

This video is a detailed account of a research project examining the relationship between French businesses and German authorities during the occupation of France in World War II, particularly focusing on the automobile industry and Ford SAF (Société Anonyme de Fabrication Ford). The researcher initially set out to explore various industries but narrowed the study down due to the complexity and volume of available material.

The project emphasizes the notion of "underproduction" as a form of resistance by French auto manufacturers, who claimed they deliberately produced less during the war to resist German demands. This video claim has been echoed in contemporary French historiography, suggesting that these companies were not collaborators but rather resisters. The researcher found extensive archival records from both German and French sources that highlight the dynamics of collaboration, institutional support for Ford SAF, and the economic pressures faced by French companies during the war.

The narrative also touches on the evolving perceptions of collaboration and resistance, particularly how the French auto companies justified their wartime actions post-liberation. The researcher underscores the complexities of the era, including shifts in production rates, the need for companies to navigate a deteriorating economy, and the interplay of interests between French firms and German occupiers.

Ultimately, the study reveals how external pressures, economic necessities, and strategic decisions shaped the operations and narratives surrounding Ford SAF and the broader French automobile industry during and after the occupation. The research highlights the intricate relationships between different actors and the motivations behind their decisions, suggesting that these dynamics are crucial for understanding the complexities of wartime economies and collaborative actions.