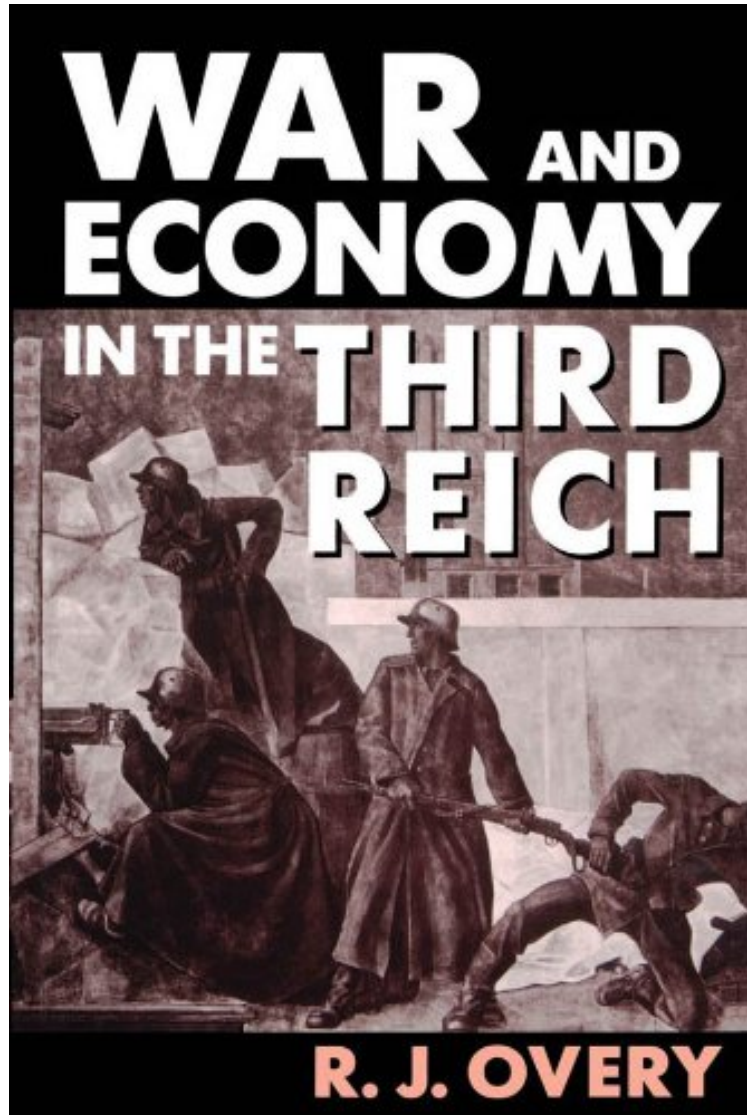


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War and Economy in the Third Reich

R. J. Overy

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R. J. Overy : War and Economy in the Third Reich before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised War and Economy in the Third Reich:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very Well WrittenBy JonI bought this book planning to use it for my history research paper. Overy's convincing argument resulted in a total shift of my own. Overy's engaging style of writing led me to read virtually the entire book. You may find that you don't subscribe to his well thought out and supported theories (like my parents), nonetheless you will surely find this book to be far more fluid and comprehensible than most academic texts.11 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Goering, Speer, Krupp, Hitler, and the average German.By Kurt GrussendorfThis book is very helpful in ascertaining the economic planning

leading up to the war and during. There are a bit too many statistics for my taste that get in the way of the narrative at times. The overall premise is that Hitler and Goering were engaged in long-range planning and not Blitzkrieg techniques--they did not fear the popular reaction of the German people by keeping civilian production up--and the fact that there was not a rational, complete mobilization for war until Speer's efforts was the fault of long-range infrastructure planning--building steel mills for the Goering enterprise while not utilizing the present capacity of the Ruhr (Krupp) manufacturers. The failure to convert to mass production and adherence to craftsman piecework was another factor in poor armaments performance. The author notes the unreliability of studies of the German economy by Allied bombing agencies and the reality of a large contingent of German women working in the factories despite Nazi ideology that women should stay at home and mind the family. All of this being said, the insistence that the Germans were willing to sacrifice for the war effort, even before Stalingrad, and the massive Allied bombing is an overstatement. The study, *Hitler's Beneficiaries*, is a better assessment of overall civilian motivation. Many Germans received booty from the dispossessed and soldiers sent home numerous luxury goods from the occupied lands in the first half of the war before things started to go downhill. These benefits are not fully taken into account, not to mention the promise of further riches to come. In reality, the German people saw themselves as gaining a good deal of personal wealth from the war. Many large private industrialists were shut-out from some of the more lucrative projects in the name of National Socialist party boss power grabs--but in the years building up to the war and before Stalingrad, the picture was quite rosy for all concerned in regard to future largesse. The Sudatenland and Silesia and the promise of rich picking in the Ukraine and the Baku oil fields remained a powerful motivator for the German populace until things really started going downhill. It is my contention that the average German followed the Nazis more for material gain--realized and unrealized--rather than ideology during the years 1934-1942--and even into 1943, for a time. After that it was a fight for sheer survival, but the author makes far too much of the rationing "privations" before then. The author neglects the zenith times of soldiers returning from occupied France with perfume and wine, Denmark with butter and cheese, and the trainloads of household furnishings to be had from dispossessed Jews before such items were reserved for the Allied bombing victims. Those early years were much more frothy with booty and promise of more to come that outweighed any official civilian rationing. Even the German soldier and bureaucrat--and there were millions of them--were fed and lodged better than at any other time in their lives before the slide to oblivion later in the war. After Stalingrad, the false hope that the reversals were only temporary stoked the fires of avarice for another 6-9 months. Germans wanted to get rich as well as seek security after the hyper-inflation of 1923. Money or the promise of it trumped ideology--in my opinion. 13 of 15 people found the following review helpful. A tremendous and insightful look into the topic. By A Customer. Overy has done an excellent job with this book. I used it as a major source for some research I was doing and do not think it could have been any better of a source. Overy outlines the nature of the Nazi economy, both leading up to and during the war, in very understandable fashion. His linking of foreign policy and economy is very strong and brings to light issues that most people probably have not considered. Chief among these is that Hitler paid close attention to the economy and was thinking of war in economic terms (as in, was the German war economy actually ready for war). In September, 1940, Hitler did not believe it was and did not think it would be for another four or five years. Overy describes these thoughts of Hitler's vividly and you finish the book thankful that Hitler made his vital miscalculation about the resolve of Britain and France in September, 1940.

War and Economy in the Third Reich examines the nature of the German economy in the 1930s and the Second World War. Richard Overy's essays, collected here for the first time with a substantial new introduction, explore the tension between Hitler's vision of an armed economy and the reality of German economic and social life. Often thought-provoking, always informed, *War and Economy* opens a window on an essential aspect of Hitler's Germany.