



LECTURA DE 5 MINUTOS AGRICULTURA

El movimiento biodinámico y Demeter en tiempos del nacionalsocialismo

31 DE OCTUBRE DE 2024 DEMETER, FEDERACIÓN BIODINÁMICA DEMETER INTERNACIONAL, SECCIÓN DE AGRICULTURA

492

Hogar > Naturaleza > Agricultura > El movimiento biodinámico y Demeter en tiempos del nacionalsocialismo

¿Qué vínculos existían entre los practicantes de la biodinámica y las organizaciones nazis? ¿Cuáles fueron sus motivaciones para tomar ciertas decisiones durante la dictadura? Estas preguntas se abordan en el estudio *«Die biodynamische Bewegung und Demeter in der NS-Zeit»* [El movimiento biodinámico y Demeter en tiempos del nacionalsocialismo] (2024). El estudio se ha publicado como libro y fue presentado por los autores en el Centro de Documentación Topografía del Terror en Berlín.

El equipo científico independiente, integrado por Jens Ebert, Susanne zur Nieden y Meggi Pieschel, presentó los resultados de su investigación a más de 160 personas

interesadas. El evento público fue moderado por la historiadora Daniela Münkel. El proyecto fue encargado por Demeter Alemania, la Federación Biodinámica Demeter International y la Sección de Agricultura del Goetheanum. Estas instituciones financiaron el proyecto junto con el apoyo de tres fundaciones: la Fundación Software AG, la Fundación Edith Maryon y el Fondo Rudolf Steiner.

Un estudio diferenciado sobre una base de datos amplia

En su estudio, el equipo científico rastrea la historia de la biodinámica hasta principios de la posguerra, basándose en una amplia gama de fuentes. Durante la investigación, que comenzó en 2020, el equipo se sorprendió por la cantidad de material de las menos de 2000 personas que formaban parte del movimiento biodinámico en aquel entonces. Entre otros materiales, examinaron más de 10 000 páginas de la agencia de vigilancia y control policial nazi, así como documentos de más de treinta archivos y legados. Los tres investigadores analizan las coincidencias ideológicas y las formas de colaboración, pero también abordan las "diferencias importantes entre los movimientos biodinámico y nacionalsocialista, así como las diversas formas de resistencia por parte de sus seguidores y funcionarios", como escribe Daniela Münkel en la introducción. "Este libro aporta mayor objetividad al debate, a veces cargado de emotividad, sobre el tema, e introduce información nueva y bien documentada en la discusión".

The study traces how the members of the biodynamic associations decided to integrate into the Nazi state as early as the summer of 1933—the alternative would have been liquidation. During the National Socialist dictatorship, the biodynamic movement was able to grow initially until it was dissolved by the Gestapo in the summer of 1941. After that, however, some biodynamic specialists were recruited by the SS for their agricultural facilities, for example, at the Dachau concentration camp.

Collaborators from the Ranks of the Biodynamic Movement

At the time, Erhard Bartsch (1895–1960) managed the offices of the Research Group [*Versuchsring*] and the Demeter Agricultural Union [*Wirtschaftsbund*] as well as the monthly journal. With the founding of the Biodynamic Reich Association in 1933, the participants accepted the new conditions, the "Führer principle" was introduced, and

Jews were excluded. The protection of the Führer's deputy Rudolf Hess, a follower of biodynamic agriculture, led to institutional links with the Nazi state from 1934 onwards, without which organized biodynamic agriculture would probably not have been possible. The Biodynamic Reich Association was then banned in 1941, which marked the end of institutional cooperation. However, SS Reichsführer Himmler had six biodynamic specialists recruited by the SS to take part in biodynamic gardening experiments in the Dachau concentration camp: a case of collaboration. According to the study, the gardener Franz Lippert (1901–1949) was the only one to undergo denazification proceedings after 1945 and, like the majority of Germans, was exonerated.

It is true that the biodynamic and National Socialist movements emerged at the same time and shared similar views of the reform movement [Lebensreform] typical of the time, such as criticism of the increasing rationalization of life. However, as the study shows, the approaches of the two movements were very different: "We were also surprised that our text analysis of biodynamic writings, even in those texts that were explicitly addressed to Nazi authorities after 1933, did not contain any approval of the central Nazi ideological themes: anti-Semitism, racism, nationalism, imperialism, and the destruction of 'unworthy' life," concluded the researchers.

International Movement With a Clear Position Against Extremism

Demeter Executive Board member Alexander Gerber expressly thanked the three authors and the five-member scientific advisory board for their intensive and fruitful work and emphasized: "As a biodynamic community, we are now able to talk at a scientific level and have differentiated answers and can also take a position as an association: As ideological descendants of the biodynamic leaders of that time, we take our responsibility seriously and distance ourselves from the active collaboration of some biodynamic practitioners, especially their involvement in the agricultural institutions of the SS in concentration camps. We also condemn the attempted ingratiation with the Nazi system and the exclusion of Jewish members from the Biodynamic Reich Association."

"It is also clear that the opposite of racism is inherent in anthroposophy. Today, the statutes of the Demeter Association expressly distance themselves from right-wing extremism and racism. As a worldwide movement active in a wide variety of cultures

and religions, we are firmly opposed to extremist and exclusionary thoughts or practices, in accordance with the core value—to develop the individuality of the human being—of its foundation, anthroposophy,” says the Demeter Executive Board.

More Information

Book Jens Ebert, Susanne zur Nieden, and Meggi Pieschel, *Die biodynamische Bewegung und Demeter in der NS-Zeit: Akteure, Verbindungen, Haltungen* [The biodynamic movement and Demeter during the time of National Socialism: Participants, Connections, Approaches]. (Berlin: Metropol-Verlag, 2024).

Presentation Jens Ebert, Susanne zur Nieden, and Meggi Pieschel, “Die biodynamische Bewegung und Demeter in der NS-Zeit: Akteure, Verbindungen, Haltungen” [The biodynamic movement and Demeter during the time of National Socialism: Participants, connections, and approaches], *Topographie des Terrors* [Topography of Terror] (July 2, 2024).

Interview with the authors, “Biodynamisch in der NS-Zeit” [Biodynamics in the time of National Socialism], *Lebendige Erde* [Living Earth], no. 6 (2023): 46–48

Position Statement Demeter e.V. Germany; The Biodynamic Federation—Demeter International e.V.; The German Forschungsring e.V. for Biodynamic Agriculture; and The Goetheanum—Section for Agriculture, “The Biodynamic Movement stands for human rights, freedom of opinion, pluralism, and cosmopolitanism and clearly distances itself from extremism and anti-human aspirations,” (October 2020)

Position Statement Demeter Germany, “Demeter gegen Rechtsextremismus” [Demeter against right-wing extremism] (2024).

See also Sebastian Jüngel, “Opportunism served ‘to save the soil’,” Goetheanum Section for Agriculture (September 2, 2024)

Traducción de Joshua Kelberman.

Imagen: Trabajadores agrícolas en la finca Heynitz. Los derechos pertenecen a la familia Heynitz. Año y fotógrafo desconocidos, ca. 1935.

Visualizaciones de la publicación: 492

ETIQUETAS

#EDICIÓN 36/2024

#EDICIÓN EN INGLÉS NÚMERO 44/2024

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Relacionado
