

Radiolab re Fritz Haber

Traces life of Haber—possibility for secular Jew to be more fully integrated in German society (Kaiser Wilhelm vs. later under Hitler).

Problem of agriculture without fertilizer—Haber figured out how to get nitrogen out of atmosphere, so allowed world population to be larger, etc.

But later, Haber also invented chlorine gas as weapon in WW I. Saw doing so as achievement—held dinner party to celebrate.

And had conflict with wife, Clara—who was also a scientist and had even earned a PhD (both rare for that time)—about morality of poison gas weapons, she shot herself, 13 yr old son found her dying in household's garden and Haber didn't do anything to help her, etc.—went back to war, etc. the next day.

Lost his position as head of a govt. run agency during 1930s due to protest vs. Hitler's ban on Jews in civil service. Wandered from country to country but given cold shoulder by other scientists, etc. due to his poison gas work.

Died in exile/disgrace (his son had killed himself earlier).

AND ALSO—his earlier work had led to creating a pesticide gas, but with scent added so it wouldn't get breathed by people accidentally. That was zyklon A. Nazi's asked for it without scent and that version zyklon B, was used in holocaust. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-13015210>)

(on podcast—"The Bad Show", in iTunes—from about 28 min. to about 48 min.)

