

Boldorf, Marcel, and Tetsuji Okazaki, eds. *Economies Under Occupation: The Hegemony of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan in World War II*. New York: Routledge, 2015. 335 pages.

While an undergraduate history major at Mansfield State College in the 1970s, this reviewer was introduced by Professor Richard W. Condon to the importance of economic factors to the outcome of World War II with Gordon Wright's *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945*. In his chapter on "the economic dimension" of the war, Wright focuses on the impact of total war on the German, British, and Soviet wartime economies, with some attention paid to the occupied European economies. Wright's monograph was an early work in this field. In recent years much research has been done on this subject, including the volume reviewed here. What sets this work apart from most recent scholarship is the comparative aspect, analyzing differences and similarities in how the Germans and Japanese established economic hegemony over their occupied territories. This was not an easy task, as the editors admit, because few scholars have been working in both fields of study.

Economies under Occupation consists of twenty chapters written by economic and business history scholars from Europe and Asia. Overviews of German and Japanese occupation systems, war financing, and use of foreign labor forces comprise the first three sections. Ten case studies of occupied nations' economies make up the heart of the book. An analysis of multinational corporations operating in occupied economies constitutes the final section. The key themes in this volume include the competition among various administrative agencies for control of the occupied economies, the changing nature of the occupation regimes, and how Germany and Japan managed occupation nations' economies depending on the degree of industrialization.

Both hegemony established political, business, and military administrative bodies that in combination with local governments regulated the occupied nations' economies so as to incorporate them into

the aggressor's economies. Conflict over control frequently occurred. Hans Otto Froland's study of Norway found that the *Wehrmacht* and the Reich Commissariat disagreed over the amount the army spent on construction projects. Dirk Luyten ascertained that in Belgium the German military command and the various commodity offices frequently clashed over the allocation of raw materials for the German war economy as well as the Belgian market. Delphine Boissarie argues that in Indochina, French authorities developed various ways to thwart the economic goals of the Japanese administrators.

Several factors shaped the changing nature of the occupation regimes. When the fortunes of war changed so too did the regimes. For example, Mark Spoerer contends in "Forced labor in Nazi-occupied Europe, 1939-1945," that when the *Blitzkrieg* failed to defeat the Soviet Union, this led to a war of attrition which transformed the nature of the war economy and labor policy. J. Thomas Lindblad's examination of Japanese policy in Indonesia, Boissarie's analysis of Indochina, and Gregg Huff and Shinobu Majima's study of how Japan financed the occupation of Southeast Asia all note the increasingly negative impact of Allied submarine and aerial attacks on the Japanese merchant marine. By the latter part of the war, these territories were unable to continue shipping their vital raw materials—oil, rubber, and rice—to Japan. This severely damaged the Japanese and Southeast Asian nations' economies.

The degree of industrialization of occupied nations' economies significantly influenced how the occupying powers administered them. Harald Wixforth argues in his study of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia that the region's extensive industrialization "prevented uncontrolled mass terror" that occurred in other Eastern European nations. (p. 165) Instead, the Nazis employed a policy of "carrots and sticks" to foster armaments production for the German war machine. (p. 174) Unlike Germany, which occupied several nations that already had advanced economies that could contribute to arms production, Japan took over regions that had no heavy industry. Prior to the war, territories such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and Indochina exported raw materials to the West. Gerardo Sicat, for example, points out in "The Philippine economy during the Japanese occupation, 1941-1945," that 80 percent of prewar Filipino

Book Reviews

exports went to the US. After their military victories, the Japanese goal was to integrate the occupied economies into the Great East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere, which included reorienting their raw materials exports to Japan. The exception was Manchuria (*Manchukuo*), where, Tetsuji Okazaki shows, the Japanese effort to develop an arms industry—which went through three different phases—achieved limited success.

Key historiographical issues are debated in several essays. Marcel Boldorf, for example, disagrees with scholars such as Gordon Wright who claim that Albert Speer was crucial to reorganizing the German war economy. Instead, he argues that “the occupied territories played an important role in armaments production prior to Speer’s appointment.” (p. 17) He also disagrees with those who claim that the National Socialists had established a “planned economy.” Instead, he asserts that Germany had created a “command economy with incentive-based elements.” (p. 108)

Steen Anderson’s study of the Danish construction company Christiani & Nielsen’s French operations had a different focus from most essays. Anderson employs the concept of “political risk” to analyze decision making by the firm’s board when its members decided to build submarine bunkers for the Nazis. He concludes that “the fact that they might be actively supporting German warfare was less important than the financial stability of the company.” (p. 269) Anderson shows that the company conducted business as discretely as possible so that no one outside the board would know of their activities.

This book would have benefited from additional comparative analysis. Only Huff and Majima’s essay explicitly compared developments between Japan and Germany. The reader has to rely mainly on the ten page conclusion for this. In this crucial section the editors emphasize several key differences in the occupation regimes. Most significantly, they argue that Japan had to contend with administering a much larger geographical area than the Germans. Moreover, the Japanese, unlike the Germans, encountered more people willing to cooperate with them due to some “national elites who welcomed the Japanese as liberators from European colonialism.” (p. 316) Also, the Germans plundered strategic resources in their occupied areas far more than the Japanese did—the notable exception

to this being China. Important similarities included the armies of Germany and Japan “were the main consumers in both systems of war economy” and “in both cases, war financing was covered with occupation costs which were imposed to the occupied countries.” (p. 325) Overall, this is a fascinating and valuable monograph that illustrates the complexities of this topic and suggests the need for further comparative studies.

Douglas Karsner
Bloomsburg University
United States

WORKS CITED

Wright, Gordon. *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945*. New York: Harper & Row, 1968. 305 Pp.

Swingen, Abigail L. *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015. 271 Pp.

Investigating the origins of the British Empire in the Atlantic, Abigail L. Swingen shows how a variety of imperial ideologies and policies jostled for predominance throughout the 17th century. She is primarily concerned with the ways in which Britain created and maintained its empire in the Caribbean, specifically Barbados and Jamaica. Swingen argues that constant negotiation, resistance, and sometimes violent conflict between the colonies and the metropole continuously reshaped and redefined the imperial vision of the British government. Yet labor, and more precisely unfree labor, took center stage in the political and economic drama that fashioned the British Atlantic Empire.

Consisting of seven chapters, Swingen’s work starts with the founding of English colonies in the Caribbean, specifically Barbados and Jamaica. From the genesis of English imperialism, the colonies confronted an almost continual dearth of labor, especially cheap labor. In her first