The concentration on the Polish territories naturally comes with a price. Antisemitic violence was not only a salient characteristic of the Second World War. It was already endemic in the years 1918–1921, not only in Poland or in the streets of the Weimar Republic, where the Freikorps murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, but also in Hungary under the White Terror or in Ukraine, which was torn by civil war, where the estimated number of Jewish victims is—contrary to the Polish case with fewer than one thousand murdered Jews—in the hundreds of thousands. A comparative study of this transnational phenomenon is yet to be written. William W. Hagen's Polish case study is an excellent example of how this can be done.

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doi:10.1017/S0008938921000121

Einstein in Bohemia. By Michael D. Gordin. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020. Pp. 360. Cloth $29.95. ISBN 978-0691177373.

The role of the historian is to write history. This means the teller is as important as the events they have chosen to recount. Sylvia Sellers-Garcia's *The Woman on the Windowsill* (2020) addresses this directly by making it the authorial voice. The unexplainable is confronted both in terms of a crime and the desire to resolve a story. Michael Gordin's *Einstein in Bohemia* is something kindred but different. What if we just tell of the ephemeral? What happens when the answer is nothing?

As the author informs us, Einstein spent only sixteen months in Prague, but the intrigue of this city is so great that, once Gordin learned this fact as an undergraduate, the topic immediately seemed perfect for an article. There is the adage that Napoleon crossing a river makes it history, which also makes the river's meaning contingent upon the personae. But does the actor even care where he or she is at any given moment?

This does not seem to have been true for Einstein in Prague. It also seems no one really thought much of him being there either. The story must have seemed promising initially—Einstein's Prague adventure overlapped with figures such as Franz Kafka and Max Brod. He attended the fashionable salons of Bertha Fanta, where he surely would have discussed the ideas of Sigmund Freud, among others. In fact, all Einstein left behind is memories of his violin playing, which was not as astounding as his theory of relativity.

This would not be published until later, so for now Gordin can mostly only speculate about what Einstein "could not fail to notice" (83) on his fifteen-minute walk to work, the chunk of the city being dismantled "to erect a gigantic monument to František Palacký"—"so large that it is really astonishing that Einstein never commented upon it in letters to distant friends" (81)—during a time period we must consider as "very seriously" (52) as Einstein himself must have at the time, having no way of knowing that he was soon to move on and become "Einstein" instead.

This is a great point, as life is, in fact, composed of episodes whose length does not necessarily correspond with their significance—the word or the gesture that tell more than books or speeches. The author's approach to ineffability is to follow the life of Einstein's theory long after its inventor has left. This is a solution and fills in spaces not otherwise

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008938921000145 Published online by Cambridge University Press

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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doi:10.1017/S0008938921000145

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

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008938921000145 Published online by Cambridge University Press