

About Wilfried Daim

At the beginning of 1963, between the first and the second session of the Second Vatican Council, a book was published in Austria with the title "The Church and Future", which at the time was very provocative. The authors were three prominent "left-wing Catholics": Friedrich Heer (1916-1983) called his contribution "Atheists and Christians in one world". August Maria Knoll (1900-1963) headed his article with "Catholic Action and Action of the Catholics".

In this book, Wilfried Daim, born on July 21, 1923, in Vienna, wrote 29 explosive theses on the subject of "Return to Fraternity". As the last of the three pioneers of Austrian left-wing Catholicism, Wilfried Daim died on December 30, 2016, after suffering from a stroke for a long time. Wilfried Daim grew up in a working-class family in Vienna. As a teenager he participated in a Catholic youth group from 1940 to 1945 in the resistance against the National Socialists. The memories of his time as a soldier on the Eastern Front, where he lost a leg, are described by Daim under the title "As a Christian in the murderous war 1939-1945" (Verlag Plattform / Historia, Vienna, 2011) In 1948, Daim finished his

psychology studies amid heated discussions with his doctoral supervisor, Hubert Rohracher, professor of psychology for many years. While Daim wanted to study Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, Rohracher (1903-1972) was only interested in empirical research and measurable results. As a result, Daim turned entirely to practical depth psychology - supported by his wife Dr. Johanna Daim (1927-2013), without whose tireless diligence Wilfried's works would hardly ever have been created. His wife gave him a son (Falko Daim is a well-known archaeologist) and the daughters Ulrike and Martina - both successful academics.

During this time, the young scientist and therapist carried out experiments on telepathy in dreams, using pieces of colored cardboard of different shapes as objects. For example, he used a small orange cardboard disc, whereupon the test subject dreamed of an orange sun disc in a picture by the French symbolist Odilon Redon. In a similar way, a green triangle was alienated into a Christmas tree in the dream. Reports of these attempts were also published in 1949. For a time, Daim was vice-president of the Austrian Society for Psychological Research (now the Austrian Society for Parapsychology). He also took part in the 1st International Congress of Parapsychology in Utrecht (1953). In the following years his interest turned to

other questions, especially topics of practical depth psychology and political psychology.

Daim first published books on psychology and belief. In 1954 "Depth Psychology and Redemption" was published - one of two books in which an attempt, which is still rare today, is made to reconcile Sigmund Freud's system of psychoanalysis with the Christian faith. Daim took the view that the development of the person is aimed directly at God: "We only have the choice between senselessness of soul life and psychological proof of God." The central power of man is the ability to communicate with God.

From 1955 to 1975, Daim focused on political psychology. At that time, he wrote dozens of magazine articles as well as party strategy concepts. Even the ÖVP ordered one or the other psychological analysis - at that time they still believed in scientifically based party work. In 1956, Daim founded the "Institute for Political Psychology".

Wilfried Daim became known to a broader public primarily through his book "The man who gave Hitler the ideas", in which he dealt with the ethnic racial ideologist Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels (1874-1954). Daim had met the former Cistercian monk and fanatical anti-Semite personally and interviewed him

for the planned work. The book went through three editions (1958, 1985, 1994) and is just as relevant today as it was then. It contains a detailed presentation of the teachings of Lanz, who in his teaching a "pure-bred paradise", a "fall into sin" (the mixture of races), a "sin babel" (Vienna at the turn of the century) and a (final) solution of the race question through deportation or liquidation of the "non-Aryans" ("Tschandalen") postulated. The parallels with the later race policy of the NSDAP are amazing. According to Daim, the young Adolf Hitler must have come into direct contact with Lanz's theses, which were disseminated in the Ostara Magazine. Although something downplayed by Brigitte Haman in her book "Hitler's Vienna" (1996), Daim's account remains fundamental for an understanding of the National Socialist racial ideology and its significance as the spiritual root of the Holocaust.

In the following years, Daim began to deal in detail with the role of the Catholic Church and with its "feudal structures". In the book "Church and Future" mentioned at the beginning, he anticipated much of the content of the Second Vatican Council. In the meantime, several Daimler's demands have been met, such as those for the mobility of the Pope or the reduction of papal ceremonies. But at the time of publication, the book caused a great deal of

excitement, especially among the Austrian clergy. Prelate Karl Strobl wondered whether his childhood friend Wilfried had "gone crazy" only to find out later that with Johannes XXIII. some of what Daim had called for in his 29 theses was fulfilled. The Viennese Cardinal Franz König (1905-2004), who later was always considered to be particularly "liberal", said, "These are false prophets, who confuse the herd. They nail the church to the cross. The extremely pious co-author August Maria Knoll could not get over this accusation until his death.

Daim specified his thoughts on a "progressive Christianity" in further books ("Left Catholicism" 1965, "Progressive Catholicism" 1967 and "Christianity and Revolution" also 1967).

Daim's foreign policy views and theses repeatedly revolved around the East-West relationship and Austrian neutrality as the basis of our country's international bridging function. Daim understood how to portray the psychological motives of the then still communist Soviet Union in its counter-dependence on the USA in a very vivid way. So, he recognized essential depth psychological elements in the rocket war between the superpowers for the "defloration" of the moon. Towards the end of the 1970s there was a discussion about the importance of the armed forces. Together with Günther Nenning (1921-2006), Daim was a leading protagonist of the

popular initiative to abolish the armed forces. His related book is entitled "Analyzing an Illusion" (1969). Of course, it is well advisable to cast David's methodological doubts on some of the many original ideas. So, he had in 1959 in the book "Totaler Untergang?" put forward the theory that the end of the world would occur in the form of a self-inflicted apocalypse: infected by the death instinct, humanity will one day (or soon?) commit collective suicide with the help of its nuclear arsenal. Less utopian were books on China's relationship to Europe (1973) or a work on the revolutionary roots of Judaism and Christianity (1967, 1973), first published in German, then in English. Wilfried Daim is remembered by everyone who met him as always cheerful and often laughing with a slippery thigh.

The Casteless Society

Daim's most important work is the 550-page book "Die Kastenlose Gesellschaft". Based on a detailed empirical investigation (in-depth interviews with representatives of all social classes), Daim was able to prove that most forms of economically determined class antagonisms go hand in hand with psychological caste conflicts or even represent pure caste antagonisms. Cliché ideas and prejudices between members of upper- and lower-class groups, between nations, races, or ethnic groups (migrants!) have deep-seated psychological roots. Unconscious

ideas of cleanliness play just as much a role as subconscious sexual fears according to the Freudian Oedipus principle.

Its full text can be found at:

https://austria-forum.org/af/Kunst_und_Kultur/Bücher/Die_Kastenlose_Gesellschaft_Wilfried_Daim_Gegliedert_Volltext

Daim never limited himself to depth psychological diagnostics and political psychological analysis, but always emphasized that there is a solution for everything: the (early Christian) commandment of "universal brotherhood" (today better: "brotherhood and sisterhood"), which he defended.

In addition to his committed intellectual activity, of which more than twenty books and hundreds of articles bear testimony, from the 1970s onwards Wilfried Daim became increasingly concerned with the art of the Austrian interwar period. His mentor was *Otto Kallir* (1894-1978) a well-known Viennese gallery owner in the interwar period. He had survived the Holocaust in France and America and introduced Daim to the art trade. Daim was a very skilled collector and so he was able to put works from his own stock at two exhibitions. Daim is the discoverer of the previously completely unknown artist *Franz Probst* (1903-1980).

Starting in 1980, Daim published half a dozen books on his “art adventures”, in which he particularly emphasized the socio-critical aspect of the painters *Franz Probst* and *Otto Rudolf Schatz* (1900-1961).

In his last years, Wilfried Daim practically only dealt with the subject of socially engaged painting. He, who had always been involved in social reform, now interpreted engagement in art.

In 1981 Daim, who was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Documentation Archive of the Austrian Resistance, was awarded the title of professor. With him Austria loses an upright anti-fascist, an avowed reform Catholic and - above all - an original thinker and provocateur - an intellectual in the best sense of the word.

A detailed biography of Daim can be found in the Austria-Forum at:

<http://austria-forum.org/web-books/wilfrieddaimde2011iicm>