

Masculinity Scripts, Good Life and Familial Intentions: the Case of Young Lithuanian Men

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Abstract

Analyzing 30 semi-structured interviews with 19–34-year-old Lithuanian men, the article focuses on the interconnection of these men’s scripts of masculinity, good life and familial intentions. Despite differences in class, education, sexual orientation, age and physical ability, most men adhered to the traditional masculinity script based on very normative male ideals and practices. In this script prevalent in the Lithuanian society, a man was manly, strong, economically secure, career-minded and successful breadwinner for his family. A significantly smaller part of the interviewed men were proponents of the second masculine script of a ‘sensitive new age man’ based on an egalitarian philosophy of caring, support and respect for others. However, both traditional and ‘dissident’ masculinity scripts remained equally linked to the reproduction of a traditional fantasy of family life/partnership and childbearing. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the choice of different masculinity scripts does not significantly influence the respondents’ familial intentions and visions of good life.

Keywords: masculinity, masculinity scripts, good life, young men, familial intentions.

Introduction

What does it mean for a man to live a good life? Does masculinity as an everyday enactment of both social practices and fantasies have much to do with it? What masculinity scripts young Lithuanian men choose in order to survive in competitive post-socialist economies? What forms of acceptable gendering guarantee men a good life? And in what ways is the fantasy of good life related to men’s intentions to have a family and/or children?

These questions form a core of this article that focuses on the interconnection of young Lithuanian men’s scripts of masculinity, good life and familial intentions. Masculinity scripts are essential in understanding men’s attitudes towards family life, sexuality and childbearing intentions. However, this article analyzes only two facets of men’s lives: their perception of masculine practices and good life trajectories and their possible relationship to familial intentions.

In writing about masculinity scripts, some scholars of masculinity talk of the proliferation of challenges to traditional forms of masculine identity and ‘masculinities in transition’ (Robinson et al., 2011, p. 33). Although some groups of men, such as gay men or profeminist men, resist dominant scripts of masculinity (Gutterman, 2001), majority still adhere to the traditional understandings of masculinity that imply financial success, technical expertise, physical strength and sexual potency. The dominant script of masculinity emphasizes such ‘male values’ as courage, aggression, autonomy, mastery, technological skill, adventure, and ‘toughness in mind and body’ (Connell, 2005). Work and ‘bread-winner’ role are regarded as a major basis of masculine identity and traditional masculinity script. According to Michael Kimmel, in the traditional masculinity script, “the image of the ‘man’ in power, a man with power and a man of power” is prevalent: ‘The very definitions of manhood we have developed in our culture maintain the power that some men have over other men and that men have over women’ (Kimmel, 1997, p. 226). Even when the power of men seems lost in contemporary societies, as Jeff Hearn argues, ‘... loss, or perceived losses, of power among certain men interplay with processes of recouping of patriarchal power’ (Hearn, 2011, p. 214).

Scholars focusing on Western masculinity in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000, identified three main models/scripts of heterosexual masculinity: middle class masculinity characterized by rigorous work ethic, achievement and social responsibility; working-class masculinity defined by an aggressive macho style of behavior and the ‘new man’ who presents a softer, more emotional and anti-macho image of masculinity (Tolson, 1987; Segal, 1990; Oates-Indruchova, 2012). It can be argued that non-heterosexual masculinity can also fit all three models/scripts. Other scholars talked of ‘transnational business masculinity’ and ‘bourgeois-rational masculinity’ that had come into their own along with global capitalism and neoliberal economies (Youngs, 2004, p. 86). According to Jeff Hearn (Hearn, 2011), contemporary masculinities can also be described as virtual and cyberglobalizing masculinities.

The analysis of masculinity scripts also raises the question what ‘doing masculinity’ means? Is ‘doing masculinity’ an always negotiated process that occurs in relation to men and women with whom one interacts in

both public and private spheres? If we agree that it is indeed a negotiated process, then we also have to conceptualize masculinity as a 'processual and essentially incomplete, emerging from an individual's contextual sense of who he is (and who he is not), as well as the ways in which other people identify and categorize him' (Robinson et al., 2011, p. 34). Similarly, the theoretician of post-coloniality Homi K. Bhabha argued that '[m]asculinity, then, is the 'taking up' of an enunciative position, the making up of a psychic complex, the assumption of a social gender, the supplementation of a historic sexuality, the apparatus of a cultural difference' (Bhabha, 1995, p. 58). Thus, choosing a particular masculinity script can also be regarded both as a way for a man to negotiate his own social position in ever-changing locations and as a means to enunciate his cultural difference.

Another concept instrumental to the analysis of young men's life narratives is the concept of good life. What does their normative fantasy of good life consist of and how it can be achieved? Some scholars associate good life with economic welfare, prosperity and security. Others think that good life is ensured by stability of political and social institutions, long-term stable interpersonal relationships, security in labor market and emotional wellbeing related to all these things. Often the issue of good life is analyzed in the context of quality of life. In this view, subjective wellbeing is the gap between perceptions of 'life-as-it-is with notions of how-life-should-be' (Veenhoven, 2006). Good life often entails promises of upward social mobility, functional family or coupledom, sexual and emotional intelligibility (Berlant and Prosser, 2011, p. 182). People stay attached to these promises in order to be considered as 'having a life' and remain optimistic in their exhausting and often defeating everyday.

Focusing on the issues of masculinity scripts and good life, the article also asks whether the chosen masculinity script and fantasies of good life have anything to do with the young men's intentions to have a family/bear children. Is it possible to draw tentative correlations between different masculinity scripts and men's procreational intentions? In what ways do men's imaginings of good life and happiness affect their familial choices in general?

These are essential premises that inform this article. The examination of an intersection between masculinity, good life and familial intentions allows us to delve into the complexities of what it means to be a man both advantaged and disadvantaged by the traditional system of gender scripts and gender power. It also enables us to understand whether particular scripts of masculinity and good life hinder or foster men's familial intentions. The article consists of four parts. In the first part, theoretical discussion on masculinity scripts and good life are presented; the second part describes the methodology of the research on which the article is based; the third part analyzes two different masculinity scripts that emerge in the interviews with young Lithuanian men; and the last part focuses on the relationship between different masculinity scripts of the respondents, their perceptions of good life and familial intentions.

Masculine scripts and good life: theoretical remarks

As mentioned above, several 'masculine scripts' exist in contemporary societies; from them, men choose the appropriate one, despite the fact that in a certain society one masculine script might be prevalent and overpowering. This script is often described as hegemonic masculinity (Donaldson, 1993; Connell, 2005; Tereskinas, 2005). A second masculine script of a 'sensitive new age man' based on an egalitarian philosophy of shared domestic work and economic responsibility (Mannon and Kemp, 2010), takes shape globally, including in post-socialist and post-colonial countries. Scholars attribute the latter to middle or upper-class men, while the traditional scripts can be chosen by men of different classes including working-class men. Some researchers point out to the class-based divisions in the hegemonic masculinity script: working-class men often demonstrate an aggressive macho style of behavior based on the powerful male body, and middle-class men pride themselves in rigorous work ethic, achievement and social responsibility (Oates-Indruchova, 2012). Yet all masculinity scripts imply an inevitable intersection of masculinity and economy. Economic competence serves as a measure of successful masculinity. In order to survive, men must be self-reliant and competitive actors in economic markets. Besides, they must produce acceptable masculine scripts that would make their biographies decipherable and intelligible.

In analyzing masculinities, scholars note that, as cultural sets of values and practices, they are rooted in class. For instance, working-class men involved in physical labor emphasize physical capacity and strength as the basis of their masculinity (Pietila and Ojala, 2011, p. 387–388; also see Connell, 2005). Middle-class men, on the contrary, focus more on such traits of their masculinity as responsibility, respectability and industrious self-representation. According to Beverly Skeggs, the 'notions of responsibility and health-awareness could be seen to be associated with middle-class ideals in constructing the masculine self' (Skeggs, 2004). But, as it was mentioned before, economic competence as one of the defining characteristics of masculinity often transcends the boundaries of class.

In analyzing the place of emotions in contemporary capitalism, the Israeli sociologist Eva Illouz argued that 'emotional capitalism has imbued economic transactions – in fact most social relationships – with an unprecedented cultural attention to the linguistic management of emotions, making them the focus of strategies of dialogue, recognition, intimacy, and self-emancipation' (Illouz, 2007, p. 109). Her argument can also be applied to the scripts of masculinity which pay a considerable attention to all of the above strategies such as the need for recognition, self-realization, intimacy, etc. Indeed masculinity scripts also point out to 'regimes of value' (Skeggs, 2011, p. 496) that comprise the conditions of male personhood. To become such subjects 'promoted across government policy, political rhetoric, popular culture and academic discourse as the normative, the good and proper subject'

(Skeggs, 2011, p. 502), men must adapt to compulsory masculinity that are highly regarded in a certain society.

How are different masculine scripts related to the ideals of good life? I would argue that it is the narrative of masculine self-realization that references to 'normal' life. This narrative might be global, yet it does not affect men of all classes equally. Men on the lower end of social status focus more on making the ends meet or simply fulfilling basic material needs (for instance, furnishing an apartment or a house, buying a car or supporting grown children) than on personal self-realization.

The issue of good life has also become one of the main issues of contemporary feminist theory and gender studies in general. In her book 'Undoing Gender' (2004) Judith Butler asks: Why were women's lives left out of the conceptualization of good life? She thinks that the discussion on good life should start with the issue of survival which in its turn raises the issue of whose life is considered 'life' and who has prerogative to live (Butler, 2004a, p. 205). Butler also asks about beginnings and endings of what we call 'life'.

In her 'Precarious Life' (2004) Butler argues that in contemporary societies we encounter 'the broader problem that normative schemes of intelligibility establish what will and will not be human, what will be a livable life, what will be a grievable death' (Butler, 2004, p. 146). Whose lives can be marked as lives and whose deaths will count as deaths? Refusing the political Right's monopoly on the discourse of 'life', Butler addresses the concept of a 'livable life' as a form of becoming that links capacities for self-transformation with the transformation of the social order itself (Rosenberg, 2007).

Lauren Berlant raises similar questions. She speaks of the 'infrastructures of good life' (Berlant, 2011, p. 241) and relates them to social norms and the concepts of capitalism and democracy. According to her, '[t]he internal tensions between capitalism and democracy seem resolved as long as a little voting, a little privacy, and unimpeded consumer privilege prevail to prop up the sense that the good-life fantasy is available to everyone' (Berlant, 2011, p. 194). All this makes us believe that good life is accessible to all of us. However, both she and Judith Butler think that this belief is a self-negating illusion.

Describing good life as a 'moral-intimate-economic thing' (Berlant, 2011), Berlant asks why we are so attached to it despite of so much evidence to the contrary. Why are we so attached to conventional fantasies of good life based on 'enduring reciprocity in couples, families, political systems, institutions, markets, and at work – when the evidence of their instability, fragility, and dear cost abounds?' (Berlant, 2011, p. 2). It can be argued that the ideals of normal and dignified life serve, in Berlant's words, as a 'conventionalized form of normativity' (Berlant and Prosser 2011, p. 182) that makes us believe in our social belonging and intelligibility. This normativity makes us intelligible humans with livable lives and grievable deaths.

Sara Ahmed analyzes the issue of good life by relating it to different emotions, particularly the emotion of happiness (Ahmed, 2004, p. 130–131). She associates good life with certain objects that bring us happiness.

According to her, happiness directs us to certain objects, 'as if they are the necessary ingredients for a good life' (Ahmed, 2008, p. 11), thus we expect to be affected by them in ways that would live up to our expectations.

What objects can be ingredients of good life? Material welfare, reliable social security system, stable job market, traditional family, etc. may serve as objects of happiness that promise us good life. However, when people are unable to achieve happiness, self-realization or 'good life' they feel incompetent and disappointed. In other words, the objects of happiness that promise us a good life often prevent us from living well because they represent 'life' itself. Therefore, if we lack these objects we feel that we don't have a life (Berlant and Prosser, 2011, p. 182). For instance, if one is not partnered, does not have a family, is not socially mobile and does not identify with the nation, it is possible to say that she or he does not have 'life'. At least others think of this person as a person with no life.

It can be argued that perceptions of good life also contribute to the production of male subjects that either feel competent in achieving happiness or disappointed in their own performances affected by the incessant forms of normativity. It is possible to ask, in the following analysis of the interviews, how this normativity of life affects men and how life could be better formed as a response to this normativity. As Berlant argues, we need 'new infrastructures of the good life' that would enable people not just survive and keep their heads above water but, above all, to flourish and invent more fantasies of good life (Berlant, 2011, p. 241). What demands do the interviewed men make for their own lives and futures? And how do they describe living that registers such emotion as happiness that sustains their optimism?

Methodological notes

The article analyzes 30 semi-structured interviews with men of different class, education, professional involvement, sexual orientation, marital status, ability and disability, living in the Lithuanian cities and countryside. The age of informants ranged from 19 to 34 years. The median age was 26 years. Respondents were chosen by targeted selection and snowball sampling methods. The largest part of the interviews was conducted in June – October, 2013, the remaining few – from November, 2013, to January, 2014. The median duration of the interviews was 1.24 hours. Young men from Vilnius (10), Kaunas (7), Šiauliai (4), Panevėžys (1), Biržai (1), Šilalė (1), Šeduva (1), Šiauliai district (countryside) (1), Alytus district (countryside) (3), and Šakiai district (countryside) (1) participated in this research. One of the respondents lived both abroad and in Lithuania. The level of the respondents' education was the following: 2 men had secondary, 1 man, professional, 2, high school professional, 11, high school (at the time of the interviews, 3 of them attended universities, 5, colleges), 1 men with high school education studied in a college; 12 respondents had a university education (7 of them had master degrees, 1, doctoral degree, 2 of them continued their study in M. A. programs), and 1 had a higher non-university education. Six respondents were disabled (4 of them were disabled

from their childhood, 2 acquired disability in a young age). Twenty-four respondents identified themselves as heterosexuals, 4 as homosexuals, 1 as bisexual and 1 as 'queer.' Most respondents (18) were unmarried and at the time of the interviews did not have a girlfriend or boyfriend. One respondent was divorced and currently single. Six respondents had a girlfriend or boyfriend at the time of the research. Three men were married and 2 lived with their partners. All respondents can clearly be split into three distinct groups: heterosexual, homosexual and disabled men (all disabled men were heterosexual). Thus, to distinguish these three groups of the men the orientation and disability along with the respondents' age will also be indicated in presenting the interview data. To secure their confidentiality, the respondents' names were changed.

The article engages in a 'sober ethnographic reflection on the possibilities and the limits of creativity of everyday life' (Das and Kleinman, 2001, p. 27) that respondents attempt to construct while living their masculinities. It analyzes only the parts of the semi-structured interviews related to the questions about masculinity scripts, ideals of good or 'normal and dignified' life and familial intentions of the young men. It should also be pointed out, at the outset, that although masculinities are tied to changing class structures, in this research, it was not possible to distinguish these structures due to young age of most respondents and different focus of the research.

Masculinity scripts: real men as subjects of value

What does it mean to be a young man? What objects are implicated in the formation of male subject? What masculinity scripts the interviewed men choose in affirming their masculinity?

According to their preferred masculinity scripts, two groups of men can be distinguished. The first one affirms the traditional script of masculinity that emphasizes men's economic and breadwinning capacities. According to 21-year-old heterosexual Almantas, a man 'must be a breadwinner in the family, [he must] support it, must be industrious in order to earn money'. Similarly, 23-year-old homosexual Hansas said that 'If we speak of the society, of what people think, I imagine ... that he earns money for the family and he is one who shows his wife her place' although he did not agree with this widespread view of a 'real' man. In 26-year-old bisexual Jonas's words, 'There is no stable stereotype of what it means to be a man in Lithuania... he must have a family, some money to support it. Because in our country a man is regarded as a family head'. 24-year-old heterosexual Antanas thought that '... to be a man... perhaps it means that he's able to take care of himself and others particularly with regard to earning money... It's an age-long tradition that a man has to support his family financially... (laughs)'. In 31-year-old disabled man Osvaldas's opinion, 'A man must be caring. He has to take care of his wife, children, earn money, not to be an alcoholic or a junkie. He must thoughtfully care not only for himself but for his family as well'.

Some respondents critically evaluated this dominant script of masculinity in which the ideals of breadwinning, financial success, and industriousness along with

physicality, aggression and power served as prime factors in the construction of contemporary Lithuanian masculinity. According to 22-year-old heterosexual Vladas, '[the cult] of machismo is prevalent here. And you see such 'men' in quotation marks. And they often crash and die or drink themselves to death and so on and so forth. And all this is related to the necessity of proving one's manhood. I don't understand it but it exists, yes...' Similarly, 26-year-old homosexual Mantvydas argued that '...the cult of masculinism is very widespread in Lithuania. Masculinity is thought of in a very primitive way, usually as a physical power. Masculinity equals power'.

In this traditional script of masculinity, notions of professional competence, authority, and both physical and emotional strength were also evident amidst the heavily gendered ideals that the respondents expected men to have. With the exception of disabled respondents, the rest of the informants faithfully adhered to these notions. In 26-year-old bisexual Jonas's words, 'And in general, perhaps a man you must have authority, when a man says something, others, for instance, women must listen to him... He must have a strong character and be authoritative... I am not this kind of a man, I am very simple, and I don't like shouting and screaming'.

It should also be added that emotional competence was also emphasized as one of the most important traits of a 'real' man who had to be 'both strict and gentle to his partner, he [had] to know how to control himself and be physically strong. Self-control means that he knows how to act in certain situations, he doesn't explode, shout or start fights... he controls himself...' (32-year-old heterosexual Tauras). Another respondent mentioned rather similar things arguing that a real man was 'Strict but kind. Caring. Giving and receiving if it's possible [to say so] and a strong figure.... Devoted to his work and family. ... And I imagine a man who is responsible. It is indeed a real man' (20-year-old heterosexual Augustas). The real man can also be distinguished by his wisdom and resolution. He's responsible for his words and actions (30-year-old homosexual Alfredas).

It can be argued that, in these respondents' opinion, it is men's emotional attitudes and style that define their social identities and enable them to participate in social networks (Portes, 1998). This opinion of the respondents can be explained by Thurnell-Read and Parker's argument that '[c]ompetence, be it technical, emotional or physical, is an indicator of masculine prowess, a measure of personal worth; a behavioral yardstick by which one's individual value is examined and, perhaps more importantly, by which one's contribution to the collective cause might be assessed' (Thurnell-Read and Parker, 2008, p. 130). Such men extolled physical, professional and emotional competence in many spheres of their lives.

In many studies on different forms and practices of masculinity, traditional masculinity is clearly associated with power, control and authority within both public and private realms (Connell, 2005; Nixon, 2009). Therefore, losing control of one's life and feeling powerless means being emasculated. As one of the respondents stated in talking about his violent father beating up his mother

during his childhood, he felt ‘... powerless when [he could not] help someone and would do what [he] had to do’, i. e. to defend his mother (20-year old heterosexual Augustas). When a man felt powerless, his masculinity was called into question and his masculine performance became both unintelligible and unreal.

According to Beverly Skeggs, ‘In post-communist Europe, popular culture is full of attempts to re-adjust people into new capitalist subjects of value: pre-disposed to labour, driven by the lure of money, where conspicuous consumption is evaluated as a good measure of the person, making the terms of exchange explicit’ (Skeggs, 2011, p. 502). It can be argued that most respondents also clearly adjust to these requirements of ‘capitalist subjects of value’ by emphasizing such masculine traits of character as rationality, decisiveness, enterprising, self-worth and authority. For instance, 29-year old disabled man Paulius stated that a man had to ‘have self-esteem consisting of things that [made] one believe in oneself. And you would not believe in yourself if you did not have a job and had to rely on your parents’ support, etc....’.

A significantly smaller part of the interviewed men were proponents of the second masculine script of a ‘sensitive new age man’ based on an egalitarian philosophy of caring, support and respect for others. According to one of the respondents, a real man had to be well-mannered, polite, respectful of himself and others. In his opinion, there were very few such men in his environment (30-year-old homosexual Alfredas). In 26-year-old bisexual man Jonas’s words, ‘How should a man behave? What are his qualities? Well, he must look after himself. He must be, well, polite, for instance. Cultured. He must help others...’. Similarly, 22-year-old heterosexual Vladas thought that he had ‘to be a caring, understanding, supportive... and warm person...’. One of the most important features of this man was his caring attitude towards his family and himself. Interestingly, the ideal of a sensitive and sensible man also entailed the financial dimension: care was described not only in emotional but also in economic terms.

In this script of masculinity, ‘real’ men were not necessarily physically strong, muscular and tall or had to occupy high professional posts. Observing their promises and helping others were distinctive features of such men (21-year-old queer man Žygis). Some men associated manhood with ‘a higher sense of responsibility’ (23-year old heterosexual Svajūnas). Thus, social responsibility was described as a ‘masculine’ trait more characteristic of men than women. Yet, along with his sensitivity, softness, intelligence and caring attitude towards others, the men’s breadwinning role was still mentioned: ‘I think that a man must be intelligent. A man must know ... how to support his family. A man must support his family. What else? I am not sure. He must be polite, neat, well-clothed if we speak of his appearance’ (23-year-old heterosexual Ernestas).

It should be stressed that the majority of gay and bisexual respondents and the respondent who identified himself as queer were more inclined to support the second ‘non-traditional’ script of masculinity that could be described, to some degree, as a dissident script. However,

the respondents’ adherence to either one of the scripts was not clear-cut. Even if they criticized the traditional script of masculinity, they often stated that this script was not only predominant in the Lithuanian society but also had regulative and disciplining powers. Men were forced to adjust to this script if they wanted to be considered ‘real’ men. The task of being a man involved taking on this hegemonic script of masculinity. Paradoxically, by doing it, homosexual, queer and disabled heterosexual respondents marginalized themselves and wrote off alternative forms of masculinity as improper or despicable.

To sum up, despite the fact that some respondents did not subscribe to the traditional script of masculinity, the majority of them talked about it as the one that made men ‘subjects of value’ or ‘forward propelling subjects’ (Skeggs, 2011, p. 502), rational about their future choices and immersed in social responsibilities for their families and themselves. In this script, a real man possessed ‘bodily capital’, a strong and competent body. He was also emotionally ‘intelligent’, able to master his sexuality and emotions and deal with his everyday challenges.

Masculinity scripts, good life and familial intentions

What does it mean for a man to live a ‘good life’ or have a life at all? Is having a life associated with love, intimacy, family, health, professional success or just simply enjoyment? What objects normatively considered as entailing a ‘good life’ do the respondents mention in their interviews? Do they think of themselves as having good lives?

In the interviews, the respondents mentioned the following objects of good life in order of increasing importance: freedom, creativity, friendship, leisure time, a good job, material welfare, and family/or partnership. Among all these objects two were the most important: material welfare and family/or partnership.

Many respondents dreamed about earning enough money, building a house/buying an apartment and ‘owning something’ (21-year-old heterosexual Almantas). 24-year-old heterosexual Antanas stated: ‘I would like to have my own apartment, I think, I would like to invest in it. To have a place that you own and that you can return to, because I live in one dorm, then in another. I don’t have a permanent place to live...’.

The dream of ‘being completely financially secure’ was overpowering because, in 23-year-old heterosexual Ernestas’s words, ‘It seems to me that everything is based on money’. Good life also meant not lacking anything, be it money, job, friendship, partnership or love: ‘There’s no lack [in good life]’ (30-year-old homosexual Alfredas). 19-year-old heterosexual Virginijus expressed the same idea by stating that ‘[y]ou live a good life when you do not lack anything, you have a job, a stable income, a wife, children ... that is, simply a normal family’. The abundance of things as an opposition of lack was a sign of good life: ‘Good life? It is when I can allow myself a lot of things, when I have a job, good friends and can have fun’ (21-year-old heterosexual Almantas).

Only very few respondents referred to good life by eschewing its material dimension and describing it as professional satisfaction that made one's life meaningful. Yet to meet basic needs remained important. According to 30-year-old heterosexual Eugenijus,

I think [a good life] is when you do what you like to do, and it's unnecessary to earn a lot, it's enough to earn so much as you could satisfy your basic needs, to have leisure that you want and feel happy at work and feel that your life is meaningful. And, of course, to have some financial stability, clarity, and satisfy your basic necessities, satisfy your leisure needs.

This view was akin to the perception of good life as a creative activity espoused by some respondents who talked of the need to have 'a freedom of choice'. You live a good life when you are creative and 'when you are or feel a creator of your own destiny' (23-year-old homosexual Dominykas). In this view, living a good life meant achieving personal fulfillment and self-realization: '... a dignified life means an understanding of your self-worth, an ability to defend yourself and feel exclusive. Simply to feel an exclusive person ... and not to think of your life pessimistically and just drift in life...' (19-year-old heterosexual Ramūnas). Those who adhered to this conception of good life had also a fantasy of serving the public good, for instance, of becoming a politician and contributing to the improvement of the country or city life (that was the case of 23-year-old homosexual man Dominykas).¹ However, the respondents who reflected on personal fulfillment were in the minority.

Most respondents, heterosexual, homosexual or disabled, regarded family/or partnership as one of the most important objects of good life. Family was indeed the most often mentioned object of good life. All except one respondent talked of it in their responses. In 21-year-old heterosexual Renaldas's words, 'Good life? I would not associate a good life with luxury or something. A good life should start from the idea that you have someone to live for, you have a beloved person...' For 20-year-old heterosexual Augustas, good life meant a good income that let him 'live normally'. It also included a job and 'a loving family'. According to 26-year-old bisexual Jonas, 'Dreams? Well, I expect to have a family that, even if my partner is male, will be a normal family'. Most respondents expressed common ideas about the intersection of good life and family in the following way:

Yes, to live with my boyfriend in a house I own. Of course, to have a partner is my big dream but it depends not on me alone. I can or cannot buy a house; it depends on me. But to find a boyfriend ... it also depends on him and my destiny... (30-year-old homosexual Alfredas).

I have a personal dream, if it's possible, of having a happy family. A wife is not just a title but, in my opinion, both a wife and husband should desire to come back home and be together. When they at work, they should long for

each other and rush home when they can. This is my dream (30-year-old disabled Tomas).

Thus, most respondents believed that their attachment to 'normal orderly family' could secure their happiness. It seems that achieving this conventional form of normativity was regarded as the same as achieving the fantasy of good life, security and comfort: 'I am dreaming about a family that would be normal and neat... good relationship with no anger or infidelity... In a word, a simple and quiet life...' (22-year-old heterosexual Vladas). Even if self-realization was mentioned in the interview, 'not being alone' was far a more important thing:

Not to be alone is the most important. It is very difficult to be alone but when you have close people around, a partner or family, you can say that you live a happy and dignified life. And you are automatically loved and respected by these people and you feel dignity yourself. Of course, it is very important to realize yourself; I think that a lot also comes from your personal satisfaction when you find an occupation that you like and you are good at it... (23-year-old heterosexual Svajūnas).

Only one respondent stated that a partner was not a significant part of his life. According to him, '... it is OK to live without a partner, one can survive without him... I think that a partner would add some stability to my life but I do not dwell on this topic. I don't have to synchronize my life with a male or female partner...' (26-year-old homosexual Mantvydas).

Analyzing good life, Berlant (2011) and Ahmed (2004) argued that in order to have a fantasy of good life not only a social action but also certain emotional structures are necessary. When we choose objects of good life, we must ask ourselves what emotions signify them to us. In this regard, the dominant emotion that directed respondents to the imaginary objects of good life was happiness.

All mentioned objects of good life, above all, family secured the respondents' happiness: 'Now I don't know yet, I don't think about it but a family should make me happy in the future. First of all, to find a beloved person [would bring happiness]...' (21-year-old heterosexual Renaldas). Some respondents associated happiness with a family and stable income (19-year old heterosexual Virginijus), others took pride in their families that they had already established (32-year-old heterosexual Tauras), and some others talked about being satisfied and happy only after finding a partner (26-year-old bisexual Jonas).

Beside a family, emotional wellbeing also brought happiness. 23-year-old homosexual man Dominykas associated happiness with 'those moments when [he] finished some tasks or work and [he] had a couple of free days when [he] could have respite [from his work]': 'Tranquility is happiness for me, I think, the state of tranquility when you can look at something, spend time in the nature or look through the window. This is happiness for me'. Some respondents argued that happiness was a whole 'package' comprised of good personal relationships, financial freedom and emotional satisfaction: 'Perhaps three things: emotional satisfaction, say, it also includes personal relationships, when I don't have to hide my relationships. And financial freedom is necessary and, I

¹ It should also be mentioned that the 26-year-old bisexual man stated a good life for him meant not to be stigmatized and bullied in public: 'Dignified [life]? When you feel dignified, nobody insults you.... When conservatives would not abuse you, then your life will be dignified [laughs].'

would say, a family as well' (23-year-old homosexual Hansas). 26-year-old homosexual Mantvydas mentioned career as an object of happiness that sustained his optimism: 'Yes, career. I associate my own ambitions more with a career and less with certain pleasures or social relations'. This respondent thought of happiness as a balance 'between social, financial and professional needs'. In 30-year-old heterosexual Eugenijus words, he would be happy to survive, work at a job he liked and did not depend on anyone: 'I mean I really appreciate my current freedom to make decisions for myself in both my professional and personal life. My dream would be to sustain my current position and achieve better life quality in other spheres'.

To summarize, it is possible to argue that most men invested their hopes and dreams into conventional objects of good life such as family, material wellbeing and work that guaranteed both successful masculinity and consumer individualism. Very few mentioned personal fulfillment and emotional satisfaction and if they did they related them to the above objects of good life.

The choice of the conventional objects of good life signifies men's attachment to normativity of life that constitutes 'a social pedagogy of the rules for belonging and intelligibility' (Berlant and Prosser, 2011, p. 182). But the problem lies not merely in their choices. Even more problematic is the normative and limited content attributed to these objects, first of all, to the family/partnership. Most men indeed adhere to the traditional definitions of the nuclear family in which masculinity is tied to the heteronormative family structure and in which men, as breadwinners and capitalist subjects of value, are main holders of power.

The analysis of the objects of good life also demonstrates that despite slight differences in masculinity scripts favored by the respondents there is no big difference in their fantasies of good life. Family/partnership, material welfare, professional achievement, emotional satisfaction and personal fulfillment are overwhelmingly dominant objects. It should also be noted that perhaps men who advocated the second masculine script of a sensitive man based on an egalitarian philosophy of caring, support and respect for others were more inclined to supplement the traditional objects of good life with the ideas of professional achievement and emotional satisfaction. However, the differences between men in their choice of the objects of good life were negligible.

Is it possible to decipher some meaningful relations between the different masculinity scripts, visions of good life and familial intentions? It would be rather natural to assume that the familial intentions of men who focus on the traditional masculinity script and who favor family and financial security over professional success and personal fulfillment are stronger than the familial intentions of those adhering to the second 'dissident' masculinity script and emphasizing self-realization and emotional satisfaction.

However, the interview data do not let us to establish clear and definite relations between different masculinity scripts, visions of good life, familial plans and childbearing intentions. The overwhelming majority of men, whether heterosexual, homosexual or disabled, planned to establish

families and have children. Even homosexual respondents thought of parenthood by adopting children or having them via surrogacy. In 30-year-old Alfredas's words, 'I have a female friend who would agree to bear a child for me, and we could raise it together, so there is no problem to have a child. But when you look pragmatically, it is not very worthwhile to have children because you become very responsible for them and obligated...' He, like many other respondents, thought that one had to be financially stable and older to have children. According to 26-year-old bisexual Jonas, 'I sometimes think that I would like to have children but first I have to achieve financial security'. Only after finishing his studies and getting a steady job, 21-year-old heterosexual Almantas planned to 'think about children'.²

21-year-old queer identified Žygis also thought of financial security and personal maturity as things that enabled people to have children. In his opinion, when a man reaches 30 years of age, he matures emotionally and can have children. According to 21-year-old heterosexual Renaldas, he planned children between the age of 30 and 35 because 'at this age you already have some life experience and you would be more settled and would not search for various adventures and would have something to say to your child and give him advice...'

For many respondents having children entailed responsibility that they tried to postpone as long as possible. Some argued that current professional responsibilities and financial insecurity prevented them from having children: 'Yes, you always think if you have a child early you will encounter unnecessary difficulties in your professional career, so I would like to establish myself [professionally] first, to gain a financial standing, and then I will think about children' (24-year-old heterosexual Antanas).

Only very few respondents mostly homosexual ones did not plan to have children. For instance, both 23-year-old homosexual Dominykas and his partner did not want to have children. 26-year-old homosexual Mantvydas thought that although the Lithuanian society was not ready for homosexuals raising children he himself did not feel any desire to have children, at least at this point of his life: 'Because a child is responsibility ... and being aware of the problems with children's rights in Lithuania' he wanted to avoid these problems in his life.

It is possible to argue that becoming a father entailed the highest responsibilities for men. To bear children, a man had to be mature personally and secure financially. Yet the breadwinner's role was the most definitive aspect of father's identity: the man's responsibilities were mainly defined by paid work. Moreover, at a young age, fatherhood also seemed a rather conflictive dimension of masculine identity. Despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of the respondents wanted to have children, they felt that they were not ready for them at this point of their lives.

Thus, despite the differences in their understanding of masculinity and masculinity scripts, most respondents

² It should be emphasized that this respondent, as many others, defined fatherhood as financial support of a family.

believed that good life was comprised of family, children, material welfare and financially rewarding work that served as a guarantee of their happiness. Both traditional and 'dissident' masculinity scripts remained equally linked to the reproduction of a traditional fantasy of family life/partnership and childbearing. It is obvious that normativity of the objects of good life including family forced men to negotiate their masculinity within a rather traditional masculinity script defined by men's economic and breadwinning capacities.

Conclusion

The analysis of the semi-structured interviews demonstrates that 'doing masculinity' is, in most cases, an unreflexive way of enacting and reproducing the ready-made masculinity scripts available in the Lithuanian society. It was difficult for most respondents to answer the questions what masculinity entailed and what it meant to be a man for them personally. They rarely reflected on these issues in their everyday lives.

Despite differences in class, education, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, most men adhered to the traditional masculinity script based on very normative male ideals and practices. In this script prevalent in the Lithuanian society, a man was manly, strong, economically secure, career-minded and successful breadwinner for his family. The dominant masculinity script was inseparable from success, economic, familial and emotional. In the second 'dissident' masculinity script, such characteristics of manhood as politeness, caring, sensitivity and intelligence were considered as defining ones. However, most respondents, even those advocating the script of alternative masculinity clearly realized the dominance and regulative power of the traditional masculinity script resistance to which required a considerable physical and emotional investments. To become an 'acceptable' male subject, a man had to adjust, at least partially, to the normative masculinity framework.

The research findings also indicate that it is incorrect to believe that the script of alternative masculinity is necessarily a liberating one, since even men advocating this script choose rather conventional objects of good life and promote the traditional arrangement of family/partnership as a form of adjustment to 'normal and dignified life'. Despite the differences in their understanding of masculinity and masculinity scripts, most respondents believed that good life was comprised of family, children, material welfare and financially rewarding work that served as a guarantee of their happiness. Men's proximity to this fantasy of good life served as a kind of binding normativity that animated their optimism and made them live their lives.

Both traditional and 'dissident' masculinity scripts remained equally linked to the reproduction of a traditional fantasy of family life/partnership and childbearing. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the choice of different masculinity scripts did not significantly influence the respondents' familial and childbearing intentions. Although having children brings an array of responsibilities, they are also thought of as one of the

important objects of good life. Constructing themselves as 'breadwinners', 'family protectors', and 'father figures', the respondents also enforced their hegemonic power within familial settings.

It can also be argued that in the current regime of gender relations, a meaningful subversion of the dominant masculinity script remains difficult. Yet, the respondents' modest attempt to reflect on the alternative masculinity script may indicate 'new possibilities for challenging old patterns of gender performance, including the performance of masculinity' (Brickell, 2005, p. 39) and a chance for reconfiguring of masculinity practices and masculinity scripts, initially at least at the microlevel of society.

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A. Tereškinas

Vyriškumo scenarijai, geras gyvenimas ir šeiminių intencijos: jaunų lietuvių vyrų atvejis

Santrauka

Straipsnyje siekta atsakyti į klausimus, ką jauniems vyrams reiškia gyventi gerą gyvenimą ir kaip vyriškumas, kaip kasdienis socialinių praktikų ir fantazijų įveikimas, susijęs su gero gyvenimo įsivaizdavimu. Kokius vyriškumo scenarijus tyrime dalyvavę vyrai renka siiekdami išgyventi? Kokį santykį galima nubrėžti tarp vyrų gero gyvenimo įsivaizdavimų ir jų šeiminių ketinimų? Šie klausimai buvo keliami tiriant jaunų vyrų pasirinkamą vyriškumo scenarijų, gero gyvenimo ir šeiminių gyvenimo vizijų santykį. Straipsnyje etnografiškai reflektuojamos kasdienio gyvenimo galimybės ir apribojimai (Das, Kleinman 2001, p. 27), kuriuos tiriami vyrai naudoja konstruodami ir įgyvendindami savo vyrišką tapatybę. Daugiausia dėmesio skiriama vyriškumo scenarijų, gero ir „normalaus“ gyvenimo idealams bei šeiminiams jaunų vyrų ketinimams. Koncentruojantis ties vyriškumo scenarijais ir geru gyvenimu, klausiam, koku būdu pasirinktas vyriškumo scenarijus ir įsivaizduojamas geras gyvenimas gali veikti vyrų ketinimus sukurti šeimą/partnerystę. Ar įmanoma rasti ryšį tarp šių ketinimų, gero gyvenimo įsivaizdavimų ir vyriškumo praktikų, kurias reflektuoja patys vyrai? Kokiais būdais vyrų įsivaizduojamas geras gyvenimas ir laimės jausmo apibūdinimas gali veikti jų šeiminius

pasirinkimus? Būtina pabrėžti, kad nors skirtingos vyriškumo formos yra susijusios su besikeičiančiomis socialinės klasės struktūromis, šiame tyrime nebuvo galimybės išskirti šių struktūrų dėl jauno informantų amžiaus ir skirtingo tyrimo fokuso.

Straipsnyje analizuojami 30 pusiau struktūruotų interviu su skirtingos socialinės padėties, išsilavinimo, darbinio užimtumo, šeiminių statuso, seksualinės orientacijos, neįgaliais, gyvenančiais mieste ir kaime vyrais medžiaga. Tyrimo dalyviai buvo atrinkti tikslinės ir sniego gniūžtės atrankos būdu. Sniego gniūžtės atranka, kai tyrėjų socialinis tinklas arba tyrimo dalyviai tiesiogiai pasiūlė tyrimui informantus, ypač buvo taikoma sunkiau pasiekiamų socialinių grupių atveju (pavyzdžiui, netradicinės seksualinės orientacijos vyrų ir 18–25 amžiaus vyrų). Pagrindiniai tikslinės atrankos kriterijai, kuriais buvo pasirinkti informantai, - amžius (18–34 metų), tėvystės patirties neturėjimas ir skirtingumo kriterijaus išpildymas. Didžioji dalis interviu atlikta 2013 m. birželio – spalio, o keletas 2013 m. lapkričio – 2014 m. sausio mėnesiais. Vidutinė vieno interviu trukmė – 1 val. 49 min. Tyrimo dalyvavo jauni vyrai, gyvenantys Vilniuje (10), Kaune (7), Šiauliuose (4), Panevėžyje (1), Biržuose (1), Šilalėje (1), Šeduvoje (1), Šiaulių rajone (kaime) (1), Alytaus rajone (kaime) (3), Šakių rajone (kaime) (1). Du tyrime dalyvavę informantai nuolat migruoja tarp Lietuvos ir užsienio šalių.

Pagal išsilavinimą informantai pasiskirstė taip: 2 informantai yra įgiję pagrindinį (iš jų 1 šiuo metu siekia vidurinio išsilavinimo), 1 – profesinį, 1 – vidurinį profesinį, 11 vidurinį išsilavinimą (3 iš jų interviu atlikimo metu studijavo universitete, 5 – kolegijoje), 1 informantas, įgijęs aukštesnį išsilavinimą, studijuoja kolegijoje, aukštąjį universitetinį išsilavinimą yra įgiję 12 informantų (1 iš jų yra įgijęs daktaro laipsnį, 7 – magistras), 1 informantas yra įgijęs aukštąjį neuniversitetinį išsilavinimą. Iš 30 informantų 6 turi fizinę negalią (4 informantai yra neįgalūs nuo vaikystės, o 2 negalią patyrė jaunystėje). Tyrimo dalyvavo heteroseksualūs (24), homoseksualūs (4), biseksualūs (1) vyrai. Vienas informantas savo seksualinę orientaciją apibūdino kaip „queer“. Visus informantus galima suskirstyti į tris aiškias – heteroseksualių, homoseksualių ir neįgalų – vyrų grupes (visi neįgalieji buvo heteroseksualūs).

Rašydami apie vyriškumo scenarijus, mokslininkai kalba apie šiuolaikinius išsūkius tradicinėms vyriškumo formoms ir „pereinančias vyriškumo formas“ (Robinson et al., 2011, p. 33). Tačiau kai kurie tyrėjai teigia, kad nors kai kurios vyrų grupės, tokios, kaip profesionalistai ar gėjai vyrai, priešinais tradiciniams vyriškumo scenarijams (Guterman, 2001), didžiuma vyrų privilegijuoja tradicinį vyriškumą, kurį išreiškia finansinė sėkmė, techniniai gebėjimai, fizinė jėga ir seksualinė potencia. Dominuojantis vyriškumo scenarijus pabrėžia tokias „vyriškas vertybes“ kaip drąsa, agresija, autonomija, rizika ir kūno bei proto tvirtumas (Connell, 2005). Darbas ir šeimos maitintojo vaidmuo suvokiamas kaip esminės vyriškos tapatybės bei tradicinio vyriškumo scenarijus sudedamosios dalys.

Mokslininkai, tyrinėjantys Vakarų šalių vyriškumą, identifikuoja tris pagrindinius heteroseksualaus vyriškumo modelius/scenarijus: vidurinės klasės vyriškumą, kurį apibūdina griežta darbo etika, pasiekimų troškimas ir socialinė atsakomybė; darbininkų klasės vyriškumą, pasižymintį agresyviu fiziniu elgesio stiliumi, ir „naująjį vyrą“, kuris pateikia „minkštesnį“, emocingesnį ir anti-mačo vyriškumo vaizdinį (Tolson, 1987; Segal, 1990; Oates-Indruchova, 2012). Galima teigti, kad šie vyriškumo scenarijai tinka apibūdinti ir neheteroseksualų vyriškumą. Kiti mokslininkai kalba apie „transnacionalinį verslo vyriškumą“ ir „buržuazinį racionalų vyriškumą“, kurį suformavo globalus kapitalizmas ir neoliberalios ekonomikos (Youngs 2004, p. 86). Pasak Jeffo Hearn (Hearn, 2011), šiuolaikinį vyriškumą taip pat galima vadinti ir virtualiu bei kiberglobaliu vyriškumu.

Kita svarbi sąvoka, vartojama analizuoti pusiau struktūruotus interviu su jaunais vyrais, yra gero gyvenimo sąvoka. Ką reiškia gyventi gerą gyvenimą ir kokios sąlygos bei aplinkybės jam būtinos? Gero gyvenimo klausimą socialinių ir humanitarinių mokslų atstovai diskutuoja jau ne vieną dešimtmetį. Dalis tyrinėtojų gerą gyvenimą tapatina su ekonomine gerove, klestėjimu ir saugumu. Kiti mano, kad gerą gyvenimą užtikrina politinių sistemų ir socialinių institucijų stabilumas, tvarūs ir ilgalaikiai tarpasmeniniai žmonių santykiai, asmens saugumas darbo rinkose ir su visais šiais dalykais susijusi emocinė gerovė. Dažnai gero gyvenimo problema analizuojama gyvenimo kokybės kontekste. Čia atotrūkis tarp gyvenimo, koks jis yra, ir įsivaizdavimo, koks jis turėtų būti, ir išreiškia subjektyvų gyvenimo kokybės supratimą (Veenhoven, 2006).

Pusiau struktūruotų interviu analizė rodo, kad daugeliu atveju vyrai nereflektavo savo vyriškumo ir vyriškumo apskritai. Jiems buvo sunku atsakyti į klausimus apie tai, ką vyriškumas reiškia jiems asmeniškai ir kokie vyriškumo scenarijai vyrauja Lietuvoje.

Nepaisant informantų socialinių, išsilavinimo, amžiaus, fizinio įgalumo, seksualinės orientacijos skirtumų, dauguma jų buvo linkę patvirtinti tradicinį vyriškumo scenarijų, besiremiantį normatyvinėmis vyriškumo praktikomis ir idealais. Šiame scenarijuje, kuris dominuoja Lietuvoje, vyrui svarbiausia yra ekonominė, šeimtinė ir emocinė sėkmė. Kai kurie tyrime dalyvavę vyrai (jų mažuma) rinkosi antrą vyriškumo scenarijų, kurį galima vadinti disidentiniu ir kuriame tokie bruožai, kaip jautrumas, rūpestingumas, mandagumas, supratingumas ir inteligentiškumas buvo pabrėžiami kaip esminiai vyrui. Tačiau net ir tie informantai, kurie priskyrė savo elgesį pastarajam scenarijui, teigė, kad tradicinis vyriškumo scenarijus turi reguliuojančią ir disciplinuojančią galią Lietuvos visuomenėje. Siekiant būti pripažintam kaip vyrui, svarbu prisitaikyti prie šio scenarijaus. O norint jam priešintis, reikia nemažai emocinių ir fizinių jėgų.

Tyrimo duomenys taip pat rodo, kad neteisinga manyti, jog alternatyvaus vyriškumo scenarijus yra būtina išlaisvinantis, nes net tie vyrai, kurie save apibūdino kaip besiremiantys šiuo scenarijumi, rinkosi gana konvencinius gero gyvenimo objektus ir susiejo save su gana tradiciniu šeimos/partnerystės įsivaizdavimu. Nepaisant skirtumų apibūdinant vyriškumo scenarijus, dauguma informantų manė, kad gerą gyvenimą sudaro šeima, vaikai, materialinis saugumas, gerai apmokamas darbas. Pastarieji dalykai taip pat buvo jų laimės garantas, kuris skatino vyrų optimizmą ir tikėjimą ateitimi.

Kaip rodo tyrimas, tiek tradicinis, tiek disidentinis vyriškumo scenarijai buvo panašiu mastu susiję su tradicinės šeimos/partnerystės fantazijos bei vaikų turėjimo atgaminimu. Tad galima teigti, kad skirtingų vyriškumo scenarijų pasirinkimas reikšmingai nelemia informantų šeiminių ir prokreacinių intencijų. Nors vaikų turėjimas, informantų nuomone, susijęs su didele atsakomybe, jie buvo apibūdinami kaip svarbūs gero gyvenimo objektai. Konstruodami savo kaip „šeimos maitintojus“, „šeimos gynėjus“ ir „tėčių figūras“, informantai taip pat patvirtino savo hegemoninę galią įsivaizduojamų šeimų kontekste.

Galima teigti, kad šiuolaikiniame lyčių tvarkos režime itin sunku priešintis vyraujantiems vyriškumo scenarijui. Tačiau informantų mėginimą reflektuoti alternatyvias vyriškumo trajektorijas ir galimybes galima suvokti kaip nedrąsų bandymą keisti įsigalėjusias vyriškumo praktikas, kad ir visuomenės mikrolygmenyje.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: vyriškumas, vyriškumo scenarijai, geras gyvenimas, jauni vyrai, šeimtinės intencijos.

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