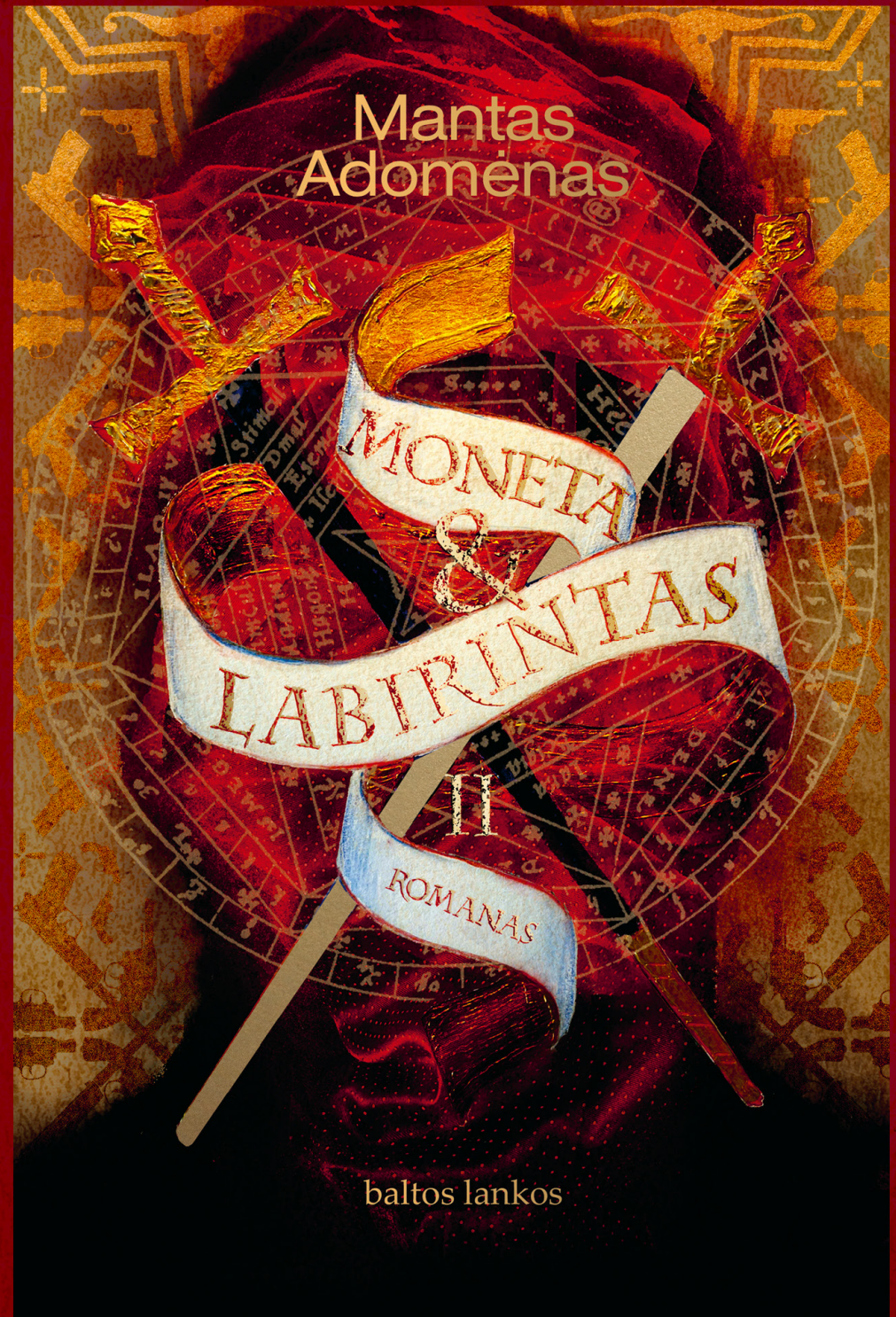


**2025
ADULT RIGHTS GUIDE**

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FICTION



The Coin & the Labyrinth

(Book I)

by Mantas Adomėnas

LITERARY SPY THRILLER

Published in 2023

576 pages; full English translation available

Published in Latvia in 2025 (Zvaigzne ABC)

- Fiction Book of the Year 2023 in Lithuania
- No. 1 bestseller in Lithuania
- Included in the list of Top 12 Most Creative Books of 2023 in Lithuania

He looked at the ten-rouble coin, and examined it carefully, as if hoping to read something in it. For some reason, he remembered Borges' short story about Zahir, a mystical object: once you see it, you can't forget it, and eventually it obsessively captures all your thoughts. Zahir's reincarnation was a coin that Borges' character received as change in the suburbs of Buenos Aires. He smiled – one could hardly imagine a less memorable object than a ten-rouble coin. He took it, thinking idly to himself that even such an insignificant artefact was a fairly accurate expression of the state that had created it, its ideology or mentality – whatever you call it.

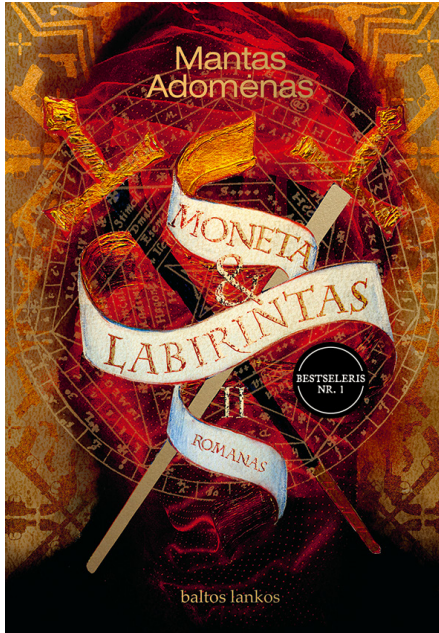
The core events of the first novel in the duology THE COIN & THE LABYRINTH take place in 2018, in Nizhnevinsk, Northern Russia. Tomas Narvydas, an intelligence officer in the Deep Geopolitics Division of the Lithuanian Security Service, follows a cold trail. A year ago, in this city right next to the Arctic Circle, his mentor and friend, Leonas Nevardauskas, was found drowned in a river. At first glance, his death looks like an accident, but what was a man hated by the FSB doing alone in a remote Russian village? Why was a belemnite stone, also known as the Devil's Finger, found in the deceased's pocket? What secret is encrypted in an unfinished manuscript of a novel found in his drawer?

Tomas embarks on a labyrinthine journey towards the truth, through the darkness of Russia and his own past. From Tomas' first encounter with his intriguing lecturer Leonas at Vilnius university, his life in the bohemian cafes of Vilnius at the dawn of the country's independence, his interest in medieval studies and unrequited love for the alluring Monika, enigmatically marked with melancholy, to the dangerous intelligence operations of 1990s Lithuania, and the attempt of Tomas and Leonas to open the door to the world of today's Great Game – a world of secret political movements, conspiracy theories, enemy efforts to subjugate minds through esoteric means – and the battle between good and evil.

Mantas Adomėnas (b. 1972) was educated as a Classicist at Vilnius University, then received his PhD in philosophy at Cambridge University. He is also a well-known former Lithuanian politician, having held the office of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs from 2021 to 2023. He currently holds the office of the new Secretary General of the Community of Democracies (CoD). THE COIN & THE LABYRINTH is Adomėnas' fiction debut.

Contains both an allegory and a philosophy of intelligence, but of course the reader is initially grabbed and drawn deeper by the romance of espionage. There are also detective mysteries and what some would probably call magical realism. Although I would call it realistic magic.

Bernardas Gailius, author, historian



The Coin & the Labyrinth

(Book II)

by Mantas Adomėnas

LITERARY SPY THRILLER

Published in 2024

560 pages

Rights sold: Latvia (Zvaigzne ABC)

- No. 1 bestseller in Lithuania
- Nominated for Fiction Book of the Year 2024 award

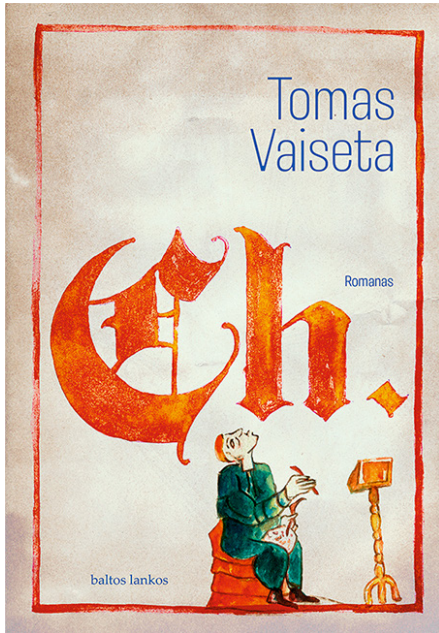
THE COIN & THE LABYRINTH has truly become an important event in the Lithuanian literary world. We now have a carefully written, intellectually philosophical spy novel in the tradition of John le Carré and Robert Harris.

Andrius Tapinas,
one of the most prominent journalists and
TV anchors in Lithuania

In the second and final instalment of the duology THE COIN & THE LABYRINTH, Tomas Narvydas, an intelligence officer in the Deep Geopolitics Division of the Lithuanian Security Service, and his enigmatic colleague Monika continue their labyrinthine journey towards the truth. Where will the mystery encrypted in the manuscript of their murdered teacher Leo lead? Will they be able to dismantle the network of spies in the Lithuanian state institutions, marked by the acrostic OCTAVUS? How is the main antagonist of the book, the Academic, related to the ancient theory of the Third Rome? What is the real aim of the Operation Devil's Finger, or the 'Lost Chance' Brotherhood, and will it be possible to fight against it?

From Vilnius and Nizhnedvinsk in northern Russia to Rome, Vienna, Istanbul, Kiev and eastern Ukraine, in the face of the Great Game of 2018 and the war on Ukraine that Russia started in 2014, the spiritual wars of good and evil that began centuries ago are simmering, as are the enemies' attempts to metaphysically subjugate minds and entire territories.

Mantas Adomėnas (b.1972) was educated as a Classicist at Vilnius University, then received his PhD in philosophy at Cambridge University. He is also a well-known former Lithuanian politician, having held the office of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs from 2021 to 2023. He currently holds the office of the new Secretary General of the Community of Democracies (CoD). THE COIN & THE LABYRINTH is Adomėnas' fiction debut.



Ch. (A Short History of a Guillotine)

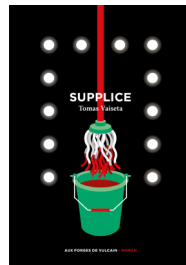
by Tomas Vaiseta

LITERARY FICTION | A NOVEL

Published in 2021

240 pages; full French translation
and sample in English available

- Nominated for the European Union Prize for Literature 2022
- Awarded the Jurga Ivanauskaitė Literary Prize 2022
- Included in the list of Top 12 Most Creative Books of 2021



Published in France in 2024
(Aux forges du Vulcain)

Vaiseta's experimental writing invites us to be carried along, slowly enter the sinuosities of a thought process that is by turns absurd or grotesque, but always tragically striking.

Le Monde

This novel goes against the grain... A discovery of an exceptional author who will definitely leave his mark on literature.

Renaud Monfourny, Les Inrocks

The plot of "Ch. (A Short History of a Guillotine)" centres around the main character Charlie (or, as he calls himself, Charlemagne). A former librarian who, after his daughter gets kidnapped and burned alive in a car's trunk, decides to work as a stagehand at an unusual theatre where performances last until death. Such theatres are said to appear during the darkest years of tribulation to atone for the sins of mankind. Upon entering the stage, the actors reenact the story of the torture of Saint Denis, the bishop of Paris, as it used to be depicted in medieval performances: they are burned, whipped, fed to wild beasts.

This story can be read as an elegy of a father mourning his murdered daughter; an allegory of purgatory, created in Charlie's mind for the people who, in one way or another, were responsible for the death of his daughter, abundant in references to the Bible, Carolingian culture, and literary fiction; a warning of an imposter prophet about the end of European culture; an ode to cats, Charlie's greatest companions and allies who were sent to fight the Devil.

Tomas Vaiseta (b. 1984) is a writer and historian. He holds a doctorate degree in humanities and works as an associate professor at the Faculty of History, Vilnius University. His debut collection of short stories "Paukščių miegas" ("The Sleep of Birds", 2014) and his novel "Orfėjas, kelionė pirmyn ir atgal" ("Orpheus: A Journey There and Back", 2016) were included in the national list of top 5 books for adults in the "Book of the Year" selection. Three short stories from his book "The Sleep of Birds" were published in English in 2023 by "Strangers Press" in their chapbook series. Vaiseta has also written three historical monographs: "Nuobodulio visuomenė" ("Society of Boredom", 2014), "Vasarnamis" ("Summerhouse", 2018), and, together with historian Valdemaras Klumbys, "Mažasis O: seksualumo kultūra sovietų Lietuvoje" ("The Little O: Culture of Sexuality in Soviet Lithuania", 2022).



Nobody Believes in Devils in the City

by **Kostas Strielkūnas**

COSY CRIME | A NOVEL

Forthcoming in 2025

336 pages;

sample available in English

There are very few detective stories set in Lithuania. For a long time, I wanted to write something that captured the feel of a small-town atmosphere of Agatha Christie's "Miss Marple" series and, at the same time, would be uniquely Lithuanian.

Kostas Strielkūnas

Who would have thought that mixing ancient pagan superstitions, snapshots of modern-day rural life in Lithuania, a partisan's diary written in a forest bunker after the war, and the personal struggles of a Vilnius resident on a short visit to the countryside could result in such a gripping, layered, and genuinely engaging rural detective novel? Rokas Kėsus, the reluctant sleuth at the center of the story, investigates alone – but in place of the usual detective sidekick, he's aided by a couple of imaginary animals that help him make sense of the bizarre and inexplicable events unfolding around him. The characters feel like people you know – flawed but endearing, almost like family. The dialogue sparkles with wit, the pacing is tight and rhythmic, and the ending is both surprising and, in a strange way, completely logical. A true delight.

Rasa Drazdauskienė, co-author of a national broadcaster's "LRT" program on crime fiction, translator

"Nobody Believes in Devils in the City" is a rural detective story inspired by the figure of the devil in Baltic mythology. The novel weaves together three timelines: the suicide of a young man seven years ago in the village of Kalniškis, a series of unexplained deaths and mysterious letters signed by the devil himself in the present day, and the dark story of the guerilla war against the

Soviet Union in 1944–1953. It's also the story of Rokas Kėsus, a Vilnius resident who escapes the city to the countryside after a bad breakup. Ultimately, the book is a somewhat humorous exploration of the contrasts between city and country life, past and present, and God and the devil.

Kostas Strielkūnas (b.1998) is a writer, project manager, and football commentator. He has won the intellectual TV game show "Who and Why" and is now attempting to win another one called "The Golden Mind".



Mindseer

by **Sophia Živilė Mitkė**

UPMARKET FANTASY | A NOVEL

Forthcoming in 2025

~ 480 pages; sample available in English

Today, many people struggle with mental health, and psychologists often say: control your thoughts and you'll control yourself. In my work, this idea takes a magical form – thoughts are visible, and whoever controls them controls the world. Evil isn't a monster in the dark, but an idea that spreads from person to person.

Sophia Živilė Mitkė

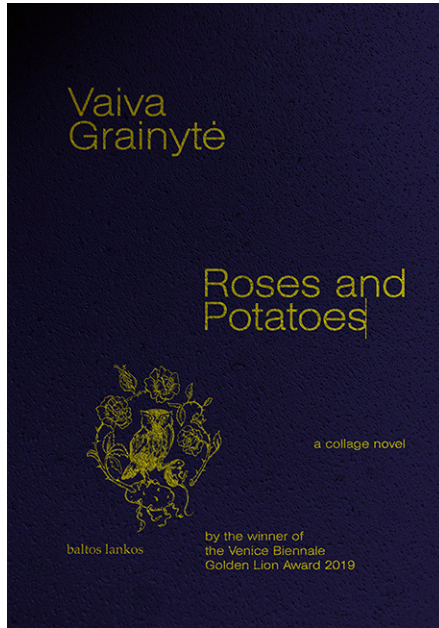
“Mindseer” is a work of fantasy about people with special magical powers: the ability to see and control other people’s thoughts. The main character of the novel, Klaudijus, is a young thief sentenced to slavery by the order of judges in his country, Karelia. When he is unexpectedly gifted with a special power – the ability to see other people’s thoughts – the ruthless order of judges gives the young man two years: either he becomes one of them, or he dies.

A soul-snatching disease is ravaging the world, stealing people’s souls. One stray thought is all it takes – and thoughts know no borders, no laws. Klaudijus has vi-

sions, and the young man believes that he is destined to save the world. While serving the judges, he meets Helena, a princess from the country of Nevara who has fled her duties and has magical powers to heal and protect.

Can these two young people, raised in nations steeped in tension and mistrust, overcome their differences, become allies, and stop the spread of the soul-snatching disease? And will the legendary Gates – said to hold the key to saving the world and known only to the cunning Judge Atrijus – finally open to them?

Sophia Živilė Mitkė (b. 1992) is a writer, artist, and former programmer currently living in New Zealand. For the past six years, she has been focused on developing her “Mindseer” series. This book is the first instalment in that series.



Roses and Potatoes

by **Vaiva Grainytė**

LITERARY FICTION | UPMARKET FICTION | A NOVEL

Published in 2022

324 pages;

full English translation available

By the winner of the Venice Biennale Golden Lion Award 2019

Kevin and I were watching a silly comedy yesterday which featured a chimpanzee dressed in a butler's uniform: the animal smiles and laughs so much you'd think it actually liked being fondled and tugged by the characters in the film.

Animals smile – show their teeth – from terror, in order to frighten, defend themselves and ward off danger. So that furry film character was probably utterly terrified.

You know, in this land of forced smiles, I sometimes feel the same way.

The bilingual (Lithuanian and English) collage novel “Roses and Potatoes” playfully deconstructs the stereotypical concept of happiness embedded in contemporary culture. In a world that has ground to a halt due to the pandemic, the novel’s protagonists and allegorical figures each seek, reflect on and affirm happiness in their own particular way: Davis in Canada, agonising over his articles; Vika living in isolation; brothers connected by calculations and genetic tests; a woman suffering from cancer; a mouse searching for a morsel to eat; an owl disregarding ancient theories of warmth; a virus looking for a more spacious place to live; the country of Denmark, nominated as one of the happiest countries of the world.

The fragments of the characters’ everyday lives – letters, dreams, diary extracts, social media posts, alter ego passages – are all creatively combined with the rhetoric of essays, articles, and topical issues, juxtaposed with cultural and historical intertexts and surprising insights regarding sociology, psychology, zoology, and phrenology. All this intrigue – a surrealist mosaic of miniatures of happiness – is permeated by the themes existing on the fringes of melancholy: loneliness, burnout, forebodings of disaster, dictatorship of conventional norms, and longing for connection.

Vaiva Grainytė (b. 1984) is a writer, poet, playwright, and the recipient of the Lithuanian National Culture and Art Prize (2019), who, together with other co-authors, won the Golden Lion statue at the Venice Biennale of Contemporary Art in 2019, for the opera-performance “Sun and Sea”. Her two books – an essay collection “Beijing Diaries” (2012) and a poetry collection “Gorilla Archives” (2019) – were both nominated for the national “Book of the Year” award and were included in the list of 12 most creative books of the year. The author’s work has been already translated into more than ten languages.



Oder

by Dainius Vanagas

UPMARKET FICTION | A NOVEL

Published in 2021

272 pages;

sample available in English

Take a bit of Orwell's pessimistic despair, a bit of Huxley's hedonistic desperation, add some of our own eternal wish to correct things to make it better, throw in loads of social experiments that already take place in our ever-changing world, and there you have it – the future that you wish would never come true. Chilling.

Aidas Puklevičius, a Lithuanian journalist, writer, and influencer

Please understand me properly: I like beautiful things. In the same way, I also like beautiful ideas. And the pricelessness of life, no doubt, is exactly that. A beautiful idea. And I like the idea, really, and if you were talking about my mother, my wife, or even me, I would say exactly that. These lives are priceless.

But does everyone see it this way? Absolutely not!

We put value on people on a daily basis because that is the essence of communication: valuation.

We sort each other into categories all the time: poor and rich, black and white, men and women, young and old, working class and elite, educated and simple, useful and useless.

The idea isn't very beautiful, of course. But it is realistic.

"Oder" is a dystopian novel set in a fictional totalitarian city by the same name in Central Europe in the near future, 2050. To solve the problems of immigration and ineffective policies, the authorities of Oder take on radical measures: they decide to build a giant wall around the city and keep in only those citizens who are economically utile. You can be a part of this prosperous world only if you can prove you are useful.

Written in sharp, short, even claustrophobic sentences, the novel comprises three intertwined parts that differ in style and narrator's perspective. One part is an interrogation of the city mayor, now imprisoned; the second part consists of short philosophical essays that explore modern life and the purpose of a human being; the final part is a story of Alan who is deemed worthless and, after being deported, has to find his way back to Oder and the society he once belonged to.

Dainius Vanagas (b. 1989) is a writer, literary translator, and senior editor at the national radio station "LRT Klasika". He received his bachelor's degree in cultural history in 2012 and his master's degree in semiotics in 2014, both from Vilnius University. Since 2010, Vanagas has been writing for the national cultural press and has published over 130 pieces of literary criticism and prose, which are distinct for their experimental structure and dynamic, intense style. "Oder", his debut novel, has been chosen by the readers of the nation's most popular news website "15min.lt" as one of their favourite books of the year 2021.

NON-FICTION



Outsider

by Deimantė Rudžinskaitė

NON-FICTION | MEMOIR

Published in 2024

288 pages; sample available in English

- No. 1 bestseller in Lithuania
- Nominated for Book of the Year 2024 award (non-fiction category)

My mother keeps reminding me to avoid friendships with the outsiders – Worldly people: they are a bad influence on God's servants.

From my mother's stories, I imagine that the Worldly children are like little donkeys, their apartment keys tied around their necks, jingling like little bells. Most of the wandering waifs outside my window are my peers, as if all the children in the yard were born on the same day like a large litter of puppies. This number of children is a great test of my faith, because although I am very good at spending time alone, every year I get more curious...

Growing up as a Jehovah's Witness, Deimantė believed that the end of the world was just around the corner. That's why everyday her mother and her would spread the "Good News" in the streets of Šiauliai: when the Armageddon comes, Jehovah will call those who are devoted to him into his kingdom. But Deimantė also knew that paradise comes at a price – a complete separation from the "Worldly people", outsiders who do not believe in Jehovah, and their supposedly satanic influence.

The girl's loneliness was exacerbated by the fact that she could not talk to anyone about the horrors she was

experiencing at home: the abuse of her mother and father, like the scourge of God, would come upon her every time she disobeyed their strict rules. Later, Deimantė's fear turned into anger and adolescent rebellion: the girl was not afraid to drastically change her appearance and even tried running away from home. However, resisting her parents and their beliefs eventually became life-threatening for her.

"Outsider" is a story of liberation from psychological, physical, and spiritual abuse. The book is a sincere, unsparing and sometimes ironic account of the power of self-belief and hope.

Deimantė Rudžinskaitė (b. 1993) is a photographer and stylist, born and raised in Šiauliai, Lithuania. "Outsider" is her first book.

When you read Tara Westover's "Educated", it seems that her Mormon life is too far away to ring true. Deimantė's extraordinary openness and courage reminds me of Tara. But Deimantė saving herself happens so close to home that your body goes limp with the realisation: this happened in our own backyard.

Dovilė Filmanavičiūtė, TV presenter



Weightmania:

My Journey to 100 Kilos and Back

by **Aistė Simėnaitė**

NON-FICTION | MEMOIR

Published in 2024

272 pages; sample available in English

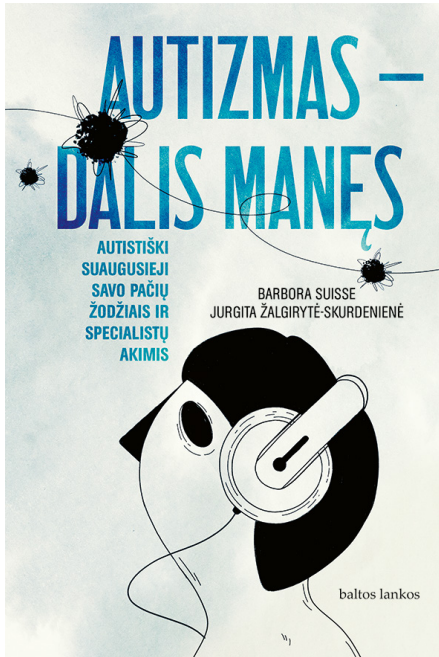
I wish I could have read a book like this five, ten, even fifteen years ago. I wish I'd known I wasn't the only one who cried while staring into the mirror, wondering what would happen if I took a kitchen knife and cut away the parts of myself that felt like they were keeping me from truly living. I wish I could have handed a book like this to my parents, my grandparents, my teachers, my friends – and most of all, to myself. To the girl who believed she had to change her body to deserve to exist.

A weightmania has swept over the world. We calculate our worth in kilograms and clothing sizes. Millions of people are going through hell to conform to imposed beauty standards. In my life, one diet was always replaced by another, then the kilos would come back with a vengeance, and the radio of weightmania would buzz in my head: “centimetres, grams, kilos, calories, fats, proteins, carbohydrates...” What a high price I had to pay to have that internal radio destroyed.

Aistė Simėnaitė

WEIGHTMANIA is a powerful true story about a young woman's battle with weight and food. It begins with her early awareness of looking different from the popular girls at school and follows her journey through multiple eating disorders, including surgical treatment for obesity – each stage marked by intense emotional struggles. Aistė Simėnaitė offers a raw and honest account of the many difficult paths that the desire to “fix” one's body can take.

Aistė Simėnaitė (b. 1992) is a TV and radio producer and presenter, journalist, and blogger.



Autism is Part of Me:

Autistic Adults in their Own Words and through the Eyes of Specialists

by **Barбора Suisse and Jurgita Žalgirytė-Skurdenienė**

NON-FICTION | MENTAL HEALTH

Published in 2024

368 pages; sample available in English

- No. 1 bestseller in Lithuania

I don't have disorders – I have challenges. My strangeness won't go away if I validate myself by getting a diagnosis. Autism is me, it's a part of my personality. It's not something I can put in my pocket now and then throw away later.

“Autism Is Part of Me” presents 15 stories of autistic adults, allowing a better understanding of the everyday life of a person living with the autism spectrum disorder, the challenges they face and the ways they find to overcome them. These short life stories, illustrated by Tatjana Pleskevičienė, who is also a member of the community of autistic adults, are followed in the second part of the book by interviews with child and adolescent psychiatrist Prof. Dainius Puras, disability-rights expert Prof. Jonas Ruškus, medical anthropologist Dr. Daiva Bartušienė, and the President of the Lithuanian Association of Psychiatrists Dr. Ramunė Mazaliauskienė.

The book invites readers to explore the unique world of autistic people and aims to dispel the uncertainty often felt by parents of children with autism spectrum disorder: what kind of a future awaits my child, will he or she have friends, a family, a job? Does an autistic adult need help – and if so, what kind? The authors of the book, Barбора Suisse and Jurgita Žalgirytė-Skurdenienė, are convinced that “answers are liberating: they give a name to challenges, <...> they help us find people similar to us”.

Currently, the Lithuanian theater company “Atviras ratas” is preparing a stage play titled “Spectrum: Invisible Stories” based on the real stories presented in the book.

Barбора Suisse is a neurodiversity advocate, speaker, founder of the initiative “Draugiški Autizmui” (Eng. Autism-Friendly) and the autistic adult community “Mes spektre” (Eng. We on the Spectrum), as well as a mother of an autistic child. She's also a member of the Board of the Lithuanian Diversity Charter. She provides training and workshops to companies to help them become autism-and-neurodiversity-friendly.

Jurgita Žalgirytė-Skurdenienė is a medical psychologist (“EuroPsy”), music therapist, and lecturer at Vilnius University and the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. She consults autistic people, as well as their families and employers, and conducts training sessions on autism for various companies and specialists in many diverse fields.

Tatjana Pleskevičienė is a Lithuanian artist and illustrator. The illustrations she created for “Autism Is Part of Me” have been exhibited at many institutions, from the Lithuanian Presidential Palace to companies like “Western Union”, “Vinted”, and “Moody's”.



The Overlooked Organ:

How Every Woman Can Take Care of Her Brain and Hormonal Health

by **Emilė Radytė**

NON-FICTION | NEUROSCIENCE | WOMEN'S HEALTH

Forthcoming in 2026

60 000 – 90 000 words

PROPOSAL available in English

“The Overlooked Organ” is a book every woman should read at least once in her life. It’s a guide to understanding your body through your brain: how hormones shape your mind, mood, and pain experience – not as mystical forces, but through clear, measurable, biological pathways. Dr. Emilė Radytė draws from neuroscience, biology, psychology, cultural critique, and emerging therapeutics to reveal what’s been overlooked for too long: the brain, a central player in women’s health, performance, and recovery. This is a book to de-mystify, to arm with knowledge, and to help women advocate for their well-being with scientific authority.

The book unfolds across three parts, tracing how women’s hormones work, and how women’s hormonal experiences have been medicalized without neuropsychiatric context, then reframing women’s mental and physical health through a brain-first lens and, finally, exploring emerging solutions that treat the brain and mind, not just “the hormones”. Dr. Radytė offers a new model of women’s health that integrates the brain, respects the cycle, and supports lifelong change to allow women to live the highest quality of life they deserve.

Emilė Radytė (b. 1998) is a neuroscientist and technologist, holding a PhD in Psychiatry and Engineering from the University of Oxford, a Master’s in Neuroscience from Oxford, and a Bachelor’s in Neuroscience & Anthropology from Harvard (summa cum laude). She is also the co-founder and CEO of “Samphire Neuroscience”, a company pioneering neurotechnology solutions for women’s health. Her flagship innovation, Nettle™, is the first wearable treatment designed to reduce PMS and menstrual pain without drugs or hormones, bridging the gap between neuroscience and the lived experiences of millions. Dr. Radytė collaborates with research teams at Stanford, Harvard, UCL, Monash, Kaiser Permanente, Caltech, and others. Her work has been widely featured in the media, including “Forbes 30 Under 30”, New Scientist, TechCrunch, WIRED, and Brummell.



Babies Do Not Come From Cabbages:

How to Have Honest Conversations About Sexuality

by **Akvilė Giniota**

NON-FICTION | EDUCATION | SEXUALITY

Forthcoming in 2026

60 000 – 90 000 words

Sample available in English

Until recently, mental health was something we rarely spoke about openly. Even today, we're still learning how to recognize and challenge the stigma that surrounds it. But mental health is just one part of our overall well-being. Sexual health, too, is often overlooked – ignored, misunderstood, or even treated with discomfort or ridicule. Yet, sexual health isn't just about being free from sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). It's deeply connected to self-esteem, body image, relationships, and the sense that our sexual lives contribute to, rather than take away from, a fulfilling life.

If we want a society that is healthy, compassionate, and sexually literate, we need education that goes beyond biology to include the emotional, social, and cultural dimensions of sexuality. Sexual literacy shouldn't be a luxury or an option – it's essential. It's an investment in overall well-being.

Akvilė Giniota

This book is a rare and bold aid for adults who want to learn how to talk openly about sexuality with their children and with themselves. Drawing on years of practice, research, and personal experience, Dr. Akvilė Giniota reveals why our cultural silence in this area is harmful and offers concrete ways to turn it into lively, comfortable conversations. This is a universal book, relevant to any society that wants to raise critical, dignified, and empathetic people.

Akvilė Giniota (b. 1988) holds a doctorate in educational sciences and has over a decade of experience as a sexuality education practitioner, working with children, young people, and adults. In 2023, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania honored her with an award for her contributions to sexuality education and human rights. She is also a mother of two.



The Little O: Culture of Sexuality in Soviet Lithuania

by Tomas Vaiseta and Valdemaras Klumbys

NON-FICTION | HISTORY | CULTURE

Published in 2023

400 pages; comprehensive summary available in English

Rights sold: Poland
(Wydawnictwo Księgarnia Akademicka)

- Book of The Year 2023 (non-fiction category)
- No. 1 bestseller in Lithuania

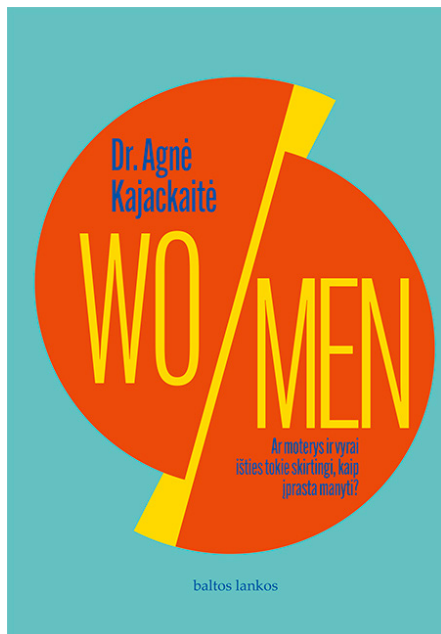
In the West, “The Big O” became the axis of the events of 1968, when public discourse welcomed the topics of sexual relationships, pleasure, and the importance of (female) orgasm, as well as its liberating and emancipating force, which brought on a cultural change that was nothing short of a revolution. Interestingly, at the end of the 1960s, notions of the sexual life and the issue of female sexual frustration also entered public debates in Soviet Lithuania. Yet, these questions (just like many other issues related to sexuality) were restrained, their importance lessened. Instead, these issues were framed within glorified discussions on love, family, and the relationships between sexes; the vital issue of women’s sexual frustration was unsolved. Therefore, the sexual culture of the time had to develop around “The Little O”.

Probably the first monograph in Lithuanian publishing history that bears the disclaimer “only for adults”! With it, historians Valdemaras Klumbys and Tomas Vaiseta have entered a territory in which they were not supposed to find much – after all, the belief that sexual culture was non-existent in Soviet Lithuania is still quite pervasive. Yet, the authors reveal a very diverse and dynamic culture: the Soviet press apparently enjoyed publishing sexualized images of women, which could have led to a cultural revolution if it were not for the instant backlash from the government; with the advent of VHS players, groups of people used to gather to watch pornography; doctors patiently educated husbands who were unable to satisfy their wives.

Klumbys and Vaiseta ground their research on press archives, diaries, memories, interviews, and approach the sexual culture of the Soviet period through three perspectives: public images, texts related to sexual education and sexuality, and society’s behaviour. They claim that the Soviet period was marked by a dictatorship of love, which successfully repressed a sexual revolution, but then led to a sexual civil war.

Valdemaras Klumbys (b. 1979) holds a doctorate degree in humanities and works as a historian at the Lithuanian History Institute, as well as a lecturer at the Faculty of History, Vilnius University. He has been carrying out research on resistance movements during the Soviet period and the social as well as cultural history of Soviet Lithuania. Dr. Klumbys published a historical monograph titled “Having Stood Under a Tree? The Behavioural Strategies of Lithuanian Intelligentsia During the Soviet Period” (2021).

Tomas Vaiseta (b. 1984) is a writer and historian. He holds a doctorate degree in humanities and works as an associate professor at the Faculty of History, Vilnius University. Dr. Vaiseta published two historical monographs: “Society of Boredom: Lithuania in the Late Soviet Period (1964-1984)” (2014) and “Summerhouse: The Social History of Vilnius Psychiatric Hospital, 1944-1990” (2018).



WO/MEN:

by Agnė Kajackaitė

NON-FICTION | SOCIOLOGY | BEHAVIOURAL ECONOMICS

Published in 2023

208 pages; full English translation available

The Eternal Battle of the Sexes, or How Different We Truly Are?

I can't think of a book that I'm looking forward to more than this one.

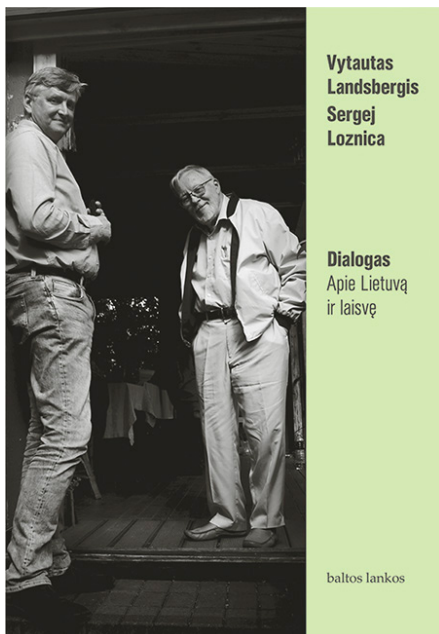
Prof. Uri Gneezy, Israeli-American behavioural economist, co-author of "The Why Axis"

Gender is an important and sensitive topic that is discussed often and almost everywhere. Policies are made around gender and around insights we think we have on gender. It is therefore quite harmful that the discussion about gender differences, gender roles, and gender equality is so often based on non-scientific knowledge and stereotypes. We need science to back up what we think we know about gender. We need it right here, right now, and we need it badly.

In the last twenty years, behavioural economics has become a subject that intrigues not only academics but general audiences as well. "WO/MEN" stands out from other titles in the field as it offers a completely novel perspective: a focus on the behavioural differences between the sexes. Here you will learn surprising answers to questions like: who takes more risks, women or men? Who tends to be more generous? Who believes in conspiracy theories more? Which gender is more likely to change their behaviour depending on the situation and social clues?

Before the publication of the book, dr. Kajackaitė's work became an overnight sensation: in 2019, her research on the effect cold temperatures in modern offices have on women's productivity (the so-called "war for the thermostat") was covered in news articles in more than 60 countries. "The New York Times" wrote: "The findings <...> add to a scientific rethinking of the spaces where we work and study, which sometimes have been devised with a limited set of physical requirements in mind." "Bloomberg" added: "Now there's evidence that women have had good reason all along to complain about arctic office air." Such precise scientific revelations and many more can be found in "WO/MEN", making us reconsider the ways in which we take things for granted in our day-to-day lives.

Agnė Kajackaitė (b. 1987) is a senior assistant professor at the University of Milan. She was the head of a research group of ethics and behavioural economics at the WZB Berlin Social Science Center for 5 years since 2017. She has been collaborating with the best scientists in the field (Uri Gneezy, Joel Sabel, Tom Chang, among others) and contributed to important scientific journals, such as "American Economic Review", "Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization", and others. Right after its publication, "WO/MEN" reached the top 10 high-in-demand books list on the nations' biggest e-bookshop, "Knygos.lt", and one of the most popular physical bookshop franchises, "Vaga".



Dialogue: On Lithuania and Freedom

by Vytautas Landsbergis and Sergei Loznitsa

NON-FICTION | POLITICS | HISTORY

Published in 2023

288 pages; unedited Russian manuscript available

Books like these have been and will always be necessary. A discussion that embarks on deconstructing evil, revealing the anatomy of it, and warning people about its threats to our future.

Arnas Ališauskas, Lithuanian poet, literary critic, editor of the book

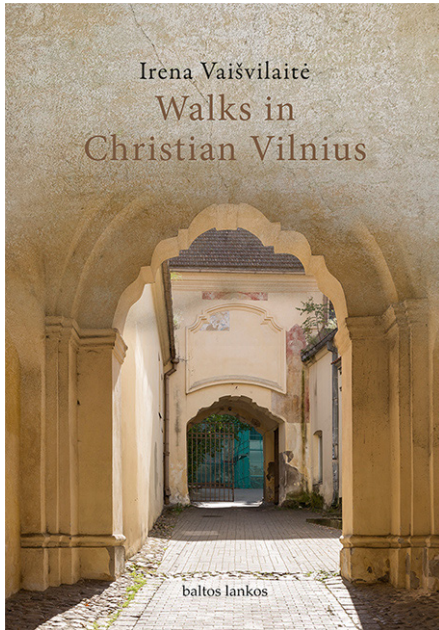
For the [Soviet] government, people didn't exist – only territories existed... Once, a high-ranking state official from Moscow [Nikolai Sliunkov] came to Lithuania at the beginning of the Lithuanian Reform Movement and explained the gist of the problem as he saw it. Supposedly, it was about the disagreements between the [political] center and the territories. He thought it was completely normal, reasonable, conceptual – the center and the territories – but we replied: “We’re not a territory, we’re a people, a nation”. It was extremely difficult for them to comprehend that. Even today they [Russian government] think along the lines of a political map: we’re in charge of this many territories and that’s great, but if the territories shrink, then it’s a tragedy for humanity. Then they identify themselves not only with “the people” but with the entire human race.

In the summer of 2020, Professor Vytautas Landsbergis and the Ukrainian director Sergei Loznitsa met to have a talk for Loznitsa's film “Mr. Landsbergis”. Their discussion turned into a sixteen-hour dialogue which eventually became this book. A conversation of two Eastern European intellectuals: a Lithuanian and a Ukrainian, one an active participant, the other – a keen observer of history. A contemplation of a historical point of rupture that reverberated throughout Eastern Europe when Lithuania (as well as its Baltic neighbours) and Ukraine regained their independence and went off on different paths of political autonomy.

Creatively prompted by Loznitsa, V. Landsbergis tells the history of freedom in the Baltics from the first rallies of the Reform Movement of Lithuania in the late 80s to 1993, when the last Russian soldiers were withdrawn from the country. This story helps to better understand the fateful episodes of history that formed the foundations of contemporary Lithuania and its Baltic neighbours: Latvia and Estonia. “Dialogue” is simultaneously a personal account and a precise, intellectual cross-section of historical events carried out by one of the most important political leaders of contemporary Lithuania.

Vytautas Landsbergis (b. 1932) – the first official leader of the newly re-established Republic of Lithuania, one of the leaders of the Independence movement, politician, historian of art, music, and culture, writer, recipient of the National Culture and Art Prize (2011). He has published more than 150 books, initially mostly investigating the works of M. K. Čiurlionis, but later on also tackling the issues of Lithuanian and international politics.

Sergei Loznitsa (b. 1964) is one of the most prominent contemporary European filmmakers. He has created more than 30 documentary and feature films. In 2018, his drama film “Donbass” was awarded the prize for the best director in the Cannes Film Festival program “Un Certain Regard”. His documentary film “Mr. Landsbergis” (2021) won the Best Film Award at the IDFA film festival.



Walks in Christian Vilnius

by Irena Vaišvilaitė

NON-FICTION | HISTORY | CULTURE | RELIGION

Published in 2022

384 pages; full English translation available

I believe this book is a great starting point for talking about how different identities of people living in Vilnius determine their relationship with this city, how a foreign cultural context allows us to recognize some meanings that we might've missed, being too close; finally, to discuss whether we've succeeded in making the city speak and reveal its hidden stories during the epoch of Independence.

Aurimas Švedas, Professor at Vilnius University, Lithuanian historian, journalist, radio show host

The fabric of Lithuanian history and culture, which has been torn many times, has preserved these unbroken threads which, like the mythical threads of Ariadne, can help one find the way to the sources of life-giving water; without which Vilnius would not be what it is – one of the great cities of Europe. It is impossible to understand not only Lithuania but also Europe without the knowledge of the still-blossoming, multi-faceted Christian tradition in Vilnius.

“Walks in Christian Vilnius” is the first comprehensive cultural guide of the multiconfessional and multinational Vilnius. It is often emphasized that Vilnius is a city in which Christianity, Judaism, and Islam each found their place. But equally remarkable is the way in which Eastern and Western, or Greek and Latin, Christianity have closely co-existed in the capital of Lithuania over many centuries, which is an exceptional phenomenon in Europe. This book covers both the heritage and the present situation of Eastern and Western Christianity in Vilnius, explaining the long-forgotten meanings of cultural values distant from modern life and drawing their connections with contemporary experience.

An attempt to see in Vilnius not just the beauty of the city but also its meaning, the book is intended for walks that single out topics associated with the religious life of the city and its urban fabric, including the many fine artistic and religious forms that have grown deep into its culture, narratives, symbols and signs. The genre of walks also serves as an indication of another peculiarity of the book: it is not just a guidebook, but also a personal story with plenty of impressions, opinions and memories.

Irena Vaišvilaitė (b.1954) is a cultural historian and diplomat, a former Lithuanian Ambassador to the Holy See, as well as a Professor at the Faculty of History, Vilnius University. Her field of study is cultural history between the 17th and 20th centuries. She is particularly interested in the religious aspects of culture.