

## Freud's 'Lamarckism' and the Politics of Racial Science

ELIZA SLAVET

*University of California, San Diego (UCSD)*

*La Jolla, CA, USA*

*E-mail: eliza@aya.yale.edu*

*64 Fort Greene Place #2*

*Brooklyn, NY 11217, USA*

*E-mail: esclavet@ucsd.edu*

**Abstract.** This article re-contextualizes Sigmund Freud's interest in the idea of the inheritance of acquired characteristics in terms of the socio-political connotations of Lamarckism and Darwinism in the 1930s and 1950s. Many scholars have speculated as to why Freud continued to insist on a supposedly outmoded theory of evolution in the 1930s even as he was aware that it was no longer tenable. While Freud's initial interest in the inheritance of phylogenetic memory was not necessarily politically motivated, his refusal to abandon this theory in the 1930s must be understood in terms of wider debates, especially regarding the position of the Jewish people in Germany and Austria. Freud became uneasy about the inheritance of memory not because it was scientifically disproven, but because it had become politically charged and suspiciously regarded by the Nazis as Bolshevik and Jewish. Where Freud seemed to use the idea of inherited memory as a way of universalizing his theory beyond the individual cultural milieu of his mostly Jewish patients, such a notion of universal science itself became politically charged and identified as particularly Jewish. The vexed and speculative interpretations of Freud's Lamarckism are situated as part of a larger post-War cultural reaction against Communism on the one hand (particularly in the 1950s when Lamarckism was associated with the failures of Lysenko), and on the other hand, against any scientific concepts of race in the wake of World War II.

**Keywords:** Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, psychoanalysis, Lamarckism, evolution, heredity, racial science, Jewish identity, Nazis, Bolshevism, Ernest Jones, August Weismann, Paul Kammerer

### Freud Amongst the Evolutionary Theorists

For at least 20 years before writing *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), Sigmund Freud flirted with the idea that individuals inherit an "archaic heritage" from their ancestors. However, it was not until this final book that he explicitly

insisted on the inheritance of phylogenetic memory. In this work, Freud developed a theory of Jewishness – what it is, how it is transmitted, and how it continues to survive. Though he spends much of the book reconstructing the “real” story of the origins of Mosaic monotheism, he ultimately insists that his entire work depends upon the idea that acquired characteristics (such as Jewish memory) are inherited. Freud acknowledges that he had “behaved for a long time as though the inheritance of memory-traces of the experience of our ancestors, independently of direct communication and of the influence of education by the setting of an example, were established beyond question.” And he concedes that his position was “made more difficult by the present attitude of biological science which refuses to hear of the inheritance of acquired characters by successive generations.”<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, he argues that the survival of Jewish tradition could only be understood by incorporating this evolutionary theory.

Freud’s late acknowledgement of the controversy regarding the “inheritance of acquired characters” has often been interpreted as evidence that he knew that such a “Lamarckian” position was no longer scientifically tenable.<sup>2</sup> However, it is unclear whether the question of the inheritance of acquired characters was ever a purely scientific matter and whether such a theory could ever be definitively disproven.<sup>3</sup> Indeed,

<sup>1</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism, S.E.*, vol. XXIII (1939), 100. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from Freud’s work are from James Strachey, ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (S.E.)*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1953); all German quotations are from Sigmund Freud, *Gesammelte Werke, chronologisch geordnet*, ed. Anna Freud, 17 vols. (London: Imago Publishing Company, 1940).

<sup>2</sup> Part of this misunderstanding is due simply to the fact that Ernest Jones uses Katherine Jones’ translation of this passage. In the original German, Freud writes, “*biologischen Wissenschaft..., die von der Vererbung erworbener Eigenschaften auf die Nachkommen nichts wissen will.*” In Jones’ translation, Freud seems to acknowledge that biological science “*rejects* the idea of acquired qualities being transmitted to descendants.” However, the translation in the *Standard Edition* is closer the original German: “biological science *refuses to hear of* the inheritance of acquired characters by successive generations.”

<sup>3</sup> Recent work in the field of “epigenetics” shows that “epimutations” in response to the environment may be hereditarily transmitted and suggests that Lamarck might have been a “little bit right.” See, for example, Elena Aronova, “Karl Popper and Lamarckism.” *Biological Theory* 2.1 (2007); Michael Balter, “Genetics: Was Lamarck Just a Little Bit Right?” *Science* April 7 2000; Eva Jablonka and Marion Lamb, *Epigenetic Inheritance and Evolution: The Lamarckian Dimension* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Edward Steele, Robyn Lindley and Robert Blanden, *Lamarck’s Signature: How Retrogenes are Changing Darwin’s Natural Selection Paradigm* (Reading, MA: Perseus Books, 1998).

it is often quite difficult to distinguish the borders between scientific and political questions, and this is particularly evident in regards to the debates about evolutionary and hereditary theories in Europe in the 1930s. The complicated relationship between science and politics in the '30s extended its effects well into the 1950s (and later) when many of the foundational histories of evolutionary theory and of psychoanalysis were being written. In the 1950s, the belief in the inheritance of acquired characteristics was associated with the failures of politically motivated science in the Communist East, and as such, in the West it was regarded as specious pseudo-science. In this article, I show that Freud was uneasy about insisting on the inheritance of acquired characters at least partly because he was aware of the political implications of this idea.<sup>4</sup>

While Freud's initial interest in phylogenetic memory was not necessarily politically motivated, his refusal to abandon this scientific theory in the 1930s must be understood in terms of wider debates, especially regarding the position of the Jewish people in Germany and Austria. By suggesting that individuals inherited the effects of their ancestors' experiences, Freud seemed to align himself with other "Lamarckians" who opposed the determinism of the neo-Darwinians' hard heredity in favor of a "softer" and more malleable concept of heredity. While Lamarckism went out of fashion in the West in the 1940s, it is often forgotten that it was a major subject of scientific and political debates well into the 1930s, if not later. In Germany, the Nazis referred to Lamarckism as the product of "liberal-Jewish-Bolshevist science"<sup>5</sup> which superstitiously and foolishly supported an outmoded theory of evolution. "Lamarckian" theories of Jewishness were suspiciously regarded not only by the Nazis. After World War II, *any* hereditarian theory of Jewishness appeared uncomfortably similar to racist theories which had undergirded the Nazis' "final solution." However, Freud was neither the first nor the last Jewish scientist to develop a hereditarian definition of Jewishness. In asserting that the Jews inherit the memories of their ancestors, Freud developed a racial theory of Jewishness which *opposed* racist definitions of the Jewish

<sup>4</sup> Allan Young has recently explored "the Evolutionary Freud," but has focused on the "credibility" of Freud's evolutionary ideas. By contrast, I am not interested in attempting to determine whether such ideas are credible, correct or otherwise; instead, I am interested in trying to understand the context and consequences of Freud's so-called Lamarckism, particularly as it emerges in his final book. Allan Young, "Remembering the Evolutionary Freud." *Science in Context* 19.1 (2006).

<sup>5</sup> Robert Proctor, "Nazi Medicine and the Politics of Knowledge," *The "Racial" Economy of Science*, ed. Sandra Harding (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 350.

people and partially (if bizarrely) explained their persistent survival despite centuries of anti-semitism and oppression.

In his classic three-volume biography, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* (1953), Ernest Jones explains that he could not understand Freud's "obstinacy" in insisting upon the apparently "outmoded" scientific theory of "Lamarckism" in *Moses and Monotheism*. Since then, numerous other scholars have followed Jones' lead and have remarked upon this aspect of Freud's work with bemusement and wonder: why did he continue to insist upon the inheritance of acquired characters, particularly in the 1930s when this idea had (supposedly) so clearly been disproven?<sup>6</sup> Not content to see Freud's obstinate insistence on Lamarckism as an eccentricity of old age, many historians have presented this aspect of Freud's work as a quandary, and have intensely scrutinized it with wildly differing consequences.<sup>7</sup> Scholars intent upon showing the fraudulence of Freud's theories have emphasized his "Lamarckism" as one of many examples demonstrating the scientifically flawed foundations of psychoanalysis.<sup>8</sup> Other scholars – particularly historians of psychoanalysis, many of whom are psychoanalysts themselves and therefore protective of Freud's legacy – have attempted to downplay Freud's loyalty to Lamarckian-sounding ideas for fear that all

<sup>6</sup> For example, Emmanuel Rice suggests that the "central weakness" in Freud's theory is his "seemingly irrational dependence on Lamarck's theory of inheritance of acquired characteristics." Since Rice cannot make sense of why "Freud, the scientist, would accept this hypothesis without question, hesitation or doubt," he argues, "We must look to Freud the man for an explanation." Emanuel Rice, *Freud and Moses: The Long Journey Home* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 146, 152. See also Stephen Jay Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977), 155ff.

<sup>7</sup> The key source in all discussions of Freud's use of biological theory is Frank J. Sulloway, *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend* (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

<sup>8</sup> As Richard Webster writes in a review of Frederick Crews' *The Memory Wars* and John Forrester's *Dispatches from the Freud Wars*, "the picture of Freud which has gradually emerged... is of a man so deeply ensnared in the fallacies of Lamarck, Haeckel and late nineteenth-century evolutionary biology, and so engulfed by the diagnostic darkness of turn-of-the-century European medicine, that he led an entire generation of gifted intellectuals deeper and deeper into a labyrinth of error from which our intellectual culture as a whole is still struggling to emerge." Richard Webster, "The Bewildered Visionary," *Times Literary Supplement* May 16, 1997. See also Richard Webster, *Why Freud Was Wrong: Sin, Science and Psychoanalysis* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 236, 240.

of psychoanalysis might be tainted by his idiosyncratic obstinacy.<sup>9</sup> In other words, they attempt to save Freud from himself. More recently, a number of historians of psychoanalysis have learned from their predecessors, and instead of downplaying Freud's foibles, they meticulously document his flaws, including his misguided scientific claims (such as his Lamarckism). Thus, they attempt to beat the Freud-bashers at their own game and to demonstrate that psychoanalysis's reputation can be salvaged even if Freud's cannot.<sup>10</sup> Finally, because Freud's "Lamarckism" emerges most explicitly in *Moses and Monotheism*, many scholars have tried to understand this aspect of his work in terms of his Jewishness, a point which I will discuss in more detail.<sup>11</sup> While it may be possible to "emancipate" psychoanalysis from the power and problems of the original psychoanalyst, neither Freud nor his critics (nor any other thinker for that matter) can emancipate themselves from the historical circumstances which shape their ideas, hopes and fears.

Though Freud's incorporation of the idea that memory could be inherited allowed him to develop an idiosyncratic theory of Jewishness, his insistence on the inheritance of acquired characteristics was neither scientifically misguided nor unusual for the 1930s. In what follows, I draw

<sup>9</sup> The most explicit example of this argument is Lucille Ritvo who goes to extraordinary lengths to show that Freud's belief in the inheritance of acquired characteristics was not Lamarckian but rather Darwinian. Lucille B. Ritvo, *Darwin's Influence on Freud: A Tale of Two Sciences* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). Similarly, Dennis Wrong has grouped Freud's Lamarckism alongside other embarrassing elements such as the death instinct and the primal crime which many psychoanalysts have tried to keep from contaminating psychoanalysis proper.

<sup>10</sup> Patricia Kitcher argues that Freud drastically misunderstood many scientific concepts because he attempted to be interdisciplinary. Thus, she remarks that when Lamarckism had become "highly controversial," Freud was not able to "free himself from such dubious entanglements when he had the chance" (178). Ironically, Kitcher's work lacks an interdisciplinarity which would allow her to incorporate the larger (socio-political) context of the (scientific) controversies regarding Lamarckism during Freud's lifetime. See Patricia Kitcher, *Freud's Dream: A Complete Interdisciplinary Science of Mind* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 174ff; Peter L. Rudnytsky, *Reading Psychoanalysis: Freud, Rank, Ferenczi, Groddeck* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 218. D.H. Wrong, *The Problem of Order: What Unites and Divides Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 122. For a critique of Wrong, see Howard L. Kaye, "Was Freud a Medical Scientist or a Social Theorist? The Mysterious 'Development of the Hero'" *Sociological Theory* 21.4 (2003): 379.

<sup>11</sup> See note above: Rice, *Freud and Moses: The Long Journey Home*, 146. See also Richard J. Bernstein, *Freud and the Legacy of Moses* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); José Brunner, *Freud and the Politics of Psychoanalysis* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2001); Sander L. Gilman, *Freud, Race, and Gender* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).

from recent scholarship in the history of science, particularly by Peter Bowler, Robert Proctor and Paul Weindling, which recasts the emergence of Darwinism as a long and uneven process which cannot be disentangled from the political debates of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is not to suggest that Freud was correct or incorrect, brilliant or flawed – he was all of these. Rather, I am interested in exploring his logic and its relationship to historical circumstances and political debates which he did not necessarily explicitly articulate. By pursuing Freud’s references to hereditary and evolutionary theories, I show that his theories of Jewishness and of psychoanalysis must be understood as part of a larger conversation in which the dividing lines between various scientific positions – as well as between science and politics – were not so clearly established. This approach allows us to pose critical questions about the ever-shifting relationships between science and politics.

### **The Polemization of Evolutionary Theory: 1890s–1930s**

In the late nineteenth century, it was quite common for scientists to propose that the idiosyncracies of individuals and groups could be traced back to experiences of their ancestors. While Darwin’s theory of Natural Selection provided an answer to the question of survival, scientists continued to grope for an answer to the question of how and why species changed even as they appeared to maintain constant identities over time. For example, how was it possible to refer to “humans” as a constant group if they had evolved from apes, changing physical and mental characteristics until they came to resemble present-day human beings? Such questions were also posed about racial and linguistic groups: how was it possible to identify both the constants of Aryans or Semites while taking into account the idea that the peoples and languages changed over time? One solution to these conundrums was the idea that in response to changes in the environment, groups *acquired* characteristics – both positive and negative, as well as physical and mental – which they then passed on to their progeny. Such reasoning is usually identified with the French naturalist, Jean Baptiste de Lamarck (1744–1829), but it was common to later evolutionary theorists including Darwin and many of Darwin’s followers,<sup>12</sup> as well as many

<sup>12</sup> Because the belief in the “inheritance of acquired characters” has been associated with anti-Darwinism since the end of the nineteenth century, and because such a belief has long gone out of favor, there has been much confusion about whether this idea was antithetical to Darwinian Natural Selection. Nonetheless, Darwin himself accepted the idea that organisms could be modified through “use and disuse” and that these modifications could be inherited by the succeeding generations.

theorists of race and heredity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On the one hand, the inheritance of acquired characteristics suggested that a group (such as the Jews) could lose its distinctive identity by taking on the characteristics of the surrounding peoples. This argument was used both by assimilationist Jewish leaders and by anti-semites. Some Jewish leaders used this reasoning to support their fight for increased civil rights, reasoning that increasing the Jews' civil rights would allow them to change their behavior and characteristics such that they would no longer be so identifiably and problematically Jewish. Similarly, some non-Jewish authors reasoned that unlike other distinctive groups, the Jews were the most dangerous because they were such good chameleons – or parasites – who could modify their characteristics to appear like their hosts, and could continue to survive undetected with their host-nations.

Well into the late 1920s, the developing evolutionary and hereditary theories were used to support a range of social and political positions, including both racist and anti-racist political movements, socialist eugenics programs and Bolshevik revolutionary activity.<sup>13</sup> However, in the 1930s, particularly in Germany and Russia, neo-Darwinist Mendelian eugenic theories became “linked to conservative views of society” and Lamarckian theories became “linked to left-wing socialist views of society.”<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the association of racist eugenics with Nazi Germany and Lamarckism with Communist Russia is so firmly engrained in our historical memories that it is often difficult to reconstruct the complexity of the relationships between science and politics as they emerged in the preceding decades. As Loren Graham has noted, the polemicization of science during this time period raises the question as to whether it was an “entirely social and political phenomenon, essentially distinct from the scientific theories under discussion,” or whether “there was something intellectually inherent in each of the competing theories of heredity which supported a particular political ideology.”<sup>15</sup> If there were inherently political elements in these

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Veronika Hofer, “Rudolf Goldscheid, Paul Kammerer und die Biologen des Prater-Vivariums in der liberalen Volksbildung der Wiener Moderne,” *Wissenschaft, Politik und Öffentlichkeit: von der Wiener Moderne bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Mitchell G. Ash (Vienna: WUV Universitätsverlag, 2002); Richard Weikart, *Socialist Darwinism: Evolution in German Socialist Thought from Marx to Bernstein* (San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1999); Paul Weindling, “Dissecting German Social Darwinism: Historicizing the Biology of the Organic State.” *Science in Context* 11.3–4 (1998).

<sup>14</sup> Loren R. Graham, “Science and Values: The Eugenics Movement in Germany and Russia in the 1920s.” *The American Historical Review* 82.5 (1977): 1134.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

theories, the “allegedly value-free nature of science” would have to be radically questioned. So too, Freud’s own use of these theories raises questions about the political nature of his science and the position of psychoanalysis as a science – questions to which I will return at the end of this article.

One of the larger questions with which theorists of evolution and race grappled was about the rate of change: how much time was required for a species or a race to change – a couple of generations or thousands of generations? If changes in the environment resulted in organisms rapidly changing forms, then the typologies of groups were not stable. Since genetic mutations were not widely understood, it was unclear how Natural Selection and heredity alone could result in evolutionary change. While scientists interested in the dynamics of heredity generally focused on consistency from one generation to the next, those scientists who were more interested in evolution of the species over time focused on factors of change such as Natural Selection and adaptation. It would take some time before the phenomena of constancy *and* change could be integrated in a unified theory of evolution.<sup>16</sup>

Various discoveries about heredity and individual development were haphazardly and belatedly incorporated into evolutionary theories in different places at different times.<sup>17</sup> While it is not possible to establish exactly when one evolutionary or hereditary theory became definitively established, it is feasible to outline when certain theories became subjects of heated debate in particular places. For example, though August Weismann proclaimed the “all-sufficiency of Natural Selection” in the 1880s, it was not until the late 1890s that his work became a major subject of debate. Even then, Weismann’s work did not so much disprove Lamarckian notions of evolution as it ignited a wave of anti-Darwinism, such that many scientists began to identify themselves as neo-Lamarckian in opposition to the Weismannians who identified themselves as neo-Darwinian (in support of a Darwinism “purged of the Lamarckian element that even Darwin himself had retained”).<sup>18</sup> And while Gregor Mendel published his groundbreaking paper on plant breeding in 1866, it was rarely read until its rediscovery in 1900 by the Dutch plant physiologist, Hugo de Vries. Even after de Vries proposed that evolution could be caused by mutation (rather than by changes in

<sup>16</sup> See Jonathan Harwood, *Styles of scientific thought: the German genetics community, 1900–1933* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

<sup>17</sup> See *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Peter J. Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 116–118.



the environment), scientists in America, England, Germany and the Soviet Union continued to use Mendel's theories to support a number of opposing ideas about heredity and evolution, including Lamarckian notions of inheritance. Partly because many early embryologists were explicitly opposed to integrating embryology and evolution, it took some time before the rediscovery of Mendel's theories had a substantial effect upon evolutionary theory. As Peter Bowler has shown, Mendel's theories allowed genetics to establish itself "as a distinct branch of science by divorcing the study of heredity from embryology."<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the most well-known biography of Mendel was written in 1924 by Hugo Iltis, a Czech-Viennese scientist who explicitly opposed Weismann's theories and supported the inheritance of acquired characteristics.<sup>20</sup>

Iltis was one of many scientists who maintained positions which were not clearly Darwinian or Lamarckian and who regarded heredity as an explicitly political and moral issue. Like Iltis, many of the most outspoken scientists to combine these positions worked at Hans Przibam's "Vivarium," a Viennese laboratory devoted to biological experimentation to study regeneration, embryogenesis, evolution, heredity and adaptation. Since many of the laboratory's experiments explored how changes in the environment could affect development and heredity, these scientists were by definition open to the "Lamarckian" idea that organisms could acquire new hereditary characteristics.<sup>21</sup> While Iltis worked at Przibam's laboratory, he also wrote a number of articles for the socialist newspaper *Die Gesellschaft: Internationale Revue für Sozialismus und Politik* in which he argued that Lamarckism and Mendelism were not only compatible, but complementary. In his criticisms of "Race Science and Race Delusion" (the title of a 1927 article) and other "myths of race and blood,"<sup>22</sup> Iltis argued that

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 117–118.

<sup>20</sup> Hugo Iltis, *Gregor Johann Mendel: Leben, Werk und Wirkung* (Berlin: J. Springer, 1924).

<sup>21</sup> See Cheryl Logan, "Overheated Rats, Race, and the Double Gland: Paul Kammerer, Endocrinology and the Problem of Somatic Induction." *Journal of the History of Biology* (2007).

<sup>22</sup> Hugo Iltis, "Rassenwissenschaft und Rassenwahn." *Die Gesellschaft: Internationale Revue für Sozialismus und Politik* (1927). Hugo Iltis, *Der Mythos von Blut und Rasse* (Vienna: R. Harand, 1936). See also Hugo Iltis, *Volkstümliche Rassenkunde* (Jena: Urania-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1930).

Mendelism and Lamarckism needed to be combined in order to avoid the hateful “delusions” supported by Weismannian logic.<sup>23</sup>

Almost all the scientists working at the Vivarium were Jewish or traveled in Jewish circles that overlapped with Freud’s own social scene.<sup>24</sup> For example, in “The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman” (1920), Freud approvingly cites Eugen Steinach’s attempts to surgically alter individuals’ sexual identification.<sup>25</sup> An early endocrinologist who performed experiments demonstrating that sexuality was much more malleable than previously thought, Steinach (1861–1944) was also famous for his “rejuvenation”-operations (similar to vasectomies), one of which he performed on Freud in the fall of 1923 (to alleviate his early suffering from the jaw-cancer that would eventually kill him).<sup>26</sup> While so-called Lamarckians attempted to show that the environment could control biological heredity, Steinach’s surgeries on mammalian sexual organs and his explorations of hormones were even more radical.<sup>27</sup> Whereas many scientists argued that biological heredity (whether soft or hard) controls human experience, Steinach’s work suggested that humans could directly assert control over biology.

<sup>23</sup> Graham suggests that Iltis “saw in Lamarckism a way of softening the hard facts of genetics, and in that way he helped forge the links between leftist politics and Lamarckism that were growing in the 1920s.” See Graham, “Science and Values: The Eugenics Movement in Germany and Russia in the 1920s,” 1142.

<sup>24</sup> For a more extensive discussion of the Vivarium’s overlapping social and scientific circles, see Deborah Coen, “Living Precisely in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna.” *Journal of the History of Biology* 39 (2006).

<sup>25</sup> Though today “sexuality” and “gender” are often discussed as distinct (though related) categories, in this historical context, “sexual identification” would include both terms. Sigmund Freud, “The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman,” *S.E.*, vol. XVIII (1920), 171–172.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for our Time* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1988), 426; Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* (New York: Basic Books, 1953–1957), III: 98. There is other evidence that Freud was quite friendly with Steinach. For example, in an interview on the occasion of his 100th birthday, the sexologist Harry Benjamin recalled that his mentor Steinach had arranged a meeting with Freud; this suggests that Steinach was close enough to Freud to arrange such things. See Erwin J. Haeberle, “The Transatlantic Commuter: An Interview with Harry Benjamin on the Occasion of his 100th Birthday.” *Sexualmedizin* 14.1 (1985).

<sup>27</sup> See Chandak Sengoopta, “Glandular Politics: Experimental Biology, Clinical Medicine, and Homosexual Emancipation in Fin-de-Siècle Europe.” *Isis* 89.3 (1998); Chandak Sengoopta, *The Most Secret Quintessence of Life: Sex, Glands, and Hormones, 1850-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Steinach's operations became famous partly through the efforts and publications of Paul Kammerer (1880–1926), another Vivarium scientist.<sup>28</sup> While Freud admiringly quoted from Kammerer's work *Das Gesetz der Serie* in his 1919 essay on "The Uncanny,"<sup>29</sup> Kammerer was famous (even infamous) for his experiments on midwife-toads allegedly proving that acquired characters could be inherited.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, he is often mentioned in brief histories of evolutionary theory as *the* exemplary case showing that Lamarckism is "bad science." Kammerer is portrayed as a "pseudoscientist" at least in part because of a series of public scandals involving the falsification of evidence, a state-sponsored jaunt in Communist Russia, publications on occultism and everlasting-youth, the rejection by his lover Alma Mahler (amongst other lovers), and finally his suicide in 1926. However, as Sander Gliboff and Cheryl Logan have shown, Kammerer's case is far more complicated than is usually suggested by the off-handed comments in many histories of evolutionary theory.<sup>31</sup> In his frequent public lectures, Kammerer expounded on the political implications of various kinds of Darwinist eugenics, arguing that Weismannian approaches to eugenics "only tossed the unfit aside." As Gliboff notes, Kammerer "favored programs of human improvement through education, public health measures, and medical or even surgical intervention to make individuals *acquire* heritable physical and mental improvements. He claimed in his public lectures that these potential applications made his [Darwinism] the best

<sup>28</sup> Paul Kammerer, *Rejuvenation and the Prolongation of Human Efficiency: Experiences with the Steinach-Operation on Man and Animals* (New York: Boni and Liverlight, 1923).

<sup>29</sup> Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," *S.E.*, vol. XVII (1919b). Freud cites Kammerer's work which argued that "uncanny" coincidences could be explained by the law of the series. However, the citation is itself uncanny, for it appears in the context of a discussion of coincidental numbers which may prophecy a person's (Freud's) date of death. Kammerer committed suicide on September 23, 1926; Freud died exactly 13 years later. Coincidence? Uncanny? Prophecy?

<sup>30</sup> The classic work on Kammerer's mid-wife toad experiments is Arthur Koestler, *The Case of the Midwife Toad* (London: Hutchinson, 1971).

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*. The reasons for Kammerer's downfall were not only that he apparently falsified his evidence. In addition to general anti-semitic accusations, Kammerer was also widely criticized for his general showman-style (which only added to the perception of him as a charlatan and confirmed anti-semitic accusations that he was deceitful). See Sander Gliboff, "The Case of Paul Kammerer: Evolution and Experimentation in the Early 20th Century." *Journal of the History of Biology* 39 (2006): 527. Sander Gliboff, "The Pebble and the Planet: Paul Kammerer, Ernst Haeckel, and the Meaning of Darwinism," PhD, Johns Hopkins University, 2001.

form of Darwinism.”<sup>32</sup> Kammerer was not convinced by Weismann’s supposed “disproof” of Lamarckism;<sup>33</sup> rather, he claimed that Weismann’s germ-plasm idea was a veiled form of teleological “creationism” from which Mendelism needed to be freed.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Kammerer argued that in their “racial fanatacism,” the Weismannians overly emphasized the power of selection in order to guarantee the survival of one race over all others, whereas “race hygienists” such as Kammerer were interested in understanding adaptation in order to improve the well-being of all humanity.<sup>35</sup>

While neo-Darwinism and neo-Lamarckism are often discussed as if they were opposing scientific theories, the disputes amongst many of these scientists were often clearly both personal and political: that is, the rhetoric and logic of personal and political animosities often shaped the scientific arguments.<sup>36</sup> Kammerer did not oppose Darwinism per se; he opposed Weismann’s (and Weismannians’) eugenics which were associated with Neo-Darwinism (as opposed to Neo-Lamarckism in the 1890s). As Gliboff explains, “During the First World War, Kammerer developed evolutionary arguments for international cooperation and

<sup>32</sup> Gliboff, “The Pebble and the Planet: Paul Kammerer, Ernst Haeckel, and the Meaning of Darwinism,” 209, my italics.

<sup>33</sup> Most histories of evolutionary theory have pointed to Weismann’s experiments in the 1880s and 1890s as the final nail in the coffin of Lamarckism. See, for example, Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth*. Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*.

<sup>34</sup> Gliboff, “The Pebble and the Planet: Paul Kammerer, Ernst Haeckel, and the Meaning of Darwinism,” 219–220. Then, as now, “creationism” was often used as a euphemism for anti-scientific religious positions which supported theological teleology and rejected Darwinian Natural Selection.

<sup>35</sup> Logan, “Overheated Rats, Race, and the Double Gland: Paul Kammerer, Endocrinology and the Problem of Somatic Induction.” *Journal of the History of Biology* (2007).

<sup>36</sup> As Paul Weindling notes, most critics of racism and racial hygiene were also “committed to biologicistic solutions for social problems.” Paul Weindling, *Health, Race, and German Politics Between National Unification and Nazism, 1870–1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 331. This does not mean, however, that Darwinism or Mendelism led to the Nazi horrors. In an interesting turn of the historiographic screw, Richard Weikart has extensively (and sometimes convincingly) argued that Darwinian evolutionary theories made Nazis’ loss of ethics, racism and eugenics possible (or thinkable). However, Weikart implicitly supports the idea that Darwinism and evolution without God lead to evil and that “intelligent design” is gentler and better. Weikart received research funding for his book *From Darwin to Hitler* (2004) from the Center for Science and Culture (CSC) and he is listed as a fellow of the Discovery Institute, a Christian organization which promotes various religious agendas, most specifically the idea of “intelligent design.” Richard Weikart, *From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics, and Racism in Germany* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

pacifism and further reduced his estimation of the role of struggle and selection. This overt subordination of science to ideology raised hackles among his colleagues, the majority of whom supported the war, and caused his reputation to suffer further."<sup>37</sup> Likewise, Weismann's and others' anti-Lamarckianism was often expressed through personal denunciations of individual scientists, particularly Kammerer and his "Jewish" colleagues.<sup>38</sup> While it is unclear whether – or how – Kammerer was Jewish, many of his opponents pointed out his Jewishness in connection with his deceitful scientific practices, his Lamarckism and his Bolshevism.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, in developing his "germ-plasm theory," Weismann was not necessarily motivated by anti-semitism or politics, but in later life, he was known to "give vent to a more than casual anti-semitism."<sup>40</sup> Indeed, in a notebook from 1910, Weismann wrote, "Kammerer (Vienna) is a little, miserable, sticky Jew, who has proven himself on earlier occasions to be a quite unreliable worker."<sup>41</sup>

Though Weismann's germ-plasm theory was not immediately associated with anti-semitism or racism, it was soon used as fodder in the growing discussions of "racial hygiene." The first issue of the *Archive for Race and Social Biology* [*Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie*] in 1904 was dedicated to Weismann and Ernst

<sup>37</sup> Gliboff, "The Pebble and the Planet: Paul Kammerer, Ernst Haeckel, and the Meaning of Darwinism," 209.

<sup>38</sup> There is some debate about whether Iltis and Kammerer should be considered "Jewish" scientists since there is no evidence that they identified themselves as Jewish. On the one hand, they traveled in Jewish circles and they were labelled as Jews by their political and scientific enemies. On the other hand, there is some sort of twisted logic at work in calling them Jews just because their (anti-semitic) enemies called them Jews. In her dissertation, Veronika Lipphardt takes the position that "Jewish racial scientists" include only those who identified themselves as Jewish – thus, she explicitly excludes Iltis and Kammerer since there is no reliable evidence which demonstrates that they self-identified as Jewish. Veronika Lipphardt, "Biowissenschaftler mit jüdischem Hintergrund und die Biologie der Juden: Debatten, Identitäten, Institutionen (1900–1935)," PhD, Humboldt Universität, 2006.

<sup>39</sup> Fritz Lenz, "Der Fall Kammerer und seine Umfilmung durch Lunatscharsky." *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie* 21 (1929); Fritz Lenz, Erwin Baur and Eugen Fischer, *Human Heredity* [*Menschliche erblichkeit*] (1931[1921]), 674–675.

<sup>40</sup> Nick Hopwood, "Book Review: August Weismann's *Ausgewählte Briefe und Dokumente*, ed. Frederick B. Churchill and Helmut Risler." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 76.2 (2002).

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Gliboff, "The Pebble and the Planet: Paul Kammerer, Ernst Haeckel, and the Meaning of Darwinism," 187, n314. "Klebrig [sticky]" was a common anti-semitic epithet at this time, suggesting that Jewishness was contagious and that Jews were parasites who would "stick" to other people and suck out the life-blood. I thank Veronika Lipphardt and Sander Gliboff for clarifying this phrase.

Haeckel, and both were named honorary chairmen when the Society for Racial Hygiene was formed the following year.<sup>42</sup> These institutions were not explicitly anti-semitic or right-wing in their early years, but by the end of the 1920s, they developed into robust organs of anti-semitic racism.<sup>43</sup> One of Weismann's students, Fritz Lenz (1887–1976) was not only an early member of the society, he also wrote numerous articles for the *Archiv* and as well as a large textbook on heredity in which he clearly delineated the political and racial implications of Lamarckism. In a 1929 article on the recent film on Paul Kammerer by the Soviet filmmaker Anatoli Lunatscharski, *Falschmünzer* (also known as *Salamanca-dra*), Lenz explained that everyone involved with Kammerer was Jewish, Bolshevik and maliciously motivated by problematic politics. Moreover, Lamarckism was particularly representative of Jews' fantasy that "by living in the German environment and adapting to German culture, Jews could become true Germans." Small wonder, Lenz explained, that all of the notable Lamarckians happened to be Jews or "half-Jews."<sup>44</sup> Indeed, in his foundational book on heredity, *Grundriss der menschlichen Erblichkeitslehr und Rassenhygiene* (1927), he even went so far as to claim that Jews were hereditarily predisposed (!) to support Lamarckism for it was "obviously an expression of the wish that there should be no unbridgeable racial distinctions... Jews do not transform themselves into Germans by writing books on Goethe."<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Robert Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 33.

<sup>43</sup> Indeed, in its early years, the *Archiv* published a wider range of articles, including some by scientists who self-identified as Jewish, Lamarckian and/or anti-racist. See Paul Weindling, "The Evolution of Jewish Identity: Ignaz Zollschan between Jewish and Aryan Race Theories, 1910–1945," *Jewish Tradition and the Challenge of Darwinism*, eds. Geoffrey Cantor and Marc Swetlitz (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006).

<sup>44</sup> Lenz, "Der Fall Kammerer und seine Umfilmung durch Lunatscharsky," 316–317.

<sup>45</sup> Lenz directly accuses Paul Kammerer of being a Jew, a Lamarckian and a Bolshevik, all of which he assumes are correlated: "For instance, it is extremely characteristic that Kammerer, who was himself both a Jew and a Lamarckian, should write that 'the denial of the racial importance of acquired characteristics favors race hatred.'" While Kammerer saw connections between the biological theory of the inheritance of acquired characters and his political stance against racial and social inequality, it seems dubious whether he ever actually said the words attributed to him by Lenz. Moreover, Kammerer did not necessarily see himself as *either* a Lamarckian or a Jew, but by the 1920s, both of these labels were used as much as accusatory epithets as descriptive classifications. Lenz's remarks from his *Grundriss der menschlichen Erblichkeitslehr und Rassenhygiene* (1927) are here quoted from Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*, 55.

By the 1930s, when Freud was hard at work on *Moses and Monotheism*, it was clear that the “present attitude of biological science” toward Lamarckian notions of heredity was not simply a matter of scientific proof or disproof. In his 1931 article on “National Socialism’s Position on Racial Hygiene” Lenz extensively and admiringly quoted from *Mein Kampf* and trumpeted Hitler’s position as the “first politician with truly great influence who recognizes racial hygiene as a mission.”<sup>46</sup> Finally, in 1937, the Nazi Party’s *Handbook for Hitler Youth* (implicitly) cited Weismann’s experiments as proof that racial inheritance is “always victorious over environmental influences.”<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, in the Soviet Union, Weismannism was denounced as bourgeois science, Kammerer was hailed as a hero and Lamarckian notions of heredity were eventually applied to the government-controlled agricultural projects of Trofim Denisovich Lysenko, with infamously disastrous results.<sup>48</sup>

Though certainly not all Lamarckians or Bolsheviks were Jews (and not all Jews or Bolsheviks were Lamarckians), Lenz’s comments about this connection were not purely anti-semitic lies. Indeed, Lamarckian notions of evolution did seem to support a more malleable idea of racial character which was attractive to many German Jews in this time period. In the 1920s and ‘30s, many Jewish scientists turned to Lamarckism to counter racist anti-semitism, particularly as Weismannism was used more and more to support anti-semitic politics and policies. For Jews, Lamarckism seemed to support the idea that the negative characteristics and conditions associated with being Jewish were the result of malleable environmental conditions (specifically centuries of anti-semitism) rather than of an a priori difference perpetuated by hard-wired heredity.<sup>49</sup> As Lenz noted, “This enables us

<sup>46</sup> Fritz Lenz, “Die Stellung des Nationalsozialismus zur Rassenhygiene.” *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie* 25 (1931): 308.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*, 37–38.

<sup>48</sup> See Richard Lewontin and Richard Levins, “The Problem of Lysenkoism,” *Dialectical Biologist* (Cambridge: 1985).

<sup>49</sup> However, not all Jewish scientists were Lamarckian; many continued to integrate various positions which could be described as Mendelian, Weismannian, Darwinian and Lamarckian. As Veronika Lipphardt shows in her recent work, there was not a neat division between scientists who adhered to nature/neo-Darwinism/determinism and those who supported nurture/Lamarckism/anti-determinism. Moreover, there were many Jewish “race” scientists who gravitated toward the first “nature”-category. Lipphardt, “Biowissenschaftler mit jüdischem Hintergrund und die Biologie der Juden: Debatten, Identitäten, Institutionen (1900–1935),” 21.

to understand why the Lamarckian doctrine should make so strong an appeal to the Jews.”<sup>50</sup> In his recent work on Jewish social scientists in the early twentieth century, Mitchell Hart suggests that many Jewish scientists relied heavily on Lamarckian environmentalism because “it allowed them to explain the particular physical or mental traits often-times identified as racially Jewish as historically or socially determined.”<sup>51</sup> Thus, while Jews were often stereotypically associated with Bolshevism, they were often drawn to it partly because of a shared logic of Lamarckian environmentalism supporting the idea that the inequities of the present were determined by historical conditions that could and should be changed in the future.

### **Freud’s Suspiciously Bolshevik Lamarckism**

It is against this background that Freud’s interest in the inheritance of phylogenetic memory must be understood. Before discussing his interest in the inheritance of memory, however, let me clarify a common misperception about Freud’s so-called “Lamarckism.” While it is true that the inheritance of acquired characteristics was widely accepted in the late nineteenth century, Freud did not himself incorporate this idea until around 1912. In establishing psychoanalysis in the 1890s, he attempted to distinguish his form of therapy from the hereditarian theories of his mentors by insisting that mental illnesses originate in individuals’ experiences rather than from the inheritance of familial degeneracy. Thus, though Freud was generally interested in the parallels between ontogeny and phylogeny, in the founding years of psychoanalysis he explicitly resisted the notion that an individual’s illnesses could be traced back to “the experiences of his ancestors” for this seemed to move too far away from the life history of the individual and too quickly back to a hereditarian aetiology of mental illness.<sup>52</sup> In 1912, however, he began to reconsider his earlier resistance to the inheritance

<sup>50</sup> Quoted in Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*, 55. See also Gliboff, “The Pebble and the Planet: Paul Kammerer, Ernst Haeckel, and the Meaning of Darwinism.”

<sup>51</sup> Mitchell Bryan Hart, *Social Science and the Politics of Modern Jewish Identity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 12.

<sup>52</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Sexuality and the Aetiology of the Neuroses,” *S.E.*, vol. III (1898), 280.



of memory and to argue that the Oedipal complex as well as individuals' predispositions could be (at least partially) explained by the inheritance of ancestral experiences.<sup>53</sup> Between 1912 and 1920, he explored the works of both Weismann and Lamarck, and eventually concluded that individuals inherit the effects of phylogenetic experiences. Despite his obvious association with ideas which we might now term "Lamarckian," Freud never claimed to be a "Lamarckian," even when he explored Lamarck's works. Whether he avoided describing his views as "Lamarckian" because of the political connotations cannot be clearly determined. However, while the political implications of Lamarckism may not have motivated Freud's initial interest in the inheritance of phylogenetic memory, he did not turn away from this idea when the political repercussions were readily apparent. As he notes in *Moses and Monotheism*, his "position, no doubt, is made more difficult by the present attitude of biological science, which refuses to hear of the inheritance of acquired characters by succeeding generations."

It is in this context, then, that we must understand Freud's remarks about the inheritance of memory, beginning in 1912 and continuing until the end of his life. Before publishing *Totem and Taboo* (1913), he sent a draft of the new work to his friend (and eventually his biographer), Ernest Jones. In response to Freud's proposal that the Oedipal complex could be understood as the result of phylogenetic experiences, Jones anxiously responded, "I feel that you have captured an important and far-reaching idea, in pointing to the inheritance of *Verdrängung* [repression] as the result of earlier racial experiences, but I am rather in the dark as to the relation of it to the Weismann principle of the non-transmissibility of acquired characters. I hope it can stand in harmony with this, and not in contradiction."<sup>54</sup> With the hindsight of later developments in evolutionary theory, Jones' remark sounds quite reasonable. Since later theorists and historians of evolutionary theory point to Weismann's germ-plasm theory as the anticipation of the later Evolutionary Synthesis (of Darwinian Natural Selection and Mendelian

<sup>53</sup> The reasons for this shift in Freud's thinking are complex and have to do with the establishment of psychoanalysis beyond Vienna and his relationship with Jung. I discuss this matter in more detail in my book manuscript (in preparation).

<sup>54</sup> Interestingly, though Jones regularly quoted from his correspondence with Freud in the biography, he did not include this letter in his discussion of Freud's "Lamarckism." Jones to Freud, August 7, 1912, Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones, *The Complete Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones*, ed. Andrew Paskauskas (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

heredity),<sup>55</sup> it would seem that Freud should have heeded Jones' suggestion that the inheritance of phylogenetic experiences would not be compatible with Weismann's anti-Lamarckian theory.

While Jones might have been convinced of the incompatibility of Weismann's principle with Freud's notion of "the inheritance of *Verdrängung*," Freud had ample reasons to ignore his comment. To begin with, Jones' confidence in Weismann's theory must be understood in terms of the differing developments of hereditary and evolutionary theories in England and in Germany. As Peter Bowler and Jonathan Harwood have suggested, the Mendelian and Weismannian "revolutions" developed differently amongst English- and German-speaking scientific communities. Thus, for example, in the English-speaking world, the emergence of genetics marked the end of the credibility of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, but the same was not true in the German-speaking world.<sup>56</sup> As English scientists such as T.H. Morgan attempted to distinguish the new field of genetics from evolutionary theory, they also distinguished between individual and phylogenetic development much more quickly than the German scientists. Meanwhile, German scientists "refused to accept this rigid distinction and allowed cytoplasmic inheritance" to continue to shape evolutionary theory "in ways that seemed outlandish to English-speaking geneticists."<sup>57</sup> Indeed, Freud already suspected Jones of over-zealously rejecting hereditary theories of evolution. Upon first meeting Jones in 1908, Freud wrote to Jung, saying that Jones "denies all heredity; to his mind even I am a reactionary."<sup>58</sup>

In the years following the publication of *Totem and Taboo*, Freud continued to explore both Weismann and Lamarck's works without mentioning any sense of contradiction between the two. In his essay "On Narcissism" (1914), Freud explicitly referred to Weismann's germ-plasm theory, and the following year he composed a "Phylogenetic Fantasy" in which he incorporated the Lamarckian idea of the inheritance of memory. Freud sent a draft of this work, tentatively entitled "Overview of the Transference Neuroses" to his friend Sandor Ferenczi, with whom he enthusiastically shared his emerging ideas about the parallels between

<sup>55</sup> Ernst Mayr, *The Growth of Biological Thought: Diversity, Evolution and Inheritance* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 706.

<sup>56</sup> Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Rinterpreting a Historical Myth*, 104.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 123–125.

<sup>58</sup> May 3, 1908. Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, *The Freud/Jung Letters: The Correspondence between Sigmund Freud and C.G. Jung*, trans. R.F.C. Hull and Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 145.

individual and phylogenetic development. From 1916 to 1918, Freud and Ferenczi intermittently discussed the possibility of co-writing a work about Lamarck and psychoanalysis. In December 1916, Freud wrote to Ferenczi to tell him that he had ordered “the Lamarck” from the university library, and on January 1, 1917, he sent a “sketch of the Lamarck-work,” a paper apparently not preserved, and reported that he had begun reading Lamarck’s *Zoological Philosophy* (1809).<sup>59</sup>

Despite his enthusiasm for the “Lamarck-work” in the summers of 1917 and 1918, Freud never actually followed through with his plans to fill in the details of the “sketch.” The problem was not that he lacked interest but rather that the difficulties presented by the volatile political situation in Europe pulled his concerns in a decidedly more practical direction.<sup>60</sup> In March, Freud wrote to Ferenczi about the lack of progress on the Lamarck-work: “I have not progressed either,” he writes. “In the weeks of cold and darkness I stopped working in the evening – and have not got back to it since then.”<sup>61</sup> By May 1917, he wrote again, despondent with the difficulties presented by the war. “I am not at all disposed to doing the work on Lamarck in the summer and would prefer to relinquish the whole thing to you.”<sup>62</sup> As World War I and its fallout drastically affected the European economy and life in general, Freud became less interested in studying Lamarck’s works than with maintaining a basic standard of living: he was far more concerned about the welfare of his sons (who were on the war-front), with acquiring basic provisions and maintaining psychoanalytic institutions and publications.<sup>63</sup> While Freud seems to have begun to doubt whether Lamarck was the solution to his theoretical problems, the main issue was that “because of the war, there were difficulties in getting the literature.” As Grubrich-Simitis suggests, “Ultimately the external emergency situation, which was reaching crisis level, may also have had an

<sup>59</sup> Ilse Grubrich-Simitis, “Metapsychology and Metabiology,” trans. Axel and Peter T. Hoffer, *A Phylogenetic Fantasy: Overview of the Transference Neuroses, by Sigmund Freud* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987), 94.

<sup>60</sup> In other words, Freud never explicitly repudiated or rejected Lamarckism; instead, he seems to have simply become less interested in pursuing Lamarck’s works. Though he continued to insist on the inheritance of acquired characteristics, he would not necessarily have regarded this idea as specifically “Lamarckian.”

<sup>61</sup> March 2, 1917, Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi, *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi*, trans. Peter T. Hoffer, ed. André Haynal, vol. I–III (1993–2000), II: 186.

<sup>62</sup> May 29, 1917, *Ibid.*, II: 210.

<sup>63</sup> January–February, 1918. May 29, 1917, *Ibid.*, II: 259–263.

inhibiting effect.”<sup>64</sup> By the end of 1918, Freud’s pursuit of Lamarck seems to have fallen by the wayside.

Because of objections from the victorious powers in the autumn of 1918, the Fifth International Psycho-Analytical Congress was moved from Breslau to Budapest, home of Ferenczi. In the wake of the successful congress, attended by representatives from the Austrian, German and Hungarian Governments,<sup>65</sup> there were two developments which are significant because they suggest that Freud moved directly from his theoretical interests in Lamarck to practical concerns which were nonetheless shaped by his interest in Lamarckism and its ties to Bolshevism. At the congress, Freud delivered his paper on “Lines of Advance in Psycho-Analytic Therapy” (1919) which he had written the summer before while he was staying with his friend, Anton von Freund in a suburb of Budapest.<sup>66</sup> While the paper focused on “active” psychoanalytic methods (associated with Ferenczi), it also reflected the political context in which it was delivered. Freud fantasized about a “psychotherapy for the people” and proclaimed that

at some time or other the conscience of society will awake and remind it that the poor man should have just as much right to assistance for his mind as he now has to the life-saving help offered by surgery... It may be a long time before the State comes to see these duties as urgent... Probably these institutions will first be started by private charity.<sup>67</sup>

While Freud imagined a time in which the State would assist the poor man, he recognized that such radical changes were not likely in the near future. As for a “private charity,” there were rumors that von Freund considered leaving his large fortune to found just such an institution. (This never transpired partly because of the war and the difficulties in transferring money, and also because von Freund died the following

<sup>64</sup> Grubrich-Simitis, “Metapsychology and Metabiology,” 94.

<sup>65</sup> While the politicians were explicitly Bolshevik, they seem to have been interested in psychoanalysis because of its therapy for the “war neuroses.” Freud’s, Ferenczi’s and Simmel’s recent work on the war neuroses suggested that soldiers suffering from the effects of war could, with the help of psychoanalysis, recover and return to the front. Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, II: 197–198.

<sup>66</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Lines of Advance in Psycho-Analytic Therapy,” *S.E.*, vol. XVII (1919a), 158, editor’s note.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 167.

year before he could arrange all the specifics.) As Abraham reported to Freud in August 1919, "Things are good in our group...your appeal in Budapest fell on fertile ground. The polyclinic will be opened in the winter, and will grow into a psychoanalytic institute."<sup>68</sup> While psychoanalysis had originally been the province of well-to-do families with ample money to support such involved methods of therapy, in 1919, Freud had high hopes that its methods could be used to improve the conditions of the "poor man," and that institutions could be set up to accomplish these transformations. Like many scientists who explicitly supported Lamarckian notions of heredity, Freud believed that poverty and sickness were not permanent conditions but rather could be improved and transformed by providing therapy.

The second important development in the wake of the Fifth International Congress was the meteoric rise and subsequent fall of Ferenczi and psychoanalysis more generally in Budapest. During the brief time period in which the Bolsheviks ruled the Austro-Hungarian empire, Ferenczi became increasingly active in public life, both as a psychoanalyst and as a member of the Social Democratic Union of doctors. Writing to Freud in November 1918, Ferenczi announced that "Your prophecy about our imminent proletarianization has come true."<sup>69</sup> During 1918–1919, hundreds of Hungarian students signed petitions requesting that psychoanalysis be taught at the Royal Medical School at the University of Budapest. By April 1919, Ferenczi was appointed as a professor and as director of the newly established psychoanalytic clinic sponsored by the new Bolshevik state.<sup>70</sup> However, Ferenczi's Bolshevik honeymoon lasted only 120 days; by August 1919, the newly established Hungarian Soviet Republic was falling apart and the White Terror had begun. Jews, Leftists, Bolsheviks and all those suspected of such "crimes" were fired from their jobs, beaten and generally terrorized. Ferenczi was forced out of his university position, expelled from the Medical Society and forced to abandon his projects, including the free clinic, and of course, the long-planned collaborative

<sup>68</sup> Abraham to Freud, August 3, 1919. Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham, *A Psychoanalytic Dialogue: Letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham, 1907–1926*, trans. Bernard Marsh and Hilda C. Abraham, eds. Hilda C. Abraham and Ernst L. Freud (New York: Basic Books/Hogarth Press, 1965), 402.

<sup>69</sup> Letter #770, November 7, 1918. Freud and Ferenczi, *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi*, II: 308.

<sup>70</sup> Michelle Moreau-Ricaud, "The Founding of the Budapest School," *Ferenczi's Turn in Psychoanalysis*, eds. Peter L. Rudnytsky, Antal Bókay and Patrizia Giampieri-Deutsch (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 53–54. See also Freud and Ferenczi, *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi*, II: xxix–xxx.

work on Lamarck. While it is likely that Ferenczi was fired as much for being Jewish as for being a Bolshevik, Freud evidently understood the situation in terms of politics. As he wrote to Karl Abraham in June 1920, “Ferenczi has now been excluded from the Budapest Medical Society as a penalty for his Bolshevik professorship. As a consequence of the still existing letter censorship I could only congratulate him on the honor.”<sup>71</sup>

The dangerous connections between Jewishness, Bolshevism and questionable scientific theories (such as Lamarckism) were implicitly recognized by Ernest Jones. Jones was notoriously worried about maintaining the scientific reputation of Psychoanalysis and protecting it from Freud’s “non-scientific” concerns, though he never directly linked Freud’s Lamarckism with any accusations of Bolshevism. For example, in February 1926, Jones wrote to Freud asking him to publicly play down his (previously private) interest in telepathy because it seemed to detract from the scientific reputation of psychoanalysis, particularly in England. “In your private political opinions,” writes Jones, “you might be a Bolshevik, but you would not help the spread of psychoanalysis by announcing it.”<sup>72</sup> In response, Freud avoided direct reference to the suggestion that he was privately a Bolshevik, and instead compared the situation to

the great experiment of my life: namely, to proclaim a conviction without taking into account any echo from the outer world... When anyone adduces my fall into sin, just answer him calmly that my acceptance of telepathy is my private affair like my Jewishness, my passion for smoking and many other things, and that the theme of telepathy is in essence alien [*wesenfremd*] to psychoanalysis.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>71</sup> June 21, 1920, Freud and Abraham, *A Psychoanalytic Dialogue: Letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham, 1907–1926*, 313.

<sup>72</sup> Jones to Freud, Letter # 476, February 25, 1926, Freud and Jones, *The Complete Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones*, 592–593.

<sup>73</sup> Freud to Jones, Letter #478, March 7, 1926, *Ibid.*, 596–597. Peter Gay emphasizes that Freud’s use of the word *wesenfremd* is proof that “Judaism was *inessential*, not to Freud, but to his creation, psychoanalysis.” In focusing only on the religious, faith-based aspects of Judaism (rather than the broader condition of *being Jewish*), Gay overlooks the inescapable conditions which Freud *had* to confront in creating psychoanalysis – he had no choice but to be a Jewish scientist. Gay’s statement that Freud “was a Jew but not a Jewish scientist” is both historically impossible (during Freud’s lifetime), and retrospectively false. Peter Gay, *A Godless Jew: Freud, Atheism, and the Making of Psychoanalysis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 148. Yerushalmi, *Freud’s Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable*, 98. I explore the question of the Jewishness of psychoanalysis in more depth at the end of this article.

In addition to totally disregarding Jones' comment about Bolshevism, Freud's response is riddled with obvious contradictions. While he insists that he would not change his public (proclaimed) "convictions" because of "any echo from the outer world," he goes on to note that there are certain things – Jewishness, smoking and telepathy – which are "private affairs". Each of these "things" is wildly different: Jewishness was (arguably) something that Freud could not change even if he wanted to, and something which he often avoided publicly discussing. Smoking was a *habit* which numerous people do give up, though with much difficulty. And telepathy was a *phenomenon* whose supposedly dubious existence Freud considered plausible. While these things belong to totally different categories, there is a sense that they were related: there was no "choice" in these matters – it was not really possible to choose whether to "pursue" these matters – it was not possible to just stop being Jewish, and it was not so easy to give up smoking or a belief in telepathy, or perhaps for that matter, Bolshevism or Lamarckism.<sup>74</sup> However, if pursued too publicly or persistently, Freud knew that they could endanger his life and/or work.<sup>75</sup>

By the time he wrote *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud was excruciatingly aware of the accusation that psychoanalysis was regarded as one example of a "Jewish-Bolshevist science." In particular, Freud worried about publishing the third part of the book in which he speculates about the role that the "inheritance of acquired characters" played in shaping the Jewish people, and he waited until he was safely stowed away in England to publish this part of the book. In a letter to Arnold Zweig (and in both of the prefaces to the third section of the book), Freud explained that he feared that the new material would further offend the Catholic Church whom he regarded as one of the few remaining sources of protection from the Nazis' anti-semitic policies. Specifically, he worried about a certain Pater Wilhelm Schimdt who, he noted, was

<sup>74</sup> Or more to the point, if telepathy were a real phenomenon, it would not be possible to stop the flow of telepathic transmissions by refusing to believe in it. Indeed, the relationship between these three forms of transmission – or *Übertragung* – were more than simply linguistic – all three were thought to mysteriously occur in a realm beyond sensory perception.

<sup>75</sup> Freud was well aware of the dangers which both smoking and Jewishness posed to his life: three years earlier (in 1923) he had been diagnosed with jaw cancer, caused at least in part by his cigar-smoking habit. During World War I, as he was contemplating the Lamarck-work, he bitterly complained in letters to Ferenczi both of the difficulty of living without a constant cigar-supply and of coping with the rise of anti-semitic violence. See Freud and Ferenczi, *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi*, II: xxxiii–xxxiv.

a confidant of the Pope, and unfortunately he himself is an ethnologist and a student of comparative religion, whose books make no secret of his abhorrence of analysis and especially of my totem theory... any publication of mine will be sure to attract a certain amount of attention, which will not escape the notice of this inimical priest.<sup>76</sup>

While Freud clearly knew a fair bit about Schmidt, here he only tells part of the story. Let me try to clarify the significance of Schmidt's work and position at the time. Schmidt was an anthropologist of international reputation who founded the journal, *Anthropos* and the Anthropos Institute, both of which still exist today.<sup>77</sup> Like many Catholics in the 1930s, Schmidt opposed the Nazis' racial anti-semitism, as well as their policies regarding "selective breeding" and eugenics.<sup>78</sup> While the Nazis emphasized the Jews' racial difference, Schmidt emphasized *cultural* difference or "cultural concept of 'Volkstum,'" <sup>79</sup> based on a people's spiritual history. While this idea understandably found favor with American (Jewish) anthropologists such as Franz Boas and A.L. Kroeber,<sup>80</sup> it also allowed Schmidt to proclaim a a more virulent form of anti-semitism. For example, in an article on the "Racial Principle of National Socialism," he rejects the "materialistic concept of race" and explains that "The Jews are not fundamentally racially distinct from the Aryan peoples." Instead, he argues their difference could be found in the "very structure of their souls." Because of their rejection of Christ,

<sup>76</sup> Freud to Stefan Zweig, September 9, 1934, Sigmund Freud and Arnold Zweig, *The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Arnold Zweig*, trans. Elaine Robson-Scott and William Robson-Scott (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1970), 92. See also Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 55, 57.

<sup>77</sup> My biographical information on Schmidt is drawn from the following sources: Thomas Hauschild, "Christians, Jews, and the Other in Germany Anthropology." *American Anthropologist* 99.4 (1997); Joseph Henninger, *P. Wilhelm Schmidt S. V. D., 1868–1954: Eine biographische Skizze* (Fribourg: Paulusdruckerei, 1956); Wilhelm Koppers, "Obituary of Pater Wilhelm Schmidt." *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 83 (1954); Wilhelm Schmidt, "Blut-Rasse-Volk," *Kirche im Kampf*, ed. Clemens Holzmeister (Vienna: Seelsorger Verlag, 1936).

<sup>78</sup> See Etienne Lepicard, "Eugenics and Roman Catholicism, An Encyclical Letter in Context: *Casti connubii*, December 31, 1930." *Science in Context* 11.3–14 (1998).

<sup>79</sup> Ritchie Robertson, "'My True Enemy': Freud and the Catholic Church, 1927–1939," *Austria in the Thirties: Culture and History*, eds. Kenneth Segar and John Warren (Riverside: Ariadne Press, 1990), 334.

<sup>80</sup> Both Franz Boas and A. L. Kroeber signed onto the list of 76 anthropologists honoring Schmidt on his sixtieth birthday in Wilhelm Koppers, ed., *Festschrift P. W. Schmidt: 76 sprachwissenschaftliche, ethnologische, religionswissenschaftliche, prähistorische und andere Studien* (Vienna: Mechitharisten-Congregations-Buchdruckerei, 1928).



the Jewish people “are a nation which in the deepest depths of their soul are uprooted. Precisely because of that, their evil and dangerous characteristics emerged which can in no way be reduced to material biological racial-concepts.”<sup>81</sup> Thus, Schmidt would have criticized Freud’s *racial* theory of Jewishness because it suggested that the Jews’ difference was hereditarily derived rather than spiritually decided.

Schmidt’s general “abhorrence” of psychoanalysis was not unrelated to his critique of racism and Bolshevism, both of which he found overly mired in the materialism of the modern world.<sup>82</sup> By the early 1930s, Schmidt was well-known not only for his anthropological studies of race and culture,<sup>83</sup> but also for his extensive and virulent attacks on psychoanalysis. The two topics came together in a 1928 lecture entitled, *Der Ödipus-Komplex der Freudschen Psychoanalyse und die Ehegestaltung des Bolschewismus* [“The Oedipus Complex of Freudian Psychoanalysis and the Marriage-Ideal of Bolshevism”]. Here, he transfers his vitriol against “Jewish Bolshevism” onto the materialism of psychoanalytic theory. Schmidt argues that Freud’s theory of the Oedipus complex is not simply wrong according to other anthropological studies, but worse: like Bolshevism it destroyed the institutions of marriage and the family, institutions which were central to Christian civilization. Though in this lecture Schmidt does not directly link his attacks on Freud, psychoanalysis or Bolshevism with the “Jewishness” of these movements, the connections would have been readily made by Schmidt’s readers and anyone who was vaguely aware of his allegiances. In 1920, Schmidt had presented a lecture entitled “Free Vienna from Jewish Bolshevism!” which was published in the same Catholic newspaper which later published his essays critiquing psychoanalysis.<sup>84</sup> By the time Freud moved to London, and published the

<sup>81</sup> Wilhelm Schmidt, “Das Rassenprinzip des Nationalsozialismus.” *Schönere Zukunft* 7 (1931–1932): 999.

<sup>82</sup> Wilhelm Schmidt, *Rasse und Volk: eine Untersuchung zur Bestimmung ihrer Grenzen und zur Erfassung ihrer Beziehungen* (1927); “Eine wissenschaftliche Abrechnung mit der Psychoanalyse,” *Das Neue Reich* 1928–1929.

<sup>83</sup> Such as Wilhelm Schmidt, *The Origin and Growth of Religion: Facts and Theories*, trans. H.J. Rose (1935); Schmidt, “Blut-Rasse-Volk.”; Wilhelm Schmidt, *The Culture Historical Method of Ethnology: The Scientific Approach to the Racial Question*, trans. S.A. Sieber (New York: Fortuny’s, 1939).

<sup>84</sup> Wilhelm Schmidt, “Befreiung Wiens vom jüdischen Bolschewismus! Eine Katholikentagsrede von Professor Dr Wilhelm Schmidt S.V.D.” *Das Neue Reich* 3 (1920). Though Schmidt published regularly in this explicitly Catholic-interest journal (later continued under the name, *Schönere Zukunft* [Better Future]) – including essays on “The Jewish Question” (1933–1934) and “The Racial Principle of National Socialism” (1931–1932), he published the lecture on “The Oedipus Complex of Freudian Psychoanalysis and the Marriage” in a less specifically Catholic journal, *Nationalwirtschaft*.

third part of *Moses and Monotheism* he finally realized that the Catholic church could not protect the Jewish people. In the second preface to the third part, written in June 1938, he notes that with the Nazis' invasion "Catholicism proved, to use the words of the Bible, 'a broken reed.'" Now Freud acknowledged "the certainty that I should now be persecuted not only for my line of thought but also for my 'race'"<sup>85</sup> and he resolved to publish the final portion of his work in which he explicitly explored the relationship between his "line of thought" and his "race."

### Jones' Biography and Its Misguided Consequences

As one of the first and most vocal critics of Freud's so-called "Lamarckism," Jones must have been aware of the dangers of publicly supporting a Lamarckian-sounding theory of inheritance, both in the 1930s (when Freud wrote *Moses and Monotheism*), and later in the 1950s when Jones wrote his seminal biography of Freud. Indeed, in the biography, he acknowledges that Freud was often lumped together with Marx as (Jewish) thinkers whose thought was "not only compatible but mutually complementary."<sup>86</sup> While he lists a number of scholars such as Bernfeld and Simmel who are well-known for attempting to synthesize psychoanalysis with Marxism, he also includes within this list the name of Pater Schmidt, and even cites his work on "The Oedipus Complex of Freudian Psychoanalysis and the Marriage-Ideal of Bolshevism."<sup>87</sup> However, nowhere in the biography does Jones connect psychoanalysis' associations with Bolshevism with the political connotations of Freud's Lamarckism. Rather, like many scholars after him, Jones insists that the issue of Freud's Lamarckism was purely scientific: the inheritance of acquired characters was simply "scientifically" disproven and Freud chose to disregard the evidence. Indeed, in all the secondary literature on the history of Psychoanalysis, I have seen no discussion of the political implications of Freud's Lamarckism.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 57.

<sup>86</sup> Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, III: 344.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, III: 344, 518, n341.

<sup>88</sup> Neither of the two classic works on Freud's use of biological theory mention any of the general associations between Lamarckism, Bolshevism and Jews. See Ritvo, *Darwin's Influence on Freud: A Tale of Two Sciences*; Sulloway, *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend*. Ilse Grubrich-Simitis alludes to the facts that neo-Lamarckism was used as the scientific basis for T.D. Lysenko in his Soviet Marxist agriculture program and that Freud would have been peripherally aware of the debates about Paul Kammerer's work. However, she does not develop these connections any further. Grubrich-Simitis, "Metapsychology and Metabiology," 98–99, n36 and n38.

Part of this confusion derives, I believe, from Jones' seminal 1953 biography in which he constructs a misleading and inaccurate picture of Freud's use of biological theories. While there is ample evidence that Freud rejected the idea of inherited memory until around 1912, Jones claims that "Freud remained from the beginning to the end of his life what one must call an obstinate adherent of this discredited Lamarckism."<sup>89</sup> As I have noted, by 1912 Jones directly confronted Freud about the extraordinary shift in his ideas about the inheritance of memory. Knowing full well that Freud had earlier resisted the idea of inherited memory, Jones asked Freud whether his idea about the inheritance of repression could stand "in harmony" with Weismann's "principle of the non-transmissibility of inherited characteristics." Second, in the biography Jones reports that he had little success in finding "allusions" to Darwinism in Freud's work, adding however, that Freud does refer "of course, to the doctrine of Natural Selection."<sup>90</sup> In fact, throughout his career Freud cited Darwin as a prominent influence, especially in *Totem and Taboo*, the work in which he began to incorporate the idea that phylogenetic memory may be inherited.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, in an attempt to defend Freud against such specious claims that he was a "Lamarckian," Lucille Ritvo has shown that Freud was overwhelmingly influenced by Darwin (rather than Lamarck) from his earliest days at the Vienna *Gymnasium* to his final work.<sup>92</sup>

According to Jones, Freud's continued insistence on Lamarckian principles is the "extraordinary part of the story, which provides us with a baffling problem in the study of the development of Freud's ideas, and also in that of his personality."<sup>93</sup> Not only is Jones' perplexity slightly disingenuous, his internal logic is inconsistent. As proof that Lamarckism had been "completely discredited for more than half a century"<sup>94</sup> – that is, since 1903 – Jones quotes a passage from Julian Huxley's 1953 book, *Evolution in Action*:

<sup>89</sup> Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, III: 311.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 309–310. Jones also notes that Freud had certainly "read the neo-Darwinian books as Weismann, Haeckel and others," as if Freud's *reading* of either of these scientists would automatically result in his embracing their positions.

<sup>91</sup> The *Concordance* lists thirty-four mentions of Darwin in the *Standard Edition* alone. Samuel A. Guttman, Stephen Maxfield Parrish, Randall L. Jones and Sigmund Freud, *The Concordance to the Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 2nd ed. (New York: International Universities Press, 1984). See also Ritvo, *Darwin's Influence on Freud: A Tale of Two Sciences*.

<sup>92</sup> Ritvo, *Darwin's Influence on Freud: A Tale of Two Sciences*.

<sup>93</sup> Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, 310.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

‘All the theories lumped together under the heads of biogenesis and Lamarckism are invalidated... They are no longer consistent with the facts. Indeed, in the light of modern discoveries, they no longer deserve to be called scientific theories, but can be seen as speculations without due basis of reality, or old superstitions disguised in modern dress. They were natural enough in their time, when we were still ignorant of the mechanism of heredity; but they have now only an historical interest.’<sup>95</sup>

As one of the founders of the Modern Synthesis of Darwinist Natural Selection in the 1940’s, Huxley was deeply invested in propagating the idea of a single line of theoretical development from Darwin to the Modern Synthesis. Moreover, Huxley – and by extension, Jones – echoes the rhetoric of earlier neo-Darwinians (or Weismannians) who portrayed their “Lamarckian” opponents as foolishly stubborn and superstitious. Although the mechanisms of heredity were not well enough understood to seriously question the possibility of Lamarckian inheritance until the 1940s,<sup>96</sup> in 1918 Hermann Siemens complained that “educators, philosophers, and socialists clutch maliciously and persistently to the belief in the inheritance of acquired characters,” and claimed that anyone who maintained such beliefs could only be the product of “the crudest biological ignorance” and old-fashioned “superstition.”<sup>97</sup>

By the time Freud was writing *Moses and Monotheism*, Jones must have seen Freud’s “insistence” on the inheritance of acquired characteristics as a major liability for the reputation of psychoanalysis.<sup>98</sup> As he recounts in the 1957 biography (with the wisdom of hindsight, of course), Jones “begged him to omit the passage” in *Moses and Monotheism* where he insisted on the biological inheritance of acquired characters. He goes on to recount the conversation he had with Freud regarding this particular passage:

I told him he had *of course* the right to hold any opinion he liked in his own field of psychology, even if it ran counter to all biological principles, but *begged* him to omit the passage where he applied it

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 310–311.

<sup>96</sup> See Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth*, 92ff., 129ff.

<sup>97</sup> Quoted in Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*, 34.

<sup>98</sup> As far as I can tell, there has been no mention in the scholarly literature that Jones’ worries about Freud’s Lamarckism were intensified by the political and/or social connotations of this idea – whether in the 1930s or in the 1950s.

to the whole field of biological evolution, since no responsible biologist regarded it as tenable any longer. *All he would say* was that they were all wrong and the passage must stay. And he documented this recalcitrance in the book with the following words: 'This state of affairs is made more difficult, it is true, by the present attitude of biological science, which rejects the idea of acquired qualities being transmitted to descendants. I admit, in all modesty, that in spite of this I cannot picture biological development proceeding without taking this factor into account.'<sup>99</sup>

In addition to the gross over-simplification of evolutionary history and the patronizing phrases ("I told him he had *of course* the right to hold any opinion he liked..."), Jones actually misquotes Freud! That is, in his bibliography, Jones cites Strachey's *Standard Edition* as the source for all translations of Freud's work from which he quotes. However, in this passage he actually quotes from (his wife) Katherine Jones' translation of *Moses and Monotheism*.<sup>100</sup> This might be understandable if for some reason Strachey's translation seemed linguistically inaccurate (as it is known to be in many instances). However, Jones' misquotation (or rather, mis-translation) conceals the sentiment of Freud's original German which is better retained in the *Standard Edition*'s translation. In actuality – in the German and also in the *Standard Edition* – Freud does not concede that biological science presently rejects the inheritance of acquired characteristics, but rather (as the *Standard Edition* translates it) that contemporary biological science "*refuses to hear of the inheritance of acquired characters by successive generations [biologischen Wissenschaft..., die von der Vererbung erworbener Eigenschaften auf die Nachkommen nichts wissen will]*,"<sup>101</sup> – or as a more literal translation of the German might read, "they want to hear nothing of it."<sup>102</sup>

If Jones was worried about the consequences of Freud's "Lamarckism" in the 1930s, by the time he reconstructed the narrative in the 1957 biography, he could only have been more apprehensive about this aspect

<sup>99</sup> Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, 313, my italics.

<sup>100</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: Vintage Books, 1939), 127–128. I have not found any other references to Jones' method of selectively quoting from the translation which suited his purposes.

<sup>101</sup> Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 100.

<sup>102</sup> [*Unsere Sachlage wird allerdings durch die gegenwärtige Einstellung der biologischen Wissenschaft erschwert, die von der Vererbung erworbener Eigenschaften auf die Nachkommen nichts wissen will.*] Ibid; Sigmund Freud, *Gesammelte Werke, chronologisch geordnet*, ed. Anna Freud, 17 vols. (London: Imago Publishing Company, 1940), XVI: 207.

of psychoanalytic theory. In the 1950s, there were additional reasons why he depicted Freud's "Lamarckism" as the irrational obstinacy of "genius" rather than as a legitimate scientific position with dangerous political consequences. If Lamarckism was seen as suspect in the 1930s – whether ideologically or scientifically – by the late 1940s, it had become even more untenable – ridiculed and disdained – particularly in the West.<sup>103</sup> As is well-known, from the 1930s to the 1960s, the Soviet agronomist Trofim Denisovich Lysenko attempted to apply the "Lamarckian" idea of the inheritance of acquired characters to Soviet agriculture with disastrous results. Until Richard Levins' and Richard Lewontin's work in the 1980s, most Western historians regarded the failures of Lysenkoism as yet another instance of the disasters which ensue when "pure" science is sullied by politics and ideology.<sup>104</sup> Not only was Lamarckism regarded as scientifically disproven, but it was also regarded as a prime example of "bad" (read ideologically motivated) science. Moreover, in the 1950s, scientists and historians were beginning to come to terms with how the Nazis had used biological theories of heredity to support their horrific ideological "solution," and as such, nothing could seem worse for a scientist's reputation than to be associated with a scientific theory which seemed ideologically motivated. Jones must have been aware of the potential effects of allowing psychoanalysis to be associated with Lamarckism – a theory which was regarded not only as scientifically outmoded, but more importantly, suspiciously motivated by political rather than by purely scientific ideals.

At the end of his chapter on Freud's use of biology, Jones seems to throw up his hands in exasperation, suggesting that maybe Freud's Lamarckism can be understood as a side-effect of his Jewish background. "It is not easy to account for the fixity with which Freud held this opinion and the determination with which he ignored all the biological evidence to the contrary."<sup>105</sup> Given Freud's belief in the omnipotence of thoughts originating in early childhood emotional experiences, writes Jones, maybe Freud's stubborn and superstitious insistence on Lamarckism can be understood as a result of his early childhood experiences with Judaism. As if such speculation were too wild to state explicitly, Jones ventures, "Was an ineffaceable mark left on his mind when he learned as a child that God visits the iniquity of the

<sup>103</sup> Graham, "Science and Values: The Eugenics Movement in Germany and Russia in the 1920s." See also David Joravsky, "Soviet Marxism and Biology before Lysenko." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20.1 (1959).

<sup>104</sup> Lewontin and Levins, "The Problem of Lysenkoism."

<sup>105</sup> Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, 313.

fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation?"<sup>106</sup> The idea that Freud's Lamarckism might be explained as an "ineffaceable mark" of Jewishness may sound preposterous, but it was not far off.

### Was Lamarckism Jewish?

Freud's Lamarckism can be understood as particularly Jewish not only because it was regarded as such in the 1930s, but also because of the ways in which it was central to what I call Freud's "theory of Jewishness." While this theory may not ever be scientifically provable or even ethically viable, it is provocative because it seems to get at the sense – shared by Jews and Gentiles alike – of the "ineffaceability" of Jewishness, both of the individual and of her descendents. Before the discovery of genetic mutation, Lamarckism was seen as an answer to the question of how populations change over time. During the 1920s and '30s, however, the assertion of Lamarckism came to be seen as a claim that human groups were malleable, and in Germany (if not elsewhere), this suggested that Jews could lose their distinctive Jewish characteristics and become fully German, whether intentionally (through conversion or active attempts to assimilate) or unintentionally (through a gradual process of assimilation and integration). While Lamarckian heredity was described as "soft" because of its emphasis on evolutionary *change*, Weismannian heredity was referred to as "hard" because it suggested that the materials of life were permanent and unchanging. Freud's use of these theories was idiosyncratic. On the one hand, he became interested in phylogenetic memory in order to better understand the "historically derived" origins of seemingly universal conflicts such as war and aggression. However, he specifically incorporated the Lamarckian inheritance of memory in order to make sense of the *permanence* and the persistent survival of these conflicts. Similarly, in his final book, Freud showed that the "special character of the Jewish people" was historically derived (rather than an *a priori* biological essence), but that it was this character which had ensured their persistent survival.<sup>107</sup>

No less a scholar than Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi has followed Jones' suggestions that Freud's Lamarckism was both scientifically misguided but also peculiarly Jewish. In his book, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (1991), Yerushalmi pays special attention to Freud's "stubborn" refusal to "expunge these embarrassing

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 313.

<sup>107</sup> Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 123.

elements” of Lamarckism from his last book. Admitting that “the truly decisive revolutions in molecular biology and genetics were not to take place until after his death,” Yerushalmi nonetheless seems perplexed that Freud insisted on Lamarckism despite the fact that he “was always aware that Lamarckism was under sharp *scientific* attack.”<sup>108</sup> Like Jones, Yerushalmi responds to Freud’s Lamarckism as if it were both surprising and surprisingly Jewish. “I find myself wondering,” he writes, “whether... Freud’s Jewishness... played a role in his Lamarckian predilections.”<sup>109</sup> While Yerushalmi seems about to concede (ala Lenz) that Lamarckism might be particularly Jewish – he steps around this distasteful possibility and adds, “No, I am not implying that Lamarckism is ‘Jewish.’”<sup>110</sup> Acutely aware of the problematic presumption that a scientific theory could be particularly “Jewish,” he nonetheless goes on to concede that Freud’s Lamarckism might be persuasively Jewish, at least in “subjective” terms:

Deconstructed into Jewish terms, what is Lamarckism if not the powerful feeling that, for better or worse, one cannot really cease being Jewish, and this not merely because of current anti-Semitism or discrimination... but because one’s fate in being Jewish was determined long ago by the Fathers.<sup>111</sup>

Though Yerushalmi critiques Freud’s overly-literal Lamarckism, he notes that Freud’s theory of Jewishness gets at “the sense that Jewishness is both inherited and indelible,” a sense which is “shared equally by Jews who... would discard their Jewish identity if they could, as well as by Jews who passionately affirm[] that identity.”<sup>112</sup> Indeed, this “sense” of the indelibility of Jewishness is shared not only by both “proud” and “self-hating” Jews, but also by philo- and anti-semitic non-Jews.<sup>113</sup>

While Yerushalmi articulates a positive sense of the inalienability of Jewishness, the idea that Jewishness is some sort of “ineffaceable mark” has uncomfortable similarities with anti-semitic racism which reached its heights in the first half of the twentieth century. It is impossible to

<sup>108</sup> Yerushalmi, *Freud’s Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable*, 31, my italics.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 31, my italics.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>113</sup> On the ways in which philo-semitism and anti-semitism seem to “supply and comply with each other in strange and disconcerting ways,” see Steven Connor, “Some of My Best Friends are Philosemites” Paper presented at a panel marking the publication of *The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity*, ed. Tamar Garb and Linda Nochlin, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK.



determine whether Freud's sense that Jewishness was "ineffaceable" was the result of his Jewish education (as Jones suggests),<sup>114</sup> or whether it was the result of his "education" in anti-semitic racism. The "racialization" of Jewishness by Jews and anti-semites alike suggests that "racialism" is not necessarily the problem. In an odd example of historical revision, the historian Richard Bernstein takes *Yerushalmi* to task for suggesting that Freud believed in Lamarckian inheritance and by extension, biological and racial Jewishness:

you seem to be accusing Freud of the type of racism that... was to become the backbone of Nazi anti-Semitism. If there are Jewish 'character traits' that are 'transmitted phylogenetically and no longer require religion,' then there is a biological basis for singling out Jews for extermination regardless of their professed religious convictions. This is why I find the claim that you keep reiterating so disturbing – that Freud believes Jewish acquired character traits are phylogenetically transmitted by biological mechanisms.<sup>115</sup>

While Bernstein's reproach may be historically inaccurate, what is more important and more interesting is that it reveals an intense discomfort with any suggestion that Jewishness may be understood as a "racial" matter.<sup>116</sup> In fact, it is not only "biological" definitions which allow the "singling out of Jews [or any other group] for extermination": biology is just one amongst many methods of defining a group of people. *Any* definition of a group which is used to single individuals out for extermination – whether it is religious convictions or any other form of self-determined identifications, and whether it is skin color or any other hereditary or environmental condition – is equally pernicious and morally reprehensible. Thus, to shift the identification of Jews or any

<sup>114</sup> Yerushalmi amply demonstrates that Freud's knowledge of Judaism was much broader than Freud liked to publicly proclaim. See Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable*.

<sup>115</sup> Bernstein, *Freud and the Legacy of Moses*, 112–113.

<sup>116</sup> Whether the definition of "who's a Jew" is *racist* depends on how and why the definitions are being used. While it is obvious that Nazi (inclusive) definitions of Jewishness were racist, it is less clear whether Jewish (exclusive) definitions of Jewishness should also be considered racist. On the one hand, late twentieth century Jewish organizations have retrospectively made numerous individuals into Jews based on their genealogical Jewishness and on the fact that they were regarded as Jewish by the Nazis. However, when Jewish definitions are exclusive and are coupled with political and economic power, the resulting policies of exclusive "race-based" citizenship certainly seem to qualify as racist.

other group from “biology” to self-determination does not protect against the kinds of evils which were perpetrated by the Nazis.<sup>117</sup> After all, there has been a long history of anti-semitism and other forms of oppression based not on biological typology but on religious, political and economic categories (as in the case of Pater Schmidt), and even on forms of religious education and ritual meant to transfer the faith from one generation to the next.<sup>118</sup> It would be a lot easier to combat racism and anti-semitism if they were simply matters of misguided scientific understandings of “race” from another era.

### Is Psychoanalysis a “Jewish Science”?

Throughout his life, Freud insisted that Psychoanalysis was a universal science (as opposed to a “Jewish science [*Jüdische Wissenschaft*]” which explicitly referred to a field of scholarship focusing on *Jewish* life and letters and as such would suggest a limited scope for psychoanalysis). From the 1890s until the end of his life, he worried that psychoanalysis would be regarded as a “Jewish national affair [*eine jüdische nationale Angelegenheit*].”<sup>119</sup> As he wrote in a letter to his friend Ferenczi in 1913, “there should not be such a thing as Aryan or Jewish science. Results in science must be identical, though the presentation of them may vary.”<sup>120</sup> While Freud hints at the question of whether a science which is differently *presented* is still the same “science,” he also implicitly recognizes the ideological nature imputed to a science which is characterized as either “Aryan” or “Jewish.” Indeed, Freud’s incorporation of the inheritance of phylogenetic memory can be seen as an attempt to move beyond the ideological (religious and historical) distinctions which might separate Aryans from Jews, or Aryan and Jewish science. As Ilse Grubrich-Simitis has suggested, the inheritance of memory allowed Freud to claim a “universal validity” for psychoanalysis as a “trans-

<sup>117</sup> Indeed, queer scholars and activists have sometimes insisted that homosexuality is a matter of biology in order to argue that homosexuality is beyond individual choice, self-determination and morality.

<sup>118</sup> This is not to suggest that these categories are completely distinct. The problems of (physical and/or anthropological definitions of) race and (economic, educational) class in America are, for example, difficult to separate.

<sup>119</sup> Freud to Abraham, May 3, 1908. Freud and Abraham, *A Psychoanalytic Dialogue: Letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham, 1907–1926*, 34.

<sup>120</sup> Freud to Ferenczi, June 8, 1913, Freud and Ferenczi, *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi*, 491.

cultural statement on the human condition.”<sup>121</sup> It was not until the *Moses and Monotheism* that Freud turned to phylogenetic memory as a way of understanding the persistent survival of Jewish difference.

While Freud insisted that Psychoanalysis was not a “Jewish science” in an attempt to protect it from ghettoization, in the end such claims of universality ironically underscored the Jewishness of Psychoanalysis. By the 1930s in German-speaking countries, it was clear that Jewish and Aryan scientists did not necessarily share the same goals, even if they concurred on certain theoretical questions. According to the Nazis, the promotion of a scientific theory as universal – or in its more coded descriptions, “international” and “trans-historical” – was a form of anti-German conspiracy.<sup>122</sup> Despite the fact that the Nazis frankly promoted their own *volkisch* ideals of science, they maintained that *their* science was free from the taint of politics and religion (of which they accused “liberal-Jewish-Bolshevist science”<sup>123</sup>). In their attempts to unite Germany as a *Volksstaat* (rather than a *Parteistaat*), the Nazis attempted to “replace the divisive emphasis on class by a unifying emphasis on race,” and to replace the language of politics with that of science. While “politics” stank of class differences and “special interests,” science had been something of which Germans could be unabashedly proud. By 1933, Germany and Austria had been awarded more than one-third of all Nobel Prizes, even if many of these were awarded to scientists of Jewish descent.<sup>124</sup> The Nazis proudly used Nietzsche’s phrase, “no science without suppositions” as a slogan supporting the idea that all science – and all parts of society – should nourish and nurture the German nation.<sup>125</sup> As Gerhard Wagner, the head of the Nazi Physicians’ League noted, in 1934, “there is no longer any *German* science without the National Socialist *Weltanschauung* as its *first* presupposition.”<sup>126</sup> Ironically, then, both scientists and politicians avoided the value-laden language of politics and appealed to the supposed authoritative neutrality of science. Nonetheless, while the language of science appeared “value-free,” as I have suggested, the

<sup>121</sup> Grubrich-Simitis, “Metapsychology and Metabiology,” 99.

<sup>122</sup> These were the terms used by Gerhard Wagner, the head of the Nazi Physicians’ League, in a 1934 speech to the Gesellschaft Deutscher Naturforscher. Quoted in Robert Proctor, *Value-Free Science? Purity and Power in Modern Knowledge* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 171.

<sup>123</sup> Proctor, “Nazi Medicine and the Politics of Knowledge,” 350.

<sup>124</sup> Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*, 294.

<sup>125</sup> Proctor, *Value-Free Science? Purity and Power in Modern Knowledge*, 171.

<sup>126</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*

debates themselves were burdened with the political exigencies of the time period.

In the wake of World War II, many scientists attempted to distance themselves from the racial science of the Nazis by reclaiming the realm of science as value-free. According to many historians, while the Nazis supported “pseudo-science,” *good* science was not tainted by ideology. As the historian of science Robert Proctor has written,

Value-neutrality allowed one to argue that *genuine science* could not have been implicated in the crimes of the period, despite substantial evidence to the contrary. For anti-Nazi critics, by contrast, the tragedy of German science was in having allowed itself to become politicized; German scientists had failed to remain value-neutral, and it was this failure that was responsible for the excesses of the period.<sup>127</sup>

Similarly, many historians of Psychoanalysis such as Jones and Peter Gay have attempted to protect the scientific legacy of Freud’s work from his “other” enthusiasms and from the various claims that Psychoanalysis may be a “Jewish science.” Particularly problematic in this context, then, is Freud’s enthusiastic defense of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, for it seems “non-scientific” both because the theory is no longer scientifically accepted,<sup>128</sup> and because it seems at least in part motivated by Freud’s sense of his own Jewishness, if not also politics. During Freud’s lifetime, psychoanalysis was regarded as a “Jewish science” both because of anti-semitic accusations *and* because of Jewish ethnic pride. And in many ways, the situation has not changed: as Yerushalmi has noted, despite all attempts to the contrary, “history made psychoanalysis a ‘Jewish science.’”<sup>129</sup>

The question, then, is not whether Psychoanalysis should be considered a Jewish science. Within the fields of Science Studies and the History of Science, it has become de rigueur to note that there is no science without values and that “all science is social.”<sup>130</sup> Indeed. However, if we simply follow Foucault’s claims that all science is social, we risk overlooking the most important questions which attend all forms of knowledge, whether in the sciences or the humanities. The question is not whether Psychoanalysis is (or was) a Jewish science but

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 175, my italics.

<sup>128</sup> Nonetheless, Lamarckian notions of inheritance continue to rear their heads in the field of “epigenetics” for example. See footnote 3.

<sup>129</sup> Yerushalmi, *Freud’s Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable*, 98.

<sup>130</sup> Proctor, *Value-Free Science? Purity and Power in Modern Knowledge*, x–xi.

rather what social goals it served then, and what our engagement with it serves now. Indeed, what did Freud think he was doing in developing a “scientific” racial theory of Jewishness in the 1930s?

Even before Freud had published all of *Moses and Monotheism*, he was besieged by letters of protest, “calling him to account for the enormity he had committed.” As Peter Gay recounts, “anxious scholars visited him in London to talk him out of publishing the book.” Why, they wondered, had he published such a book “in a time of terrible travail, with the Nazi persecution of the Jews in Germany and Austria intensifying beyond the bounds of the most vicious czarist pogroms”?<sup>131</sup> Most of their protests were focused around Freud’s shocking reconstruction of the “real” history of Moses. According to Freud, Moses was an Egyptian who had imposed an abstract monotheism upon a “rowdy band of Semites.” Finding the religion too cumbersome, the Semites murdered Moses and repressed the memory. After many other narrative twists and turns, Freud explains that the Jews had inherited the memory of Mosaic monotheism. Well aware that readers might be troubled by his proposal that Moses was actually an Egyptian rather than a Hebrew, Freud notes in the opening sentence of the book, “To deprive a people of the man whom they take pride in as the greatest of their sons is not a thing to be gladly or carelessly undertaken, least of all by someone who is himself one of them.” However, as if totally disregarding his correspondents’ protestations, he continues: “But we cannot allow any such reflection to induce us to put the truth aside in favour of what *are supposed to be* national interests.”<sup>132</sup> Here Freud intimates that he actually *does* have “national interests” in mind; they are simply different from what others think they “are supposed to be.”

Perhaps because of Jan Assmann’s stunning book on the mnemo-history of *Moses the Egyptian*, or perhaps because of Edward Said’s passionate lecture about Freud’s identification with a non-European Moses, the proposal that Moses was an Egyptian no longer seems so shocking.<sup>133</sup> Instead, readers seem persistently troubled by Freud’s insistence on the idea that Jewishness is constituted by the biological inheritance of the memory of the murder of Moses. According to Freud, a person is Jewish *not* because he believes in a monotheistic god, keeps kosher, circumcises his sons, or any other number of supposedly

<sup>131</sup> Gay, *A Godless Jew: Freud, Atheism, and the Making of Psychoanalysis*, 149.

<sup>132</sup> Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 7.

<sup>133</sup> Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Edward Said, *Freud and the Non-European* (New York: Verso, in association with the Freud Museum, London, 2003).

singularly Jewish beliefs, practices or proclivities; a person is Jewish not because he has learned about Judaism from “direct communication” or from “the influence of education.” Rather, a person is Jewish simply because he inherits the “memory-traces of the experience of our ancestors.” This is shocking stuff, particularly at a time when we are supposed to have progressed beyond such essentialist definitions of individuals’ identities. Freud’s theory of Jewishness is a *racial* theory of cultural memory for it insists that culture derives from race (in the mythical sense of biological genealogy) rather than the other way around. It is only when a person has inherited Jewishness that his belief in a monotheistic God – or his circumcision of his sons, or his affection for Jewish authors and filmmakers, or his support of Israel – constitutes “Jewish culture.”<sup>134</sup> Otherwise, it is simply an affection for things that historically (but not exclusively) have been associated with people who have inherited Jewishness. As Walter Benn Michaels writes, “all accounts of cultural identity require a racial component... For insofar as our culture remains nothing more than what we do and believe, it is impotently descriptive.”<sup>135</sup>

While American ideals of freedom might suggest otherwise, cultural identity is not simply a set of activities and beliefs which is individually and voluntarily chosen like some brand of toothpaste at the Wal-Mart Superstore of Cultural Identity. Like race, cultural identity is often experienced as something from which one cannot escape, deriving from a number of clues which (creatively, problematically, imaginatively) refer to a person’s past or her genealogy. When such clues are unavailable or unclear, many people go searching for evidence through adoption agencies, genealogy-societies, and more recently, DNA-testing.<sup>136</sup> While DNA tests have revealed some surprising results, more often than not, people go searching for “proof” of what they already

<sup>134</sup> On this point, Michael Kramer has argued that all definitions of Jewish literature proceed from a racial definition of Jewishness; his essay in *Prooftexts* elicited a heated debate: Michael P. Kramer, “Race, Literary History, and the ‘Jewish Question.’” *Prooftexts* 21.3 (2001). I use the male pronoun here because I am generally speaking of Freud, and because circumcision of one’s sons is traditionally seen as a Jewish father’s responsibility.

<sup>135</sup> Walter Benn Michaels, “Race into Culture: A Critical Genealogy of Identity.” *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1992): 682.

<sup>136</sup> Henry Louis Gates has made such searches “respectable” in his PBS show and associated publications documenting his own and others’ searches for “real” ancestral histories.

suspect – that is, they go to specific DNA-testing services which have access to specific gene pool groups.<sup>137</sup> In addition to Benn Michaels' "epistemological truism that our account of the past may be partially determined by our own identity,"<sup>138</sup> the opposite is also true: our identities are determined by our (always selective) accounts and knowledge of our pasts.

In incorporating the idea of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, Freud developed a theory of Jewishness which accounts for both the seemingly universal compulsion to turn to our pasts to make sense of our presents and for the particularly Jewish notion that one's Jewish identity (or lack thereof) is genealogically transmitted. Whereas most forms of Christianity define Christians as individuals who believe in or relate to Jesus Christ as a savior, Judaism – that is, the normative texts and traditions of Judaism since at least the fourth century – generally defines a Jew as anyone born of a Jewish parent.<sup>139</sup> This "particular" Jewish notion emerged as a more universal concept of racialization in the nineteenth century, at least in part because of the increasing secularity of Western societies and because of the development of new scientific knowledge about heredity and evolution.<sup>140</sup>

As Freud developed theories to explain the origins of hysteria, neurosis, sexuality, culture and finally, the Jewish people, he explicitly engaged with ongoing debates regarding the nature of race, heredity and evolution. While these debates may appear strictly scientific, they were –

<sup>137</sup> See, for example, the *NY Times* article discussing various individuals' search for "ethnicities" which would not only give them a sense of their heritage, but also access to benefits for particular minorities, including affirmative action and Israeli citizenship. Amy Harmon, "Seeking Ancestry in DNA Ties Uncovered By Tests," *New York Times* April 12, 2006.

<sup>138</sup> Michaels, "Race into Culture: A Critical Genealogy of Identity," 682.

<sup>139</sup> While Rabbinic Judaism uses only matrilineage to determine a person's Jewishness, in both pre-Rabbinic Judaism and some forms of contemporary Reform Judaism, a person is defined as Jewish if either his father or his mother is Jewish. On the historical derivation of matrilineal and patrilineal definitions of Jewishness, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). While the possibility of conversion to Judaism might seem to disprove the purely genealogical injunction to "be" Jewish, in fact, the process of conversion emphasizes this logic: the "convert is adopted into the [Jewish] family and assigned a new 'genealogical' identity," by receiving a new Jewish name whose ending is "ben Avraham" or "bas Avraham" (son/daughter of Abraham). See Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 240–241.

<sup>140</sup> For a broader exploration of the idea that in the twentieth century, various Jewish particularities became universally embraced, see Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

and continue to be – shaped by the scientists’ values and ideals. This is not to suggest that a person’s ideals cannot be changed or shaped by scientific discoveries. However, the very nature of the questions we ask and the answers we seek are shaped by the ongoing debates in the societies in which we live.

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