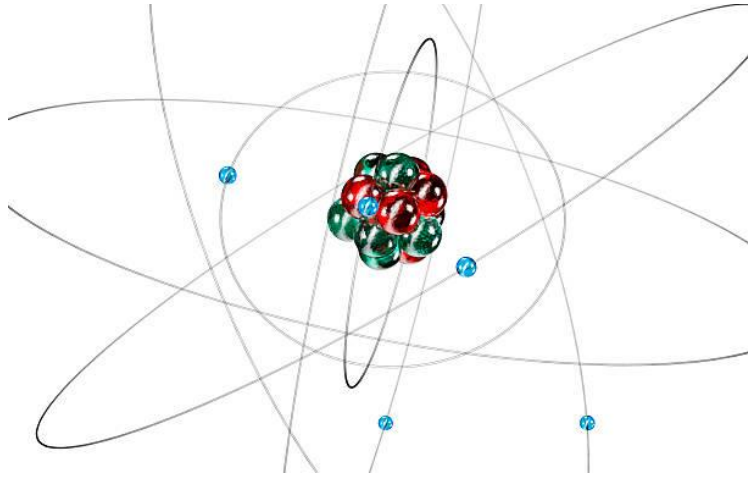


Historical Anomaly – The Nazi Nuclear Program



First off, let me say that I hope you all had a Merry Christmas, Hanukkah, Dong Zhi, or whatever winter solstice festival you celebrate. I spent it with my daughter and grandkids, as is usual this time of the year. The grandkids are seven and four, so the magic of Christmas is still alive and well on December 25.

So, why am I writing a blog about Nazi atomic research? Well, it is the major theme of my new book, **Dark Before Light**. Although I tried to get it ready before the end of the year, it took much longer to edit than my earlier books. It will be launched sometime in the new year after I hear back from my beta readers. I'm thinking early February now. Can't rush these things.

So, let's look into the Nazi nuclear program. Most historical sources state a number of factors contributed to the abandoning of the program by mid 1942. However, many of these factors were compared to similar factors in the Manhattan Project. Knowing how the Nazi system worked, such studies were not comparing apples to apples. Let's look at some of these factors.

Factor 1. All the good scientists left Germany before the war. This is not totally true, but as it is today, nuclear research was published and was readily available to scientists inside Germany throughout the 1930's regardless of who and where it was conducted. As the whole idea of fission wasn't nailed down until 1939, all remaining German scientists (including the ones that proved the fission theory) would have been up-to-date on all the research up to that point. Then, it would have only taken one brilliant mind to put it over the top. In Germany, that would have been Werner Heisenberg.

Factor 2. A strong initial drive and a continued focus was needed to develop the bomb. Believing this drive wasn't in Germany during the 1940's is purely speculative. There was a strong initial drive by the Uranium Club to focus the nuclear program on making a bomb, which was why military resources were applied early on. And although continued support may not have come directly from Hitler, someone high up could have easily kept the program going considering how convoluted the Nazi structure was. They were still making heavy water and mining uranium right up to the end. Considering how rocket and jet fighter technology was developed under the extreme war conditions in Germany, a nuclear program was very feasible.

Factor 3. The vast amount of resources put into the Manhattan Project could not have been matched by Germany in the 1940's. What this fails to take into account is all those resources costed money the Allies had to pay. Nazi Germany? Labour from concentration camps was essentially free. Economic principles didn't apply that much in Germany either, not to mention they had virtually all the resources of Europe to make use of. Also, the engineering talent in Germany was top notch. An example is the greatest number of Messerschmidt 109's fighter planes were built in 1944, after almost two years of heavy bombing by the Allies. The continuation of a Nazi nuclear program is well within the realm of possibilities.

Factor 4. Nazis did not have an adequate supply of uranium to succeed in the development of a bomb. Now, that is just outright false. The biggest supply of uranium in Europe was at Joachimsthal in the Sudetenland, a region occupied by the Nazis in 1938. The main mines were just across the border from Bavaria. There was no limit to the supply. Uranium ore continued to be mined from this area until 1964.

These four factors alone show that, despite what learned historians say, you cannot compare the Nazi nuclear program to the Manhattan Project. If anything, the main obstacle to a Nazi bomb was most likely the scientists themselves, not wanting to build something with unimaginable destructive power and give it to a mad man like Hitler. Refusing, however, wasn't an option and getting resources to continue their research was attractive. Their advantage? Most true Nazis weren't the sharpest tools in the drawer. I doubt many, if any, truly understood nuclear physics. They just wanted a small bomb with a big bang.

Hence, the premise for my new novel. I've added a number of actual historical figures into it. Reinhard Heydrich and Hans Kammler figure prominently. Heydrich was probably the most dangerous Nazi. The reasons quoted for his assassination has never been satisfactory to me. There must have been something else. Otherwise, why risk the vicious retaliation that took place that cost thousands of Czech lives? Kammler was known as a brilliant engineer. He was responsible for building most of the death camps in Poland, building the underground factories that kept Nazi war production up during the intensive bombing campaigns of 1943-44, and is believed to have organized the escape routes Nazis used to get to South America. A master of organization, if anyone could have designed and built an atomic bomb, it would have been him.

I plan to have **Dark Before Light** out on Amazon in early January, with the official launch in February. In the meantime, four new short stories are now up on Bookfunnel for your reading pleasure. Enjoy.