure of verses (*Červený mak, V zakliatej hore, Elégia, Balada, Májová, Záclona, Tulácka*) (*Red Poppy, In the Cursed Mountain, Elegy, Ballad, The May One, Curtain, Wanderer*), we have illustratively chosen four of them: *Červený mak, Elégia, Balada a Tulácka* (*Red Poppy, Elegy, Ballad, Wanderer*).

We justify the choice of the first of them, the *Red Poppy*, by its thematic similarity to the poem of the same name from the first collection, *Dar (Gift)*. As it follows from the interpretations, it is a matter of synchronising the image of the Tatra landscape, its alpine climate, with love and with the dimension of spirituality (more details on p. 103 – 104). We are therefore interested in its sound-formal appearance. The verses of the opening poem are neither of equal number of syllables nor strictly feet-oriented. They are divided into six three-verse stanzas, whose sound structure is formed by a euphonically tuned order of sounds and a simple rhyming effect of words at the end of the second and third triplets. In the first, but also in the second stanza, the leading vocals (e, i) predominate: „Keď slnce vyčarí / zo skalnej zeme kvet, / je to milosť!“, while in the third one, predominance of back vocals (o, u) is demonstrable: „Pod mojím oblokom / rozkvitol rudý mak. / Symbol a hosť!“ The authoress functionally makes the lyrical text special by using an anaphora by preferring the long vocal á: „Snád' vykvitol z krvi, / snád' z lásky. / Nikomu nedám ho skmásať!“ By prepositioning the proclitics – at the beginning of the last verses in the three strophic-syntactic units – the naturally prevailing descending, for Slovak characteristic trochaic or dactylic-trochaic tendency is disturbed, which rhythmically leads to the marked parts and thus underlining their semantics: „... / ... / **a** ty si lekár. // ... / ... / **a** na tvár vsadiť masku. // Hľad' dnes mojimi očami, / pohraj sa s makom červeným / **a** prijmi moju lásku. //“. As it turns out, the sound of the poem, especially at the level of phonetic

instrumentation²³⁰, enhances the figurative-emotional character of the emblem poem.

The sound-formal structure of the verses of the poem *Elégia (Elegy)* has a different character in comparison with the previously analysed emblem poem *Červený mak (Red Poppy)*. The above-mentioned poem is about self-examination of conscience and knowledge of hurtful sinfulness (more details on p. 106). Compared to the poem of the *Red Poppy* collection of the same name, differentiated sound means contribute to its overall rhythmic tone. Since it was translated into English (Kramoris, 1947: 127), it is possible to compare similarities and differences at the level of the sound structure of the original and receiving language.

The four three-verse stanzas, of the identical number of syllables (5, 5, 3) and identical dactylic-trochaic metric plan in the first two verses and the dactyl in the last verse of each of them, have a naturally dialogic form as a reflection of spiritual conversation. This is manifested by the differentiated melodic course of the last verses in the relevant stanzas, which is perceived rhythmically and semantically only against the background of the entire poetic text: „*Tak ako vlani / padajú listy... / Lutuješ? // Spomienka raní. / Je večer hmľistý... / Sľubuješ? // Hlavu do dlaní / polož mi tichú. / Múdry buď! / Budeme sami / a zlomíš pýchu / v hrdý stud. //*“ The regularly repeated differentiated melodic course of the verses at the end of the stanzas – the ascending-descending intonation at the end of the first two and the descending intonation at the end of the penultimate and last stanza – it is thus not just superior to the trace organisation of verses, but is also a significant sound medium that multiplies its overall rhythm. In the penultimate verse of the poem, the authoress foreshadows a semantic break in the form of spiritual

230 The vocalic instrumentation of verses may be captured in several poems of the collection analysed. The authoress uses it significantly, e.g. in the poem *Jeseň (Autumn)*, where the “impressionist image” of the autumn resembles a spinning top and “paints” it with words dominated by sonorans, consonants with a high degree of sonority: „*Kam sa zvrtnie s kolovratom, / zlaté nite / porozvláča. //*“ („*Wherever she turns with the spinning wheel, / golden threads / she would sway. //*“)

internalisation by advancing the prophecy to its beginning. The poem is characterised by melodic strength both due to strophic parallelism²³¹, and due to the rhythmic repetition of the dialogical form.

Elégia

*Tak ako vlani
padajú listy . . .
Lutuješ?*

*Spomienka raní.
Je večer hmľistý . . .
Sľubuješ?*

*Hlavu do dlaní
polož mi tichú.
Múdry buď !*

*Budeme sami
a zlomíš pýchu
v hrdý stud.*

Elegy

*A year ago,
The leaves of fall . . .
Do you regret?*

*Life now we know.
Its pain recall . . .
Or promise yet.*

*Come love with me,
Your heart confide:
Pretend, be wise!*

*Alone we“ll be
None know your pride
Or shame surmise.*

In the lyrical-epical poem *Balada (Ballad)*, the genre’s transformation of a ballad into a song multiplies its aesthetic effect. The question of how this rebirth manifests itself at the level of sound-formal structure may be answered by analysing it: A rhythmically simple, eight-stanza poem has the character of a folk song. Six-, four-, and two-syllable verses are repeated in each stanza. Although graphically the poem is divided into three-verse stanzas, essentially each of them consists of the same number of syllables (12). They are thus characterised by equivalence,

231 By strophic parallelism we mean the equality of verses within individual stanzas, which distinguishes it from the term rhythmic-syntactic parallelism.

with each strophic triplet being divided by an intonation break after the first six syllables and as a whole represents a relatively separate syntactic unit. Two and two 12-syllable triplets are semantically related and associated with an associated rhyme: „... a ja. / ... taja. //... k lesu / ... tesu. //... v hneve / ... pre ne // ... dlaňou / ... paňou. //“. These signs suggest that the authoress, despite the different graphic and sound layout of the verses, spontaneously applies syllabic prosody, which is firmly rooted in Slovak folk song.

A significant feature of the relevant triplets of the analysed poem is again stanzaic parallelism which creates its song rhythmic feet plan.

Balada

*Pohnevali sme sa
moje oči
a ja.*

*Prezradili včera,
čo už dlho
taja.*

*Ked' sme sa vracali
spolu s milým
k lesu.*

*Odbehli my vzdorne
ku skalnému
tesu.*

*Ballad*²³²

*We grew angry –
my eyes and I.
and I.*

*Yesterday they betrayed
what for long
I'd hidden away.*

*As we returned,
my love and I
to the wood –*

*they ran aside
to where
steep cliffs stood.*

²³² The poem *Balada* translated into English by Viera and James Sutherland-Smith (Chrobáková, 2000: 42).

*Darmo som volala
za sebou ich
v hneve,*

*musel ísť môj milý
ku skalinám
pre ne.*

*A keď mi ich podal
silnou, mužnou
dlaňou,*

*nebola som ja viac
vlastných očí
paňou.*

*I called to them
in rage
in vain,*

*my love himself
went to the rocks
to my shame.*

*Now he gives them to me
as a strong man's
prize*

*so no longer am I
the owner
of my eyes.*

from Red Poppy (1932)

Through her lyrical subject, M. Haľamová perceives and experiences love differently in the initial and final poetic text of the second collection. While in the emblem poem *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* love is just an emotion with a predominance of the emotional-aesthetic side of living the faith, in the poem *Tulácka (The Wanderer)* is an ethically firmly entrenched love with responsibility for the shackles it has created (more details on p. 112). For this reason, we also focus our attention on its formal processing and overall rhythmic tone.

The last poem of the collection, *Tulácka (The Wanderer)* as the horizontal-vertical analysis of verses suggests, tends, starting with the second verse, to be feet-organised. Probably intuitively, but with the feeling of a woman in love, the authoress created a poem with a dactylic-trochaic rhythmic gradient. Rhythmic peaks are preferred on the first and fourth syllables of the verse: „[...] brehy sú ďalej // Keby ma loďka / za túhou niesla, / šla by dnes kraj sveta / za srdcom zmámeným. //

Ale ja veslujem / na malom člne... / Morom mi jazero / kraj sveta hory.
 The intellectual consideration of a mature lyrical subject is expressed by a quatrain, against the background of which one may “feel”, “see” and “hear” the movement of the waves. It accumulates words with consonant *v* dominance: „*Slnce sa do vln / v strieborné zvonce lomí. / Veslami vyzváňam / tulácku pieseň / na vlnách*“. The rhythmic feet plan is only disrupted in the last verse of the final stanza: „*Človek si srdcom ukuje okovy / a v nich žiť musí.*“ The rhythmic feet plan is only disrupted in the last verse of the final stanza:

Tulácka

*Každým trhnutím vesla
brehy sú ďalej.*

*Keby ma loďka
za túhou niesla,
šla by dnes kraj sveta
za srdcom zmámeným.*

*Ale ja veslujem
na malom člne . . .
Morom mi jazero,
kraj sveta – hory.*

*Slnce sa do vln
v strieborné zvonce lomí.
Veslami vyzváňam
tulácku pieseň
na vlnách.*

*The Wanderer*²³³

*With every tug of the oars
the banks are further away.*

*If this little boat
could carry me from longing
I'd go today to the ends of the earth
for my deluded heart.*

*But I row
in a small vessel...
For me the sea is a lake,
the ends of the earth, the mountains.*

*The sun breaks in the waves
into silver bells –
With my oars I ring out
a wanderer's song
in the waves.*

²³³ The poem *Tulácka* translated into English by Viera and James Sutherland-Smith (Chrobáková, 2000: 43).

*Nad hlavou letia mi
divoké husi –
môj čln ich nedohoní . . .*

*Človek si srdcom ukuje okovy
A v nich žiť musí.*

*Above my head
the wild geese fly –
my boat will not catch up with them ...*

*I have forged chains for my heart
and in them I must live*

from Red Poppy (1932)

Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)

From M. Haľamová's last collection *Smrť tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* (1966), from among the poems analysed at the level of sound-formal structure of verses (*Vyznanie, Leto, Biela noc, Kruhy na vode, Na konci diaľky, V deň septembrový, V tú noc, Monológ, Imaginárny rozhovor, Snívali sa mi ruky tvoje, Tie machy pili z tvojich žíl*) (*Confession, Summer, White Night, Circles on Water, At the End of the Distance, On a September Day, That Night, Monologue, Imaginary Conversation, I dreamed of Your Hands, Those Mosses Were Drinking From Your Veins*), we have, by way of illustration, chosen two of the first cycle: *Vyznanie* and *Kruhy na vode* (*Confession* and *Circles on Water*).

The choice of the first one, which combines the life experience and spiritual experience of the authoress as a mature woman, is conditioned by our interest in finding out how the motivational dominants of the lyrical *Confession*: faith, love, hope in their interconnectedness transformed into a sound form.

The authoress works with modally differentiated sentences in the 6-stanza poem *Vyznanie (Confession)*, especially in her first three quatrains. In each of them, she uses poetic questions to express her uncertainty and reflections: *To whom will I give my tenderness? Where am I going? To the east? West? South? Where am I going?* The gradational distribution of the above-mentioned sentences (functionally repeated

Where will I go? In the 2nd and 3rd stanzas) together with the intonation background of the syntactic structures rhythmically complete the poem. The overall sound tone also helps to build a triad of suprasegments: melody, pause, and emphasis. The accent (emphasis) co-constituting rhythm is mostly placed on one-syllable words, which start and end the sentence sections, especially in the first and last two stanzas: „*Jar sa prebúdzá spod snehu, / v kosodrevine vták. / Komu dám svoju nehu? / V doline píska vlak. // Kam pôjdem? Svet je široký. / Na východ? Západ? Juh? / Ženú sa jarné potoky, / pod skalou drieme pstruh. //; Za tebou pôjdem, nenáhli, / mám v očiach tisíc túh. / Na našom nebi po daždi / farbistej dúhy pruh.*“

In all the stanzas of the poem, the 8-syllable verse alternates almost regularly with the 6-syllable verse, while the sound plan is enhanced by the alternating, predominantly masculine rhyme, which alternates with the feminine rhyme in the first, third, and fourth stanzas²³⁴. In the third stanza, the alternation of male rhyme with female together with sound instrumentation, preferring concluding alveolar consonants *d d' t t'*: “*Kam pôjdem? Dívam sa zhora, / dolina preťatá. / Hlbiny lákajú zdola / dôverou dieťaťa. //*”, as if with rhythmic ease it indicated the dynamisation of movement (permanent oscillation in space “from terrestrial to extra-terrestrial”). Following this, the movement to transcendence is strengthened in the fourth stanza by advancing the proclitic, that is, the ascending cycle (in the context of the prevailing descending metres). Such rhythmically signalled semantic tension is released in the following verses “[...] *a orol kolotá. / Boh varí v ohromnom hrnci / elixír života. //*”. In the same way, by advancing the preclitic, in the last verse the penultimate stanza – “*a ty máš teplú dlaň*”, announces the semantic release coming in the last quatrain: “*Za tebou pôjdem, nenáhli, / mám v očiach tisíc túh. //*”.

234 J. Sabol states that the rhythmic form of the rhyme has its own special meaning potential. The male rhyme sounds more energetic and gives the impression of a more definitive ending, the female rhyme sounds softer and closes the verse less certainly (Sabol, 1983: 50).

In the poem *Kruhy na vode (Circles on Water)*, the authoress, through “*the constant movement of the rippling water surface, evokes the image of an endless stream of life*” (more details on p. 121), emphasising visual-auditory perceptions. In this context, we are interested in how their effect reaches the level of sound structure.

The aesthetically impressive rhythm of the poem, divided into 4 (5-, 6-, 4- and 5-verse) stanzas characterised by inequality, is constituted by several elements simultaneously. The author functionally uses the repetition of words in differentiated forms (song after song, wave after wave, circle in a circle), which express the continuum of time and space (life and death). In the second stanza, it anaphorically (less so epiphorically) incorporates connections with a pre-position *o*: “*Počúvaj, spievajú o jari, / o brehoch plných kvetia, / o bielom venci milujúcich rúk, / o našej mladosti, o noci / s hviezdami, / o vykúpení z múk //*”, thus achieving a gradual amplification of meaning. In addition, she does not always use a consistent interrupted rhyme (*penia – menia, rúk – múk, spieva – uzaviera*), and thus implies a visual sensation of the wavy motion of the circles on the water. Periodicity and a certain parallelism may also be observed against the background of the whole lyrical text. The first verse of the first stanza forms an unmistakable interplay with the first verse of the third stanza, as to both motivation and rhythm: “*Zachvel sa obraz na vode – Zdvihni svoj obraz z hladiny*”. Likewise, the opening and final verses of the last stanza correspond to each other in terms of meaning and phonology: “*Za vlnou vlna / [...] / Kruh v kruh sa uzaviera... //*”. In an imaginary conversation with her husband, verses (sentences and sentence sections) with verbs in the 2nd person sound audibly (in connection with semantics) (*Schýlený nad nimi – počuješ?; Počúvaj, spievajú o jari; Zdvihni svoj obraz z hladiny, / pozri, aký je krehký.*), in which functionally used means of intonation (melody, pause and emphasis) have their justified place. The three-syllable measure, which – except for semantic breaks – repeatedly begins all the verses of the poem, also contributes to the constitution of rhythm to a large extent: “*Zachvel sa [...] / pod ním sa [...] / Schýlený*

[...] / *Zelené* [...] /". The first turning point indicated by the two-syllable bar at the beginning of the last verse in the first stanza changes song after song and announces the flow in the infinity of being. The second semantic turn, again indicated by a two-syllable bar, comes in the first two verses of the third stanza: „*Zdvihni svoj obraz z hladiny, / pozri, aký je krehký.*“, in which she draws attention to the threat to human existence. The last turn is most impressively indicated in the finale, not just by changing the three-syllabic grouping to three one-syllabic words with two rhythmic peaks, but also by phonetic instrumentation in the last two verses of the poem with dominant sonorous consonants and three dots at its terminal end: „*Z hlbiny voda vystrekla. / Kruh v kruh sa uzaviera... //*“. At the reception, this multiplies the auditory-visual perception of the eternal cycle of beginning and end.

Synthesis: The analytical-interpretative approach to the sound-formal structure of selected poems by M. Haľamová has shown that the elements against which the authoress rhythmically portrays the content of lyrical statements repeatedly appear in the individual poems of all three collections. However, the level of their application and interaction with the content component gradually increases, along with the poetess' experience, which naturally increases the aesthetic effect of her verses.

As early as in her early writings, in conjunction with the semantic and thematic-compositional arrangement of the verses, tendencies to song, balladism and psalmism may be discerned. The unifying element of these revealed tendencies, as follows from the analysis, is in the common starting point, which is firmly rooted in Slovak folklore. The genre of the song and the attributes of the sing-song are a logical and natural reflection in her emotionally internalised poetry not just on the potential of balladism, but also of psalmism. The song in her poems is, in relation to the sound structure, transformed mainly into verses of equal number of syllables or stanza sections, supported by the most

frequently interrupted rhyme. In poems with a ballad base, one may see, albeit with some inconsistencies, an effort to trace the organisation of verses, which is signalled by a change in the rhythmic feet plan of the poem in relation to the semantic component at each significant semantic break.

In addition to the sporadic rhyme, the rhyme-forming means of her poems are also in the phonological construction of syntactic-rhythmic sections with an emphasis on their melodic effect. In this regard, we may add a new finding to M. Bartko's statement that M. Haľamová entered Slovak poetry as a special creator of a simple melodic verse: by coordinated effect with several sound and rhythmic means, she managed to modify and develop the melodic nature of the verses. Contrary to S. Mečiar's contemporaneous criticism, our analyses show that her poetry is not made up of toys and non-poetic expressions, but rather human / poetic expressions in which the feeling for the "colour" of sounds and tones has been deeply encoded. With its gradual improvement, her artistic erudition in the field of phonic expression was also increasing.

The analysis of the sound-rhythmic structure of selected poetic texts of the second collection *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (1932) has confirmed the tendency to song, revealed and argumentatively supported already in Haľamová's lyrical debut.

The sound interpretation of the poems revealed that on the one hand the authoress was not bound by any constructs, on the other hand she naturally did not avoid inconsistencies and sound imbalances. Only the sense of natural rhythm and colour tones resulting not just from the euphony of Slovak, but also from the beauty and variety of folk songs spontaneously guided her in her poetic oeuvre. She let herself be "carried away" by lyrical motifs, which she in a naive-artist way rhythmically portrayed on the outside. As part of the stanzaic division, she organised the syntactic units into verses in a non-traditional way. In poems characterised by melodic strength, she created the effect of stanzaic-syntactic parallelism / stanzaic parallelism, which replaced

the traditional rhythmic-syntactic parallelism in the verses. These are signifiers which directly and indirectly confirm the presence of the song's lyrical form in the poetess' oeuvre. The thesis on the musicality of Hařamov's verse has also been confirmed. Although her verses do not show signs of strict foot organisation, certain rhythmic tendencies may be observed in them. Three-syllabic and two-syllabic paradigmatic measures alternate in song-tuned poems (but not with the same regularity as in logical, i.e. mixed verses), which emphasises the musicality of the verse (cf. Harpn, 2004: 160).

In the analysed poems, we identified not just the elements of the modified syllabic, but also the syllabic-tonic verse system. Rhythmic breaks, which disrupt the natural descending tendencies of the verses examined and in which the rhythmic gradient changes (mostly trochaic or dactylic-trochaic to iambic), in conjunction with the semantics of the lyrical statement, announce the pointed out statements. It follows from the above that the sound-rhythmic character of Hařamov's selected poems from the second collection is also formed by euphony, which enhances the musicality and melodic nature of her verses. In some poems, phonetic instrumentation thus becomes the primary and functional means of achieving the impressiveness of verses.

In the sound construction of lyrical poems in the collection *Smrt' tvoju žijem (Living Your Death)* (1966), several means participate in differentiated intensity and measure, by which the authoress underlines their semantic message depending on the complexity of motivic starting points and the depth of lyrical subject's experiencing. If the verse represents an area on which the play of movement is "repeated" (Sabol, 1983: 11), then several phonic and rhythmic impulses may be illustrated in M. Hařamov's texts, which multiply the lyrical virtuosity of her verses. The common denominator identified in almost all of the poems analysed is in the euphony, which the authoress uses with ease and grace in phonetic instrumentation, artistically impressive grouping of sounds – vowels and consonants, especially to evoke and intensify the audio-visual imagination. The associative interconnection

of the meaning of lexemes is implemented through rhyme, or rhyme effect, which greatly affects the acoustic predictability of poems. She uses an alternating rhyme, masculine in combination with feminine ones, intermittent, associated rhyme and a characteristic "chained" rhyme symptomatic for the authoress, which goes beyond one stanza. By functionally incorporating modally differentiated sentences into a poetic text, she creates an aesthetically impressive rhythmic whole. Thus, the repetition of the intonation of type-like syntactic structures, as well as the release of binding in favour of the phonology of the sentence become one of the significant components of rhythm.

All the sound means revealed during the analysis of the rhythmic construction of the poems, especially the phonetic instrumentation implemented in favour of euphonicity, confirm the musicality of the verses and the authoress' musical perception of the lyrics. In some cases, the strict binding of verses – through the elimination of rhymes, the atypical arrangement of verses of unequal number of syllables, as well as their intonation – begins to gradually weaken.

Calendar of Life and Work of Maša Haľamová

1908 – 28 August Mária Haľamová (named familiarly as Maša) was born in the Turiec village of Blatnica. She was the first child of Oľga Haľamová (née Peniašteková) and Jozef Haľama – a cloth maker and saffroner working in Turkestan, a native of Blatnica, a descendant of Czech exiles – who had six children from his first marriage: Jozef, Oľga, Miloslav, Ludmila, Anna, and Vladimír. After the death of his first wife, who succumbed to tuberculosis, he married and had two more children from his second marriage. In addition to Maša, he had his son Ján (familiarly called Jantes) born in 1913.

1914 – The family moved to the house of Oľga Peniašteková's mother in Martin.

1916 – On 25 March, Maša's mother Oľga Haľamová died of tuberculosis. Just before her death, she entrusted her daughter to upbringing by Oľga Textorisová, a teacher in Stara Pazova. During her two-year stay in the Lower Land, she wrote her first preserved poem in Serbian, *Slovan drotár* (*Slav, the Tinker*). Under the supervision of O. Textorisová, she was preparing for admittance tests to the grammar school.

1918 – After the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, she returned to Martin.

1919 – After a coup, her father, Jozef Haľama, returned home from abroad. Maša studied in the lower classes of the Reform Gymnasium in Martin, where she became acquainted with Slovak and world literature. At the secondary school collection, she published a short essay from the admittance examinations, *Vtáka poznáš po perí, človeka po reči* (*You'll Know a Bird by Feathers, Man by Speech*)

1924 – She went to Bratislava, where she continued her studies at the upper classes of the grammar school. She is formed in the company of young artists, attends the Hana Gregorová Literary Salon and Albert Pražák's lectures. Due to a lack of funds, she did not complete the grammar school, but completed a one-year business course. He was treated in Nový Smokovec with poor health and suspected tuberculosis.

1925 – In the lively environment of Bratislava she wrote poems which she included in the manuscript collection dedicated to her sister Oľga at Christmas 1925: *Zo sanatória* (*From the Sanatorium*) (May), *Riadok z kancionála* (*A Line From the Hymnary*) (September), *„Bud' wúle Twá“* (*“Thy Will Be Done”*) (October), but also a poem *Z obloka* (*From the Window*) (September), which was published in the second collection. At that time she worked at the Edifying Institute in Bratislava and probably also worked in the Bratislava law firm, where the poem *Žalujem!* (*I accuse!*) was written. He attracted the attention of Štefan Krčméry, who was fascinated by her talent and published her poem *Zo sanatória* (*From the Sanatorium*) for the first time in *Slovenské pohľady* under the pseudonym of Zornička.

1926 – According to the manuscript collection *Dar* (*Gift*), kept in the Literary Archive of the Slovak National Library, the poems *Balada o klamných ružiach* (*Ballad of Deceptive Roses*) (March) and *Dar* (*Gift*) (May) are dated in Bratislava. From 1 June 1926, she worked in the admissions office of the Dr. Szontágh Sanatorium in Nový Smokovec, where she wrote other poems: *List* (*A Letter*) (manuscript, date unknown, first published in July 1926), *Agónia* (*Agony*) (July), *Balada o hre slnka a vetra* (*Ballad on the Play of the Sun and Wind*) (autumn) and *Z knihy žalmov* (*From the Book of Psalms*) (Bratislava, December).

1927 – in Nový Smokovec in the High Tatras, other poems were written: *V marci* (*In March*), *Na Horniakoch* (*Z vlaku*) (*Uplands – From the Train*) (November). In December, she compiled the *Dar* (*Gift*) handwriting collection and dedicated it to her sister Oľga at Christmas.

1928 – Twenty-year-old Maša Haľamová published her debut poetry collection *Dar (Gift)*, for which she was rewarded with a six-month scholarship stay in Paris. Before leaving, she wrote the poems *Balada o veľkom žiali (Ballad of the Deep Grief)* (Nový Smokovec, January), *Pieseň (The Song)* (Bratislava, March), *Legenda (Legend)* (date unknown), first published in March). However, the poems *Láska* and *Milému (Love and To My Beloved One)* were not included in the manuscript collection and had not published in magazines before the first collection was published. The exact date of origin is unknown.

1929 – Before leaving for France, poems were published, which are included in the second collection of *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* (we sort the poems according to the year when they were first published): *Stesk, V zaklatej hore, Balada, Májová, Cintorín pod Tatrami, Žalujem!* She left for Paris in the autumn from 3 October 1929 to 15 January 1930 (according to correspondence preserved). In the cultural environment of the city, she completed a French language course at Sorbonne. She transferred immediate impressions to the poems: *Sen (A Dream)* (Paris, March 1929), *Pére Lachaise* (Paris, October 1929).

1930 – 27 September got married to MUDr. Ján Pullman (born 27 November 1898 in Dobra Voda), a physician in the Dr. Szontágh Sanatorium in Nový Smokovec. Alongside her husband (familiarily named Hanes), she lived in the High Tatras, briefly in the distinctive Važec and then in Štrbské Pleso, for twenty-six years. The poems published that year were included in the second collection: *V ulici Saint Jacques (In Saint Jacques Street)*, but also *Červený mak (Red Poppy)*, *Za matkou (In Memory of My Mother)* and *Jar (Spring)* (Tatry, March 1930).

1931 – Mária Pullmanová (née Haľamová) moved to Villa Marína on the shores of Štrbské pleso, where her husband was assigned an outpatient (he was in charge of Važec, Štrba, Hybe, Východná, and Liptovská Teplička). In a picturesque setting, she wrote other poems, later included in the second collection: *Pohly sa ľady (Ice Moves)* (Štrbské

Pleso, *Máj (May)* 1931) and *Tulácka (Wanderer)* (Štrbské Pleso, August 1931).

1932 – The second collection of poems *Červený mak (Red Poppy)* was published. The published poem *Máj (May)* (Bratislava, May) is also dated just before, but some of the poems of the second collection have not yet been published: *Elégia, Svadobná, Záclona, Večer, Jeseň, Pohreb v horách (Elegy, Wedding, Curtain, Evening, Autumn, Funeral in the Mountains)*.

1935 – At the World Ski Championships in Štrbské Pleso (FIS) she was the youngest judge with a valid ID.

1936 – At the Congress of Slovak Writers in Trenčianske Teplice, she met many personalities of literary and cultural life, with whom she had a long-standing friendship. She and her sister Oľga took a trip to Berlin, Stockholm, and Upsala. She immediately captured the experiences in travelogues.

1944 – 45 – She actively participated in the SNU as a guerilla liaison, for which she was threatened with imprisonment.

1955 – The first edition of her collective work entitled *Básne (Poems)* was published.

1956 – On 28 September 1956, MUDr. Ján Pullman died. The widow Maša Pullmanová-Haľamová left her home in Villa Marína in November and settled in Martin for two years. She worked at the *Osveta* publishing house.

1957 – The 2nd edition of her collective work entitled *Básne (Poems)* was published.

1958 – She left her native Turiec for Bratislava, where she worked for fifteen years at the *Mladé letá* publishing house in the literature for

children and youth editorial office. During this period she published books that significantly affected the formation of the generation of readers of the second half of the 20th century: adaptation of the folk tale *Mechúrik Košťúrik s kamarátmi* (*Mechúrik Košťúrik with Friends*) (1962), fiction *Petrišorka* (1965), folder *Hodinky* (*A Watch*) (1966), a fairy tale *O Sýkorke z kokosového domčeka* (*On a Tit From a Coconut House*) (1976).

1966 – The third collection of poems, *Smrť tvoju žijem* (*Living Your Death*), was published, which created a poetic obituary for her husband. The first part of the *September* collection included poems that were written during a life together, and the second part *Bez Teba* (*Without You*) included poems that reflected a turning point in her life.

1968 – Maša Haľamová was awarded the title of Merited Artist for her contribution to Slovak literature and culture. The *Mladé letá* publishing house published a selection of thirty poems of love poetry *Komu dám svoju nehu* (*To whom I Will Give My Tenderness*) (Afterword written by Ján Turan).

1972 – The 3rd edition (supplemented) of her collective work entitled *Básne* (*Poems*) was published.

1973 – After fifteen years of editorial work at *Mladé Letá*, she retired.

1978 – On the occasion of Maša Haľamová's 70th birthday, Jarmila Masárová completed the book processing of the personal bibliography, which she personally handed over to her in her native Blatnica.²³⁵ The 6th edition of her collective work entitled *Básne* (*Poems*) was published.

1983 – Poetess Maša Haľamová was awarded the title of **National Artist** for her life's work. The 7th edition of her collective work entitled *Básne* (*Poems*) was published. On this occasion, literary critics again

235 Impressions from a personal meeting in Blatnica are captured in the article: Masárová, Jarmila: *Jahodové dlhy*. (*Strawberry Debts*.) [Source not identified]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

highlighted the uniqueness of her poetry, e.g. Emil Borčín: "... as if she had written only one poem all her life, in which there is both knowledge and authentic life and a moral creed" (Borčín, 1983: 9).

1988 – On the occasion of her 80th birthday, she published books of autobiographical memoirs *Vzácnější nad zlato* and *Vyznania* (*Rare Beyond Gold and Confessions*).

1991 – On 31 December at the age of 97, her sister Oľga Grebeníková (née Haľamová, daughter of J. Haľama from his first marriage) died, raising her youngest brother Ján (from her father's second marriage) after her mother's death and sister Maša.

1993 – A book edition of M. Haľamová's poems and drawings by Mikuláš Galanda: *Čriepky – Kresby zo škicára* (*Fragments – Drawings From A Sketchbook*) was published.

† **On 17 July 1995 in Bratislava**, the life pilgrimage of Mária Pullmanová née Haľamová ended at the age of 87. After the ceremonies in Bratislava (25 July), the urn was transferred to the National Cemetery in Martin. The act of reverence took place on 28 August 1995.

Epilogue

„Keď zvažujem, čo bolo –
a čo mi ešte zo života zbudlo,
nad miskami váh: hľbokej a plnej na strane „daľ“
a plytkej – čo ešte „má dať“
myslím si, že nič nebolo márne
a že sa môžem poďakovať životu
i za to ťažké – o ktoré je nás viac.
Bud' vôľa tvoja...“²³⁶

236 Obituary notice of Maša Pullmanová née Haľamová. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3455/03.

*("When I consider what was - / and what's left of my life, / above the scales:
deep and full one on the "gave" side / and shallow - what else to "give" / I don't
think anything was in vain / and that I may thank life / even for that difficult -
which makes it more of us. / Thy will be done...")*

1998 - Out of respect for Maša Haľamová, a memorial room of the church choir was established in the church in Blatnica.

2002 - On 5 July, a memorial plaque was unveiled at Štrbské Pleso, made by sculptor Ján Gejdoš, a native of Štrba.



Maša Haľamová during a break in a house in Bratislava.
A shot of 23 August 1988.
(Photographer: Magda Borodáčová, ČSTK Bratislava).

Personal History and Spiritual Poetry of Maša Haľamová (Synthesis)

The research into the life and work of the Slovak poetess Maša Haľamová was focused mainly on the study of hitherto unprocessed archival material and on the (re) interpretation of poetry collections. The aim was to answer several questions from the introduction, which arose from interpretive differences. The results we obtained in the multilevel research resulted in the answers.

In processing the milestones of her life, we followed a causal network of events and life breaks, from which we reconstructed the image of personal history and the socio-cultural background of poetess' oeuvre. We processed documents, correspondence, and clippings from the period press in citations and paraphrases in order to preserve the authenticity of the statements. In the networking of her curriculum vitae events, we connected the circumstances of the author's creative beginnings, the formation of the author's talent in childhood and youth, in adulthood, we focused on personalities of cultural life, who participated in the poetic formation and completed the conditions of her writing or reflected on her personality and efforts. In the turning point of her life, after the death of her husband, we briefly came to the editorial office and ended it at a time when the poetess received national awards, titles of merited artist and national artist for her life's work, and became a recognised figure on the Czechoslovak cultural and literary scene. Records of life milestones, nodes and breaks, are interspersed with poetic inspiration and supplemented by a calendar of life and oeuvre, which is included in the conclusion. M. Haľamová's self-referential manuscript notes on her own method of writing presented the basis of poetic inspiration and clarified the genesis of some poetic texts.

These then allowed us to confront and verify specific interpretative conclusions that had already been published at the time. Similarly, the script of the radio broadcast *Božie divadlo (God's Theatre)* proved that the metaempirical dimension of spirituality was an integral part of Maša Haľamová's oeuvre, and this also confirmed the adequate choice of analytical-interpretative procedures and their conclusions.

Supported by archival materials, especially clippings in the unprocessed file, we focused on deliberately constructing the views of contemporaneous literary critics and representatives of literary scholarship. We have followed the establishment of consensus and its disruption over a period of more than 70 years (1928 - 2001). The opinions of opinion-forming experts drew attention to the specifics of the authoress' poetics (especially within the framework of modern trends), but also to the high degree of melodicism and musicality of the verses. Many experts sought intertextual and inter-literary relations in Czech literature, some in the female line of Slovak authors, but also in the poetry tradition of Slovak literary modernity. Not only did it confirm her solitude (unclassifiable), but also her characteristic moral and spiritual potential with the hallmark of nobility. And it was the spirituality associated with the contemplative style of reading - confessionally rooted in the Protestant tradition - that gradually disappeared from the attention of experts under the pressure of historical changes, which significantly influenced the apperception of Haľamová's poetry in the 21st century. With such an approach to materials research, we not only fulfilled the condition of exegesis to reconstruct the context of the work, but we also pointed out its importance in verifying the interpretive conclusions. At the same time, contextualisation allowed us to follow the culturally conditioned consensus of experts and the cognitive causes of its gradual disruption on the timeline of the 20th and 21st centuries.

In the chapter entitled *The Story of Gift or In the Footsteps of a Poem*, we pointed out the issue of the boundaries of interpretation and sought answers to the questions raised in the Introduction. Based on heuristic research, we have reached a solution to the discrepancy

in the double interpretation, which is proof that at the reception level we can receive the text without limits of meaning even with a pragmatic outcome or practical use. The impression and degree of (self) identification with the lyrical subject is decisive, i. e. introjection. A skilled" empirical reader will suffice to obtain aesthetic information from the poem. At the level of perception, when an educated reader enters the aesthetic structure and reveals its expressive qualities, it is important what perceptual codes he will use. At this level, a prerequisite for "successful" or meaningful literary communication is the degree of agreement between the aesthetic code of the reader and the author. However, a specific situation is in apperception, i.e. research analysis and interpretation of a text that examines the parameters of artistic quality. For apperception, it is necessary to use the methodological tools of the analysis and subsequently verify its results, e.g. method of literary historical research. In this case, we have confirmed that the interpretation of an artistic text closely linked to exegesis is productive at the research level.

Since the spiritual dimension of reality was confirmed several times in the evaluation of Hařamová's poetry, we applied our own methodological concept, which allowed us to follow a differentiated form of spirituality and penetrate into the evolutionary-creative process of spiritualisation, i. e. the gradual maturation of the lyrical subject at the level of "*homo religiosus*" and "*homo spiritus*." The parabolic model of life, which gradually emerged from the structure of the poetic text in the images of nature and synchronised psychological processes with spiritual significance, also corresponded to the dynamic understanding of Christianity within the framework of panenteism. Lyrical parable and allusive play of words – signs and their spiritual meanings based on the principle of diaphania²³⁷ took part in shaping the initiation path of the lyrical subject and in deepening the spirituality (both

237 The text of a literary work of art that has the ambition to achieve a higher degree of integrity determines the shaping of the metaempirical dimension of literary reality. The dynamic tool of its creation is the gradual spiritualeme and the principle of the parable.

theocentrically and Christocentrically anchored), which gradually progressed in the area of the three collections. The semantic power of the inner word (*verbum interius*) and also the word of heart (*verbum cordis*) as a semiotic unit – spirituals influenced the mode of thought and spiritual knowledge (also at the level of genre or form, e.g. in song, confession of love, love prayer, psalm, etc.). The most significant change in the process of spiritualisation was brought about by the third collection, in which the spiritual arc of love developed on the transcendent axis of the filia – eros – storgé – agapé was emblematically closed. Behind the poetic symbol of the stone pine flower and the red poppy hid a spiritual message – the myth of love that ennobles the human heart. In the third poetic emblem, behind the subtle beauty of the flowering moss, the sacral mystery of its sacred Source appears.

Perhaps it will be fitting to conclude the initiation path of the lyrical subject constructively, in the opinion of L. Tošenovský from the article „*Nie je z tohoto sveta*“ (“*She is not of this world*”), which will consensually conclude the achieved interpretative result and its meaning: “*Her soul is a ray; at a certain angle of its impact and at a certain angle of the eye, some of the slides on the ground shine with the royal glitter of insignia.*”²³⁸

The sound construction of Maša Hařamová's interpreted poems is neither schematic nor monotonous; on the contrary, it has a tendency to variability. From equality through the binding of verses built on sound-prominent syllables of words and rhymes, the authoress proceeds to release them, while maintaining spontaneously flowing, multi-layered semantic lines saturated with musicality and melodicy. Also, the analysis of the verse structure of selected poems revealed the synergy of meaning and rhythmic-melodic expression in lyrical forms of the song using not just folklore inspirations of folk song and ballad, but

238 In the archival manuscript by Ludvík Tošenovský, there is a literary-critical reflection on the poetic work of M. Hařamová, which, in accordance with its evaluative content, has an apt title. Tošenovský, Ludvík: Inc. *Není z tohoto světa...* (*She Is Not From This World*) [manuscript]. LA SNL, Maša Hařamová file, add No. 3476/04.

also the religious tradition of the psalm and its special procedures that contribute to the aesthetic rendering of spiritual message.

Although the initial reading of Haľamová's poetry may have an effect of having been written by a naive artist on some readers, its in-depth analysis at the level of phonic rendering has revealed and at the same time confirmed its sound-rhythmic potential. The identified rhythmic elements are functionally used in the services of meaning. They underline and intensify spirituality in symbiosis with the semantic message of the subtle (sometimes touching), impressive (even feminine-noble), poems penetrated by philosophical depth and life experience and multiply their aesthetic effect.

To confirm the above versological conclusions, we may select the statement of the Slovak music composer Ivan Hrušovský from the archival materials. In 1961, he sent M. Haľamová a set of poems set to music, to which he wrote in a personally arranged cover letter:

*"I beg your pardon for my having dared to choose your verses for music, but there is something in them that constantly attracts me, that strengthens me in my great love for the Tatras and that refreshes my memories of youth. I can't judge how I managed to set your poems to music – maybe I destroyed their unique atmosphere somewhere. Above all, I tried to preserve and musically enhance the character, rhythm, and gradient of the verses. Their melodic beauty is so great in itself that it didn't take me much effort to express it with a musical melody. Originally, I wanted to set almost the entire cycle to music, but later I decided to leave others, some even more impressive poems, for a later compositional cycle."*²³⁹

Finally, we can evaluate our own result on the contribution of the poetic message of Maša Haľamová and her contribution to literary history: in the collections *Dar – Āervený mak – Smrť tvoju ťijem*, spiritual

239 Letters by I. Hrušovský to M. Haľamová [dated 10 January 1961 in Bratislava]. LA SNL, Maša Haľamová file, add No. 3476/04. According to the personal bibliography, it should be *Āervený mak*, a cycle of five lyrical songs based on the texts of M. Haľamová's collection of the same name for soprano and piano. (1960): *Jar, Stesk, Tulácka, Elégia a V zakliatej hore*. (*Spring, Nostalgia, Wanderer, Elegy, and In the Cursed Mountain*.) (Masárová, 1978: 44).



Summer residence of Maša Haľamová in Blatnica.
A shot of 1976. In the figure, house interior.
(Photographer: Jozef Mičieta, MS Martin)

poetry is developed,²⁴⁰ which interferes with Slovak interwar poetry in its Protestant line and follows a special type of confessional tradition.²⁴¹

Резюме

Монография **Маша Галямова в триаде «Дар» - «Красный мак» - «Смерть твою живу»** авторской пары Ивицы Гайдучековой и Иветы Боновой приносит в словацкую библиографию и литературную науку результаты многолетнего исследования, направленного на жизнь и творчество словацкой поэтессы Маши Галямовой, относящейся к межвоенному периоду (1918 - 1948).

В первой главе представлены методологические исходные пункты, которые выходят из синоптико-пульсационной теории (П. Зайац), из эвристических, конструктивистских, манускриптологических и герменевтических подходов. Глава *«Куррикулум вите или в сети жизненных событий»*, создана на основе изучения материала (до сих пор) неразработанного фонда Маши Галямовой в словацкой национальной библиотеке в Мартине, представляет собой реконструкцию её личной истории. В процессе контекстуализации внимание сосредотачивается на ключевые события, личную корреспонденцию поэтессы, её контакты и отношения с выдающимися личностями общественной жизни. Таким образом изучение аутентичных заметок поэтессы даёт нам возможность прямо познакомиться с её личными трагедиями, конфессионально и национально ориентированным образованием, с первыми её стихотворными попытками, с влиянием татранской природы, с любовью всей её жизни и её потерей, с её деятельностью в редакциях издательств, а также с её всеобщественным признанием.

Маша Галямова - единичное женское явление словацкой литературной сцены была в центре внимания литературной критики в XX-XXI вв., и поэтому относительно обширная реконструкция мнений, на протяжении 1928 - 2001 гг. (включая период до 2017 г.), выделяется в самостоятельной главе *«Консенсус и его нарушение в откликах литературной критики»*. В ней можно наблюдать устойчи-

240 M. Bátorová (1991) pointed out the need to follow a group of Catholic poets in Slovak interwar literature in the broader context of spiritual poetry.

241 We could follow the literary-historical classification of M. Haľamová in the continuity of P. O. Hviezdoslav's lyricism and I. Krasko's modernism, in the generational continuation of M. Rázus, E. Boleslav Lukáč, and L. Novomeský, but also in the work of some female authors, e.g. L. Groeblová, Z. Jesenská, S. Manicová, V. Szatmáry-Vlčková, and V. Markovičová-Zátarecká, as follows from the anthology by A. Bokníková, who pointed out the confessional connections in the writings of selected authors (Bokníková, 2017). However, the spiritual poetry of M. Haľamová's third collection is perhaps most closely integrated into the trinity with M. Rúfus and P. Strauss, i.e. among the "poets of the sacrum". The fact is that P. Štrauss openly subscribed to the legacy of Teilhard de Chardin (Žilková - Žilka, 2001: 129 - 144), i. e. to dynamic anthropology. A documentary about the mutual friendship of M. Haľamová, M. Rúfus and P. Strauss is provided by a video recording *U Straussovcov o poézii* (1998, in: Kollárová - Kollár, 2008).

чивые рецептивные границы, представленные прежде всего в современной печати, а также их постепенное нарушение, которое вытекало из литературно-исторических изменений после 1948 и 1989.

Семиотическую проблему границ интерпретации и сверхинтерпретации в главе «По следам одного стихотворения... (Интерпретация и экзегеза)» разрешило эвристическое исследование архивного материала. Оно подтвердило, что при проверке интерпретационных заключений на уровне апперцепции особенно продуктивными являются литературно-исторические методы.

В главе «Духовность в (ре)интерпретации трёх сборников стихотворений», ориентирующейся на аналитико-интерпретационные проникновения, ключевое положение получила методика иерархизованной духовности и конфессиональная (протестантская) традиция герменевтического чтения. Приведённые приёмы позволили открывать структуру значения с виду простых стихотворений и диафаническое изображение трансценденции, то есть метаэмпирической дименсии действительности, в интенсиях панентеизма. Избранный подход в диапазоне трёх сборников стихотворений «Дар», «Красный мак», «Смерть твою живу» показал развитый процесс спиритуализации, в котором лирический субъект постепенно приходит к теологальной модели жизни. Одновременно он открывается креационно-эволюционному бытию на уровнях «Homo religiosus» (человек религиозный) и «Homo spiritus» (человек духовный), которые выделяются особым модусом религиозного мышления и духовного познания. В лирической параболе, постепенно создаваемой в отдельных частях триады, святая любовь – градуальная спиритуалема фундаментальным принципом христоцентрически закреплённой жизни. Она проникает в лирический субъект на духовном пути вплоть до мистического познания «внутреннего слова» (*verbum interius*) и «слова сердца» (*verbum cordis*), которым возбуждает субтильное впечатление из харизматической спиритуальной поэзии.

Комплексный взгляд на лирическое творчество Маши Галямовой завершает глава под названием «Фонико-ритмические элементы структуры стиха». В ней даётся оценка обнаружений, вытекающих из горизонтального и вертикального анализа стихов, которые подтверждают, что чувство естественного ритма, красочность тонов, а также присоединение к народным песням были для Маши Галямовой естественной навигацией по пути формирования выражения. Было обнаружено, что в построении стихотворений участвует в дифференцированной мере несколько средств акустической инструментации, с помощью которых автор подчёркивает семантическое послание в зависимости от сложности мотивических основ и глубины духовного испытания лирического субъекта. Погружение в построение стихотворений опровергло единичные утверждения современных критиков о схематичности и монотонности её стихов. На уровне фонического изображения, наоборот, оно открыло и подтвердило их богатый звуково-ритмический потенциал.

Фактографичность публикации под конец завершает «Календарium жизни и творчества Маши Галямовой», в котором на ленте времени наглядно нанесены все важные вехи в жизни поэтессы. Заключительную точку образует изложение результатов многоуровневого исследования под названием «Личная история и спиритуальная поэзия Маши Галямовой».

Представленная монография как результат направленного, методически ориентированного и впервые систематически осуществлённого исследования жизни и творчества Маши Галямовой является убедительным доказательством вклада её поэтического послания в словацкую литературу межвоенного периода. Спиритуальная поэзия её трёх сборников является несомненно значительным вкладом в развитие словацкой литературы.

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Мгр. Янка Мелюхова

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**PAVOL JOZEF ŠAFÁRIK UNIVERSITY IN KOŠICIE
FACULTY OF ARTS**

Department of Slovak Studies, Slavonic Philologies, and Communication

MAŠA HAĽAMOVÁ in the *Dar – Červený mak – Smrť tvoju žijem Triad*

Authors: Assoc. prof. PaedDr. Ivica Hajdučeková, PhD.

PhDr. Iveta Bónová, PhD.

Publisher: Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice

Publishing ŠafárikPress

Year of publication: 2021

Print run: 100 pcs

Number of pages: 194

Number of author's sheets: 10.42

First Edition

Printed by: EQUILIBRIA, s. r. o.

Graphic design and make-up: Monika Hrušková

Special-purpose publication – not for sale.

ISBN 978-80-574-0049-3 (e-version)

ISBN 978-80-574-0061-5 (printed version)

