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THEOLOGY OF LITERATURE BY ŠATRIJOS RAGANA

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of the research. Šatrijos Ragana is viewed by early 20th century Lithuanian writers as one of the most religious and as one of the most known creators of Christian pedagogy in the history of Lithuanian pedagogy. Her Christian spirituality is noted by pedagogical history researchers: love for one's fellow man and country, will, self-restraint, diligence, justice, orderliness, children's obedience of their parents, and the fostering of motherhood and womanhood. It is said that religion is the source of virtuous upbringing, and the purpose of upbringing is the search for eternal happiness, but the impact of Christianity on virtuous upbringing has not been discussed.

Researchers of Šatrijos Ragana prose often describe the writer's depiction of transcendence using neo-romantic symbolism. Christian spirituality is often transfigured with a vague longing for eternity and the yearning for a romantic death. Fragmentism is highlighted as a principle of Šatrijos Ragana creativity, attesting the fullness of being. The writer's most significant creative characteristics can be described as an indistinctly idealistic world-view, a romantic sense of the world, and the longing for excellence. Christianity is blended into her artistic works, which are admonished for being rhetorical and didactical.

In the research of Šatrijos Ragana works, the analysis of her educational activities and assessment of her prose are generally done independently of one another, in that pedagogy and the educative process are left unrelated to the discussion of religiousness and transcendence in fictional literature. From a literary theology aspect, there has been no systematic assessment of the sense for religion and the Christian experience, imagination, self-awareness, Christianity's link with the national, moral, social and cultural aspects in Šatrijos Ragana work, nor have the dynamics of Christian ideas and education in her works been described.

Earlier research on the topic. Even though Šatrijos Ragana has attracted the attention of researchers like few other Lithuanian writers, the literary theology of her works have still not

been comprehensively or systematically researched. In the first half of the 20th century, researchers would emphasize the educational nature of her works, underlining their morality and religiousness. Vaižgantas, P. Orintaite, J. Tarvydas and V. Biciunas noted the link between the literature of Šatrijos Ragana and education evident from the situations depicted and the birth of the Christian spirit in her human characters. V. Mykolaitis-Putinas emphasized the importance of a world-view and education in creating an image. K. Cibiras called her works the art of living, capable of reforming the everyday. J. Brazaitis, J. Grušas and K. Gulbinas particularly noted the writer's educative ideas that fostered Christian spirituality. The elevation of patriotism, morality and love preconditioned examining the writer's works from a literary theology approach.

Literary researchers from the second half of the 20th century (B. Ciplijauskaite and J. Grinius) considered Šatrijos Ragana not just the most known Lithuanian romantic writer, but also as the forerunner of existentialism in Lithuanian literature. P. Cesnulevičiute and J. Žekaitė exalted the dignified individual, the veiled romantic, geared towards noble ideals in her works. V. Kubilius and J. Sprindytė noticed the ethics of nobly dedicating oneself to others and one's sense of duty to society. Contemporary literaturologists (D. Ciocyte and B. Speicyte) base the religiousness of the writer's works on theological motivation, identifying correlations with the Bible. V. Daujotyte states that the writer depicts life as a phenomenological text, full of the sense of transcendence.

Object of research. Applying contemporary literary theology research methods, all of Šatrijos Ragana pedagogical, fiction, aesthetic and spiritual texts, essays and letters were analyzed. German pedagogue F. W. Foerster's influence on the formation of the writer's literary theological conception is discussed separately. The inter-twinning of religiousness, pedagogy and aestheticism in Šatrijos Ragana texts is analyzed. The dissertation also examines Šatrijos Ragana literary theology in axiological and eschatological terms.

The following links between theology and literature are researched:

- a) The education of a Christian and formation of their world-view: the inter-twinning of spiritual literature and religious education; reflection of axiological belief in the context of the aesthetic dynamics of literature.
- b) Christian ideas and themes and the moral behaviour they determine: their interrelation, the author's attitude towards them, the Christian basis for moral motives and ideals, the Christian perfection of an individual and formation of a community.
- c) The functions of theopoetic and narrative theology expression. Also discussed are Christian values in a work's semantic structure, and the links between religious and aesthetic experiences; also, literature's artistic impact on religious education texts, and the artistic expression of the main theological paradigms.
- d) The eschatological particularities of one's soul, death, love, hope, happiness, and personal transformation.

Relevance and novelty of the research topic. The theology of literature by Šatrijos Ragana is the first comprehensive monographic work on this topic in Lithuania. The dissertation presents the outline of the development of literary theology, and describes the specifics of this inter-disciplinary field and the main methods involved.

Šatrijos Ragana's teaching of Christian morals is discussed for the first time, as well as Christian development in literature, the close ties between the writer's biography, aesthetics and creativity, and the artistic expression of Christian ideas and the theopoeticism of the texts is revealed. The eschatology of Šatrijos Ragana literature is assessed for the first time, as well as the details concerning the depiction of the finality of the great beyond. The significance of

Christian values in literature, and generally, cultural aesthetic renewal, universality, and the spirituality of literature are assessed from a literary theology approach.

Research methods. Contemporary literary theology methodology is applied in the dissertation. The theological aesthetic method is based on aesthetic and religious experience, as well as the inter-twinning of life experiences (R. Guardini, H. U. Balthasar, P. Tillich, A. Grözinger, A. Rombold). Religious experience grows from a certain bipolar paradoxical life structure, determined by transcendental opposites: life is dynamic and static, formless and with form, it is characterized by differentiation and integration, primevalness and orderliness. This phenomenological insight method and learning about antonymns empowers various writers' interpretation of Christian existential problems.

The Correlation method (P. Tillich, E. Schillebeeck, K.-J. Kuschel) capacitates the resolution of Christian and cultural contradictions: the truth concerning revelation and its interpretations. The presentation of man's situational analysis, from which existential questions arise, shows that symbols of the Good News of Christianity are in fact answers to these questions.

The Theopoetic method (D. Sölle, K.-J. Kuschel, D. Mieth) presents the Christian dialogue about God style of teaching, combining devotion to the Christian news and the revelation of reality in literature.

The Structural analogy method facilitates the search for equivalents of non-Christian reality with Christian realia. Relations between theology and literature are turned into tension, dialogue and a battle for the truth. To think according to a structural analogy is to base ones thoughts on inter-relations and contradictions.

In applying the Realization method (D. Sölle, A. Schöne), a basis is found for the function of religious language in literature: a wordly realization is given to that which is a given or promised in religious language.

The methods mentioned above have been chosen for being the most characteristic methods for revealing the theology of the literature by Šatrijos Ragana.

Purpose and objectives:

- To reveal the particularities of literary theology as a new inter-disciplinary theory, and its main research principles.
- To analyze Šatrijos Ragana pedagogical, aesthetic, religious, fictional, and epistolary texts based on the components of literary theology, the axiology of literature and the eschatology of literature.
- To reveal the aesthetic suggestiveness of the realization of Christian morality and to outline the impact of the Christian ethos on artistic texts.
- To describe criticism by Šatrijos Ragana on narrow Christianity and religious renewal based on the ethics of theological conviction.
- To analyze the aesthetic influence of theologems (love and the hope for death).

Hypotheses being defended:

- 1) Literary theology integrates theological reflection and the artistic image.
- 2) Friedrich Wilhelm Förster's religious pedagogy had an essential influence on the theopoetics of Šatrijos Ragana works.
- 3) The literary theology of Šatrijos Ragana Šatrija raises the themes of the Christian art of living, the theological moral narrative, and love as a factor of the process of perfection.
- 4) The visualization of the main theological values in works by Šatrijos Ragana integrate reality and eternity, and open the way to a complete Christian way of life.

THE FORMATION AND SPREAD OF LITERARY THEOLOGY

The first part of the dissertation titled „The formation and spread of literary theology“ analyzes the development of traditional Christian literature and introduces the problems of contemporary literary theology as a new theory, with a description of the particularities of literary theology.

The first section, The paradigm of Christian literature reveals the anthropology and cosmology of traditional Christian literature as being dualistically divided: the drama of salvation takes place between two poles: strength and helplessness, sin and grace, condemnation and salvation. Traditional Christian literature is typified by the demonization of evil, and didactic or moralizing imagery. Life is divided into two worlds, two kingdoms. The world in this literature is a battle field shared between the Devil and God. The sins of the individual are vanquished in the face of repentance and mercy. Traditional Christian literature did not change reality, but rather, it tried to reveal the „eternal order“. Among its features was a certain approach that came from the work's content that conformed to Christian principles and teaching. The criterion of this type of literature is Christianity, as much as it is alive in the author's consciousness, and how it is expressed in a work of literature, and in the creator's aesthetic view (G. Kranz). The most important parameter here is the creator's own Christianity, especially their spirituality. The deciding aspect becomes not Christian material, a Christian theme, plot, or motifs, but the spirit, the attitude and the world-view that are expressed in the work.

However, traditional Christian literature is criticized (K.-J. Kuschel) for simplifying the concepts of sin and mercy: for the fear of sin; this is so because an action is aligned according to a Jansenist scheme: one is either chosen or rejected, saved or condemned. A unique paradox arises in Christian literature, the main role is taken not by the character of Jesus, but by the dualism of sin and trial, salvation and condemnation. This type of literature becomes disputable not for the reason that it is not contemporary, but that Christianity is insufficiently expressed. That is why it is suggested that discussions take place about the religious or Christian elements of literature, rather than about Christian literature as such. The concept of Christian literature is expanded: a work is considered to be Christian when it is about the search for the meaning of life, when there is a clear longing for eternity and salvation. This concept encompasses the psychological and metaphysical emptiness of man and God (not the godless!), as well as negative anthropology and theology: man genuinely searches for God when he understands and experiences life as a contemporary drama of existence, when the deepening of religious consciousness is related to moral advancement.

In the second section Assessment of the contemporary theories of dialogue between theology and literature describes literary theology as an explanation of the relationship between literature and theology, an interpretive inter-disciplinary theory formed in the second half of the 20th century. Literary theology as a theory arose from the questioning of the concept of Christian literature in Western countries (primarily France, Germany, Austria, Poland, and Switzerland). The concepts of sin, mercy and salvation became empty formulae through which it was difficult to convey the world-view, ideological, and value rich content of Christianity. When describing literary theology, the relations between Christian consciousness, a Christian world-view and explanation for life, the intentions of the subject, and the literary quality of the text are highlighted. This inter-relation determines literary theology as speaking about God through literature, or as the art of theological speaking (J. Krzywon, R. Crimman). In order to outline literary theology, the aesthetic existence

dimension, typical of Orthodoxy, is important. The main paradigms identified are: -sophy (theosophy), theurgy, and the religious performance of words. The relevance of Dostoyevsky's works is highlighted: his works are described using constants of the consciousness of Orthodoxy: passion and holiness, where passion is poetic religiousness, or „the power to be transformed“. The writer exalted these ideas to the religious level, transporting them into the sphere of religious experience. The ideas in Dostoyevsky's works are related to the dramatic depiction of Christ: love must go through suffering and death. The principle of relation between Christ and beauty is brought into the sphere of morality. Such beauty is delivered from ambivalence and organically binds with goodness and truthfulness.

The particularities of literary theology is based on several links between theology and literature. In literary theology, the functions of social influence and public criticism present in literature and theology are inter-twinned. Theology gives a diagnosis of the missing, or outlived, or old-fashioned forms of language, exposing the forms of man's slavery, and revealing humanity's deficits. Literature develops opposite ethical models, shows up the alternatives, offers sketches of different utopias, and tests theology with measures of the grotesque, parodies, and paradoxes. Literary theology analyzes how literature depicts Christian themes and motifs that determine one's moral education according to the teachings of the Bible, showing the effects of human actions and pointing out the orientation guidelines that one who is seeking purpose in life should follow. The axiology of literature aspect of literary theology discusses the moral position and behaviour of the narrator, the actors, and the heroes, as well as their decision to seek out the Christian ideal, the implementation or loss of Christian ideas, and the course of training or losing one's will in literature. The eschatology of literature aspect of literary theology discusses, from a Christian viewpoint, the paradigms of love, hope, happiness, the Kingdom of Heaven, salvation, and personal transformation in literature, overcoming death, the soul's rush to eternity, and the existential drama of good and evil. The education of man prepares him for the eternal life, but stepping between the boundaries of this side and the other side is rarely explained in discourse, and being based on an artistic depiction, it is transformed into the godly morals (faith, hope and love). Enthusiasm for faith and the power of love becomes a principle of artistic idealization, not only broadening death

as a topic of experience in literature, but also bringing meaning to existence in the afterlife as an experience of perfect beauty, where good and evil are in harmony. Religious language, theopoetics, emphasizes the kerygmatic and stylistic functions of words. Theologically speaking, the word of God is not expressed directly as words formed by man, but in man's speaking about God. Religious language reflects the limits of man's experiences, engaging him and directing the content of one's speaking towards transcendence into the Kingdom of God. Contemporary theology accepts that the best way for transmitting Christian faith is through words. That which takes place in the act of believing is also an experience of heeding the call of salvation, and can be put into words.

From a theological aspect, in the retelling there is a search for proof that comes about through the witness's being and appeals to the listener's existence. In this way, speaking about faith becomes the retelling of confession. The speaker confesses that which he talks about. The language of faith is turned towards transcendence, which cannot be covered by language itself. Thus transcendental language is expressed as an unavoidable paradoxical speaking and through existential paradoxes. Talking about confession and the eschatological promise that comes along with it leads towards an effective spoken dialogue. This primarily elevates the level of the aesthetic-communicative word, along with its moral-ontological content, which transmits religious meaning. Aesthetic theology is formed, presenting literature, film and electronic media examples as functional motifs and proof of the experience that artists recreate, or dramatize reality; an authentic force requiring salvation. In this way, dogmatic

formulae and religious experience is broadened, and contemporary philosophical thought and images from literature and art are drawn into the Christian mystery.

THE AXIOLOGY OF LITERATURE BY ŠATRIJOS RAGANA

The second part discusses the axiology of literature; literature's value and transcendental backbones. The education of Christian morals and depiction of perfection is emphasized, revealing the theopoetics of the art of living, and showing deviations from Christianhood.

The first section titled "The influence of Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster's religious pedagogy" analyzes German pedagogue F. W. Förster's influence on the formation of Šatrijos Ragana literary theology. According to the platonic concept taken from Förster, the writer depicts man as made from matter and a soul. These two constituent parts have been in competition during the entire history of mankind, and it is art that best expresses this battle. The most famous works of art reflect the ruptures in man's innermost battle. Art in particular helps the soul to free itself from matter. The leader in this battle is religion, but it is assisted by art. By means of art, the religious content being expressed is made easier to understand and becomes more effective, while art works enriched with the religious spirit are finer and more masterful. The writer also adopted the inductive method of pedagogy from the German pedagogue - that is, the depiction of practical life situations through examples, metaphor and symbols. The true impact of Förster's moral education does not come through its annunciation, but rather, via its personalization through life experience. Teaching faith occurs via moralization: using everyday life examples. Teachings about God and their expression are linked to nature and feasts: beginning with that which is seen, to that which is invisible. The basis of teaching morality is awakening and fostering the imagination, as well as those habits that provide a foundation for the order of life morals. Artistically expressed actions of will and experienced moral feelings beautify man's nature and help him to better realize religious moral ideals. Works by Šatrijos Ragana were particularly influenced by Förster's thoughts on Christian perfection based on those values transmitted in works, his thoughts on artistic effect as a necessary element of religious and moral pedagogy, and that the positive emotions aroused through art strengthen moral feelings and encourage moral reflexes. Even though the writer almost never mentioned Christ or the saints in her prose, she emphasized the meaning of the Good News, and the axiological approach to the mystery of Christ. The pedagogical narrative she invoked from the German pedagogue is understood as the training of one's will and the formation of good habits, based on ethical and religious arguments.

The second section titled "The theological national consciousness narrative" underlines faith as one of the inherent attributes of nationalism. Love for one's nation is sacralized, and tuned towards a religious obligation. Šatrijos Ragana presents one of the broadest scales of Polonized manorfolk attitudes and her struggles against the argumentation of the Lithuanian national revival movement in literature from the early 20th century. She shows heroic images where patriotism is fused with religiousness, and the Church is understood as nationally Polish. For the comprehensiveness of the imagery of Polonized manor life, and the scope of religious pedagogical argumentation, Šatrijos Ragana surpasses Maironis and V. Pietaris. The writer makes a religious assessment of Lithuanian education: parents who fail to teach their children how to read and write in Lithuanian are sinners not just in terms of nationhood, but in the face of God. Šatrijos Ragana includes the teaching of patriotism into a complete education process. Patriotism is not simply added as a scheme, or a dry idea, but something that grows through consideration and reflection. Love for one's nation and fatherland is justified as an obligatory sensation when it is combined with moral life goals. Christian ethics raises two

conditions for patriotism: that it must be based on moral goals and that it is formed as a conscious moral. Denationalizing education is grounded by the authority of the Bible, and neglecting one's nation is denounced as the biblical betrayal of Judas. Šatrijos Ragana directs the teaching of patriotism towards cultural works: national heroes that battle not with the sword, but through words. Words are transformed into a weapon of denationalization and nationhood creation. The link between a Christian world-view and nationhood was applied by Šatrijos Ragana to delineate between what it was to be Lithuanian and what it was to be Polish, as well as to foster national consciousness. By presenting patriotic consciousness, Šatrijos Ragana emphasizes the theological nature of national education and consciousness. Faith is elevated as an inheritable feature of national character. In educational patriotic reflection, the accent is on educational religious activities. Heroic examples of love for one's fatherland, grounded on paradigms of sacrifice and dedication, are given transcendental motivation. Šatrijos Ragana patriotic stories display the application of general behavioural norms in the formation of a Christian identity. A Christian imprint within one's national culture facilitates national consciousness and can change the actor's way of thinking or lead to one's denationalization.

The third section titled "Transcendental expressions of one's" presents how in the early 20th century Christian ethics not only lifted the requirements of moral knowledge, so that at least an intuitive understanding and knowing about the value of morality would be achieved, but also initiated raising awareness of the significance of the effective realization of moral values. This revival in moral theology was encouraged by a creative allegiance to the truth, helping overcome the divide between dogmatism and morals. The source of Christian teaching appeared not to be the reality of norms and principles, but the reality of God's revelation in Christ. More emphasis was placed on this reality being experienced via symbols that awakened the imagination and one's creativity. Man's response to God was determined essentially by symbols that fired up the imagination. The element that combined all virtues was the moral virtue of knowledge. Its task was to encourage one to correctly distinguish which virtues needed to be applied in a certain situation. An abstract moral knowledge does not raise personal enthusiasm and does not teach one to be virtuous. For this teaching to occur, one must feel the beauty and goodness of moral values. An important means of teaching virtuousness was to actually experience its beauty and attractiveness: either through the life experience of another person, or through ideals in art and culture. Šatrijos Ragana considered man's moralization to be the crown of education, understood not just as the implementation of virtues set out according to traditional Christian ethics, but also the harmonization of the main powers of the soul (mind, will, senses) in forming one's character according to the chosen highest ideal. Šatrijos Ragana moral foundation is religious faith. Faith: like a strong and enduring house, that once it is instilled will facilitate the development of a similarly strong and enduring morality. The most important aim of education is to educate one's character, expressed primarily in training one's will. Will is especially important in graduating from determination to actual behaviour, and is the essential force of implementation of a chosen ideal. In the opinion of the writer, not only the direction of will was of great importance, but also its constant stability, and the creative formation of character. Just like the artist who works on a sculpture, so too must a person constantly sculpt their own character. By creatively giving shape to one's self with each decision, man directs his will towards specific works, transforming inherent inclinations into habits.

In the writer's prose, positive virtues such as willpower, strength of character, diligence, dutifulness, altruism and aptitude are expressed in images and through the revelation of the story-teller's (the author's) moral position. However, the deliberation of moral motifs and opportunities shows that the heroes portrayed are not „closed“ characters, they are typified by the capacity to overstep worldly morals. In her work, from the very first decision there is

transition to the final goal, determining the artfulness of the visualized moral subjects. Šatrijos Ragana educational fiction stands out for the suggestiveness of its realization of morality and its artistic expression of the pedagogy of ideals. The writer depicts the adolescent acquaintance with morality and maturity, the power of one soul in seeking to influence others. The moral scheme becomes an emotionally suggestible and artistically convincing image of moral education. The morality of man's actions first of all depends on the conscious will's selection of the correct object, i.e., the extent to which one's actions are directed towards the true transcendental good. The writer portrays the process of moralization as moral creativity. The motif of moralization is the empowerment of man's ideal in his nature, its embodiment in man's reality, and the latter's dynamism according to that ideal.

The fourth section titled "Theopoetics of the art of living, through the paradigm of the art of living", encompasses both the writer's own life and the aesthetics of her works, and also the art of living as a type of lifestyle. Šatrijos Ragana goal was that her students would not only gain an awareness of self-education motives, but that they would be constantly emotionally aroused and experienced. The depth of feelings and their intensity created the conditions for combining moral and aesthetic feelings and for character formation in Šatrijos Ragana works. The writer's art of living is educative and nurturing. To become educated is to foster one's will and form one's character, to make conscious actions of behaviour unconsciously. Positive habits elevate and improve behaviour, and in this way enliven morals in the individual. The writer holds moral training as the crown of all types of education. Firstly, she inculcates the classical virtues: obedience, truthfulness, diligence, and love for one's fellow man. The writer writes about every virtue in detail, paying attention first of all to its practical application, so that in real life it could be understood by every Lithuanian village mother, even the uneducated. Fate, as an external life frustrater, is surpassed by the writer's and her works' characters own internal belief: agreement with God's will. This means that life is released into the hands of the most conscious being, the hands of God, and not blind fate. It is important to acknowledge the purposefulness of God's actions and in this way gain transcendental and ontological trust in the path of life He delivers. That is why, differently to works of Žemaite and Lazdynu Peleda, where images of misfortune dominate, in Šatrijos Ragana works we do not encounter misfortune as an existential loss, but a lack of fortune, or the fragility of fortune. She considered the earthly world to be on the path towards the Christian ideal and had a specific methodology for achieving this ideal. The writer understood the art of living as leading a moral life and as a constant process of improvement. She would often underline the main aim of education - the teaching of Christian morality: training the body and soul, where the latter is prepared for eternity and salvation. One of the most important features of the writer's art of living is knowing how to educate, i.e., knowing the ways towards an eternal life and being able to apply soul training measures.

In the fifth section titled "Crisis of Christianity Šatrijos Ragana" mocks and criticizes various digressions from faith, especially where religiousness does not match the content of faith and is more of an external practice of faith. The writer's anticlerical attitude attests to the visualization of pharisaic, hypocritical piety and Christian alienation. Šatrijos Ragana is known for her uncompromising attitude towards piousness, and superficial devoutness. She strictly dismisses any externally confirmed religious principles, or the transformation of faith into an official ceremony, and the denial of the world's Christian transfiguration. She does not accept external forms of religiousness. Šatrijos Ragana sees the crisis of Christianity as sinking into the sphere of unconscious, formal, artificial piety, which is typical of naïve types of religiousness. She criticizes the mistakes of naïve religiousness: the transformation of faith into a lifeless convention, the mechanic confession of faith according to old-fashioned norms and settled customs, belief in superstitions and examples of religious life. These are typical of

village religiousness where materiality, conformation and elements of ceremony prevail. The writer's evaluated expressions of the crisis of Christianity harm one's life, disfigure public relations, and block the way for the expression of religious experiences.

When criticizing the superstitious, naïve, backward form of Christianity, the author is always tolerant of unconventional attitudes and is respectful of others' world-view. She contrasts wishy-washy gullibility with the ethics of conviction, based on the knowledge and understanding of motives for having faith and on striving for religious consciousness. The critique of Christianity presented by Šatrijos Ragana is closer to the analysis of Christian life proposed by Vaigantas or S. Ciurlioniene, rather than Herbaciauskas' radical, paradoxical destruction of degenerated forms of religiousness. Šatrijos Ragana defines the orientation guidelines for Christian revival that are later extrapolated by S. Šalkauskis, A. Maceina, S. Yla and A. Paškus.

ESCHATOLOGY OF LITERATURE BY ŠATRIJOS RAGANA

In the third part there is an analysis of the paradigms of the eschatology of literature: the eschatological particularities of the soul, death, love, hope, fortune and personal transformation. The eschatological and theological narrative is described, moral motives and ideals are given a Christian foundation.

The first section titled "Love - the heart of Christian development" uses the concept of love to encompass public attitudes and its moral position. An unavoidable stage of spreading love is the performance of cultural actions: teaching the simple-folk, teaching reading and writing, creating patriotic works of fictional literature, revealing the lessons of history in order to provide a moral education. Also, to apply cultural actions to spread and increase the level of moral goodness in one's environment and community. The writer stands by love as a value-based decision and a value-based existential response to the questions of existence. Šatrijos Ragana, along with Vaigantas and Maironis, and to some extent Vydunas, represents the idealized, moralizing, Christian aspect of love in Lithuanian literature, or love as a lifeawakening force. From the main scales of love (eros, philia, agape - caritas), she pays most attention to agape - caritas.

First of all the writer casts aside the tradition of love as fortune, as it is dramatically created in works by Žemaite and Lazdynu Peleda. Šatrijos Ragana usually depicts how a demanding love is transformed into a giving type of love. The purpose of a giving love is to forget the act of giving, for it to become unnecessary, so that the receiver can learn to receive himself, i.e., that he will become ignited by love and the ability to love will be formed. In the writer's works every type of love - erotic, affectionate, or friendly love (spiritual) - encourages one to rise to a higher level of being. The basis for this rise is man's value, his own search for and acknowledgement of his individuality. Active, lively love is characterized by moral activities, and the expression of spiritual values. The writer depicts the development of moral values, their realization through actual actions and their transformation into theological values. This is love for one's fellow man and its development determines the internalization of moral and theological values, and their transformation into moral prerequisites. Šatrijos Ragana claims that the spread of eschatological love starts from childhood and is formed through the child being able to gradually reduce his self-love and offer his love to others.

The texts by Šatrijos Ragana depict Christian love in triangular form, consisting of three sides: 1) God's love for man; 2) man's response to that love (man's love of God); and 3) man's love for his fellow man. Removing one of these sides renders Christian love as non-existent. The triangle is possible because the giving love of God empowers one to love that which is ordinarily not dear to one's heart: sinners, the wretched and narcissists. Agape stands

for the primal, unconditional love that overcomes man's desires and caprices, as the universal, unchanging, eternal reality. It actualizes man's powers, transforms him, and renews his spiritual might. The love that Šatrijos Ragana writes about is revealed as the opening up of the spirit to a new infinity. Three components create love in the heart: the lover, the loved, and love itself. Lovers in this case do not just give themselves to one another, as much as they give themselves up to unselfish, giving love. The agape love portrayed by the writer joins all three scales of love (erotic, affectionate, and friendly), and elevates the integration of man's being and completeness in God's presence. Love encourages Christian development, as a process of the individual's and society's moral growth. The morality of Christian love is based on the irrevocable orientation towards the highest goal: the worship of God and the realization of His plan for the salvation of man and the world. This orientation gives direction and order to the entire life of one's soul. All virtues arise from real choices and existential certainty, directing one towards Christ as the final perfection and goal. Thus, Christian development that is inspired by love is coming closer to Christ and man's transformation, or revival, based on constant conversions and transitions to the eschatological reality.

The second section titled "Death as the defeat of this side" shows that the death that is depicted by Šatrijos Ragana is a transitional step towards eternal truth, but whose reality and the „quality“ of death essentially depends on the opposing man's belief in God's eternity. In the writer's works, there is an awareness of death and the search for the purpose of death that takes place. Similarly to Vydunas, Šatrijos Ragana has adopted the insights of the Holy Bible and Plato, that the hour of eternal sleep is the hour of awakening. The power of transformation that comes from the hope of awakening is emphasized. This is why death is portrayed as liberation from the grasp of matter. The writer uses a polyphonic method of depiction adopted from spiritual literature and Förster, where the image is moulded and strengthened through deliberations, questions and answers, dialogue and negotiation, reflection and the introduction of several perspectives to a story. In the works of Šatrijos Ragana, death is anthropologized, it is tamed and made an actor, taking one behind the scenes, which is an image applied frequently by the writer to demarcate the line between death and eternity. In the writer's works the desire to come closer to this secret, to discover the reality hiding behind the curtain, is expressed often.

Of all the Lithuanian writers from the first decades of the 20th century, Šatrijos Ragana gives the most open depictions of death. For the comprehensiveness and depth with which the issue of death is deliberated, she can be called a Christian romantic and forerunner of existentialism in Lithuania. The transience and rapid pace of life is symbolized by the writer using musical melodies, rhythm, crashing waves, while man himself is depicted using the imagery of Baroque shadows or ants. Man's existence is similar to a musical sound; it disappears without trace. The ontologization of inexistence and the motif of the transience of being paradoxically destroys the realness of worldly existence, scattering all illusions about the persistence of transitive things. The writer's paradoxical conclusion proclaims that everything that disappears according to the Divine plan is not an attribute of God. That is why the transience of being also brings a sense of joy that the temporary forms of existence will fall away. Šatrijos Ragana creates the image of theological sensibility, where the idea of ontological extinction is rendered into concentration and painted with all the emotions of nature's melancholy. The fragrance of dying nature grows into reflection, personalized through a melancholic image: a mystical fragrance is transformed into music for extinction. Death determines the essential theological transformation, the spiritual alteration beyond which lies a happier, better life. Šatrijos Ragana has not only realized, but feels the life-death, deathlife antimonies. Death appears as happiness, giving the opportunity to know the truth and to find justice.

Death does not come as an absolute opposite of life, or as a pessimistic failure. Rather, it shows man's moral resolve to value the truth more than life itself, to acknowledge the importance of the truth of faith. Death is evidence of a higher meaning of one's faith. To discover the meaning of death is to simultaneously overcome the fear of extinction and the dispensability of life. In the writer's works we see death as the process of separation of the body and soul. The transience of being is left to the body, and one starts to see it from other life perspectives. The meaning of death and the dynamism of its comprehension is determined by one's self-determination at the time of death.

Šatrijos Ragana emphasizes the significance of accepting God's will in demolishing various obstacles on the path to God. Trust in the purposefulness of God's creativity and the acceptance of the Divine mercy is agreement with the will of God. The bending of one's will towards His will and overcoming worldly sorrow are clearly reflected in the pictures of serenity created by the writer. Accepting the will of God as the highest parameter is not seen as an adaptation to reality or expression of passivity, but brings about reconciliation with these feelings. The images of death depicted by Šatrijos Ragana are evidence that faith in a supernatural life and the understanding of the motive for faith grow together. In the writer's texts, images of death as a happy visitor or mystical secret prevail. The ontological extinction of death brings with it existential intimidation and fear. Death is not linked to the motifs of pain or suffering, but to the transience of life in this world and the motif of the end. Šatrijos Ragana depiction of death is understood as a passing from inexistence to eternal existence. The writer's theological narrative presents death as overcoming worldly existence based on morals and coming to believe in spiritual modification.

The third section titled "Vignettes of the imagery of the soul" reveals the soul as a spiritual human substance seeking to escape the body. The general sensation of this escape is the longing for ontological eternity. The soul's escape is characterized by dynamism and the desire to go through more and more new transcendental experiences, that is, not based on the senses. Šatrijos Ragana became God's image of perfect creativity: the creator's creativity strikes through nature's beauty, and lights up the soul with joy, meanwhile the soul, experiencing such joy, is cleansed of moral evils. This depicts the vertical rise of the virtuous soul's progression. Šatrijos Ragana raises a new time-sense constant: the concept of eschatological time as the salvation of the soul. This is a more realistic and practical measure of time as all material conditions disappear together with the time that has passed, while the soul remains untouched by time. The soul's salvation depends on how time is used. The integrity of one's worldly life, the intensity of one's actions, directly affects the quality of eternity. Time is used meaningfully if the most important of life's purposes is never forgotten: the salvation of the soul.

Faith in God's fairness in the works by Šatrijos Ragana explains the problem of overcoming evil in one's life. This is a kind of practice of faith, the motif of having faith or not. Šatrijos Ragana considers the main religious feature of man to be his devotion to God's will. In the face of fear, suffering, death and all-encompassing responsibility, his will carries all the cares and disabilities into the purposefully righteous hands of God. The realization of the Divine righteousness allows Šatrijos Ragana to follow God's will, accept that the world order of the mortals is a temporary, breakable matter of shadows, and see the meaning of the eternal truth. Man who looks upon everything through the spectre of eternity cannot give in to pain and fall into despair. This sort of insight into the meaning of life gives the devout characters in Šatrijos Ragana works their typically satisfied outlook on life. The writer depicts the Kingdom of God as the main eschatological motif. The soul's rise along an eschatological path is drawn as a kind of existential preparation for the Kingdom of God and meeting with Christ. Theological hope, based on Christ's promise, transforms the Soul's longing not into a utopian or romantic illusion, but rather, waiting for it to come to a realistic fruition. Waiting

for things that appear when one truly believes in God revive one's faith and are life-reviving. The theological hope depicted by Šatrijos Ragana is related to change, the soul's transformation, with resurrection as having reached the final eschatological goal.

In the late 19th-early-20th century context of „soulless psychology“, Šatrijos Ragana voiced the substantialism, individualism and spiritualism of the soul. She underlined man's soul as „the axis of creation“ joining eternity and reality as the main emotional constant expressing the longing for eternity. The value intentionalism of the soul is in this way related to transcendental experiences of beauty. The maturity of the soul and its rise towards God written about by Šatrijos Ragana is described in the theory of Christian development and moving through the levels along the mystical road. In the cleansing phase the soul is freed from the body, the cloak of matter: the factor of aesthetic transformation determines the soul's change, metanoia. The soul's development is most commonly presented in the sower's metaphor, or the metaphor of waves of good (and evil). The luminosity stage is revealed using the symbols of mountains, and climbing mountains, that embody the place of transcendence where closeness to God is felt. The integration stage proves the soul's desire to reach the Kingdom of Heaven and enjoy eternal happiness. An important eschatological paradigm - the longing for immortality - heightens the visualization of apocalyptic Christianity. In the works by Šatrijos Ragana man's dramatic footsteps are surpassed by the living consciousness of eternity. Complete existence is realized through the perspective of eternity, experienced in this world as the image of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Using an eschatological narrative, Šatrijos Ragana shows the interrelation of the eschatological and anthropological levels, and its meaning in educating the soul. Belief in God's righteousness in the works by Šatrijos Ragana helps explain the practice of trust in the ability to overcome evil in one's life. Realization of the righteousness of the Divine allows one to follow God's will, accept that the mortal world order is temporary and to see the meaning of the eternal truth.

CONCLUSIONS

Traditional Christian literature is characterized by the visualization of duality: the drama of salvation takes place between two poles: power and helplessness, sin and mercy, condemnation and salvation. This literature did not change the reality, but rather, it tried to reveal the „eternal order“. Among its features was a certain approach, or perspective, coming firstly from the content of a given work, harmonized in line with Christian principles and teaching.

Contemporary literary theology is described as the theological art of speaking, literary meditation coming from the revelation of religious experience, and as critical reflection. Religious and aesthetic experiences and scientific-critical reflection uphold and test faith, searching for a dialogue with non-believers, believers of other faiths, and opponents. Contemporary Christian literature serves as a stimulus to theology: it develops opposite ethical models, shows the alternatives that can be found, and offers sketches of different utopias. It tests theology using measures of the grotesque, parody, and paradox.

The spirit of Šatrijos Ragana Christian creative works provides eschatological preconditions for their analysis from a literary theology approach. The writer's works visualize Christian ideas and spread the principles of Christian growth.

Šatrijos Ragana adopted an important literary theology inductive pedagogy method from German pedagogue Förster: the visualization of practical life situations using examples,

metaforms and symbols. Stories about God take place in a moralizing way: using natural, everyday life situations. The image or trope is used as the heart of educational storytelling. Both Förster and Šatrijos Ragana enact moral behaviour so that art encourages the development of morality. This pedagogical narrative, taken from the German pedagogue, is seen as training of one's will and the formation of good habits, and is based on ethical and religious argumentation.

Šatrijos Ragana traces a theological line regarding national education and consciousness. Faith is elevated as an inheritable feature of national character and is one of the inherent attributes of nationalism. Love for one's fatherland is sacralized, and tuned to religious obligation. In educative patriotic reflection, the effect of educational religiousness is highlighted. Using heroic examples of love for one's fatherland, based on theologems of sacrifice and devotion, a transcendental motivation is rendered. Šatrijos Ragana patriotic stories depict the application of general behavioural norms in the formation of a Christian individuality.

Šatrijos Ragana educational fiction differs from earlier didactical literature, which was usually illustrative and stereotypical, due to its suggestivity for the realization of morality and the artistic expression of the pedagogy of the ideal. Virtues such as willpower, strength of character, diligence, responsibility, altruism and aptitude are expressed through images and also through the telling of the narrator's (the author's) own moral position. The deliberation of moral motives and opportunities shows that the stories' characters can be typified as having the opportunity to overcome worldly virtues. The moral scheme becomes an emotionally active and artistically convincing image of moral education. The morality of man's actions first of all depends on the conscious decision of choosing the correct object, i. e., the extent to which one's actions are directed towards the true transcendental good.

The theo-poetics of the art of living is claimed to be, by the writer, to lead a moral life expressed as a continuing process of improvement using cultural measures. One of the most important features of the art of living, according to the writer, is knowing how to teach, that is, to point out the roads to eternal life and be able to apply soul-teaching methods. The writer upholds the realization of self-teaching motives: they should always be emotionally aroused and experienced. The depth and intensity of feelings creates the conditions for the union of moral and aesthetical feelings, along with character formation, in the works of Šatrijos Ragana. It can be said that the writer's art of living is educational and nurturing: to train one's will and form one's character using a theological motivation basis.

Christian love in Šatrijos Ragana texts is expressed as the practical principle of all-encompassing faith. Agape is embodied and the godly love for one's fellow man is realized when the experience of God, one's individuality, and the need to heed the calling is combined in the believer's consciousness with active humanity. The uniqueness of the Šatrijos Ragana theological thought is that following Christ is not shown so much as the confirmation and announcement of faith, but more as the embodiment of Christian love, or as the ethos of love. In the texts of Šatrijos Ragana, Christian love is depicted as a triangle, consisting of three sides: 1) God's love for man; 2) man's response to that love (man's love of God); and 3) man's love for his fellow man. The giving love of God empowers one to love that which is not naturally dear, or loved: sinners, the wretched and narcissists. Love in the heart is formed by three components: the loved, the lover and love itself. Lovers in this case do not as much devote themselves to each other, as they devote themselves to selfless, giving love. The agape-love depicted by Šatrijos Ragana joins all scales of love (erotic, affectionate, and friendly), elevating the integration and completeness of man's being in the existence of God.

Šatrijos Ragana depictions of scenes of death prove that faith in supernatural life and understanding the motif of faith develop simultaneously. The meaning of death and the dynamism of its understanding is determined by one's resolve at the time of death. The instability of existentialism, the transience and fragility of life is noted. In the writer's texts, images of death as a happy visitor and mystical secret dominate. The ontological disappearance of death carries existential fear and despair. The meaning of death is not linked to the motifs of pain or suffering, but of motifs representing the transience of mortal life and the end. The type of death visualized by Šatrijos Ragana is understood as the transition from non-existence to eternal existence.

Šatrijos Ragana exalted the substantialism, individualism and spiritualism of the soul. She described the human soul as the main emotional constant expressing the longing for eternity. The intentionalism of the value-rich soul that is depicted is linked to the transcendental experience of beauty. A new time-sense constant is introduced: the eschatological concept of time as the saviour of the soul, according to which the intensity of worldly activities directly determines the quality of eternity one can expect. The maturity of the soul and its rise towards God written about by Šatrijos Ragana is described in the theory of Christian development and moving through the levels along the mystical road. In the cleansing phase the soul is freed from the body, the cloak of matter: the factor of aesthetic transformation determines the soul's change, metanoia. The soul's development is most commonly presented in the sower's metaphor, or the metaphor of the waves of good (and evil). The luminosity stage is revealed using the symbols of mountains, and climbing mountains, that embody the place of transcendence where closeness to God is felt. The integration stage proves the soul's desire to reach the Kingdom of Heaven and enjoy eternal happiness. An important eschatological Theologem - the longing for immortality - highlights the visualization of apocalyptic Christianity.

The literary theology of Šatrijos Ragana shows the interrelation of the eschatological and anthropological levels, and its meaning in educating the soul. Belief in God's righteousness in the works by Šatrijos Ragana helps explain the practice of trust in the ability to overcome evil in one's life. Realization of the righteousness of the Divine allows one to follow God's will, accept that the mortal world order is temporary and to see the meaning of the eternal truth.