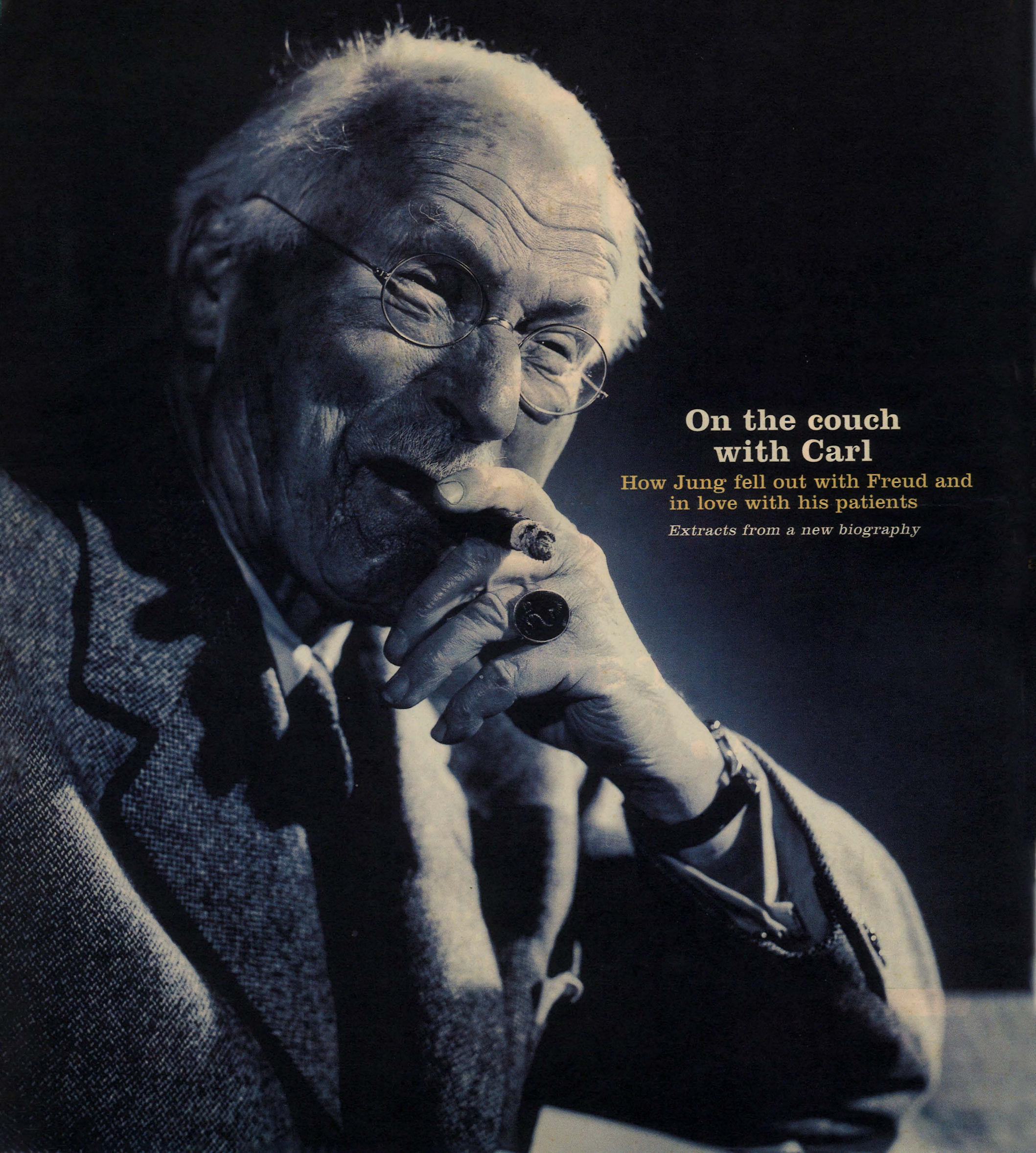


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GOOD WEEKEND



On the couch with Carl

How Jung fell out with Freud and
in love with his patients

Extracts from a new biography

While Freud put sex on the psychiatric agenda, it was his protégé Carl Jung who bedded patients. But, as Ronald Hayman writes in a new biography, the end of Jung's most torrid affair and his split with Sigmund drove him into a madness of his own.

Jung at heart

NO PSYCHOLOGIST, APART FROM Sigmund Freud, has been more influential than Carl Jung, who died in 1961 at the age of 85.

Originally a disciple of Freud, he went on to develop his own theory of analytical psychology. He is famous for his theory of the collective unconscious – a stock of archetypal images he thought all of us possess, much as we possess instincts. He would urge his patients to analyse these primordial, mythological images as they occurred in their dreams and fantasies. Also central to his method was his division of people into extrovert “feeling” types and introvert “thinking” types.

Jung was born in Switzerland, where his father, Paul, was a country parson. Jung's mother, Emilie, was psychotic and spent time in a mental hospital. She gave him the impression she had two distinct personalities, and he believed that he took after her. “I sensed and feared a splitting in my self.”

This anxiety that her condition could be hereditary may have fuelled Jung's determination to study psychiatry. After studying medicine, he took up his first job as assistant doctor in a famous lunatic asylum, the Burghölzli in Zurich. During his time here Jung was to forge two important relationships. One would ensure his lasting fame: the other would create a pattern often repeated in the course of a turbulent personal life.

In 1904 a new patient came to the asylum. She was an 18-year-old Russian Jewess who wore her hair in pigtails and dressed like a child, though she wanted to be a medical student. Sensitive, emotional, articulate and sometimes suicidal, she had uncontrollable bouts of laughing, weeping and screaming. She kept her head lowered and stuck her tongue out if anyone touched her. Her name was Sabina Spielrein.

After diagnosing “psychotic hysteria”, Jung was surprised when Eugen Bleuler, the director of the asylum, asked him to psychoanalyse Spielrein. Jung was uncertain what he was expected to do.

Freud had introduced the word “psychoanalyse” in 1896, claiming he could bring unconscious memories to consciousness and promising to explain, in a future work, how this was done. Eight years later the work still hadn't appeared, and so Jung had to improvise.

Within 4½ months, Jung said he had analysed Spielrein. Every other day he spent one or two hours with her, sitting behind her for the analysis sessions. He had been experimenting with the “word association test”, in which words were read from a list, one by one, and the patient had to answer with the first word that came to mind. Silences and hesitations were measured with a stopwatch. With Spielrein, he used these devices and, when she talked about her troubles, Jung focused on changes in volume, rhythm or subject matter.

She remembered being smacked on her bare bottom when she was three. She'd become excited, as she had when her father smacked her brother, and now, though it enraged her to see anyone punished, the anger grew into sexual excitement. By the age of 18 she was alternating between fits of depression and bouts of manic rage.

Sabina was the first patient Jung invited to assist him with his work – a variation on the idea of increasing the self-confidence of schizophrenics by giving them simple tasks. He enlisted her help on an essay he was writing and she was surprisingly helpful. Still depressed and disoriented, she was astonished to hear him say: “Minds like yours help to advance science. You must become a psychiatrist.”

Though Freud thought doctors should have no social contact with patients, Jung chatted to Spielrein about his young wife, Emma, and soon they were discussing her critically. Sharing a home was difficult, he said. Spielrein was exceptional, but Emma was an ordinary woman with no interests of her own. He took Spielrein out for walks, and once, when she dropped her coat, he got the dust off by beating it with his stick. Throwing herself at him furiously, she grabbed it back. He'd reminded



MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY; BLOOMSBURY (2); SPIELREIN PHOTO FROM A SECRET SYMMETRY (ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL)



her of beatings received from her father. But she was becoming less hysterical and, in April 1905, she was well enough to enrol at the university. She began her medical studies in June.

After discharging her from the asylum, Jung went on spending time with Spielrein. Her impetuosity got on his nerves but, attracted by their physical differences, they magnetised each other. Teutonic in appearance, he could hardly have looked less like the Jews and Russians she'd known, while he'd grown up in rustic parsonages and never had any Jewish friends. He found her Jewishness exciting, and the tension between them increased when she claimed to be reading his thoughts telepathically.

Desperate to regain control over the situation, Jung thought of sending Spielrein to Vienna for a consultation with Freud. He hoped that Freud might be impressed by the results of his first attempt at psychoanalysis and wrote to him without mentioning her name.

The more stable Spielrein became, the more Jung enjoyed being with her. Unlike Emma, she could excite him by talking about her dreams and her unconscious, which seemed to interpenetrate with his. The affinity depended partly on what they'd both inherited from religious families – her grandfather was a rabbi, and there were Lutheran pastors on both sides of Jung's family. Like him, Spielrein believed the unconscious had prophetic powers, and they'd both been reclaimed – she with his help – from schizoid experiences. But he felt no love for her until long after she fell in love with him, and they loved each other long before they became lovers.

Her intention was to demand nothing. Obsessed with the idea of sacrifice, she felt more reverence than desire. He admitted to desiring her, but said they must control themselves. She fantasised about bearing him a child, Siegfried, who would blend Jewish and Aryan qualities.

He was ambivalent about Jewish girls, however much they attracted him. He later said, "I would never like to have children from a person who has Jewish blood." But the difficulties of resisting Spielrein were compounded by her certainty that she had powers as a clairvoyant and by his willingness to believe her.

His faith in her spiritual powers harked back to his childish faith in those of his mother, while Spielrein's faith in his future greatness increased his

impatience to meet Freud, who might help him up the ladder. Early in March 1907, he and Emma visited Freud in Vienna, accompanied by another doctor from the Burghölzli, Ludwig Binswanger.

At their first lunch it was Jung who did most of the talking, and later, in Freud's study, the conversation went on until 2 am. Afterwards, Freud said Jung had the most sophisticated set of neuroses he had encountered.

Jung and Binswanger were the first non-Jews he invited to the Wednesday Club, which had been meeting since 1902 for psychoanalytical discussions. Before leaving Vienna, Jung asked for a photograph of Freud and, in his next letter, promised that his foremost concern would be to "lay the foundations for a scientific popularisation of your teachings".

They were both excited about their friendship, which was to grow more intimate through correspondence than it would have done had they been living in the same city. Jung agreed to edit a Freudian periodical, and he proposed: "Let me enjoy your friendship not as one between equals but as that of father and son."

But he was impatient to be back with Spielrein. Kissing, cuddling, debating whether to make love, they still held back. "We could sit for hours in silent ecstasy," Spielrein wrote later in a draft letter to Freud, "... My love for him transcended our affinity until he could bear it no longer and wanted 'poetry' [lovmaking]. For many reasons I could not resist and did not want to."

By this time also, Jung had come under the influence of Otto Gross, a maverick Freudian analyst addicted to cocaine and morphine, who had become a patient at the Burghölzli. Tall, shy and slim, with blond hair, blue eyes and an aquiline nose, Gross had charisma. Though shy with women, he sometimes became sexually involved with patients. He had several illegitimate children and had been recommending promiscuity to his patients. Jung disliked Gross at first, but warmed to him, and they once had 12 hours of nonstop conversation, analysing each other.

Spielrein was astonished when, beaming with pleasure, Jung said he'd gained insight into polygamy. He'd been suppressing his feelings, but, apart from Emma, she was his dearest friend. They finally made love, and celebrated by collaborating on a prose poem. "For you I battled with the raging waves; now, as victor, I come brandishing my oars, and you shall be the

Objects of his affection: (from left) Jung, right, with Sigmund Freud in 1909; Sabina Spielrein, one of Jung's first patients, with whom he had a passionate affair; with his wife, Emma, and four of their five children in 1917; Jung was 27 when he married 20-year-old Emma in 1903, the year this picture was taken.



prize.” Jung loved her for the magnificence of her passion, he said, and she’d taken his unconscious into her hands.

But his feelings changed when Emma, who had given him two daughters, produced a son. Spielrein was shocked to receive a confused letter saying he couldn’t go on deceiving his wife. “Give me back, in the moment of my need, some of the love and guilt and altruism I was able to give you when you were ill.”

However, Jung went on with the relationship when he found he couldn’t end it peaceably. Emma decided she had been too tolerant for too long, and in January 1909 Spielrein’s mother received an anonymous letter saying she should step in to save her daughter from Dr Jung.

She wrote to him, and instead of denying the affair when he replied, he pointed out that he “could more easily abandon my role as doctor since I felt myself to be under no professional obligation, as I’d never charged a fee”.

Even so, Jung told Spielrein that from now on their relationship must be strictly that of doctor and patient. Writing to her mother again, he said, “I have always told your daughter that a sexual relationship was out of the question and that my actions were meant to express my feelings of friendship. When this happened, I chanced to be in a very gentle and compassionate mood, and I wanted to give your daughter convincing evidence of my confidence in her and friendship in order to liberate her inwardly.”

After staying away for three weeks, Spielrein arrived in his consulting room with a knife, and when Jung grabbed at it, she resisted. Suddenly he went very pale, rapped his hand to his left temple and said: “You struck me.”

Spielrein found herself outside the room, weeping and sitting on a trolley, surrounded by people

manage to charm us with every conceivable psychic perfection until they’ve achieved their purpose is one of nature’s greatest spectacles.”

IN JUNE, JUST AS JUNG FINISHED A LECTURE, Spielrein came up to him. He tried to hurry away, but she seemed calm. Half-believing the theory he’d evolved for Freud – that he was suffering from a “Jewess complex” – he explained

ashamed. “In the waiting room his children came running to meet me, two sweet little girls and a little boy ... In front of the children I was small, powerless and ‘desire’ seemed disgusting. What did I want, after all?”

Jung methodically alerted unstable patients to religious and mythological ideas, and Spielrein was the first to be given this unorthodox form of therapy. But at the same time, he inflamed



“The way these women manage to charm us until they’ve achieved their purpose is one of nature’s greatest spectacles,” Freud sympathised.

asking questions. She had blood on her hand and her arm, but it was his. Apparently she’d slapped his face before they struggled over the knife.

Without mentioning her name, Jung wrote to Freud about a troublesome female patient. “Towards her I have always played the gentleman, but in confrontation with my over-sensitive conscience I don’t feel entirely innocent, and that’s what’s most painful, for my intentions were always honourable. But you know how it is – the devil can use even the best of things for the manufacture of filth.”

Jung and Emma visited Freud soon after and it was then that Freud decided to take up Jung’s earlier proposal that they should have a father-son relationship. Jocular but also serious, he offered to adopt Jung as his eldest son, formally “anointing” him in an improvised ceremony as successor and crown prince. Overcoming his misgivings more quickly than he might have done if he hadn’t been anxious about a scandal, Jung submitted to the improvised ritual.

When he finally admitted the truth about Spielrein, he expected to be disinherited. “Since I had until recently given the patient my friendship and my full confidence, my action was a piece of knavery which I very reluctantly confess to you, as my father.” But Freud welcomed the chance to offer male solidarity: “The way these women

that in Vienna he’d been enchanted by Freud’s youngest daughter, Sophie, who was nearly 14, and that these feelings had been transferred to Spielrein.

She didn’t see him again until September 1910, when she was writing her doctoral thesis. Influenced by his work, she had been studying a paranoiac woman who seemed to be talking gibberish. With

perseverance and empathy, Spielrein decoded what she said, and asylum director Eugen Bleuler was so impressed that he advised her to submit the thesis for publication in the yearbook Jung was editing.

According to her diary, “The main result of our meeting was that we again loved each other fervently ... My love for him overwhelmed me with an insane glow. Sometimes I resisted violently, and at other times let him kiss every one of my little fingers, and I glued myself to his lips, fainting with love.”

The thesis had thrown him into raptures, he said. It proved that psychotic thought mechanisms corresponded to patterns in myth. He offered to work with her until it was publishable, and to enrol her in the psychoanalytical association.

Going to his house every morning, Spielrein felt



Collective unconscious: (clockwise from top) Jung, front right, and Freud, front left, at Clark University in Massachusetts, where both men were invited to lecture in 1909; Jung in his study in 1958; with Toni Wolff, another patient who became his mistress, his assistant, then an analyst.

her desire for him and his for her. By November they were lovers again. He loved her, he said, because of her magnificent pride, and because her thoughts ran parallel to his, but he would never marry her. He was fundamentally a philistine, he said, who needed narrow limits and the typically Swiss domesticity that Emma provided. Though Spielrein hated the idea of being a “diversion”, the affair continued. Her whole being was “suffused with love” and she prayed to Fate: “Let me love him nobly.”

In bed he was sometimes tender and affectionate, but at other times “reverted to the Don Juan pose I find so repellent. Though he considers me honest in love, he said I should belong to the category of women created not for motherhood but for free love.” And on January 15, 1911, the day before her exam, he told her she’d do well because she was in league with the devil.

In psychiatry her result was so good it seemed

an assistant and then an analyst. There were also short-term affairs. Jung told a friend, “When I die, probably no-one will realise that the old man in the coffin was once a great lover.” Spielrein believed he was taking full advantage of his popularity. “Dr Jung is no hermit – he sees many other women besides me.” Jealousy seeped into her condemnation of the suffering he caused. “I have just learned of a tragedy with a woman

Freud told: “I hit upon a few objections to your method of dealing with mythology, and I mentioned them in discussion with the little girl. I must say she’s rather nice, and I’m beginning to understand.” The “little girl” was 25.

In his later work on the death wish, Freud drew on Spielrein’s ideas with no acknowledgment, just as Jung did in his book. Writing to her in March 1912, Jung made out that he’d only just noticed the “incredible parallels” between her work and his. After receiving a furious reply, he conceded: “The priority is yours ... The death wish was apparent to you much earlier than it was to me. For obvious reasons!” What had happened, he said, was they’d unconsciously “swallowed” part of each other’s soul, but the reading public must be kept in ignorance about this “secret penetration of thoughts”.

Still fixated on Jung, Spielrein consulted Freud, who surprised her by offering to analyse her. Perhaps he could help her to “drive out the tyrant”. The friendship between the men was cooling, and they were exchanging letters less frequently. The tone of Jung’s was still friendly, but Freud’s were sometimes sarcastic. Hearing that Jung had been bitten by a dog, he asked whether it was the dog’s health he should worry about.

Could Jung achieve emotional independence from Freud and Spielrein without cracking up? What made it almost unendurable was the contact his two friends had with each other. Jung’s bitterness is understandable, if unreasonable. Telling Freud that Spielrein’s paper for the yearbook was “heavily overweighted with her own complexes”, he quoted from Horace: “The upper half is a lovely woman and the lower half a fish.”

As Jung’s ideas became less Freudian, he presented them to Freud more forcefully. Incest, he said, was primarily a fantasy problem, and the taboo hadn’t been intended literally. Freud was also wrong to blame neurosis on damaging infantile experience – its causes always lay in the recent past. The earlier a bad experience seemed to have occurred, the greater the probability that the memory was inaccurate.

At their next meeting, Freud told Jung he’d “conjured up the intimacy” only to brush it off. He wasn’t what he seemed – “a born ruler, who, through his authority, could spare others many mistakes”. Jung promised he was still “completely on the side of the cause”, but Freud accused him of promoting his career by playing down the importance of sexuality. Writing to Ernest Jones, his future biographer, Freud complained: “He behaves like a perfect fool, he seems to be Christ himself.”

Though it had been Jung who suggested they should have a father-son relationship, he accused Freud of “reducing everyone to the level of sons and daughters who blushing admit to their deficiencies”. Writing to another analyst, Freud said Jung was “behaving like a florid fool and a brutal fellow, which he certainly is”. The drift towards hostility was irreversible. “He seems all out of his wits,” Freud told Jones. “He is quite crazy. After some tender letters, he wrote me one of utter insolence.” Their friendship “is not worth the ink”.

Jung later said: “I felt as though I’d been banished from my father’s house.” Unable to hide his confusion, he nevertheless went on seeing patients. When a woman objected, “But that’s the opposite of what you said last week,” he answered, “That may be so, but this is true, and the other was also true. Life is a paradox.” He was sometimes “so wrought up” that he had to



to justify their faith in her potential. Finally submitting her essay for the yearbook, she wrote: “Receive now the product of our love, the project which is your little son, Siegfried.” But he gave it only a cursory reading. What she had written, he said, was courageous, far-reaching and philosophical. Instead of appearing in the yearbook, it should be published on its own.

HOW PROMISCUOUS WAS JUNG? WE KNOW THAT later Emma had to tolerate another mistress, Toni Wolff – like Spielrein, an ex-patient who became

patient whom he first led on, then rebuffed, then people talked about other such ‘feats’.

If this was one of her reasons for leaving Zurich, Freud was a reason for settling in Vienna, where she turned up, uninvited, at one of his Wednesday meetings. Instead of being annoyed, he invited her to read a paper at a later meeting. The subject she chose was the death wish – something Freud had neither written nor even thought about. Her paper impressed him, though he objected to her easygoing treatment of mythology. This reminded him of Jung, whom

“eliminate the emotions through yoga practices”. His dreams became so oppressive that he suspected a “psychic disturbance”.

Early in 1912, Spielrein married a doctor, Paul Scheftel, but in the fourth month of her pregnancy she was still obsessed with Jung. Freud was unsympathetic: “The reason you still love Dr J so deeply, I imagine, is that you haven’t brought the hatred to the surface.” Reluctant to listen “when you go on enthusing about your old love and past dreams”, Freud hoped “that if your child is a boy, he will grow into a staunch Zionist. We are and remain Jews. The others will only exploit us and will never understand us or appreciate us.”

“I let myself fall. It was as if the floor literally gave way underneath me, and I plummeted into dark depths.” It took Jung about three years to recover from the breakdown.

THROUGHOUT THE AUTUMN, JUNG WAS under strain. “The pressure I had felt inside me seemed to be shifting outwards, as if there were something in the atmosphere: it actually seemed darker than before.” His dreams became more like visions, and he was probably writing about himself when he described the state he called “godlikeness”.

He tried to master his turbulent fantasies by taking notes and drawing or painting images that presented themselves. He claimed to have acquired the knack of catching unconscious material “in flagrante”, and his book *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* suggests his behaviour was heroic – that he was making a dangerous expedition into

the unconscious for the sake of scientific discovery.

Several dreams involved subterranean staircases and caverns, which suggested that his fantasies were located somewhere underground. In December 1913, he says, he decided to drop downwards.

“I let myself fall. It was as if the floor literally gave way underneath me and I plummeted into dark depths.” But his son, Franz, was sceptical: “My father writes that he chose. I don’t believe that he chose. I believe he had no choice.” It took about three years to recover from the breakdown of 1913.

Jung spoke of undergoing a conversion. As a schoolboy of 12, he had believed that God had singled him out for direct contact, and as an

adult he had never lost his faith in revelation. He now thought it had been revealed to him that he shouldn’t let himself be “blinded by the presumptuous spirit of the times”. To regain his soul, he must stop trying to “fend off” the other, more powerful spirit – “the spirit from the depths of time immemorial and for all time to come”. This spirit had “robbed me of the power to speak or write of anything that was not in his service – in the service of uniting sense and nonsense”.

It was during Jung’s breakdown that he arrived at some of his most important concepts. His idea of the anima was born during an argument with an inner voice while he was writing down fantasies. What was he doing? Was this work scientific or

artistic? He felt sure the voice was female. “I was very interested that a woman should intervene from inside my thoughts. Probably, I thought, it’s something to do with the soul in the primitive sense ... Later on I came to see that this feminine figure plays a typical or archetypal role in the consciousness of a man, and I called it the anima.”

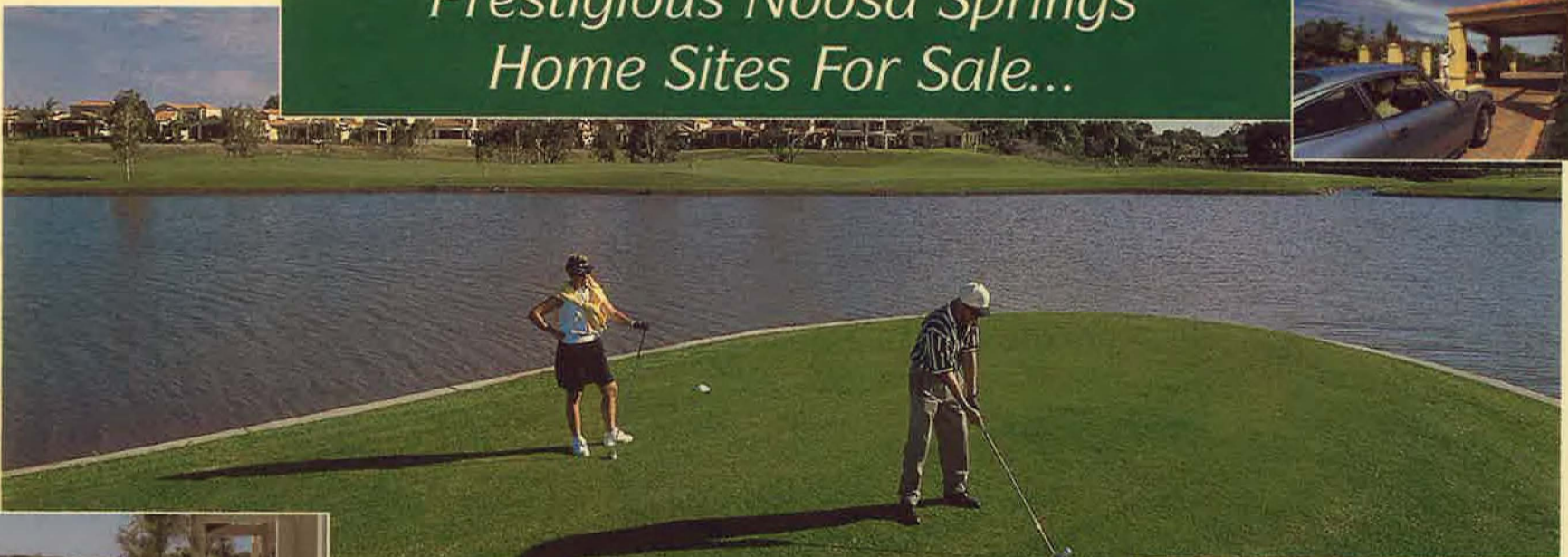
One of the reasons he found Spielrein irresistible is that, unlike Emma, she matched his memories of a dark-complexioned maid who’d looked after him during a period when his mother was in a mental ward. Describing her, he said this “type of girl” became “an aspect of my anima”. He believed that having inherited a collective image of woman, each man settles on a mate when his intuition tells him she’ll be able to receive the image he projects on her. She then stands for his soul.

Had it not been for his breakdown, Jung might never have developed the technique he called active imagination, based on conversations with his anima and with fantasy figures. He told patients to draw or paint characters from dreams or fantasies, and to interrogate them. This was like praying to an internal god, “for there are answers inside you if you are not afraid of them”. It was a matter of “letting the unconscious come up”.

Whether his theories are accepted or rejected, the help he gave his patients should not be undervalued. As one of them said, “He was always marvellous at getting people to be very much themselves”, and another praised him for accepting everything that came up in the session “not only rationally, intellectually, but with his whole being ... He gave us a feeling ‘there is a greatness in you, and we must serve this’.”

An edited extract from *Life of Jung*, by Ronald Hayman, to be published this week by Bloomsbury.

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