

(Read ebook) Vilnius: City of Strangers

Vilnius: City of Strangers

Laimonas Briedis

*ePub / *DOC / audiobook / ebooks / Download PDF*

Laimonas Briedis

VILNIUS City of Strangers



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#2335348 in Books Central European University Press 2009-03-04 Original language: English PDF # 1 1.10 x 6.74 x 9.78l, 1.60 #File Name: 9639776440296 pages | File size: 46.Mb

Laimonas Briedis : Vilnius: City of Strangers before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Vilnius: City of Strangers:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. enjoyedBy jonas miglinaswell written. enjoyed reading0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerLoved it, went there for vacation this fall, best vacation ever0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Wayne A. SimpsonReally interesting and personal and informative

Presents the history of the capital city of Lithuania from its 14th century legendary beginnings up to 2009, when Vilnius bears the distinction of European Capital of Culture. Besides applying the traditional apparatus of historical

investigation and referring to a large amount of sources, the special feature of this book is the ample quotes from travelers who passed through the city during their own life journeys. This list ranges from known artistic giants (such as writers Dostoyevsky, Ostrovsky, Tolstoy, Dblin, and Brodsky) through political and cultural icons (such as German general Ludendorff and the Emperors Napoleon and Alexander), to equally compelling forgotten European personas who mark entire generations back to the 14th century. The subtitle refers to the fact that until quite recently, ethnic Lithuanians rarely formed the majority of the inhabitants of Vilnius. Contents; Prologue Chapter 1: The Brink of Europe Chapter 2: Mapping Sarmatia Chapter 3: Enlightenment Shadows Chapter 4: Napoleon s Curse Chapter 5: Russian Intrigue Chapter 6: German Intrusion Chapter 7: The Absent Nation Chapter 8: Maelstrom Europe Notes Illustrations Cited Works Index

Vilnius Contested City In a modern Europe Vilnius can seem peripheral. Mr Briedis, however, begins by noting that when French geographers recently plotted the mid-point between Europe s cartographical extremes, they found the continent s true centre was a derelict farmhouse just outside the city. Foreign visitors have left few written accounts, but Mr Briedis uses them all as sources. A hapless papal delegation provides the first. In 1324 it tried and failed to persuade Lithuania s great pagan ruler, Gediminas, to adopt Christianity. He showed no desire to forsake Perkunas the thunder god, berating his visitors for their intolerance. Why do you always talk about Christian love? he asked the pope s men. Where do you find so much misery, injustice, violence, sin and greed, if not among the Christians? Lithuania eventually adopted Christianity, along with a dynastic deal with Poland, in 1387. A cathedral was built on the pagan temple, the holy fires doused and the sacred groves felled. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania flourished. At its height in the 16th century it was a vast multiconfessional empire, stretching to the Black Sea, with no fewer than six legal languages, including Hebrew and Armenian. Even as that declined, the Vilnius style of Baroque architecture ripened in glory, a splendid autumn in one of Mr Briedis s many well-turned phrases, that paid a gracious farewell to its phantom golden age . The most poignant chapter is on cemeteries past and present, many of which were desecrated by the Soviets. Mass graves are still unearthed in Vilnius. They hold victims of Stalin s NKVD, of the Nazis, and as in one recent example thousands of fallen soldiers from Napoleon s shattered Grande Arme. Vanished civilisations and lost empires leave a city stalked by horror and steeped in wonder. --The Economist About the Author Laimonas Briedis is a cultural geographer, who received his degree at the University of British Columbia.