

CULTURE AND COSMOS

A Journal of the History of Astrology and Cultural Astronomy

Vol. 20 no 1 Spring/Summer 1998

Published by Culture and Cosmos
And the Sophia Centre Press,
in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.
in association with the Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology
in Culture,
University of Wales Trinity Saint David,
Faculty of Humanities and the Performing Arts
Lampeter, Ceredigion, Wales, SA48 7ED, UK.

www.cultureandcosmos.org

Cite this paper as: McGillion, Frank, 'The Influence of Wilhelm Fliess' Cosmobiology on Sigmund Freud', *Culture and Cosmos*, Vol 2, no 1, Spring/Summer 1998, pp. 33-48.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue card for this book is available from the British Library

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ISSN 1368-6534

Printed in Great Britain by Lightning Source

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The Influence of Wilhelm Fliess' Cosmobiology on Sigmund Freud

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ABSTRACT: Sigmund Freud's psychology was influenced both by traditional Jewish mysticism and the cosmobiological theories developed by Wilhelm Fliess (1858-1928). Fliess argued that biological processes were partially regulated by 23-day and 28-day cycles, time of conception and birth, the solar year and the eccentricity of the Earth's orbit around the Sun. We can term these theories cosmobiological. Freud adopted these ideas although he was apparently hostile to the 'occult'. He investigated traditional astrology, represented by the casting of horoscopes, but concluded that its efficacy was due to telepathy.

Introduction

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo
(If I cannot bend heaven, then I will rouse hell).¹

Freud's quotation from Virgil in the preface to his seminal work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, makes a memorable impact, telling us something about his concerns, and of the determination with which he explored his own unconscious in an attempt to elucidate what hidden factors shaped the expression of the conscious mind. It hints too, perhaps, at aspects of his intellectual development that are not well known, including his early and long term interest in unorthodox views of an esoteric nature.

Freud was no stranger to scientific unorthodoxy. Until the end of his life he was an advocate of the view of evolution proposed by Jean Baptiste Lamarck, in which the major part is played by inheritance of acquired characteristics, rather than the random genetic mutations favoured by Neo-Darwinists. He believed that the Lamarckian view was a more apposite one for psycho-analytical theory, a view shared by his colleague, Sandor Ferenczi.² This was also a view both favoured and allegedly demonstrated experimentally by the biologist Paul Kammerer who was a young contemporary of Freud's in Vienna. Kammerer would

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almost certainly have been known to Freud by scientific reputation and possibly also through Freud's brief professional association with Gustav Mahler, whose wife was a very close colleague of Kammerer.³ Though a biologist by training, Kammerer had wide-ranging interests, one of which involved attempting to elucidate the nature of coincidence. He published a paper on this topic in 1919 in which he introduced a concept which he termed *seriality*.⁴ This was a direct precursor of Jung's very similar concept of synchronicity, the basis of his famous astrological experiment.⁵ Despite Kammerer's apparent brilliance in demonstrating the Lamarckian mechanism in the laboratory he was ultimately accused of scientific fraud and committed suicide in 1926.

Though his name appears to be conspicuously absent from Freud's major published works, Kammerer's suicide would most certainly have attracted his interest, again if only because of their common appreciation of Lamarck's evolutionary views. On this, as in other matters, Freud was highly exegetical: those of his followers who queried the credibility of Lamarck's unorthodox theories were told in no uncertain terms by Freud that 'Psycho-analysis cannot accommodate itself to the belief of biologists. We must go our own way'.⁶ As Paul Kammerer's work was the only available experimental work then apparently favouring the Lamarckian view it is possible that, like Jung, Freud borrowed heavily on ideas from the charismatic young biologist without due acknowledgment.

Frustrating as such heretical evolutionary views were to some of his devotees however, it was Freud's views and comments on numerology, astronomical cycles and the apparent periodicity of life which they found most controversial. These were developed by another charismatic young man, Freud's intimate friend, confidante and colleague Wilhelm Fliess.

Freud and Fliess

Freud originally valued many aspects of Fliess' work, describing him, according to Schur, his personal physician, as 'the Kepler of biology', while according to Jones, Freud viewed much of Fliess' work with 'breathless attention and critical admiration'.⁷ In 1895 Freud wrote to Fliess: 'First impression: amazement that there exists someone who is an even greater fantasist (i.e. visionary) than I am'. Two years later he praised one of Fliess' lectures in unambiguous terms: 'Cordial thanks for your lecture, it reveals an unbelievable power of condensing thoughts and in twenty minutes leads one through the universe'. In 1894 he had written to Fliess that 'Your praise is nectar and ambrosia to me'.⁸

However, Freud's early commentators and biographers systematically discredit his relationship with Fliess. They also attempt to totally distance Freud from many of Fliess' writings which they consider to be unworthy of the great man's interest and reputation. One considered Fliess merely an unbalanced Berlin physician who exerted 'a Svengali-like influence over Freud'.⁹ But while most of these commentators attack Fliess and his relationship with Freud with an unbridled ferocity,¹⁰ a more balanced view of their relationship is given by Erikson, who amusingly states that 'Some of us now read of Freud's affection for this man wishing we could emulate that biographer of Goethe who, in the face of Goethe's claim that he had once dearly loved a certain lady, remarked in a footnote "Here Goethe is mistaken"'.¹¹

In spite of his early admiration, Freud himself played his own part in undermining Fliess when, acting with an uncharacteristic cynicism, he ensured that certain ideas which they had to a great extent developed together, were plagiarised and irrevocably damaged before they could be published. That Fliess himself was personally damaged by this behaviour appears not to have merited commensurate remorse or comment from either Freud or his followers.

Freud had met the young Otto Weininger, who was an intimate friend of Freud's patient, Dr. Herman Swoboda. Weininger was the author of an overtly anti-Semitic and misogynist text entitled *Geschlecht und Charakter* (Sex and Character), which was published in 1903.¹² Freud discussed the issue of bisexuality with both Weininger and Swoboda and it seems certain from the published correspondence that Freud, either directly or indirectly, passed the major intellectual content of Fliess' work on bisexuality over to Weininger.¹³ Thus, by the time that Fliess' work discussing this topic, *Der Ablauf des Lebens*, was published in 1906,¹⁴ his radical views concerning the nature of bisexuality had already been diminished by association with Weininger's other ideas. This unsavoury episode occurred despite the fact that Freud had actively encouraged Fliess to develop these ideas, just as Fliess had in turn helped Freud develop some of the basic principles of psycho-analytical technique and theory.¹⁵ Indeed it was the very fact that Fliess *had* developed such ideas on the nature of bisexuality that stimulated the dispute between the two men when Freud, without justification, attempted to claim the credit for these.¹⁶ Twice before in his life, Freud had made major scientific discoveries, in the fields of cytology and pharmacology, which had ultimately led to other scientists attaining a

scientific eminence which could have so easily have been his.¹⁷ We must assume, therefore, that he had no intention of making such a costly mistake a third time with his researches into the dynamics of the psyche.

Freud's actions in enabling Weininger to plagiarize the work of Fliess' work who, like Freud, was Jewish are all the more remarkable because he knew first-hand just how problematical it could be to be Jewish in central Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁸ That he could countenance leaking Fliess' ideas to an anti-Semite like Weininger, therefore, almost beggars belief. That he did so and then lied to Fliess about it, suggesting that Weininger had burgled his study using a spare key, says much, therefore, about the intensity and nature of his motives, chiefly, perhaps, his desire to separate his work from any association with what could be considered to be occultism.

Freud's policy in this respect became clear in 1910 when he made a request to his protégé Jung, that together they should form a 'bulwark...against the black tide of mud...of occultism',¹⁹ a statement which alarmed Jung as he considered it to have less to do with scientific judgement than with a personal power drive. According to Jung, by occultism Freud included 'virtually everything that philosophy and religion, including the rising contemporary science of parapsychology, had learned about the psyche'.²⁰

Fliess' Cosmobiology

Fliess' writings can be divided into three distinct bodies of work. The first concerns his conventional pursuits as a physician and as an ear, nose and throat specialist. The second relates to his ideas concerning what he and Freud termed the nasal reflex neurosis.²¹ The third, with which we concern ourselves here, covers his theories concerning periodicities in life and their association with astronomical phenomena as detailed in *Der Ablauf Des Lebens*, which may be translated as *The Rhythm of Life*.²²

Perhaps not surprisingly it is in his writings on cosmic periods as they allegedly pertain to life's processes and to astronomical phenomena that we find Fliess at his most enigmatic and his critics at their most voluble. In his introduction to *Der Ablauf Des Lebens*, Fliess addresses the question of the nature of the laws which he believes govern the flow of life.²¹ He suggests that while these laws appear to be irregular and random, by consideration of the processes of birth and menstruation we discover that they are neither. According to Fliess there are cycles which occur in all animal and plant life, and which follow fixed periods of

twenty three and twenty eight days. He suggests that these cycles are related to the production of what he terms a male substance and a female substance.

In the first part of the book Fliess suggests that these periods govern human activities and transitions including physical, mental, spiritual and even aesthetic events. They are considered to be universal and are said to influence all life on Earth, plants as well as animals. He states that these cycles are related both to the time of the conception of the individual and to the time of their birth. He also claims that corresponding cycles can be found within blood-relations which dictate the times of such matters as illness and death within families. Such cycles, he stresses, are also found outside the family; and it is in this context that he specifically cites the example of the death of Freud's father in relation to that of Bismarck which we refer to below. Fliess also acknowledges that connections can be found between generations of a family which are independent of the twenty-three and twenty-eight day cycles and which are therefore dependent on some other unstated common cause.

In the second part of the book Fliess describes his Theory of Sexual Distribution, developing his theories of bisexuality and elaborating on the basis of the solar year's function as a biologically effective astronomical unit, something which is true also, he says, with respect to the half-year. By bi-sexuality he meant not sexual disposition, but division of life into two genders. Through investigation of birth statistics we are led into a discussion on still births, the sex of still-born children, the sex of plants and the incidence of twins and identical twins. We are then told that all living things are a combination of the masculine and the feminine and that the relative balance or imbalance of either of the male or female substances is pertinent to such issues as hermaphroditism, bisexuality, parthenogenesis and left-handedness. The latter, which was also much discussed by Freud, was considered to be due to dominance of secondary sexual characteristics. Thus an excess of the male 23-day substance on women or of the female 28-day substance in men apparently led to left-handedness and hernias. Fliess also alleges that artists are closer to their opposite sex.

Fliess points out that in male hermaphrodites there is a better physical development on the right side and that men show more sexual development on the right and women on the left. He also cites evidence for his theories from genital bleeding in neonates of both genders and

from the phenomenon of vicarious tissue secretion known as witches' milk, to support his case.

Fliess attributed the interrelation between 23 and 28 days in the year, the origins of sudden changes in living organisms and their fundamental bisexuality, to the eccentricity of the Earth's orbit around the Sun. He argues that as human sexual make-up is determined by the two major seasons, one associated with male, the other with female, and that as the eccentricity of the Earth's orbit around the Sun is responsible for the two genders, then if we were equally influenced by both halves of the year we would be truly bi-sexual or androgynous. In particular he attributes these effects to the seasonal factors associated with the Earth's distance from the Sun, varying between its furthest point, its aphelion, around 21 December, and its closest approach, its perihelion, around 21 June. He considers the 'the fact that the Sun is not at the centre but at one of the focuses of the elliptical movement of the Earth the fundamental cause of the bi-sexuality of life'. He also wrote that 'Our life is by necessity bound to the Earth', that life and men and women are attuned to the two main seasons and that 'the year and the seasons of summer and winter are reflected in life's events'. He argues that over millennia the Earth has moved closer to the Sun, making the solar year shorter now than it once was and the days longer. He also points out that three-year periods are also important in this respect as they contain three aphelia and three perihelia.

Fliess was fully aware of the radical nature of his theories, acknowledging that people might label him a mystic but pointing out that further research could be undertaken to confirm his statements or otherwise, particularly on the connection between the numbers 23 and 28 and the aphelion and perihelion of the Earth's orbit.

Although Fliess' claims are still generally dismissed as, for example, a 'farrago of nonsense',²³ they did anticipate subsequent developments in biology. That many of them appeared to make no scientific sense in their time was simply due to the lack of a credible scientific mechanism to explain them and this was no fault of Fliess. It was only in the early 1950s that science caught up with him when others demonstrated that there was indeed a physical link between cosmological and biological phenomena of a type Fliess had postulated over fifty years previously.²⁴ His male and female substance would now be associated with known sex hormones. His 28-day period would equate with known hormonal changes occurring during the menstrual cycle, and his 23-day period may

be similarly accounted for. The connections between members of a family which he suggested existed, would now tend to be described in terms of genetic predisposition. This is consistent with Fliess' view that at least some of these observations were independent of his twenty-three and twenty-eight day periods. In viewing the solar year as a biological unit and in attributing biological significance to the eccentric orbit of the Earth and the seasons, Fliess was at his most ingenious and he was also perfectly correct.

We have now firmly established that there are highly significant biological effects of variable sunlight and of variable seasonal day-night length, on light-sensitive enzymes of many species including humans. Accordingly we do see predictable periodic changes in such diverse phenomena as sexual maturation, reproductive cycles, behavioural parameters, incidence of birth and mood states, just as Fliess implied.²⁵ Further, these biological phenomena are now quite correctly described in terms of the astronomical phenomena which elicit them, phenomena which are in turn related to the eccentric orbit of the Earth, again just as Fliess suggested.²⁶ We can safely conclude, therefore, that although many of Fliess' ideas may have been seriously flawed for a number of reasons, others were inspired and many years ahead of their time. Cosmobiology is now a well established sub-discipline within contemporary biology and it is fair to say that it was due to original and innovative thinkers such as Wilhelm Fliess that it has become so. While some of the ideas attributable to Fliess have found their way into pseudo-scientific areas such as bio-rhythms,²⁷ many of them, when refined, would grace the pages of respectable cosmobiological journals. Indeed they do so today in modified form under the names of a diversity of authors, occasionally with credit given to Fliess. This, however, is too late for Fliess, whose observations were long ago assigned to the realm of the mystical.

Freud and Numerology

In spite of his denunciation of the occult, Freud had been immersed for many years in the study of the arcane and the esoteric. It has been argued, notably by David Bakan, that without such exposure psycho-analysis as we know it might never even have been developed, and that it represented a secularisation of Jewish mysticism.²⁸ According to Freud's personal physician, Max Schur, his interest in the esoteric in general and in numerology in particular almost certainly extended back to his childhood where he would have been exposed to the Judaic esoteric

tradition. As Schur writes, 'Some common superstitions in this cultural environment were linked to the Bible or to the use of the Hebrew Alphabet as both an orthographic and numerical system'.²⁹

Bakan recounts how a scholar named Chaim Bloch undertook to translate a work on Kabbala which so distressed him that he decided to complete it only after he had a dream which encouraged him to do so. Bloch apparently approached Freud for both moral and material support for his project which the latter, reportedly very excited by Bloch's translation, offered to give him until they had a disagreement about Freud's work *Moses and Monotheism*. Freud is then said to have stormed out of the study leaving Bloch alone. When the latter looked around the study he noted that it contained a large number of books on Kabbala in German and a copy of the *Zohar* in French.

The influence of Kabbala may be evident in Freud's numerology. At the age of seventeen, for example, he wrote to a friend that 'I have noted that everything that happens in the real world has its equal, that is its equivalence, in the world of numbers'.³⁰ There is no doubt therefore that Freud's interest in the esoteric nature of numbers, and in what was termed numerological determinism, pre-dated his meeting with Fliess.

It is probably true, though, that Fliess' original theories on numbers rekindled Freud's former interest. While it is likely that Fliess was also exposed to mystical aspects of Judaism in his childhood and youth, and that this may have predisposed him towards these views, it does not in itself sufficiently account for them. So Fliess' ideas in this respect probably appealed to Freud for two reasons: his former interest in such matters, and the novelty of Fliess' approach. This interest in numerology remained with Freud for the rest of his life as his published correspondence with Fliess and other published sources clearly demonstrate. He assumed that Fliess' biological cycles had a psychological equivalent, writing to Fliess that 'You have taught me to recognise the latter (sexual development), as special multiples of the 28-day female period...This would mean that psychic development occurs according to 23-day periods'.³¹ His belief in Fliess' cycles accounts for one event which apparently greatly influenced Freud's view of the potential validity of numerological determinism. This event concerned the date of the death of his father.

Freud's father was born on the same day as Bismarck, 1 April 1815. He died on 24 October 1896 thus pre-deceasing the great German Chancellor by 644 days, which is the exact multiple of 23 and 28.³²

According to Schur, it was partly through entertaining such simplistic and naive observations, that Freud came to believe in the possibility that he might die at the age of fifty-one.³³ Schur also passed comment on an observation made by the psychologist George Groddeck, that the 2,467 errors Freud claimed to have made in preparing *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* had a numerological significance with respect to Freud's deteriorating health.³⁴ The paragraph referring to this was removed from editions of the book published after 1907, the year in which Freud became fifty one years old.³⁵

Despite the failure of this prediction, Freud persisted with these ideas, and in 1909 he was writing to Jung implying that he might now die at the age of 61 or 62. He wrote to Jung that 'Some years ago I discovered within me the conviction that I would die between the ages of 61 and 62... Then I went to Greece...and it was really uncanny how often the number 61 or 60 in connection with 1 or 2 kept cropping up...' He also comments here that a new telephone number, 14362, which he obtained in 1899, made him wonder if he would die aged 62: 'in 1899 I was 43 years old. Thus it was plausible to suppose that the other figures signified the end of my life, hence 61 or 62'.³⁶ There is no doubt that Freud's interest in numerology was persistent. He was still citing Fliess' work in this respect as late as 1920,³⁷ and probably had some residual belief in numerology until the day he died. During his final illness he elected to die by receiving a small but fatal dose of morphine from Schur, who reported that 'He died just before midnight the next day, 23rd September 1939'.³⁸ By design or coincidence this just happened to be the anniversary of the suicide of Paul Kammerer and a few minutes before the seemingly fateful 24th, the anniversary of both his father's death and Fliess' birth.

Numerology was not the only area of the esoteric which interested Freud. His colleagues Ferenczi and Jung were interested in the occult and, quite probably unaware of the degree of his earlier exposure to it, they had encouraged him to explore the general area. This he duly did despite his noted protestations to Jung. He was a Corresponding Member of the Society of Psychical Research from 1911 until his death in 1939,³⁹ and he published a number of academic works in this general area, such as *Psychoanalysis and Telepathy*. It was in his studies into Kabbala, however, that Freud may well have found what he considered to be support for both his own and Fliess' radical theories. There appear to be no wholly definitive sources on Fliess' exposure to esoteric Judaism

though he uses concepts in his theories such as bisexuality, numerology and the doctrine of predestination of the time of death, in a manner consistent with this tradition.

Freud the 'Astrologer'

As we have seen, Fliess placed great emphasis on cosmological factors in the theories he developed with Freud's encouragement and approval, though he had no physical mechanism to explain such correlations. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, in the absence of credible mechanisms to account for these, that at one point in his ruminations on these matters Freud commented that 'one can no longer escape from acknowledging heavenly influences. I bow before you an honorary astrologer'.⁴⁰ On 9 October 1896 Freud wrote the following, which is obviously completely derived from Fliess: 'All the phenomena of life exhibited by organisms - and also no doubt their death - are linked with the completion of fixed periods, which express the dependence of two kinds of living substance, one male the other female, upon the solar year'.⁴¹

However, Freud and Fliess were not really studying astrology but what today we would describe as cosmobiology, a term not in vogue in the early 1900s. Freud's reference to himself as 'an honorary astrologer' strongly suggests that he had no more precise name for this sort of study. He certainly knew that it wasn't formal astrology as he, and presumably Fliess, were familiar with astrological terminology as exemplified by Freud's letter to Fliess of November 14 1897 where, apparently in jest, he begins 'It was on November 12th 1897, the Sun was precisely in the Eastern Quarter, Mercury and Venus were in conjunction'.⁴² Freud was not actually using an ephemeris as the planetary aspects do not conform to the day in question. In fact Venus was at 27⁰ Libra and Mercury at 23⁰ Scorpio, and hence not in conjunction. Mercury was in an exact conjunction with Mars, also at 23⁰ Scorpio. Freud's comment was thus merely an illustration of his point that 'No, birth announcements no longer start like that'. However, the quote illustrates that Freud could use the terminology without apparent effort, so was familiar with it. Much of his esoteric knowledge, of course, became known only a great deal later despite Jung and Ferenczi's interest in the occult and Freud's often dismissive attitude to them.

Though perhaps not quite appreciating the true significance of what calling himself an astrologer suggested in terms of the formal causality of the phenomena he and Fliess were considering, Freud did acknowledge

later in his life that apparent prophecy was possible through the use of astrology. This, however, he attributed to a form of what he termed thought transference.

The circumstances under which Freud came to this conclusion are clearly delineated in his paper *Psycho-analysis and Telepathy* in which he systematically and logically analyses an encounter between one of his analysands and a fortune-teller who had cast a horoscope for him.⁴³ It was quite clear to Freud that the fortune-teller had access in some way to information possessed only by her client and he suggested, therefore, that the transfer of this information occurred while the fortune-teller was occupying her mind with her astrological computations, thus enabling her to be receptive to her client's thoughts. Like later work carried out by Jung in his experiment on synchronicity, Freud suggested that it was emotionally charged information which was most likely to pass between people in this manner.⁴⁴ In the context of this particular case the information apparently passed concerned the analysand's hatred for his brother-in-law. Freud considered the content of the prophecy to be congruent with a suppressed wish-fulfillment.

It is interesting to note that Freud was extremely uncomfortable in dealing with this situation. He wrote that 'I myself was so much struck - to tell the truth, so disagreeably affected - that I omitted to make any analytic use of his tale'.⁴⁵

Conclusion

Taking all of the above into consideration, we can safely conclude that Sigmund Freud had been exposed to Judaic esoteric knowledge to a much greater extent than is commonly recorded, by at least some of his major biographers. By not paying due attention to this fact it is felt that some historians of Freud in particular and of the psycho-analytical movement in general are in part omitting from their commentaries a possible major influence on their subject-matter. It is reasonable to assert that the influence of this tradition both on Freud and on his theories may well have been considerable and a great deal more important than it is commonly thought to be. This may be true both in terms of Freud's own intellectual development and in the development of that body of work we know of collectively as psycho-analysis.

Freud's interest in what he considered to be astrology, in particular, was of great significance to his work. Without his involvement in the general area of suspected astronomical influences on the development of

life, it is unlikely that the ideas on the nature of bisexuality which are commonly attributed to him would ever have been formulated in the form we have them. Freud, however, was not solely responsible for these ideas as he and his later collaborators would have us believe. His friend and colleague Wilhelm Fliess was the innovatory thinker in this respect, a man willing to pursue ideas he knew would be unpopular with his contemporaries, but who nevertheless persisted in doing so. Accordingly, despite some undoubted excesses of imagination in a number of his writings, Fliess produced ideas of major importance both to the theories of Freud and to the modern medico-scientific discipline of cosmobiology.

References

Note: the Standard English Edition of Freud's works used is referred to as the Standard edition.

1. The quotation is from Virgil's *Aeneid* and was used by Juno, who summoned the Fury Allecto from hell after Jupiter had refused her demands. See also *H. F. Ellenberger, The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*, London, 1994, p 452.
2. E Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, Harmondsworth, 1964, p 442.
3. A Koestler, *The Case of the Midwife Toad*, London, 1975, p 9.
4. P Kammerer, *Das Gesetz der Serie*, Stuttgart 1919b-2. Aufl. 1921.
5. F.B. McGillion & P De Vries-Ek, 'A Further Look at Jung's Astrological Experiment', *Jaarboek van de Interdisciplinaire Vereniging voor Analytische Psychologie*, Amsterdam, 1997, p 77-93; Pety de Vries-Ek, Frank McGillion, 'A Further Look at Jung's Astrological Experiment in the Context of his Theory of Synchronicity', *Correlation* Vol. 14, No 1 Northern Summer 1995.
6. R.W. Clark, *Freud, The Man and The Cause*, Glasgow, 1987, p 382. Lamarckianism's quasi-mystical nature is commented on by a number of contemporary biologists e.g. R Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*, London, 1989, p 289-290.
7. M Schur, *Freud: Living and Dying*, New York, 1972, p151, Jones, *Freud*, p 257.

8. Freud to Fliess, October 31 1895, J M Masson, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess 1887-1904*, London, 1985, p 147; Freud to Fliess, March 29 1897, J.M. Masson, *Letters*, p 233. Freud to Fliess July 14 1894, Masson, *Letters*, p 87.
9. Clark, *Freud*, p 93.
10. Jones, *Freud*, pp. 253, 264.
11. E.H. Erikson, *Insight & Responsibility*, New York, 1964, p 34.
12. O Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, English translation of 6th German edtn., London and New York, 1906; Masson, *Letters*, p 463 et.seq.; 15. Jones, *Freud*, p 272.
13. Masson, *Letters*, pp 463-468.
14. W Fliess, *Ablauf des Lebens, Der Grundlegung zur exakten Biologie*, Leipzig and Vienna, 1906; 2nd ed., 1923.
15. According to some commentators, Fliess was sometimes ahead of Freud in the deciphering of the unconscious: 'He appeared...as an extraordinary mind, to be almost, perhaps even really a genius', K.R. Eissler, *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Association*, 22, 1972, p 114.
16. In 1906 Fliess published a short work, *In Eigener Sache*, discussing this issue. See Jones, *Freud*, p 272.
17. Clark, *Freud*, pp 56, 61.
18. Freud had lost a job at the Brücke Institute almost certainly in part because he was Jewish (Schur, *Freud*, p 28), he had indirect links with the Zionist Hans Herzl, like Fliess he had carefully followed the Dreyfus affair and had celebrated its outcome; and he had first presented his ground-breaking work on dream analysis to Bnai Brith, the Viennese Jewish society (Clark, *Freud*, pp 182-183, pp 196).
19. C.G.Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, London, 1963, p 173.
20. Jung, *Memories*, p 173.
21. The first two bodies of work referred to are of no major concern to us here and need be commented on only briefly. In his conventional work Fliess was a

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respected physician and researcher and he published a great deal of merit in his chosen areas of expertise which extended beyond the field of otolaryngology in which he specialised. His work with Freud on an apparent clinical entity which they termed the nasal reflex neurosis seems ill-advised. Indeed this work almost brought them both to professional disaster when a patient diagnosed as having this disorder almost died. See L Appignanesi & J Forrester, *Freud's Women*, London, 1993, pp 119-120. It must be said in the context of this paper, however, that even this elusive clinical entity, which was much criticised by detractors of Fliess, appears to have at least some medical credibility when viewed from a more contemporary medico-scientific perspective. See H Holmes, *The Nose: An Experimental Study of Reactions within the Nose in Human Subjects During Varying Life Experiences*, Illinois, 1950; F.B. McGillion, 'The Placebo and its Role in Clinical Pharmacology', *Meth. and Find. Exptl. Clin Pharmacol* 1, 2: 115-120, 1979, demonstrates just how potent a placebo effect emanating from the physician can be, something well recognised in Fliess' time too but rarely well controlled for.

22. This account of Fliess' work is taken from a comprehensive summary made in English by the author from: *Der Ablauf Des Lebens*, Wilhelm Fliess, 2nd Edition Leipzig, 1923, Franz Deuticke. Specific page numbers in the German have not been allocated to specific comments and the interested reader is referred to the original text.

23. Clark, *Freud*, p 96.

24. See, for example, J.I. Kitay and M.D. Altschule, *The Pineal Gland*, Cambridge, Mass, 1954; M.D. Altschule, ed., *Frontiers of Pineal Physiology*, Cambridge, Mass and London, 1975. This is an appraisal of pineal research developments including many which are in accord with Fliess' theories.

25. R. J. Reiter et seq. in Altschule, (ed.), *Frontiers of Pineal Physiology*, p 54; V. M. Fiske, *ibid.*, p 5; P.H. Sampson, *ibid.*, p 204; R.J. Reiter et al, *ibid.*, p 75; L.B. Bigelow, *ibid.*, p 225.

26. B.E. Thalen et al, 'Seasonal and Non-Seasonal Depression - A Comparison of Clinical Characteristics in Swedish Patients', *Eur.Arch.Psychiatry.Clin.Neurosci.* 1995: 254, 2: 101-8; R.M. Gallagher et al, Myofascial Face Pain: Seasonal Variability in Pain Intensity and Demoralization, *Pain* 1995, 61, 1, 113-20.

27. B Gittelson, *Biorhythm 1991-92-93 A Personal Science*, London, 1990, p 42.

28. D Bakan, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition*, Boston, 1958.

29. Schur, *Freud*, p 25.
30. Eissler, *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Association* 22, 1972, p 120.
31. Freud to Fliess, 6 December 1896, Masson, *Letters*, p 210. See also *The Origins of Psychoanalysis: Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts and Notes*. Eds.M.Bonaparte, A Freud & E Kris, London, 1954; Schur, *Freud*, p 227, 236-7.
32. There is some disagreement as to the exact date of Freud's father's death. On October 26 1896 Freud wrote to Fliess that his father 'died during the night of October 23rd'. On August 1st 1898 he wrote to Fliess 'so he died after what is probably a typical long life, on October 23/24 1896', Masson, *Letters*, pp. 201 & 322. From these and other sources it seems certain that Freud's father died in the early morning of October 24th 1896. According to Freud his father's date of birth is more debatable but is generally taken to be the same as Bismarck's , Masson, *Letters*, p 322.
- 33 M Schur, *Freud*, p 227. In early editions of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, Chapter 12, Freud himself commented on this. Even recent editions in the chapter titled 'Determinism, Belief in Chance and Superstition: Some Points of View' give an explicit account of Freud's numerological ideas and pursuits. See Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, Volume 5, The Pelican Freud Library, 1987, pp. 300-344.
34. Schur, *Freud*, p 312.
35. Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, 1st ed. 1901 German, 1st English translation 1914. Standard edition 6:1-279.
36. Freud letter to Jung, 139F, 6 April 1909, in S Freud and C.G. Jung, in *The Freud/Jung Letters*, Ed William McGuire, Penguin Books, London, 1991 p 145.
37. Clark, *Freud*, p 96.
38. Jones, *Freud*, p 657.
- 39 R.A. McConnell (Ed.), *Encounters with Parapsychology*, University of Pittsburgh, 1981, p 224
40. Schur, *Freud*, p 321.
41. Masson, *Letters*, p 200

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42. Masson, *Letters*, p 278.

43. S Freud, 'Psychoanalysis and Telepathy', 1921, in James Strachey (trans.) *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. XVIII, London, 1955, pp. 177-194.

44. As Freud said of the information which passed '...it was an extremely strong wish...' *ibid.*, p 185. Compare this with Jung's view on synchronous events (see note 5).

45. Freud, 'Psychoanalysis', p 183.