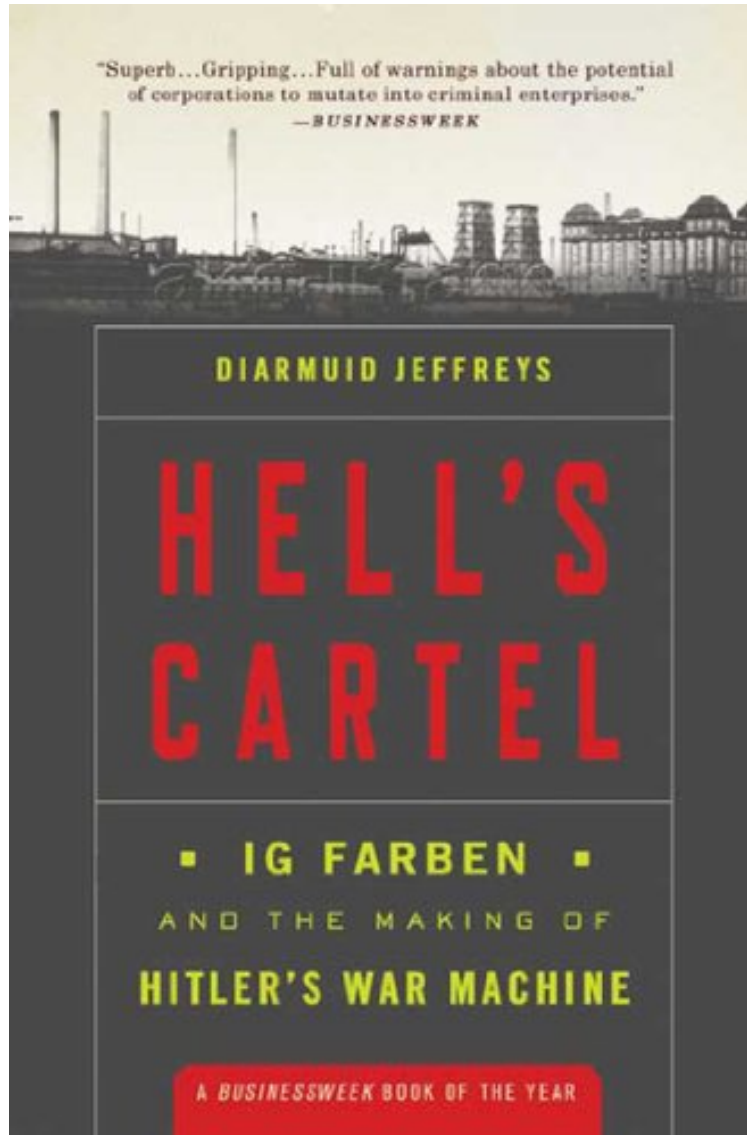


[Download] Hell's Cartel: IG Farben and the Making of Hitler's War Machine

Hell's Cartel: IG Farben and the Making of Hitler's War Machine

Diarmuid Jeffreys

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Diarmuid Jeffreys : Hell's Cartel: IG Farben and the Making of Hitler's War Machine before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hell's Cartel: IG Farben and the Making of Hitler's War Machine:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Who was really responsible for Hitler and World War II?By Mal WarwickIn 1965, just twenty years after the collapse of the Nazi regime, I visited Auschwitz. Even though that was nearly half a century ago, my memory of that shattering experience remains vivid: the mountains of human hair, eyeglasses, and gold dental fillings; the photographs of skeletal prisoners staring glassy-eyed from bunk beds crowded together in darkness; the route from the trains to the barracks to the ovens followed by more than one million

European Jews from 1941 to 1944. Those disturbing images kept coming back to me as I made my way through the pages of *Hell's Cartel*, Diarmuid Jeffreys' compelling story of the role of Germany's largest industrial concern in the rise of the Nazis and the conduct of World War II. Few readers under the age of 60 are familiar with the name IG Farben, but for most of the 1920s and 1930s, the company ranked fourth in the world, just behind General Motors, U. S. Steel, and Standard Oil of New Jersey. However, IG Farben was more than another enormous business -- it was, in fact, a cartel, or association of separate huge firms for much of its existence -- and, more than any other company, it personified German science and Germany's rise while it dominated much of the German economy between the two World Wars. (The name IG Farben is an abbreviation for a string of German terms meaning "community of interest of dye-making corporations.") *Hell's Cartel* opens in Nuremberg in 1947, where 23 of the highest-ranking Nazi political and military leaders of the Third Reich had been tried, and most found guilty, in a lengthy war crimes trial that ended the preceding year. Now, in one of a series of subsequent military tribunals, 24 of the directors of IG Farben were going on trial, too. With the scene set against the devastation of urban Germany, Jeffreys then launches into the history of IG Farben, beginning in the 1880s with the first attempts in Germany to challenge English control of the chemical dye industry; the emergence of several large companies famous in their own right (Bayer, BASF, Hoechst, Agfa) as the German industry overtook its competitors and leapt to the lead in dyestuffs, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals; and the two-decade quest of Carl Duisberg ("the world's greatest industrialist") to convince the leaders of competing firms to combine with his own company, Bayer, in an all-German chemical cartel. When Duisberg finally won the day in 1925 and the IG Farben was born, the foundation was laid for one of the darkest chapters in the history of business. In Jeffreys' view, the fatal moment came in 1933, shortly after Hitler came to power, when the IG's chief executive, Carl Bosch, entered into a huge government contract to produce high-octane synthetic fuel for Hermann Goering's illegal air force. "The agreement Bosch had signed," Jeffreys writes, "was far more than the fulfillment of his long-held ambitions [to commercialize synthetic fuel]. It was also a pivotal moment in a sequence of events that would lead inexorably to the blitzkrieg, to Stalingrad, and to the gas chambers of Auschwitz." Although the IG manufactured thousands of products through its extensive web of companies and subsidiaries -- ultimately, throughout the lands Hitler annexed from 1936 to 1943 -- its military significance lay chiefly in its production of synthetic fuel, synthetic rubber, and explosives. However, for many observers, the cartel's most notable product was the Zyklon-B gas used to exterminate millions of Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, and others judged undesirable and unfit in the deranged mind of Adolf Hitler and those who followed his lead. Jeffreys' judgment about the preeminent role of IG Farben is unequivocal. "Had the IG's managers found the courage to oppose doing business with the Nazis in the late 1930s, or had they been even marginally less compliant, Hitler would have struggled to get his war machine moving." Going even further, the author quotes one of the company's top executives, Georg von Schnitzler, who concluded after the war had ended that the firm gave "decisive aid for Hitler's foreign policy which led to war and the ruination of Germany . . . I must conclude that IG is largely responsible for the policies of Hitler." "It is difficult to imagine a more dramatic example than IG Farben of business unmoored from any moral purpose -- not just supplying the products that literally fueled the Nazi war machine and sponsoring the gruesome research of Dr. Josef Mengele (the notorious "Angel of Death"), but going so far as to build its own concentration camp for Jewish slave laborers at Auschwitz. [Note: "Auschwitz" connoted a network of more than forty camp facilities, including the Birkenau extermination camp and the IG's installation near the synthetic rubber plant it was building near the Polish border town of Auschwitz.] In the final pages of *Hell's Cartel*, Jeffreys returns to the 1947 IG Farben trial in Nuremberg, detailing the testimony and attitudes of the two dozen defendants, introducing the American lawyers and judges, and relating the court's verdict on each of the defendants. I won't summarize here the outcome of the trial. Suffice it to say that the final chapters of this book make the whole story well worth reading. Diarmuid Jeffreys is a British journalist and television documentary producer. In an earlier book, *Aspirin: The Remarkable Story of a Wonder Drug*, he researched some of the early history of Bayer and other German pharmaceutical companies that figure in central roles in *Hell's Cartel*.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good Book on Not Well Known Subject By Benjamin Dover The author outlines a comprehensive history of the companies that merged into IG Farben. He addresses the technological contributions of each and shows how it really became a hellish cartel. This wasn't a company to be messed with in the world markets. However, his conclusions about their involvement at the upper levels is a bit sketchy. Make no mistake, this reviewer has no doubts about their guilt. But after reading an entire book methodically detailing involvement it was a bit disconcerting to read modifiers like 'surely' or 'they must have'. (Step up to the plate man!) It also would have been nice to have seen more of the world's competition (ICI, Allied, DuPont, etc) in the context of the world's markets. He mentions them often, but I would have liked more. All in all, I would recommend this book as an excellent review of the growth of the German chemicals industry. The author outlines the development of household names and household products, and it is a very interesting read. Four stars in my book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Hell's Cartel* - a history of the blindness of greed By DAVID KINZER *Hell's Cartel* references a part of history which begs the question - how could this happen? The author's amazingly extensive notes and bibliography give credence to the authenticity of the factual details of the book and the fact that it did happen. The book is captivating as the chronological history of about fifty years of German chemical technology, engineering and industrial genius in the

burgeoning global economy show how the greedy tentacles of the evil of a demented national leadership wrapped around an otherwise good and benevolent undertaking and twisted it into a money grubbing horror at the expense of holocaust victims. Further, it shows how an international mood, ignorance, apathy and timing would allow many, if not all, of the perpetrators to essentially walk free after standing trial. A great read!

The remarkable rise and shameful fall of one of the twentieth century's greatest conglomerates At its peak in the 1930s, the German chemical conglomerate IG Farben was one of the most powerful corporations in the world. To this day, companies formerly part of the Farben cartel—the aspirin-maker Bayer, the graphics supplier Agfa, the plastics giant BASF—continue to play key roles in the global market. IG Farben itself, however, is remembered mostly for its infamous connections to the Nazi Party and its complicity in the atrocities of the Holocaust. After the war, Farben's leaders were tried for crimes that included mass murder and exploitation of slave labor. In *Hell's Cartel*, Diarmuid Jeffreys presents the first comprehensive account of IG Farben's rise and fall, tracing the enterprise from its nineteenth-century origins, when the discovery of synthetic dyes gave rise to a vibrant new industry, through the upheavals of the Great War era, and on to the company's fateful role in World War II. Drawing on extensive research and original interviews, *Hell's Cartel* sheds new light on the codependence of industry and the Third Reich, and offers a timely warning against the dangerous merger of politics and the pursuit of profit.

From Publishers Weekly British journalist Jeffreys (*Aspirin: The Remarkable Story of a Wonder Drug*) pre-sents a compelling account of the comprehensive collaboration of Germany's major chemical conglomerate with Adolf Hitler's genocidal dictatorship. The fourth largest industrial concern in the world, IG Farben was a key element of German foreign policy. Its employees were well treated. Its scientists won Nobel prizes. Its administrators created an international network controlling the production and sale of everything from plastics to camera film—and poison gas. Jeffreys tells the story from the rise of Germany's chemical industry in the 19th century to its support of the Nazis' ascent to power starting in 1932. National Socialism was good for business. The increasingly lucrative contracts came with a price: first accommodation, then collaboration, as one compromise after another enmeshed the cartel ever deeper in the Nazi system. Eventually, from Farben's perspective, Auschwitz was no more than a source of labor for producing the synthetic rubber and oil that kept the war machine operating. Ignominiously dissolved in the early '50s, IG Farben remains a monument to willful and unapologetic moral blindness. (Aug. 1) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "A damning new history in which Jeffreys brings a rare combination of forensic acumen and narrative flair to bear on the material."—Chicago Tribune