Anna Lipphardt, *Vilne. Die Juden aus Vilnius nach dem Holocaust. Eine transnationale Beziehungsgeschichte*, Munich: Ferdinand Schoeningh, 2010. 545 p. ISBN 978-3506-770-66-0

Anna Lipphardt's book 'Vilne. The Jews of Vilnius after the Holocaust. A translocal history' provides an important impulse for both West European and Baltic historiography. She tracks the many ways how Jews from Vilnius who survived the Shoah linked themselves with the city they left. Doing this in a translocal perspective means that she is following their migration paths as a *histoire croisée*. Bringing together Vilna Jews in Tel Aviv, New York and Buenos Aires, Lipphardt establishes a closer understanding of how they related to each other and to the urban space they left behind. The author, a professor of anthropology at Freiburg University, analyses in her book the post-Shoah practices of memory communities. The German anthropologist carried out long-term research at these sites, to find out how the few survivors from Vilne and earlier emigrants transferred the local memory of Vilne into new living situations, and how they interacted in Soviet, American and Israeli social contexts.

Lipphardt's book provides an empirical basis for further research on Jewish life after the Holocaust in Lithuania, and fosters a discussion on the translocal approach with a broader scope on ethnic communities in Central and Eastern Europe, which were forced to leave the places they were attached to for generations. The author brings together insights from migration, memory and nationalism studies into the growing research on Jewish history in Lithuania.

Vilne is based on Anna Lipphardt's doctoral thesis, defended at Potsdam University. Beyond the linguistic context of the German text, it is a major contribution to a better understanding of how the memory of Vilne was transformed into a translocal setting. It shifted the focus to the interconnection between narratives in Lithuania and narratives on Lithuania abroad. Translated into English and Lithuanian, her research, carried out in Vilnius between 2001 and 2004, would still have an impact on academic discourse on the changing image of Lithuanian Jewry and their imagination of Lithuania. Due to the interdisciplinary character of the book, with a focus on the interdependencies of mobility, memory and transnational network building, *Vilne* provides various insights into history, but also anthropology, sociology and human geography.

The author is aware of the specific intercultural constellation of an academic project on the Lithuanian-Jewish community after the Shoah,

carried out in Germany, and critically reconceptualising today's Jewish community in Vilnius, and the tricky relations, for example, in regard to the former YIVO materials gathered in Vilnius. Lipphardt's strategy to cope with her specific insights from Lithuania is to stick closely to interviewed persons, and to follow their views on the ongoing processes, translating their experience into the academic discourse, paying great attention to the specific translocal Jewish studies context in which her research took place.

The relevance of her work is not only due to her anthropological approach combined with means of historiography. It is placed in the broader context of a range of new research, which came out during the last five years, a whole range of new publications on a Yiddish land, and its imagined capital, often called the Jerusalem of the North, in Lithuania and abroad. The literature in Lithuanian itself covers several important aspects of Jewish-Lithuanian history, including the earlier period of Jewish-Christian relations in medieval times, the particular role of Jews in the urban settlements of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Jewish-Lithuanian paths of modernisation throughout the long 19th century under Tsarist rule.¹ When it comes to 20th-century research, the focus on Vilnius is on the First World War, the interwar period, and the Holocaust. Research projects on the latter usually focus on the destruction of Lithuanian Jewry, therefore implicitly assuming the end of Jewish life after 1944.² Lipphardt's book makes an important point here, to go beyond the catastrophe and start telling the postwar story of the few Lithuanian Jews who survived, following their lives both within the Soviet Union and abroad.

A second important aspect of the relevance to the field of Lipphardt's book is provided by her translocal approach itself. So far, this approach is present in genealogical practices and in tourism, but in Lithuanian academia, the attempt to follow the migration paths of former inhabitants of Lithuanian settlements, and to write history with a focus not on the place, but on its former inhabitants, does create an important impulse for Lithuanian-Jewish studies and beyond. This has so far been done for nearby places, but not for Lithuania proper. Broadening the regional understanding to include the postwar perspective on the narrative of Lithuanian Jewry would be a meaningful long-term interpretation of Anna Lipphardt's book on Vilne.³ Therefore, a scholarly translation of the book from German into Lithuanian or English would be very welcome.

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¹ *Lietuvos žydai. Istorinė studija*, (ed.) V. Sirutavičius, D. Staliūnas, J. Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė (Vilnius, 2012).

² M. Jakulytė-Vasil, *Holokausto Lietuvoje atlasas* (Vilnius, 2011); A. Niunkaitė-Račiūnienė, *Lietuvos žydų tradicinio meno ir simbolių pasaulis: atvaizdai, vaizdiniai ir tekstai* (Vilnius, 2010).

³ E. Bemporad, *Becoming Soviet Jews: The Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk* (Indiana, 2013); *Shtetl, XXI vek: polevye issledovania*, ed. V.A. Dymshits, A.L. L'vov, A.V. Sokolova (St Petersburg, 2008).