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КУЛЬТУРНОЇ ПАРАДИГМИ СУЧАСНОСТІ**



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# CONTEMPORARY LITERARY STUDIES

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**FROM POST- TO METAMODERNISM:  
CHANGING THE CULTURAL PARADIGM  
OF OUR TIME**



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## THE VISIONARIES OF VILNIUS AND THE LITHUANIAN VERSION OF METAMODERNISM

**Annotation.** Contemporary Lithuanian culture uses a unique source of creative spirit, which gives birth to visions of Lithuanian Statehood and sacred architecture. It is Vilnius, and authors related to Vilnius focused on its visual, poetic, and historical meanings. Such creators periodically appeared in the 19th and 20th centuries (M. K. Čiurlionis, A. Mickiewicz, O. Miłosz, Cz. Miłosz, M. Kulbak), and when Poland occupied Vilnius, the spiritual connection between the city and Lithuania painfully and vividly intensified. Furthermore, Vilnius' significance highly increased during the Soviet occupation (1940, 1945–1990). It symbolised the enslaved Statehood of Lithuania at that time and remained an invincible architectural vision of European continuity. Composers (E. Balsys, V. Barkauskas), film directors (A. Griekvičius), and painters (A. Stasiulevičius) created the paradigm of the eternal city, deeply rooted in the self-consciousness of Lithuanian Statehood. In the 21st century, this paradigm flourished incredibly powerfully in literature and music. Composer Onutė Narbutaitė (\*1956) seemed to awaken Vilnius' importance in global Western civilisation. In her oratorio "Centones meae urbi" (1997), she brought several eras of Vilnius history back to the present, raising the concept of the seasons as parts of the oratorio: "Spring" — Baroque, cultural flourishing, "Summer" — 20th century, Holocaust catastrophe, the fate of Vilnius Jews, "Autumn" — 19th century Romanticism, A. Mickiewicz's poetry, the deep patriotism of Polish-Lithuanian people, "Winter" — the tragic 1991 January events in Vilnius, Lithuania's walk toward the West and the restoration of independence. This musical-poetic-documentary concept of oratorio, recreating the turning points of Eastern European epochs, brought Narbutaitė's work, the winner of the National Prize award, into the global spotlight.

It is even more important to emphasise the role of literature, returning Vilnius to the civic historical self-awareness of the European present, which is especially relevant after the beginning of the Russian imperial aggression in 2022 against Ukraine. It is the four-volume work *Silva rerum* (2008–2016) by the writer and doctor of art studies Kristina Sabaliauskaitė (\*1974). Because of its artistic and geopolitical incisiveness, it was translated into the languages of neighbouring European nations (Polish, Latvian, Estonian). Here, the depth of Vilnius' historical memory grows into the restoration of the meaning of Statehood and acquires an exclusive expression of literary value, the sound of multicultural rumble with a unique penetration of antiquity into the present. The coverage of Sabaliauskaitė's literary style is a powerful showcase of linguistic memory and existential and state life events, which, in her unique narrative, transforms into an endless melody of musical expression, enriched with the brutal reality of images and actions. Through Vilnius' idea, not in a vague visionary sense but in a concrete historicism revision sense, Sabaliauskaitė brings back the deep state of the 16th–18th-century Republic of Two Nations (Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth) into modern Lithuania, unveiling its relevance. Most importantly, the works of both women creators place them in the category of Vilnius visionaries. Here, historicism is integrated into metamodernism — through an endless melody, the transformation of a musical form, and a literary sentence into the will of the world, the step into the present. Semantics becomes the bearer of the idea of an astute gathering of nations (in Vilnius as well), the inspirer, and the assessor of Europe's weakened citizenship genesis in the sense of the Statehood of Eastern Europe. A melody emerges as a line of historical memory in the vault of metamodernism, reviving and enriching the myths of emptiness and the end of history spread by postmodernism. It also synchronises in the present time when an experience of a new challenge of the "falling-behind history" caused by war.

**Key words:** Vilnius; visionaries; historicism; metamodernism; endless melody; imagery; soundscape.

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## ВІЛЬНЮСЬКІ ВІЗІОНЕРИ І ЛИТОВСЬКА ВЕРСІЯ МЕТАМОДЕРНІЗМУ

**Анотація.** У литовській культурі з'явилося унікальне скупчення художніх висловлювань про історію Вільнюсу, розвинене у творчості так званих вільнюських візіонерів. Без сумніву, в сучасному контексті можна назвати імена двох



мисткинь, які впровадили тему Вільнюсу до міжнародного поля художньо-історичних та політичних студій. Йдеться про композиторку Онуте Нарбутайте (нар.1956) та письменницю Кристину Сабаліаускайте (нар.1974). Вільнюська ораторія О.Нарбутайте, «*Centones meae urbi*» (1997), нагороджена Державною премією, відкрила значущі перспективи для сучасного глобального та мультикультурного бачення Вільнюсу, по суті, відродила дух архітектурного всесвіту міста, болісну тему Голокосту, входження барокової доби процвітання у теперішнє. Ще в більш актуальний спосіб, минуле Вільнюсу ожило у чотиритомній епопеї про аристократичні литовські родини «*Silva rerum*» (2008–2016) К. К. Сабаліаускайте, письменниці і докторки мистецтвознавства. Сабаліаускайте, відтворюючи бурхливе життя Вільнюсу за допомогою потужних образів у вічному старовинному стилі, впроваджує цю парадигму до метамодерного простору, де панує велике творче розмаїття, від вербальної естетики до трансформацій геополітичних цінностей.. У цьому сенсі вільнюське візіонерство постає як надзвичайно актуальне та парадигматичне поле насаги для литовського метамодернізму в цілому.

**Ключові слова:** Вільнюс; візіонери; історизм; метамодернізм; мелодія без кінця; образність; звуковий ландшафт.

Contemporary Lithuanian identity is based on the constant change of the past and its transformation into metamodernism. Postmodernism did not give enough prosperous space for Lithuanian passion for Statehood and European influence. The visual projection of this paradigm converted Vilnius into a stellar centre of history, Statehood, sacrality of culture, and a multinational spiritual power—the source for creation in music and literature.

This power penetrated old documental films like: «Time Passes Through the City» (1966) by director Almantas Griekvičius, which was created in the deep Soviet epoch, with Lithuanian Christianity signs, Statehood, and royalty codes lasting for centuries that have reached our times on the architecture of Cathedral walls. Similar signs are shown in the recent film by director Audrius Stonys, «Bridges of Time» (2020). In 2023, Vilnius celebrates its 700 anniversary when the most important Lithuanian creators—composers, writers, and painters, will explore Vilnius as the eternal centre of Lithuanian historical identity. They find the unique source of such creativity in the holiness of Vilnius architecture. The ideas of *vanished Vilnius* (Drëma, 1991) open even more mystery and secrets for images.

The creators of music, literature, and painting mainly contemplate the style of Baroque, inspired by the Vilnius paradigm. Baroque, for them, means a particular new field of images of metamodernism, the transformation of creative cells of life in rich textual memory. Baroque transforms itself into a music space with a contour line of *eternal melody*, with towers of vertical harmony and an all-absorbing *transcendental landscape* of a spectrum of sounds in O. Narbutaitė's compositions. In literary texts by K. Sabaliauskaitė, Baroque expresses the deep state in very creative linguistical experience using old languages (Latin, Hebrew, Slavic, and Baltic) and old-fashioned artifacts described in long-lasting sen-

tences, what became historical dimensions of literary narrative, wakening impulses, inspiring personal diversion in the matter of genesis of Lithuanian aristocracy. But everywhere behind Baroque, we find the Vilnius paradigm with architectural signs of time-passing identity. We can also see the idea of eternal rhythm as centralising spiritual power in lifetime paintings by Aloyzas Stasiulevičius (\*1931), where Vilnius appears as an exceptional object of collusion of towers with heaven.

The broad concept of Vilnius Baroque has a particular significance in Lithuanian literature, visual art and music. It is inseparable from Vilnius' symbolism, the European context, radiating meaningful, eternal codes of Lithuanian Statehood in the spiritual transcendence of time in mere expression of its architectural sacrality. This reflection of memory in Lithuanian culture is crucial, determining historical twists stronger than breaking the time and its wounds, which is especially relevant after a long period of Soviet occupation.

However, in the present time, speaking of a transcultural Baltic identity based on the contemporary sacrality of music and archaic, Vilnius stands for a synonym of Baroque in Lithuanian culture. The capital has acquired a unique historical foundation in the nation's consciousness and the connection with old Europe, specifically with Italy, where the noblemen, who intermarried into Lithuania and Poland royal families, descended from, speaking about the Queen Bona Sforza d'Aragona who contributed significantly to the development of the European identity of Vilnius in architecture and music. The *eternity* paradigm is associated with Vilnius, its architecture, and the dimension of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth—the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This paradigm transforms into the contemporary style of Baltic minimalism in music, integrating Esto-



nian Northern borderless space, Latvian post-romanticism, deep German psychology, and the suspended time in Arctic nature. Such *transcendental soundscapes* of contemporary music are distinguished by their Balticness and dynamism of processual drama. Still, here again, Lithuanian origins of historical experience turn toward the Baroque as a different infinity. Nature, with its birds' voices, archaic symbols and pantheism, does not deny the multi-dimensional universe of Baroque and its associated heights of cultural spirit—the reflection of Great Christian-Jewish Europe (according to Leonidas Donskis, 2016) but, in a way, deepens them further and further. It forms a metamodern stream of contemporary Lithuanian identity.

**Vilnius' history context in music.** Onutė Narbutaitė's (\*1956) loyalty to Vilnius developed as a paradigm of the creative resurrection of the past. Being in a family genetically related to Vilnius' multiculturalism, with Polish, Lithuanian, Jewish, and German roots and aristocratic spirit, she became an exclusive Lithuanian composer, spreading a unique Vilnius theme to Europe. Narbutaitė's oratorio "Centones meae urbi" (Patchwork for my City, 1997), which is dedicated to rethinking Vilnius' multinational past, its aristocratic spiritual dimension, and its collusions with history, has received significant international and national recognition and has been awarded the National Prize (1998). She is a writer of extraordinary intelligence, possessing scientific insight, including in her creativity the talents of a composer, poet, writer, artist, and art researcher. She used a powerful cultural documentary of historical knowledge in oratorio. She elevated the picture of Vilnius as a philosophical paradigm of various expressions, even a restoration of cultural heritage, reconstruction of Lithuanian national identity based on multiculturalism, and the tragic accent of historicism characteristic of the whole of Eastern Europe through the prism of the Holocaust. A whole different scene opens, a scene of the epochs as seasons of history. The oratorio "Centones meae urbi" consists of four parts arranged according to the seasonal cycle. Moreover, each tells about a different period of the Lithuanian state, starting from the autumnal romanticism of Adam Mickiewicz until the apocalyptic summer, the mid-20th-century tragedies: war, post-war, deportations, and the Holocaust. Texts used by the composer demonstrate the documentary style of the work and its peculiar closeness to the painful

study of history in turning points from Jesuit poetry of Vilnius University to the newspapers in different languages (Lithuanian, Polish, German, Yiddish, etc.) at the beginning of the 20th century. The oratorio performance uses action space. Here, the "scenography" of Vilnius Old Town exposes somewhat uniqueness. The church of St. Catherine in Vilnius heart has become its part, known where a composer Stanislaw Moniuszko (1819-1872) worked for a long time in the 19th century and which during the Soviet occupation was devastated, robbed, shut down, and turned into a warehouse. For the first time in a long time, the premiere of Narbutaitė's oratorio opened this church's doors to a contemporary public for the expression of Baroque. The inner wealth of music—sacredness, poetics, and historicism filled significantly damaged church space with symbolism and raised the spirit of Lithuanian art to a new level of European revival in the reflection of the past. It is especially true regarding the culminating part four, the *Summer*, where the author touches upon the theme of endless pain – the destruction of Vilnius Jews and their heritage during the Holocaust. Here the intersections of epochs reach an apocalyptic climax, and the turning point of time becomes irreversible. Until then, no Lithuanian composer had approached this aspect of the catastrophism of epochs. Therefore, Narbutaitė's work became an exceptional turning point for Vilnius in its conception from the Baroque to the present-day Lithuanian culture and in the European context of Jewish history.

There is also an exclusive range of sources of artistic creation: poets whose names alone recreate the essence of Vilnius' spiritual deepness, the sublime *spiritus movens*. These are particular Vilnius' prophets-visionaries: Motiejus Kazimieras Sarbievijus, Adam Mickiewicz, Oscar Milosz, Czeslaw Milosz, Moshe Kulbak, Vaidotas Daunys, Eugenijus Ališanka. The oratorio begins with Autumn in Vilnius, All Souls Day (November 2), the mystery of Mickiewicz's romanticism, and the transcendence of the eternal meeting with All Souls on their Day, the special old and contemporary phenomenon in Lithuania and Poland, described in the poem "Pan Tadeusz" by Adam Mickiewicz.

Yet, the key to historicism lies in Narbutaitė's increasingly widely interpreted Baroque, associated with the creative *spring* of revival in the oratorio. Dr Audronė Žiūraitė, the researcher of Narbutaitė's creations, writes:

The Renaissance and Baroque era is the time of flowering of Vilnius. The texts of this period often refer to spring; also the arrival of King Stephen Bator and Vladislav Vasa in Vilnius (historical, poetic sources – a collection of greetings issued on the occasion of Stephen Bator's arrival in Vilnius in 1579 (a collection issued in honour of the arrival of Vladislav Vasa in Vilnius in 1648), as well as the procession to Trakai (through Paneriai) described by M. K. Sarbievijus in 1622 took place also in spring. A few centuries later, at a different time of the year, the summer, the Jews were executed here. Many tragic pages of history relate specifically to the meaning of *summer*: the Soviet occupation (J. L.), the beginning of the war, deportations to Siberia, and the destruction of the Vilnius ghetto. And the deadly stagnation of *winter* seems to bring the present-day closer, reminding the horrors of January 13, 1991. (Žiūraitytė, 2006, p. 75–76).

And Baroque, with its image of *spring*, becomes the source of life with an extraordinary spectrum of European historicism in this layout of Vilnius dramaturgy. "The field of polystylistic associations of *Centones meae urbi* sank into the Middle Ages," as A. Žiūraitytė writes (ibid.). Narbutaitė is characterised by timeless stylistic codes such as Gregorian chants.

Here we hear Gregorian and choral singing in general, alluding the hints to Baroque (Bach, Handel), classical (Gluck, Mozart) style, hearing recognises romantic chamber music (there is also one quote from St. Moniuszka) and allusions to previous works by O. Narbutaitė. (*Opus lugubre*, the cantata "Kai ateina paskutinė taikos diena" [*When the Last Day of Peace Comes*]). (Žiūraitytė, 2006, p. 76).

The composer seeks out and discovers the stylistic uniqueness of Vilnius in *modern Baroque* musical language. In general, gradually, Baroque becomes a paradigm in her work, the analogy to eternity, infinite melody ("Gesang" by R. M. Rilke for four soloists, oboe and organ, 1998; "Melody in the Olive Garden" for trumpet and two string quartets, 2001). It is the conceptual key of the eternal melody of musical transcendence – the "other space" for the layers of contextuality in Narbutaitė's music. In terms of the psychology of depth and stylistics of the *universe* of the language of music, it allows connecting the various spiritual-poetic spaces philosophically as far up as to the "transcendental cyphers" of early modernism (according to

Karl Jaspers, see Landsbergytė, 2017, p. 176). The music here overcomes the differences as easily as the wake of a wing ascending into space and shimmering with the "fire" of the melody of Gregorian chant. The act of giving light and transparency to this pulsating universe enables the return of eternal Vilnius contexts (according to part one, "Return of the Poet" of Narbutaitė's oratorio. Here the Baroque image of Vilnius consists of "The Four Epitaphs". In *Epitaphs*, the chorus and ringing of the bell are expressively diversified with flute and oboe solo episodes (Žiūraitytė, 2006, p. 80). It is significant to note that the oboe in the composer's images is also a "baroque instrument" (author's comment about "Gesang").

Oboe solo ... like going through a romantic filter becomes more moderate, without sharp intonations, in simpler rhythms and strokes. Here, the long, continuous shifts of slow-motion parts can be heard like in the Brandenburg Concertos by Johann Sebastian Bach. The timbre of the oboe makes it more earthly, contrasting with the abstract fluttering of the flute in a high register. Oboe speaks in the sacred language of burial grounds, elucidating the last part of the Fourth Epitaph... In a quiet background of percussion, the soprano recites Cz. Miłosz: "... And now there is no us nor Marilė". (ibid. p. 80)

Due to the oratorio, these texts became the context of Lithuania's present self-consciousness and a part of the actualised creation of the concept of identity. In its own way, this harmonised the field of author's creative ideas, which became *eternally retrospective*, spread at the beginning of the 20th century in philosophical infinity of modernism and existentialism, and literary poetics by Rainer Maria Rilke, Georg Trakl, Oscar and Czesław Miłosz, Ingeborg Bachmann, Oskar Kokoshka, Charles Baudelaire (opera *Cornet*, text by R. M. Rilke, 2013). Transcendentalism of the Modernism in oratorio responded to the Lithuanian vault of sacrality with the tragic death of young poet Vaidotas Daunys (1958-1995) and the semantics of visions and dreams with works of Eugenijus Ališanka, Edmundas Gedgaudas, and others. Vilnius and its transcendental romantic Baroque became a key to architecture and its meaning to music. The pursuit of Narbutaitė's ideas and the sublime style of her creative work is precisely related to the processes of space and infinite melody – the Bachian paradigm of the world's music. The inspirations and sources

of this breakthrough of the Vilnius spirit lie in the author's visual memory. Since childhood, her family lived on the premises of the present Franciscan monastery near beautiful St. Anne's Church with windows overlooking the modern Adam Mickiewicz monument, which stands here now. Architects and sculptors, her parents' friends, were mediators of this Vilnius heritage as well, prophets of identity visions, shaping the future composer and inspiring her visions.

Onutė Narbutaitė is probably the only Lithuanian composer who has raised even the following Baroque literary layers of Vilnius' past: Petras Roizijus' "Epitaph for Queen Barbora", poems of Motiejus Kazimieras Sarbievijus (1595-1640), greeting and epitaph texts from Jesuit Academy students of the 16th century, tombstone records from Bernardine and Rasos Cemetery... (ibid. p. 74).

In the works of Onutė Narbutaitė, the name of Vilnius rang both for Lithuania and the world. Here, a crucial matrix is architecture and restoration (her brother is a restaurateur), which has codes of memory that *open the gate of oblivion*. The sound symphony opens interaction between different cultural identities. The return of Vilnius' past became the irreversible paradigm of metamodern creation.

**Vilnius' Baroque eternity in words. Writer Kristina Sabaliauskaitė (\*1974)**, an author with special education in art research who, so far, mastered and raised the Vilnius Baroque image and elevated it to conceptual heights, has emerged in contemporary literature. She is a doctor of history of arts (this education particularly helps to describe artifacts) and undoubtedly a member of an ancient and noble Lithuanian family, who has converted her research into a stratum of the "archaeology of memory" containing a vital development of meaning, necessary for the renewal of the Statehood idea in literature. After a long and controversial era of post-Soviet postmodern literature filled with anti-historical nihilism, dark skepticism, and modern *emptiness* in different versions, a long-awaited breath — the literary *enlightenment* of *ancient-style* comebacks, astonishing us with its incredible popularity, opens up. Unlike the other current literary works, four volumes of Kristina Sabaliauskaitė's "Silva rerum" (2008-2016) have become the most readable bestseller. It is translated into Polish and other Baltic languages. "Silva rerum" delves into the epoch of Rzeczpospolita so deeply and fundamentally that it changes the critical concept of the past

of the Lithuanian state. It brings out the dimension of multinational interaction and intense open connections with *old* Europe. The continual Russian threat and the fatalism of the kingdom's twilight in the shadow of the dark Empire echo the Enlightenment and the European sunset (Rakutis, 2022). This vision of the enlightenment of the Lithuanian state is based on the analogy of the metamodern Baroque idea and the origins of roots of democracy, the historical conceptualisation of the free unity of nations and states. All this deepened research in visual art and psychology. However, the Baroque style is particularly strongly represented by the author's old-fashioned literary magnificence, filled with the essence of the expression of musical development: the infinity of serenity, depth of memory, the vigour of interactions, bends, and eclipses. And especially, it oozes with antique ornamental rhetoric, parabolas, the polyphony of memory lines, the intertwining of times, and the penetration of the visual-existential details. "The researcher had to describe the painting or artifact in such an exact way and could not miss any smallest detail that its image would remain on paper forever with its meaning described in words" (Sabaliauskaitė, 2018a). In her interview with Nobel prize winner Olga Tokarczuk, Sabaliauskaitė pointed out the great power of Imagination and Empathy historically toward others and how it drives forward the author's narrative about the common European past. (Sabaliauskaitė, 2021, p. 58). As a result, her literary style "glows" with the penetration of details and the energy of the infinite historical action, radiating the architectural and political spirit of Vilnius eternity. Events in "Silva rerum" take place mainly in Vilnius. The city's socio-cultural and existential layer is widely open, but the roads also lead to the whole of Lithuania of those days (Biržai, Milkančiai, Nesvyžius, Karaliaučius) and European cities (Amsterdam, Rome, Paris, London) and their provinces. The geography of "Silva rerum" is not accidental. It gives an insight into the geographical extent of Rzeczpospolita, its geopolitical perspective, its educational strengths and weaknesses, the heights of values, and the problematic twilight of "sunset" — *liberum veto*, the chaos of local *Seimas* (Parliament), betrayals, the principle of self-interest, the wars, the mysterious retreat in existence of distinctive and independent Jewish world, yet another depth of civilisation, and a secret valuable phenomenon — a soul of Vilnius mystery. The

Jews seem to take Baroque universality to the futuristic level of scientific advancement, bringing it closer to our times; however, they leave it to “blossom” at the intersection of epochs, as it has not yet been overcome by a glow of universal pain of the 20th century — the Holocaust, occupation and barbarism of genocide. It is an important historical space for Narbutaitė; however, Sabaliauskaitė prefers the epoch of centuries before it. Thus, the literary penetration of the author’s insight can triumph in the vaults of the meanings and values of the Enlightenment and allow the reader to feel *not yet in bloodlands* (Timothy Snyder’s notion of Eastern Europe in the 20th century, where massacres of various scale occurred during and long after the World War II, including the Holocaust, partisan war, deportations, see Snyder, 2010). Her readers continuously dive into the “sunset” of old Europe with its retrospective. It is a particularly profound restorative effect of Sabaliauskaitė’s literary texts, reinstating the worthful character of the strata of the Lithuanian state and national identity and summoning the Eastern European phenomenon to “wake up from the oblivion”, what is even more than as an exceptional text becoming history’s *par excellence*. The writer also made this point in her article on historiography (Sabaliauskaitė, 2018b). Her mission as a researcher remains the same as a writer: to unveil the Lithuanian national identity in connection with the Polish nation, show it the European path, a certain style of thinking, perspectives, and the fears of destruction. Sabaliauskaitė’s methodology (using authentic archival sources), the attitudes of scientific research results, and the art critic’s attention create this perspective accordingly, further reinforcing the concept of national identity based on the Baroque and Vilnius paradigms. The writer’s literary talent and ability to convey powerful charisma created the bestselling popularity. Clever usage of the *old-style language*, its linguistic phenomenon in collusion with the depth of modern deep psychology, precisely detailed historicism, penetrating contemporary mental space with an intense spirit of the modern, with all-absorbing endless sentences rising intensity charged with transformations and infinity and power brought to life an epoch that was left in literary oblivion for a long time.

At this point, it is essential to emphasise that Sabaliauskaitė, a visionary of Vilnius, is acknowledged by great intellectuals like Polish writer and

Nobel Prize laureate Olga Tokarczuk, Pawel Huelle, and Tomas Venclova. Her literary magnetism with inspiring images of Vilnius is well-known internationally among the famous writers of the world (Sharapan & Mikulich, 2019).

Vilnius has become a stage for the stories of Antanas Ramonas, Ričardas Jurgis Kunčinas, Abraham Sutzkever, Czesław Miłosz, Tomas Venclova, Joseph Brodsky, Kristina Sabaliauskaitė, Max Frey and other writers. (Charapan & Mikulich, 2019, p. 18)

Vilnius’ image here resembles an ancient style of music development in polyphony and endless melody, only the literary one. In “Silva rerum” v. I., Sabaliauskaitė writes:

It seems that Vilnius is small, even though half a year ago, when he stood under the Delamarso Arch, it seemed huge and teeming like Rome itself. Yet, compared to a world full of grand cities founded thousands of years ago, even thousands of years before the birth of the Lord Jesus, full of strange nations, customs, structures, creatures and plants, such as Vilnius with its four quadrants and green suburbs reminding him of fields, now seem so tiny for Kazimieras as if a blackened fingernail somewhere on the outskirts of the Christian world, albeit it is good that it is well marked on the map in all, and a couple of months was enough to realise that all Vilnius people know each other by sight, as they circle in that city together and day after day and Kazimieras was no longer surprised to learn that the man with a gold watch who he once memorised turns out to be the famous Biront and Cholecki’s professor Liauksminas, whom he sees every day at the academy.

On the other hand, this desolate and devastated city, which was called just a big village by the ones who disliked it, was a mighty part of the world on its own accord because it had the hellish stubbornness to resurrect and rise again, and again the bells were hung in churches, and the golden votives were carried, the city women were pampering themselves, the shelves of the university library, stolen and burned by the Tsar’s army soldiers, were gradually filled up with books, and once again the Department of Civil Law functioned. Again, treatises were written in Vilnius, theological disputes were held, scientific tests were commenced, and poems were created, and Vilnius was not extinct from the map of the world and remained inscribed there as a European capital, among other major and smaller



capitals and cities, where through the glazed windows of university libraries one could see the falling autumnal leaves and jackdaws flying in cawing flocks; just like now, Kazimieras also sat down with other students, and who knows, he might have read Theodore de Bry's *The Discovery of America*, and maybe, by a magical coincidence, also turned the same page at the same time, depicting the same three war-ready American savages, so sitting in the university library with a book in his hands, Kazimieras was feeling strange like being a small part of a large family of Latin reading students scattered all over the world, and altogether a tiny part of that vast world. (Sabaliauskaitė, 2018, p. 214-215)

**Vilnius 700 anniversary in 2023.** Vilnius paradigm as a deep integrated spiritual source reopened more metamodernism performance this year when Vilnius creators celebrated the 700 anniversary of the Lithuanian capital. Once again, Vilnius visionaries come afront. Kristina Sabaliauskaitė and composer, director, and conductor of New Ideas Chamber Orchestra (NIKO) Gediminas Gelgotas (\*1986) created an oratorio "Vilniaus Sarabanda" (2023) integrating uniqueness (music, word, song, dance step) of Gelgotas' famous interdisciplinary minimalism with almost romantic soft melody's cells repeating themselves and endlessly growing. The words here appear as sounds of ideas, though they lead to a rising content — the idea of the wholeness of nations and multicultural greatness of Vilnius, of Europe, as a powerful source of human souls, inspirations, and cultures. The idea is enlightening the music as an eternal stream of the source of the deep state in text and sound... Sabaliauskaitė's libretto fills the music with verbal light in rising steps... "Vilniaus Sarabanda" (first performed in Lithuanian National Philharmonic on March 10, 2023) is one excellent example of literature's co-work with visions in music. Vilnius' visionaries list expands further: A. Mickiewicz, Cz. Miłosz, O. Miłosz, Motiejus Sarbiejus, the Vilna Gaon Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, Stanislaw Moniuszko, Moshe Kulbak, and contemporary names Vaidotas Daunys, Edmundas Gedgaudas, Onutė Narbutaitė, also many other painters and composers, and the last two Kristina Sabaliauskaitė and Gediminas Gelgotas propose a creative field of ideas of renewed perspective geopolitical philosophy. Renewed life philosophy flashes with the magnitude of multinational Baroque, old-fashionedness, and transcendental minimalism's drive. The latter

considers the transformation of Baroque empowering it to become fundamental for the real inspirational life of the fragile contemporary society. Its context is enriched with deep historical psychology of the nation's Self and impulses of other awakening nations and the hidden codes of Vilnius' visionary metamodern paradigm embedded in architectural images. The hope of rising self-awareness and statehood in history is Vilnius' statement, leading nations to your and our freedom.

**Conclusions.** Through all aspects of Vilnius Baroque architecture, the idea of the European cultural spirit is deeply entrenched in self-awareness of the Lithuanian identity. It creates a contemporary association of Lithuanian metamodern images. The name of Vilnius visionaries is given to creators *genetically* related to Vilnius with old family roots and who achieved the highest professional level with a responsible attitude to historical matters.

In this way, Lithuanian culture, in relation to the tradition of Statehood, complements the Baltic identity, which has formed as a new unified entity comprised of resistance and the *Mannerheim line* of the *deep state* under the Soviet occupation. The creators of contemporary Lithuanian culture: musicians, composers, painters, directors, writers, and poets often remain in the projection of the philosophical paradigm of Vilnius. A particular definition is given to such creators—Vilnius' visionaries. A few new names can be distinguished in recent cultural discourse related to Vilnius: composer Onutė Narbutaitė and writer Kristina Sabaliauskaitė, who developed the idea of Vilnius in their own way, integrating it into the wholeness of Lithuanian identity with various archetypes and connecting it with the Baltic identity line. This wholeness is structured by the Baltic dimension of depth, the Northern horizontal, and the multipolarity of European Baroque. Their works explore the idea of meaningful codes of Vilnius in Lithuanian culture in their particular ways, getting to metamodern openness.

Onutė Narbutaitė's Baroque is a *melody of eternity in the garden of olives*, endless melodic lines, Gregorian chant, and melodic-polyphonic transcendentalism of Christianity. It is a union of sacrality and the Baltic linear horizontal in music, which is again an architectonical wholeness, encompassing the Baltic Selfhood, which colludes with the depth and the harmony of the pure and continuous Northern clarity in collusion with a Gregorian chant.

Kristina Sabaliauskaitė recreates the real greatness of the Lithuanian-Polish Union identity in literature, dominated by Baroque style linguistic connections to old-fashionedness and reflection of the tradition of Statehood, in particular as a contemporary “European project”, the inexperienced freedom because of occupations, the longing of which is always felt and encoded in the Lithuanian concept of Selfhood (Rubavičius, 2014).

Lithuania and Baroque are brightly expressed like a **modern union of metamodernism** recently trapped in ruptured history. The ancient contextuality of the present becomes the most definite stylistic attraction for Sabaliauskaitė. In such a concept, Vilnius is its centre and the stage of metamodern expression. Vilnius’ paradigm becomes crucial in the creation of its visionaries. They open the content and style of all-absorbing metamodernism, which emerges as acoustic or linguistic landscapes, and interdisciplinary memory fields, including architectural images. The actual Vilnius visionaries, both women composer Onutė Narbutaitė and writer Kristina Sabaliauskaitė come close to some continuing aspects, possibly with feminine sense: nostalgia for old-fashionedness, aristocracy in the style of royalty, European Sunset in generations of not-vanished ancient statesmen families’ life, drama of constant Russian aggression and war, and existential matter of feminine fate on the scene of sensitive East European history. Their ideas keep inspiring today’s composers like Gediminas Gelgotas.

Vilnius Baroque emerged here as a significant wholeness of the present-day illuminating Lithuanian identities — the reconstructed rising enlightenment, which is capable of overcoming the current apocalyptic Endarkenment (Mickūnas, 2018). Kristina Sabaliauskaitė’s interpretation of the fate of Statehood becomes the highest point of Vilnius’ paradigm because it is actualised in the metamodern discourse about the incredible comeback of history in non-illusional red lines of war.

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