covered in the shelves full of Einstein biographies already out there. It is, as the author states, an acknowledgement that "there is no single way of being a person in a place at a specific time" (18); "events do not possess a single meaning the moment they happen" (3).

Then who is this ever-changing Einstein whose relationship with Prague was mutual ennui? First of all, he was not, the author insists, a Bohemian. The Golems and Cubists of "Magic Prague" will not be part of this story. And because there is really zero interest to be found in any event, conversation, eureka moment, or what have you during Einstein's brief encounter with a city where so much else happened for so many others other than he—What can this story be? "Why," as the author asks, "do these non-events matter?" (9).

This is what most of the book is about because by chapter 4, which begins on page 108 of a 265-page text (excluding acknowledgments and endnotes), Einstein has left Prague. The remaining three chapters and the conclusion gather together ephemera in the form of forgotten novels, articles that were "tendentious and polemical" (188), rivalries and debates between other physicists and philosophers such as Ernst Mach, Oskar Kraus, and Philipp Frank to those whose Einstein's name is attached—in short, whatever it takes to turn this article into a book. And in the case of Einstein, this actually seems appropriate given that the man has become more myth than anything at this point—as captured by the fact that, despite it all, there are three plaques in Prague memorializing his brief time in a place, evidence suggests, he forgot about the moment he left.

"*Tantae molis erat romanum condere gentem*" ("So great a task it was to establish the Roman race"—Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.33)—greatness lies in everyone. And if it is true for being it must also be the case for time, space, and motive enough to recount what happened even when nothing did. This refutes the author's claim that Einstein was not a Bohemian. There is more to Bohemia than "lolling," "flouncy," and "shambolic" (5); it is also "flowing hair," "a Virginia cigar" (53)—"among the oddballs" (239) who "endured his celebrity" (12). That is why he was Einstein and we are not.

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Der Deutsche Sparkassen- und Giroverband zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus. By Janina Salden. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2019. Pp. 385. Cloth €64.00. ISBN 978-3515123402.

Germany's landscape of banking institutions—a three-tier system of private, publicly owned, and credit unions—represents a complex and diverse tapestry of interests, individual actors, and the social life of money. Tracing the development of these institutions requires clear attention to detail and the desire to disentangle local, national, and political threads intertwined in time and space. Janina Salden's meticulously researched book provides an important institutional and structural history of one of the tiers of the German financial system, that of the publicly owned savings banks. She analyzes the activities and main figures of the German Savings Banks Association (DSGV), an umbrella organization established in 1924 as an "association of associations" (24). This work highlights the following essential questions: What scope of action did the DSGV have in the context of the Nazi

regime, and what choices were available to it and its member associations? Did it seek to be a vehicle for economic policy, or was it inherently ideological? Was the DSGV an active agent of Aryanization efforts, or did DSGV leaders see this as separate from their mission? Would they—could they—resist? Salden contributes a solid foundation for further study on the social life of economic structures and policy as well as the space for interactions between organizational bodies and Nazism before, during, and after the war.

Salden's study divides the history of the DSGV into distinct periods. She begins by discussing the period from the organization's founding until 1933, paying particular attention to the first president of the DSGV, Dr. Ernst Kleiner, and the work that fell under the organization's purview. Additionally, Salden explains the layered existence of such an umbrella organization, which necessitated operating on simultaneously local, national, and international levels. For example, Salden references the "foreign policy" (*Außenpolitik*), wherein the Central Association rendered decisions and negotiations with the national government, parliament, and other groups making up the economic landscape. This contrasted with the Central Association's "domestic policy" (*Innenpolitik*), which navigated the relationships of the constituent member associations (31). In general, the discussion of the DSGV's early years sets the stage for the analysis of the Nazi period, in particular, which serves as the main focus of the book.

Salden divides the Nazi period into several key periods: a transitional period between 1933 and 1935, the prewar period of armament and expansion from 1936 to 1939, and the war. This periodization situates the organization and its member associations against the evolution of the Third Reich and its bureaucratic structures. Within the context of these broader periods, Salden stresses the period of *Gleichschaltung*, the period of broad Nazification following Hitler's appointment as chancellor in January 1933. Interestingly, however, Salden argues that Nazi influence was minimal in the DSGV at first, leading the *Hauptamt für Kommunalpolitik* (Main Office for Local Politics, the HfK) to complain about a lack of Nazi representation on the DSGV's boards and committees (155). This helps complicate the view that the party tended to either integrate organizations and institutions or disband them, and it calls attention to the interplay among party, municipality, and organizational politics even after the Nazis took power. Salden drives home the point that the NSDAP had little by way of settled economic policy beyond broad ideological goals; alignment of the DSGV and member associations with the Nazi regime was varied and lacked standardization (61).

By the time the Nazis began their expansion into Europe by annexation and rearmament starting in 1935, Salden demonstrates that expansion of the DSGV followed. Ernst Kleiner left office that year, and the new president, Johannes Heintze, was viewed as sympathetic to party goals and ideology. As the Nazis incorporated more European territory, the DSGV expanded its scope of operations in pursuit of aligned economic policy as it related to the savings bank system. Other party organizations, especially the German Labor Front (DAF), oversaw and influenced some of the DSGV's work. The association's newsletter even bore the DAF's coat of arms. Here, too, is a contribution to the scholarship about reinforcing and interconnected bureaucratic mechanisms of the Third Reich, some of which were redundant and revealed the ways rivalries developed and manifested. Salden deftly traces the DSGV through the prewar years and into World War II. The onset of the war allowed for further expansion of DSGV influence as it related to economic policy and the establishment of savings banks and public credit institutions in the East. This also

meant that the DSGV operated in a space that necessitated working with various Reich ministries and leadership.

Salden closes her book with a postwar epilogue, noting that "the war had left large gaps in the association apparatus in terms of personnel and material" (315). Much of the DSGV's activities were limited by the end of the 1944, and it was unclear who was able to still work on the eve of capitulation in May 1945. Her epilogue also briefly discusses the DSGV's situation in an occupied and divided Germany, highlighting the long, difficult, and varied experiences of denazification and postwar life. She tackles the continuities and discontinuities of the Nazi period and after, picking apart individual actors' motivations and the impact they had on the activities of the DSGV, making it more than a "vicarious agent of Nazi dictatorship" commandeered by the party faithful (361). The conclusion that DSGV saw opportunities separate from Nazi ideological goals provide nuance to the discussion of the landscape of organizations and ministries in the Nazi period. An area that could have warranted further attention—and contextualized the impressive depth of Salden's work—would be a discussion of what made the savings bank sector distinct from credit unions or private commercial banks in German finance and society. At the same time, though, honing in so clearly on the DSGV and its member associations allowed Salden to provide a rich institutional history that will support further research of modern German history and the roles economic structures play in it.

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The Pen Confronts the Sword: Exiled German Scholars Challenge Nazism. By Avihu Zakai. Albany: SUNY Press, 2019. Pp. 374. Paper $34.00. ISBN 978-1438471631.

Three weeks after World War II ended in Europe, Thomas Mann gave a public talk at the Library of Congress, in which he evaluated his own intellectual past and decried the unfortunate German tendency toward inwardness and intellectual self-absorption, which had helped pave the way for National Socialism since German intellectuals denigrated the value of political freedom in contrast to other West Europeans. One of the main themes of *The Pen Confronts the Sword*, which deals with five important German scholars, is the ways in which each had to reevaluate their own thinking as Germany descended from high civilization to barbarism.

The four main chapters of the book are self-contained and can be read as distinct treatments of the authors covered. Although Avihu Zakai repeatedly draws connections among the five authors, it would have been useful to have an introductory discussion on the larger topic of how "the pen confronts the sword" in other historical contexts. Hundreds of German intellectuals ended up fleeing the Nazi state, weaponizing their pens as part of various antifascist initiatives. This book does not tell us enough about how these five writers fit into that larger effort.

In his opening chapter on Thomas Mann, Zakai focuses on apocalyptic and eschatological themes in Mann's novel *Dr. Faustus*, which Mann began in 1942, when the Nazi empire was at its height, and published in 1947. Mann's retelling of the famous medieval story retains