



# **Labyrinths: Emma Jung, Her Marriage to Carl, and the Early Years of Psychoanalysis**

*Catrine Clay*

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## **Labyrinths: Emma Jung, Her Marriage to Carl, and the Early Years of Psychoanalysis** Catrine Clay

A sensational, eye-opening account of Emma Jung's complex marriage to Carl Gustav Jung and the hitherto unknown role she played in the early years of the psychoanalytic movement.

Clever and ambitious, Emma Jung yearned to study the natural sciences at the University of Zurich. But the strict rules of proper Swiss society at the beginning of the twentieth century dictated that a woman of Emma's stature—one of the richest heiresses in Switzerland—travel to Paris to "finish" her education, to prepare for marriage to a suitable man.

Engaged to the son of one of her father's wealthy business colleagues, Emma's conventional and predictable life was upended when she met Carl Jung. The son of a penniless pastor working as an assistant physician in an insane asylum, Jung dazzled Emma with his intelligence, confidence, and good looks. More important, he offered her freedom from the confines of a traditional haute-bourgeois life. But Emma did not know that Jung's charisma masked a dark interior—fostered by a strange, isolated childhood and the sexual abuse he'd suffered as a boy—as well as a compulsive philandering that would threaten their marriage.

Using letters, family interviews, and rich, never-before-published archival material, Catrine Clay illuminates the Jungs' unorthodox marriage and explores how it shaped—and was shaped by—the scandalous new movement of psychoanalysis. Most important, Clay reveals how Carl Jung could never have achieved what he did without Emma supporting him through his private torments. The Emma that emerges in the pages of *Labyrinths* is a strong, brilliant woman, who, with her husband's encouragement, becomes a successful analyst in her own right.

## **Labyrinths: Emma Jung, Her Marriage to Carl, and the Early Years of Psychoanalysis** Details

Date : Published November 8th 2016 by Harper

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Author : Catrine Clay

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## From Reader Review Labyrinths: Emma Jung, Her Marriage to Carl, and the Early Years of Psychoanalysis for online ebook

### Bettie? says

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b082x79j>

Description: *The story of Emma Jung, her marriage to Carl and the early years of psychoanalysis. Emma Jung was clever, ambitious and immensely wealthy, one of the richest heiresses in Switzerland, when she met and fell in love with Carl Jung, a handsome but penniless medical student. She was only 17, too young to understand Carl's complex personality or conceive of the dramas that lay ahead.*

*It was a highly unconventional marriage with many labyrinthine twists and turns. Emma was forced to fight with everything she had in order to come to terms with Carl's brilliant but complicated character and to keep her husband close to her. His belief in polygamy led to many extra-marital involvements with women he met when they became his patients. A ménage à trois with a former patient, Toni Wolff lasted some thirty years. But the marriage endured and Emma realised her ambition to become a noted analyst in her own right.*

See also 'A Dangerous Method' (2011) from a play by Christopher Hampton

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### Owlseyes says

Labyrinths: Emma Jung, Her Marriage to Carl and the Early Years of Psychoanalysis by Catrine Clay – review

in: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011>...

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### Holly says

I like Jennifer Senior's take (from the NYT):

“Labyrinths” was well received when published in England this summer. Yet throughout the first half of the book, no matter how much I squinted, I could not discern why. The subject is rich, definitely, and Jungian analysis has a groovy, woo-woo sort of appeal. But Ms. Clay’s sourcing is thin. She devotes pages of filler to the glorious architecture of Middle Europe — sounding uncomfortably close to the sales pitch for a Viking River Cruise — and to the menu at the Jungs’ wedding, and to the wares of the Bahnhofstrasse, and to the costume of the day. ... It all seems a clumsy attempt at trompe l’oeil, to give the illusion of depth. // My l’oeil wasn’t tromped.

Hehe! I agree. Not all is executed well in this book but it was still interesting and reminded me of just how new and strange the ideas of early Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis were to the European world. In the end I was glad that I persevered through the elaborate scene-setting and silliness. There are repetitions and

redundancies, and the structure could have been tighter, but by the end the cumulative effect was a vivid picture of the fascinating Emma Jung's excellent mind and generosity of spirit (and Carl Jung's uh ... complicated personality and adherence to non-monogamy).

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### **?????? ?????? says**

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### **Deborah says**

It was a slower read than I had anticipated.

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### **Lizzi says**

Loved this! A really wonderful story full of amazing people - and I was very pleased to learn about Emma Jung. What a brilliant woman. Blog post coming soon...

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### **M. Jane Colette says**

More about Carl and Sigmund than Emma. But an interesting lens at times.

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### **Stephen Hope-Hall says**

There have been numerous biographies of Carl Jung. The only one I had previously read was his autobiography, so I found Labyrinths to be particularly useful in filling in the gaps in my knowledge of the subject.

I was disappointed that I didn't gain enough of an insight into Emma Jung's life. There didn't seem to be a lot of detailed information about her. I think that this shows how considerably she was overshadowed by her husband, and also points out the minimal role of women in most professions in those days.

Still it is fascinating theme and I found the read most enjoyable. I will now seek out Emma Jung's two published works - one about the Holy Grail, the other about the animus.

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### **Boriana Ovcharova says**

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**Laura says**

*From BBC Radio 4 - Book of the week:*

*The story of Emma Jung, her marriage to Carl and the early years of psychoanalysis.*

*Emma Jung was clever, ambitious and immensely wealthy, one of the richest heiresses in Switzerland, when she met and fell in love with Carl Jung, a handsome but penniless medical student. She was only 17, too young to understand Carl's complex personality or conceive of the dramas that lay ahead.*

*It was a highly unconventional marriage with many labyrinthine twists and turns. Emma was forced to fight with everything she had in order to come to terms with Carl's brilliant but complicated character and to keep her husband close to her. His belief in polygamy led to many extra-marital involvements with women he met when they became his patients. A ménage a trois with a former patient, Toni Wolff lasted some thirty years. But the marriage endured and Emma realised her ambition to become a noted analyst in her own right.*

*In the first episode, Carl meets Emma and breaks down her resistance to marriage - a seduction by intellect.*

*Readers: Deborah Findlay and Henry Goodman*

*Written by Catrine Clay*

*Abridged and produced by Elizabeth Burke*

*A Loftus production for BBC Radio 4.*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b082x79j>

**Louise says**

Emma Rauschenbach Jung was one of the wealthiest women in Switzerland and Carl Jung was among the poorest men. After her marriage at a young age, Emma provided Carl with an elegant lifestyle and became his colleague. She performed analysis, wrote papers and was President of the Psychological Society (which sounds like a resort where papers were presented and ideas shared) in Zurich. What could have been dynamic picture book marriage was marred by Carl's "rages" and infidelities.

The author begins with a compelling scene where the Jung's visit the Freud's for a family dinner. After this, the narrative goes back to Emma's and Carl's childhoods and the timeline stays linear. The interesting prose that describes the dinner with the Freud's does not recur.

You learn of Emma's family's decision that she not be educated, her interest in the legend of the Holy Grail,

her "wedding", her early married life at the Burgholzli asylum, how she and Carl designed and built their state-of-the-art home (flush toilets and electricity), had 5 children, enjoyed family life while coping with Carl's "rages", tolerated of Jung's female "guests", and how she became an analyst, wrote papers, gave lectures and traveled.

There is a good description of daily life in Switzerland during WWI.

The author presents a lot of information, but it seemed more like a series of events than a portrait. In the end, I didn't feel that I knew either Emma or her "labyrinth".

If you are interested in Emma and/or Carl Jung you will want to read this book for its informational content.

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### **Vesela Proshkova says**

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### **Sarah Beth says**

I received an uncorrected proof copy of this book from HarperCollins.

Born in 1882, Emma Rauschenbach was "one of the richest heiresses in Switzerland" (3). Clever and ambitious, Emma always wanted to study the natural sciences at the University of Zurich, but was discouraged because of her family's desire for her to follow the dictates of Swiss society that decreed that she must prepare for marriage. However, her mother did encourage Emma to marry Carl Jung, "the son of a poor pastor of the Swiss Protestant Reformed Church" (3). Carl was just embarking on a career as a doctor for the insane, which was regarded as the lowest rung in the medical profession. It was an odd choice for a wealthy young woman, but Emma was intrigued by her husband's profession and from very early in their marriage assisted him closely with his professional work.

More than a biography of Emma Jung, this is truly a portrait of a marriage, one that was complex and full of both hardships and love. Carl seems to have been a difficult husband. Clay describes him as having a split personality that Carl himself referred to as "Personality No 1" and "Personality No 2;" the two differed in nearly every way: "sure and unsure, optimistic and pessimistic, introverted and extroverted, sensitive and insensitive, brilliant yet obtuse, genial yet given to violent rages, cold under warm, dark under light - always split, and that split always hidden. Secret" (26-27). The vastly variable versions of her husband made their home life difficult throughout their over fifty years of marriage. Emma too struggled, primarily with the

strictures placed on a wife and mother, as their eventual five children together kept her largely at home while her husband was still free to pursue his intellectual pursuits. Another major point of contention in the marriage was Carl's insistence on the need for their marriage to be "polygamous" or an open marriage, in which he brazenly flaunted his infatuations (often with patients) and mistresses in front of his faithful wife.

Throughout all of their struggles, the internationally renowned work in psychoanalysis made famous by Jung would likely not have happened without Emma's quiet presence in the background. "Without Emma keeping the steady rhythm of family life going he might have cracked" (214). Emma was also a huge support to her husband professionally, helping him keep up with patients, correspondence, and paperwork during his many travels. In nearly every way, theirs was a "joint career" (320).

After fifty-three years of marriage, Emma died of cancer in 1955, survived by her husband, five children, and nineteen grandchildren. Disappointingly, after a biography that was intimately intertwined with the life of her husband, the author failed to include any insight into Carl's remaining days after his wife's death. This biography was an interesting inside look into the woman who is much lesser known to history but deserves just as much renown as her husband. I found Emma's choice to defy social convention and marry a man with no social standing or personal wealth inspiring and an indication of her affection for Carl but also her deep interest in intellectual pursuits, which she knew would be fueled by Carl. By the many sources referenced in this book, Emma appears to have been a thoughtful, down to earth, clever woman that fulfilled her familial expectations while also still managing to carve out some time for her own interests and academic pursuits.

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### **Chad Bunch says**

Interesting, but dull. I listened to the audio-version and I often found my mind wondering while listening.

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### **Wanda says**

3 JAN 2017 - a recommendation through Bettie. Many Thanks!

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