

wintershall dea

PRESS RELEASE

WINTERSHALL DEA CONTINUING TO REAPPRAISE COMPANY HISTORY IN THE ERA OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

- German Society for Corporate History (GUG) currently researching the actions of the predecessor company DEA
- Historians show how DEA became the most important supplier for the navy and exploited forced labourers

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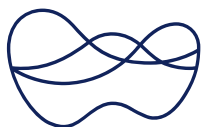
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Hamburg/Kassel. Three years after the publication of the book "Expansion at All Costs: Studies on the Wintershall AG between Crisis and War, 1929-1945", Wintershall Dea is continuing to reappraise its company history in the era of National Socialism and is now focussing on its second predecessor company, "Deutsche Erdöl Aktiengesellschaft" (DEA), founded in 1899.

The research project began at the start of 2022 and is being carried out by the independent Business History Society ("Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte"/ GUG), which has commissioned two renowned economic historians, Prof Dr Manfred Grieger (University of Göttingen) and Dr Rainer Karlsch (Berlin), to conduct the research. The aim is to publish an overview of the company's history during the Nazi era, showing the structures and key developments of the DEA Group between 1939 and 1945 and analysing how they differed at the local mining, oil production, refinery and sales facilities. Publication as a book

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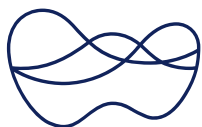
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is planned for the end of 2024/start of 2025. Initial findings on previously unexplored aspects of DEA's company history have now (8 November) been presented to a specialist audience at a historical conference in Hamburg.

Importance of historical reappraisal more relevant than ever

Mario Mehren, CEO of Wintershall Dea, stresses that it is important for an international company with German roots to deal with its own history. In times in which a party, which includes right-wing extremist elements, is celebrating electoral successes all over the country, in which xenophobic slogans are being spread again and Jews in Germany are increasingly being attacked, he says that it is important to take a critical look at the National Socialist period and the role of his company during that time. That is the only way to resolutely counter right-wing extremist ideas.

Company spokesman Michael Sasse adds: "If there is a lesson that we at Wintershall Dea have learnt from our company history, it is to take a clear position. Against right-wing extremism. Against hate and hate speech. For democracy and respectful coexistence. We also owe that to our own workforce." More than 2,000 people from 60 nations work at Wintershall Dea worldwide: "We have to show them: we value you. And we will protect you from hatred and hate speech. This is what our company is committed to today, so that terrible history is not repeated," says Sasse.



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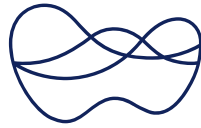
What was previously known about DEA's history

Unlike Wintershall, there were already a few individual publications on certain aspects of DEA's history during the Nazi era: Rainer Karlsch, for example, in addition to his industry study "Faktor Öl: Die Mineralölwirtschaft in Deutschland 1859-1974" (The Factor Oil: The Mineral Oil industry in Germany from 1859 to 1974 (German Only)) also published an essay on Karpaten Öl AG, a joint venture of German oil companies in which DEA had a significant stake in terms of finance and personnel.¹ Karpaten Öl AG was to exploit the oil deposits in what is now Poland and used tens of thousands of forced labourers to do so.

Other historians provided insights into the fate of a number of Jewish DEA board members and supervisory board members in collective studies and source books: for example, Georg Solmssen, Chairman of the Management of Deutsche Bank AG and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of DEA, was forced out of office in 1938 due to his Jewish origin, as was DEA board member Fritz Haußmann.²

¹ Rainer Karlsch/Raymond Stokes, *Faktor Öl. Die Mineralölwirtschaft in Deutschland 1859-1974*, Munich 2003, and Rainer Karlsch: "Ein vergessenes Großunternehmen. Die Geschichte der Karpaten Öl AG" (A forgotten scheme: The history of the Carpathians Öl AG), in: *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte (Economic History Yearbook) 2004/1*, pp. 95-138.

² Regarding Georg Solmssen, see, for example: Harold James, Martin L. Müller (eds.): *Georg Solmssen – ein deutscher Bankier. Briefe aus einem halben Jahrhundert 1900–1956* (= Schriftenreihe zur Zeitschrift für Unternehmensgeschichte 25) (Georg Solmssen – a German banker. Letters from half a century 1900-1956 (= supplement of the Journal of Business History 25), (German Only)), Munich 2012. For information on Fritz Haußmann, see, for example, Martin Münzel, *Die jüdischen Mitglieder der deutschen Wirtschaftselite (The Jewish Members of the German Economic Elite (German Only))*, Paderborn 2006, pp. 277-280, or Dirk



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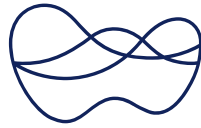
New insights into the DEA's actions in the era of National Socialism

According to current research status, it is clear that not only Wintershall AG but also DEA benefited greatly from the National Socialist armament and autarky policy. The company also used forced labourers at its sites in Germany and abroad and actively participated in the exploitation of oil reserves in the territories occupied by the Wehrmacht. DEA's involvement in "Aryanisation" could also be proven.

At the historical conference in Hamburg, Manfred Grieger and Rainer Karlsch presented further interim results of their current research. From their many research questions, they selected two topics as examples that had not yet been examined in more detail in the historical study of DEA:

Manfred Grieger presented an **exemplary analysis of a DEA site using the example of Rositz**, where the company had been producing heating oil and later also diesel from tar-containing lignite since 1916. Among other things, the historian showed how the Nazi economic policy driven by expansion and war led to a significant expansion of production capacities in Rositz. According to Grieger, the navy set specifications for product quality, but also provided loans and subsidies for extending the

Bavendamm, Die Geschichte des Unternehmens, in: ders. (Hg.), 100 Jahre RWE-DEA 1899–1999 (Dirk Bavendamm, The History of the Company, in: idem (ed.), 100 Years of RWE-DEA 1899–1999 (German Only)); Hamburg 1999, p. 200ff.



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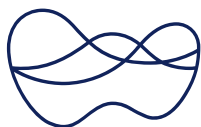
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plant facilities. DEA thus became the most important supplier to the navy, making it one of the beneficiaries of the armaments boom.

The destruction of the refinery facilities and transport routes by Allied air raids paralysed production in Rositz from mid-August 1944. To secure the production of heating oil and fuel for the German war economy, a special NS authority ensured the supply of additional forced labourers, according to Grieger. Among them were more than 420 Jewish Germans and so-called half-Jews, who were exempted through this selection from being killed immediately at one of the concentration camps. A total of 3,200 people worked for the DEA in Rositz, around half of whom were exploited as forced labourers.

Rainer Karlsch traced **DEA's activities in Austria** after the annexation by the German Reich in 1938 and showed how the war economy also led to DEA's return to oil business. According to Karlsch's research, until spring 1938, DEA was only prepared to take part in exploration in the Vienna Basin at the insistence of the Reich Ministry of Economics. However, after several wells were successful in 1938/39, DEA became the most important German oil producer in the 'Ostmark' region. The Group benefited from the preliminary work of the English oil pioneer van Sickle and concluded an oppressive contract with his company. When acquiring the "Nova" refinery in Vienna-Schwechat, DEA also took advantage of the predicament of the seller, the French company Creditul Minier, which wanted to withdraw from Austria for political reasons.



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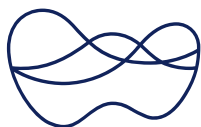
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In the final months of the war, DEA took over the management of the refinery in Ebensee in Austria. The atrocious conditions under which thousands of prisoners built underground tunnels must have been approved by the DEA headquarters and have been a daily reality for the DEA employees deployed in Ebensee.

Networking with other researchers

Other topics at the conference included the significance of the Reich Drilling Programme for Wintershall and DEA (*lecture by Marvin Brendel, All About Assets agency for Wintershall Dea*) and the foundation of Kontinentale Öl AG, in which both companies were involved (*lecture by Dr Karsten Linne, Hamburg Foundation for the Promotion of Science and Culture*). In addition, historians from the Institute for Didactics of Democracy (IDD) at Leibniz University Hannover presented their current research. In a research project funded by the Ministry of Science and Culture of the State of Lower Saxony, they are currently investigating the political, social and economic conditions and effects of crude oil production in the Celle region between 1933 and 1945 and in the post-war era. The aim is to achieve a broader contextualisation of DEA's history through the exchange between the researchers about their projects.

The complete research results of Manfred Grieger and Rainer Karlsch on the history of DEA in the period of National Socialism will be published as a book at the turn of the year 2024/25.



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About Wintershall Dea

Wintershall Dea is transforming from the leading European independent gas and oil company to become a leading European independent gas and carbon management company. We have more than 120 years of experience as an operator and project partner along the entire E&P value chain. The company with German roots and headquarters in Kassel and Hamburg explores for and produces gas and oil in 11 countries worldwide in an efficient and responsible manner. With activities in Europe, Latin America and the MENA region (Middle East & North Africa), Wintershall Dea has a global upstream portfolio and, with its participation in natural gas transport, is also active in midstream business. And we develop carbon management and low carbon hydrogen projects to contribute to climate goals and secure energy supplies. More in our [Annual Report](#).

As a European gas and oil company, we support the EU's 2050 carbon neutrality target. As our contribution we have set ourselves ambitious targets: We want to be net zero across our entire upstream operations – both operated and non-operated – by 2030. This includes Scope 1 (direct) and Scope 2 (indirect) greenhouse gas emissions on an equity share basis. Wintershall Dea will also bring its methane emissions intensity below 0.1 per cent by 2025. We endorsed the World Bank's Initiative 'Zero Routine Flaring by 2030' and continue to support the initiative aimed at eliminating routine flaring in operated assets by 2030. In addition, we plan to support global decarbonisation efforts by building up a carbon management and hydrogen business to potentially abate 20-30 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum by 2040. You can find more about this in our [Sustainability Report](#).

Wintershall Dea was formed from the merger of Wintershall Holding GmbH and DEA Deutsche Erdoel AG, in 2019. Today, the company employs more than 2,000 people worldwide from almost 60 nations.

More information on the Internet at www.wintershalldea.com or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).