Klaus Hentschel:

The Einstein-Tower: An Intertexture of Dynamic Construction, Relativity Theory, and Astronomy

(translated by Ann M. Hentschel; German original: 1992)


The various interwoven descriptive levels forming the fabric of this book include the following biographical and cognitive aspects and institutional and disciplinary histories:

The biography of the protagonist Freundlich (origin, family, religion, education, employment).

His interaction with his academic teachers (particularly Felix Klein), co-workers (von Klüber, von Brunn, Brück, von der Pahlen, Grotrian, Unsöld) and students (e.g., Batten), patrons (Einstein, Planck) and opponents in the scientific community (Struve, von Seeliger, Ludendorff).

A survey of his scientific work, focussing on his attempts to verify the general theory of relativity through observation.

Freundlich's political position within the Berlin scientific research environment.

A cross-border comparison of astrophysics, particularly with American observatories.

The tower telescope as a piece of architecture (technical specifications, architectonic layout and design, stylistic designation and comparison with other structures of the time) together with

Economic and sociopsychological components
(motives behind and arguments for its construction, financing issues also in connection with the interwar inflation).

A comparison of the reception of the Einstein Tower and relativity theory: portentous symbols of modernity or bizarre outgrowths of a `degenerate' culture?

Research results generated by Freundlich and his colleagues at the Einstein Tower, also set against the tower's original purpose.
The National Socialist rise to power and its impact on the Einstein Institut: Ludendorff’s revenge, Freundlich's exile and subsequent fate.

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