Paying for Hitler’s War

During World War II, Germany occupied much of continental Europe. Although the social and political history of this occupation has been studied extensively, the economics of the unprecedented transfer of resources has received surprisingly little attention. Allies, neutrals, and conquered nations under German hegemony were a vital source of supplies for Hitler’s war machine. Without the war material, consumer goods, and labor they provided, Germany would not have been able to wage a prolonged multi-front war. All of these countries suffered enormous losses, but each had a distinct experience that depended on Germany’s wartime needs, whether they were allied, occupied, or neutral, and their place in Nazi racial ideology. Paying for Hitler’s War is a comparative economic study that explores these different experiences through case studies of twelve nations spanning the European continent.

Jonas Scherner is Professor of Modern European Economic History at Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Eugene N. White is Distinguished Professor of Economics at Rutgers University and Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Paying for Hitler’s War

The Consequences of Nazi Hegemony for Europe

Edited by

JONAS SCHERNER
Norwegian University of Science and Technology

EUGENE N. WHITE
Rutgers University
Contents

Contributors

Introduction
Jonas Scherner and Eugene N. White

SECTION I GERMANY’S WARTIME DILEMMA

1 Germany’s Economic War Aims and the Expectation of Victory, 1918
Carsten Burbop

2 The Institutional Architecture of Financing German Exploitation: Principles, Conflicts, and Results
Jonas Scherner

3 Employing the Enemy: The Economic Exploitation of POW and Foreign Labor from Occupied Territories by Nazi Germany
Johann Custodis

SECTION II THE OCCUPIED WEST

4 The Long Shadow of Vichy: The Economic Consequences of Occupation
Eugene N. White

5 Forced Collaboration, Entrepreneurial Strategies, and Their Long-Term Effects in France
Marcel Boldorf

6 Trading with the Enemy? The Occupation of the Netherlands and the Problems of Postwar Recovery
Martijn Lak

page vii
1
17
19
43
67
101
103
126
140
### Contents

7  La Politique du Moindre Mal: Twice-Occupied Belgium
    *Kim Oosterlinck and Eugene N. White*  
    164

8  The Economics of the German Construction Programs in Occupied France and Occupied Italy, 1940–1945
    *Fabian Lemmes*  
    198

---

**SECTION III  NORTHERN EUROPE**

9  The Economic Effects of the German Occupation of Norway, 1940–1945
    *Harald Espeli*  
    235

10 Sweden as an Occupied Country? Swedish–Belligerent Trade in World War II
    *Eric Golson*  
    266

11  A Mild Occupation? Denmark, 1940–1945
    *Steen Andersen*  
    296

12 Unequal Partners: Germany and Finland during the Second World War
    *Jari Eloranta and Ilkka Nummela*  
    320

---

**SECTION IV  EASTERN EUROPE**

13 System Transformation as Consequence of the German Occupation? Czechoslovakia’s Path from the Nazi War Economy to Postwar Centralized Planned Economy
    *Jaromír Balcar and Jaroslav Kučera*  
    343

14 German Economic Exploitation of Bulgaria: Short-Term Economic Policies and Long-Term Institutional Effects
    *Vera Asenova*  
    364

15 Scorched Earth, Plunder, and Massive Mobilization: The German Occupation of Ukraine and the Soviet War Economy
    *Kim Christian Priemel*  
    389

16 The Economic Consequences of German Occupation Policy in Poland
    *Ramona Bräu*  
    427

**Index**  
451
Contributors

Steen Andersen, National Archives of Denmark, Rigsdagsgaarden, Copenhagen
Vera Asenova, Central European University, Budapest
Jaromír Balcar, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin
Marcel Boldorf, University of Lyon
Ramona Bräu, Historical Commission on the Reich Finance Ministry, 1933–1945, Cologne
Carsten Burhop, Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods, Bonn
Johann Custodis, University of Warwick
Jari Eloranta, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina
Harald Espeli, BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo
Eric Golson, Oxford University
Jaroslav Kučera, Charles University, Prague
Martijn Lak, Leiden University and The Hague University of Applied Sciences
Fabian Lemmes, Ruhr University, Bochum
Ilkka Nummela, University of Jyväskylä
Kim Oosterlinck, Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management
Contributors

Kim Christian Priemel, Humboldt University Berlin

Jonas Scherner, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim

Eugene N. White, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey