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### **Representations of men and the politics of the manhood in the 20th-late 21st century Lithuanian theatre of drama**

Vulnerability of men and the manifestation of the manhood crisis in the 20<sup>th</sup>-late 21<sup>st</sup> century Lithuanian theatre of drama – this is a succinct definition of the key issue of this thesis. The topic is explained, and the goal is reached by analysing plays of the most prominent Lithuanian drama directors of three different generations: the old generation is represented by E. Nekrošius, J. Vaitkus, J. Jurašas, the middle generation – by O. Koršunovas, G. Varnas, and the young one – by A. Areima, A. Jankevičius, and V. Bareikis.

We can clearly see signs of post-soviet trauma and images like passiveness, humility, shame, disappointment, powerlessness and introverted aggression in the works by the old generation. In their plays the vulnerability of men and the crisis that splits and weakens them is a prominent result of external circumstances. The men of the usurped country only symbolically dominate and represent the patriarchal system. But in reality, they are imprisoned in a non-performing and non-functional patriarchy. Markers such as power and control indicate hegemony and the patriarch system, but men of a captive nation are stripped away from them. Therefore, a colonized man does not possess these attributes and is ashamed - his experience and his despair become a trauma. Nevertheless, we emphasize that even though manhood goes through trauma, men confront the opposition and, to be more precise, become metaphoric rebels.

The middle generation is represented by directors who grew up in a soviet system and later experienced a social and cultural impact of the Western world. In the works of G. Varnas and O. Koršunovas we see first images of postmodernism. While their works still emphasize allusion towards the post-soviet stigma, plays by G. Varnas and O. Koršunovas show manhood without the burden of colonization – men can freely use the privilege of hegemony without the threat of the great Other (coloniser), so they regain their power and control. However, hegemony also lays the foundation of crisis. Men are barely images of privileged hegemony that only multiplies insignificant markers which disclose a fact that in a patriarch system men are vulnerable due to requirements set out by the patriarchic system. The majority of men that go through this traumatic experience encourage self-destruction and violence

towards themselves and others. While the plays by the old generation the soviet trauma encourages the manhood crisis, directors of the middle generation encourage the crisis via hyperbolization of hegemony and strict patriarch requirements. G. Varnas portrays queer subjects in his plays - this is a way to emphasize the manhood crisis, as well as, the freedom and the strength of manhood.

The young generation, V. Bareikis, A. Areima and A. Jankevičius, reveal manhood by following the footsteps of the old and the middle generation. Here we can see a repetition of a metaphoric theatre and the proliferation of postmodern clichés. We also discuss not only a manhood crisis but also a theatre crisis ever more present in the Lithuanian theatre of drama. The research of the work of these directors was supported by simulations and the theory of simulacrum – what we see on stage is a multiplying passive faceless and pointless reproduction. In this context manhood goes through a crisis because of a crisis. Men cannot comprehend who they are, what masculine norms they represent and what codes they make. There is no room for contemplation, assessment or conclusions. While the middle generation directors portrayed manhood going through a crisis because of a significant commodification, policy of consumerism, and stricter hegemonous standards, the directors of a young generation show a crisis going through dissemination. It is everywhere and at the same time – nowhere. Men give in for resignation and doubt.

The analysis of manhood crisis images was done by using J. Derrida's signs of deconstruction philosophy in the interpretation of cultural texts. In this thesis we use Derrida's deconstruction not as a tool but as a way of thinking. The research was done by using the aspects of deconstructed way of thinking: ambiguousness, uncertainty, multiplicity, never-ending division, confirmation and negation at the same time. The ambiguous relationship between men and men as well as men and women, images of men, performativity of men and the policy of manhood are revealed in the plays by using different theoretic approaches: Baudrillard's simulacra and simulation, M. Foucault's mechanisms of control, queer and gender study discourse, theory of a soviet system and a post-soviet trauma, cool Britannia and principles of postmodern dissociation.

This research explains what causes the manhood crisis and what implicates that a man is going through one as well as discusses if a feminism rebellion in Lithuania is a result of a manhood crisis and the result of an irrelevant masculine discourse?