Edyth Marion and the Path of Self-Knowledge through the Arts



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In previous essays the work on the Foundation Stone Meditation's weekly rhythms has led me to explore and differentiate the three paths of Spirit Beholding (third stanza of the meditation), Spirit Mindfulness (second stanza) and Spirit Recollection (first stanza).[1] In order to do this I asked myself how one specifically differs from the other and what each one of them allows us to experience in our soul. This was followed by an attempt to understand what it may mean to integrate the three paths. In a way, the above led to the conclusion that through anthroposophy the human being gains a new ground of being in both spirit and daily world, one in which he can transform his thinking, feeling and willing to such an extent that he can to some degree begin to "truly think, … truly feel … and truly live."

Because of my personal inclinations I have most of all contrasted Spirit Beholding with Spirit Recollection, the paths that lead respectively to truly thinking and truly living. Under this lens I looked at individuals who walked one or the other path most strongly and came to the examples of Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven and Bernard J. Lievegoed as individuals who tried to integrate the paths, though the first with more emphasis on Spirit Beholding and the second on Spirit Recollection. I also offered an example of an individual who walked the two paths with equal strength in the case of Walter Johannes Stein.

At that point in time the question of the middle path was barely touched upon and left open. Therefore I decided to explore it through one particular tool, the meditations offered by the verses of the Calendar of the Soul, which Rudolf Steiner characterized as a path to "self-knowledge through feeling."[2]

Having gained a deeper understanding of the path of the middle—that of Spirit Mindfulness, which leads us to the experience of truly feeling—I was struck by an individual who truly walked this path in the artistic realm, moreover one who was deeply connected to what the second panel calls "balance of the soul" and the "Christ-will" which "holds sway in world rhythms." That individual is Edith Maryon, one who was instrumental to Steiner's epochal and ground-breaking achievement of a

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[1] Luigi Morelli, *The Foundation Stone Meditation A Call to Integrate and Transform*, available at https://millenniumculmination.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/fsm-integrate.pdf

[2] Rudolf Steiner, preface to the first edition of *The Calendar of the Soul*: "*The aim* [of working with the Calendar] *is self-knowledge through feeling*. Through the verses expressing the characteristic mood of the respective week, this *'feeling self knowledge'* can experience the timeless cycle of soul life in relation to time. It needs to be clearly stated that the intention is to create potential for a path of self knowledge." (emphasis added). From *The Anthroposophical Calendar of the Soul*, translation by Richard Steele.

sensory/supersensory, artistic portrayal of the Christ being and his two spiritual adversaries in the so-called "Group" or "Representative of Humanity."

It is therefore the hope of this essay to open a page on the chapter of Spirit Mindfulness and render explicit how an individual has walked on a path of transformation of the life of feelings. Moreover, we can compare what she achieved in relation to what Rudolf Steiner asked of her. Nowhere is there a humbler individual than Edith Maryon, who could soberly assess how short of the goal she fell in spite of walking her path and her mission in life with enormous earnestness. That she primarily walked the path of Spirit Mindfulness obviously does not mean that she exclusively walked this path. We know that she was a dedicated anthroposophist who wanted to assimilate the living heritage of spiritual science and transform her thinking in order to cross the threshold. We know in this regard that she accomplished much and that she was one of Steiner's esoteric pupils with clear spiritual perceptions, though unfortunately hampered by incarnational challenges so that she could not bring to expression much that lived in her soul.

What is brought up below will not be an attempt to retrace a full biography. It will mostly look at Edith Maryon's spiritual yearnings and at her artistic striving, primarily in relation to the carving of the Group. First, however, let us dwell on the contrast between Spirit Beholding and Spirit Recollection before we return to the middle path.

Truly Thinking and Truly Living: A Contrast

In Spirit Recollection we find a path that is, to start with, completely personal, biographical. In spirit Beholding we recognize the polar opposite of that which is universal. In Spirit Recollection we find that side of the human being which, to start with, seems completely subjective. In Spirit Beholding that which is fully objective. What I will briefly outline here has been explored at length elsewhere.[3]

To find our way through the polarity we can orient ourselves through Steiner's revelations of the last years, in his *Leading Thoughts* and in the Foundation Stone Meditation. In the letter 17 of July 6, 1924, "Understanding of the Spirit and Conscious Experience of Destiny" Rudolf Steiner contrasts the two paths. The path of Spirit Beholding is such that

[3] See Luigi Morelli, *Karl Julius Schröer and Rudolf Steiner: Anthroposophy and the Teachings of Karma and Reincarnation*, chapter 5, available at https://millenniumculmination.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Spirit-Recollection-and-Spirit-Beholding.pdf

the human being can think, "I am forming thoughts about what my senses reveal to me as the world." In so doing contemplation of the world allows him to experience himself in his thinking, and he becomes conscious of the self. On this path we can purify our thinking through a strict adherence to sense phenomena devoid of interpretation. By avoiding associative thinking and the spinning of theories we let particular phenomena reveal the essence of what we are exploring, be it in philosophy, biology, medicine or any other scientific discipline. Regular thinking, which is a pale reflection of the cosmic thoughts that the human being receives from the cosmic distances can be transformed in the stages of knowledge known as Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. As Rudolf Steiner claims in *The Philosophy of Freedom*, and as he showed in his own life and opus, there are no limits to knowledge, only limits to what we can understand because of our personal capacities and limitations at any given moment.

In the path of Spirit Recollection we turn our attention to the inner world. We retrace the manifold key events that belong to our biography. Our memory takes us all the way back to early childhood and we can glean an organic experience of our life's destiny. By enhancing the experience of memory we can tell ourselves "I with my own self have experienced something that destiny brought to me." On this inner path we gain consciousness that we are not alone in our destiny, and that the world enters into the expression of our will. We go from experiencing ourselves to experiencing the world.

To recapitulate the contrast, in the outer path of Spirit Beholding, through experiencing the world in thinking one can experience the ego. In the inner path of Spirit Recollection, through looking at the expression of our ego in space and time, we can experience the world.

Let us pursue how the contrast appears in the first and third stanzas of the Foundation Stone Meditation, starting with the first stanza concerning Spirit Recollection and "truly living."

Soul of Man!

Thou livest in the limbs

Which bear you through the world of space

Into the ocean-being of the spirit.

Practice spirit-recollection

In the depths of soul,

Where in the wielding

World-Creator-Life

Thine Own Being

Comes to being

Within the I of God

Then in the All-World-Being of Man

Thou will truly live.

For the Father-Spirit of the heights holds sway

In Depths of worlds, begetting life.

Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones!

Let there ring out from the Heights

What in the Depths is echoed,

Speaking:

Ex Deo nascimur.

The Elemental Beings hear it

In East and West and North and South:

May human beings hear it!

These lines indicate that, ideally, through the path of Spirit Recollection we can endeavor to retrace our steps toward the time in which incarnation first began, to the Lemurian Epoch, the time before which our "own being comes to being within God's I" ("Ex Deo nascimur"). The one who takes this path, will not lose himself in the world of his own soul. He will have a feeling of communion with the world from the starting point of his own personal experience, without losing himself in false mysticism. And Steiner concludes, "Anthroposophy finds the self by showing how the sense-world reveals to man not only sense perceptions, but also the after-effects of his life before birth and his former earthly lives."[4] This is the fullest extent of the expression "Thine own being comes to being within God's I"

We will now look at what is said in relation to the third panel qualifying Spirit Beholding and truy thinking. While we do this let us keep in mind that

[4] Rudolf Steiner, *Leading Thoughts*, letter 17 of July 6, 1924, "Understanding of the Spirit and Conscious Experience of Destiny".

the imaginations of the two stanzas needs the balance brought in by the second panel, which is the only one that mentions the Christ being. We will return later to this one toward the end of our exploration. In the third panel we are told:

Soul of Man!

Thou livest in the resting Head

Which from the ground of the Eternal

Opens to t**hee** the thoughts of Worlds.

Practice Spirit-Vision

In quietness of Thought,

Where the eternal aims of Gods

World-Being's Light

On thine own I

Bestow

For thy free Willing.

Then from the grounds of the Spirit of man

Thou will truly think

For the Spirit's Universal Thoughts hold sway

In the Being of all world, beseeching Light.

Archai, Archangeloi, Angeloi!

Let there be prayed in the Depths

What from the Heights is answered,

Speaking:

Per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus.

The Elemental Beings hear it

In East and West and North and South

May human beings hear it!

Here, we see that through thinking we can apprehend the working of the spirit in "the resting head" and in "quietness of thought." It is only along this path that the human being can cross the threshold of the spiritual world

consciously in the achievement of higher knowledge in Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. We can become citizens of the cosmos and grasp the "spirit's universal thoughts" in their true essence, not just what we can achieve through the reflecting lens of ordinary thinking. We can receive the "world-being's light" and through it achieve freedom in the higher sense and start to exert truly free will. It is thus that Steiner can link together resurrected thinking, freedom and moral imagination in *The Philosophy of Freedom*.

Our thinking, penetrated through and through by the will, is what allows us to truly think "in grounds of the Spirit in Man." In contrast, the first panel indicates that Spirit Recollection allows us "to truly live…in the All-World Being of Man" meaning in the physical-etheric reality that surrounds us, which is also qualified as "ocean being of the spirit" earlier on in the first stanza.

The path of Spirit Beholding is the path of thinking transformed by the will. The path of Spirit Recollection is the path in which the will is transformed through thinking. The first path makes appeal to the purified, sense free thinking, a thinking no longer bound to the organ of the brain. The thinking made use of in Spirit Recollection is solely the activity that consists in looking back, both in reviewing factually, and in evaluating morally.

In *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* the path of knowledge is the object of the first part of the book. The path of transformation of the will is only briefly introduced in the second part, especially in Chapter 12 (Moral Imagination) and others. The whole book is primarily concerned with the transformation of our thinking, with the attainment of sense-free thinking. It was only in the years 1918 to 1924 that Rudolf Steiner offered us exercises through which we can transform our will directly, rather than through the detour of our thinking. These I have called "karmic exercises."[5] They all have in common an activity of recollection. They proceed in steps from:

- pure review (rückschau) to
- building imaginations of other people and of Self by calling to mind recollections of other people or of earlier stages of our biography
- taking full responsibility for our lives in relation to events that have marked our biography. Through this we gain a firm relationship to

[5] See Luigi Morelli, *The Journey of Spirit Recollection: A Handbook for the Practice of Steiner's Karmic Exercises*, available at https://millenniumculmination.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/spirit-recollection-journey.pdf

our higher self as the architect of our lives. We discern meaning and direction in the course of our biography.
- eventually reaching discrete experiences of events of previous lifetimes in relation to recurring motives in the present life. This step can be reached in part through the Lesser Karma Exercise and more fully through the Greater Karma Exercise or the Saturn/Sun/Moon Exercise.

The contrast between the two paths appears symptomatically when we look at the polarities between the "pencil exercise" and the rückschau, as expressions of Spirit Beholding and Spirit Recollection respectively. In the pencil exercise we focus all our attention on an object, such as a pencil, by registering our sense impressions, thinking about its component parts and their relationships, imagining the steps of the process that created it, etc. During the few minutes of th exercise keeping all thoughts foreign to the object requires a tremendous effort of the will. It is truly an education of thinking through the will.

The rückschau exercise offers us a polar gesture to the observation exercise. We bring our attention to the events of the day, or a part of it, and picture them in reverse chronological order and even in reverse motion. Instead of looking outwardly, we turn our focus inwardly with an effort of our memory. We try to bring to awareness through our memory what has brought about our actions throughout the day, which normally remains unconscious. Our thinking brings order to the unfolding of our will, reminding us of what Steiner tells us is the precondition for ethical action: we must ourselves first create the facts before being able to judge them. To summarize, we look outwardly in the pencil exercise, inwardly in the rückschau. The first exercise addresses the thinking through the will, the second the will through our thinking.

With this in mind we can remind ourselves that there is a path of the middle, which addresses first and foremost the life of feeling, the path of Spirit Mindfulness to which we will return after turning to Edith Maryon.

Early Yearnings before Meeting Anthroposophy

Edith Maryon was born on 9 February 1872 in London, the second of six children. She first attended a girls school and later went to a boarding school in Geneva. During the 1890s she studied sculpture in London at the Central School of Design, and from 1896 at the Royal College of Arts. She did her sculpting in bronze or in relief sculpture. Many of her works—some

of which were exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts—already focused on Christian themes. Even before coming to anthroposophy she sculpted a model of Michael, a relief entitled "The Seeker of Divine Wisdom" (Christ) and a 4' high painted plaster of "The Cross on Golgotha."

Thus, from early on, Maryon appears to have felt a strong need to understand the Christ Mystery and the figure of Christ. In this pursuit at age thirty-six she joined the London group "Stella Matutina" of the Hermetic Students of the Golden Dawn, led by Robert William Felkin. Because Felkin had attended some of Rudolf Steiner's lectures, Maryon was drawn to buy English translations of essays published in *Lucifer-Gnosis*. Harry Collinson—another member of the group and later an anthroposophist—had heard Steiner's Christological lectures in Rome and organized lectures on Christ's reappearance in the etheric at his London studio.[6] At forty, Maryon planned a journey whose final destination was the Egyptian Mystery sites, but she interrupted it halfway in Milan and returned to London. She may or may not have gone to Berlin immediately afterward to hear Steiner's May 12, 1912 lecture on the need to portray Christ artistically in new ways.

The prelude to Maryon going to see Rudolf Steiner came from a "biographical urgency" which may have been the death of Neville Meakin, fellow member of the Golden Dawn, whom she was ready to marry in order to afford him the help he would not have otherwise received ("because I thought he may have lived longer").[7]

We know for sure that she met Rudolf Steiner in 1912 when the latter gave a lecture in Cologne about "the future artistic presentation of the Christ Being." Shortly after she joined the Esoteric School and decided to move to Munich to be closer to where she could be needed. Revealingly, Steiner later commented "Esoteric contemplation was the natural element in which this soul lived. Her inner life was characterized by seriousness in this inward endeavor. And she was close to many important experiences in the realm of the spirit."[8]

Among Maryon's soul qualities were her absolute reliability and quiet, humble persistence. She was also very perceptive about the sign of the times, so much so that Rudolf Steiner could confide to her about impending social dangers or the sectarian tendencies and other shortcomings at play in the Society. She understood what forces played against spiritual science and was very concerned about the risks that Steiner faced, particularly in 1922

[6] Peter Selg, *The Figure of Christ*, 9-12.
[7] Peter Selg, *The Figure of Christ*, 21.
[8] Peter Selg, *The Figure of Christ*, 41.

when he gave lecture tours and was hassled by Nazi militants. Maryon was also one of the few to fully realize the importance of the renewal of the Mysteries leading to the Christmas Meeting, and the spiritual risks that Steiner had taken along the way to its success. Her readiness to enlist herself for the needs of a Master also manifested in a great empathy for his needs. She was one who more than most understood the embattled aspects of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual mission.

In Cologne Maryon had an important conversation with Rudolf Steiner on December 31, 1912, the day of the fourth lecture of the cycle on the Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of Paul, which addressed the "Christ being's engagement and relationship with Lucifer and Ahriman"! On this occasion Steiner let her know that she was much more developed occultly than she could bring to realization in the present incarnation. At the time she had the inkling and premonition that there was something definite for her to do and that it would be made explicit by a Master. Soon after she commented in a letter to Steiner "When I saw you in Berlin I knew at last I was right about the Master. There remains only the second point—is there really any definite thing for me to do, or do I only imagine it?"[9] At the time she also confided that through the meeting she was now no longer as terrified about the future as she used to be.

In May of the following year she wrote a note to Steiner in which she shared "… and last night (among other things) I thought I heard, 'your probation is ended.' Since then I feel altogether different, and all my old life and views have faded away. I welcome a new one whatever it may bring."[10] An important meeting of minds had taken place at the intersection of two calls of karma: Maryon's personal calling and the world karma imperative to inaugurate a revolutionary artistic rendition of Christ and the human being.

It was in May 1913 that Maryon heard about the relocation of the Johannes Bau project, later Goetheanum, from Munich to Dornach. From the time that she knew about the endeavor she felt she had to join it. She suggested that she could be part of the group of eighty artists who would work at the building of the Goetheanum, especially in sculpting. By 1914 Maryon started to work in Rudolf Steiner's small studio on the east side of the Schreinerei. That this was a solemn undertaking is underlined by a special laying of a foundation stone for the studio in which Steiner and Maryon worked at the Group. They were the only ones in attendance.[11] From then

[9] Quoted in Peter Selg, *The Figure of Christ*, 27.
[10] Peter Selg, *The Figure of Christ*, 33.
[11] Judith von Halle and John Wilkes, *The Representative of Humanity between Lucifer and Ahriman: The Wooden Model at the Goetheanum*, 78.

on Maryon started working at architectural models, then was involved with the carving within the building and finally devoted herself to the Group. She became the "first sculptor" in relation to the Group but liked to invest Rudolf Steiner with the honor.[12]

In keeping with a deep inner resolve Maryon readily learned enough German to be able to hear and understand Rudolf Steiner's lectures. Being interested in the Mystery Dramas, she joined the chorus of the sylphs and later sculpted some of the reliefs of motives from some scenes. Shortly after she devoted herself tirelessly to the task of giving birth to the Group together with Steiner. In undertaking such a task Maryon knew that she faced the daunting task of sacrificing her classical Greek-inspired style to devote herself to the new Mystery art.

Edith Maryon's Path to the Christ Impulse

As Maryon blended in her path an absorbing interest in both the figure of Christ and in sculpture, the meeting with anthroposophy serendipitously took place at an intersection with a mighty world karmic impulse. She met Rudolf Steiner when he was deepening his presentation of the Christ impulse through his spiritual scientific studies of the Gospels. Her introduction to Christology shortly followed Steiner's epochal revelations about the coming of Christ in the etheric and preceded the completion of the revelations of the so-called "Fifth Gospel," which covered themes that Steiner was the first to ever retrieve from the Akasha Chronicles. Here, for the first time it was possible to follow the complex matter of the two Jesus children as well as the two Mary individualities, not to mention the years of Jesus' ministry previous to the Baptism in the Jordan.

To open up to these revelations Maryon had to devote all her strength of will since she first had to learn German at a fast pace, then most often wait for the publication of the lectures since, due to her financial limitations, she could hardly afford to follow Rudolf Steiner throughout Europe in his lecturing tours.

When working on the Representative of Humanity Rudolf Steiner directed the sculptress to deepen her understanding of the prologue to the St. John Gospel by meditating upon it every morning and every evening, which she did gladly since it was her deepest desire to penetrate the Christ impulse to its very foundation. She reached the level of hearing the Word of cosmic

[12] Katherine Rudolph, *Edith Maryon: A Biographical Sketch* in Newsletter for Those Active and Interested in the Arts Section of the School of Spiritual Science, Autumn/Winter 2003.

origins resound in her soul. When she shared it with Steiner, the latter showed himself very pleased.[13] These experiences awakened first a deeper understanding of the being of the Savior and of the two adversaries. In order for Maryon to be fully able to work at the Group Rudolf Steiner explained to her that the Goetheanum was a Mystery temple, the large auditorium under the large cupola its "vestibule", the small auditorium under the small cupola its *sanctum* and the Group the inner *sanctum*. This must have resonated deeply in Maryon's soul since she had been part of, or had a share of understanding of, all aspects of the Goetheanum building, from the overall architecture to the forms of the columns and capitols, to the colored windows and the paintings in the cupolas.

Coming closer to the Christmas Meeting Rudolf Steiner penetrated further knowledge of the Christ impulse and of the adversaries as he was contemplating the impulse of the re-founding of the Mysteries. In a sense Maryon could follow this process from an artistic perspective in completing the features of Lucifer and Ahriman, particularly the way in which they connect to each other. Maryon also grew more and more conscious that in the Christ figure was also configured the aspect of the present, His reappearance in the etheric.

Maryon's work proceeded as a trial-and-error process in complementing the work on the Group by Rudolf Steiner. In the effort to portray such lofty spiritual beings as the adversaries and the Christ, she had to shed all her human limitations, all sympathy and antipathy, traces of personal flaws, plus the baggage of deeply inherited artistic canons of the time. Through these challenges Edith Maryon's soul grew in depth. Not surprisingly she deepened her understanding of the role of the adversaries in the present, the challenges and opportunities arising at a time of a new Christ revelation and the importance of the Christmas Meeting event.

Next to artistic matters Maryon was also absorbed by other anthroposophical matters, particularly the question of the threefold social order and matters of global consciousness. When Steiner published *Towards Social Renewal*, she immediately set out to translate it into English. Under this light it is of great interest to know that it was to Maryon that Rudolf Steiner first gave the motto of the social ethic, namely the one that expresses that "The healthy social life is found when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection and when in the community the virtue of

[13] Judith von Halle, *Sculpter dans le bois l'essence du Christ: Rudolf Steiner, Edith Maryon et la statue du Christ*, 68.

each one is living."[14] Maryon was also deeply concerned about the growth of anthroposophy in her home country. She helped prepare Rudolf Steiner's offering of the pedagogical course at the beginning of 1922 and made many other contributions to the growth of anthroposophy in England.

Artistic Perception: Forms and Feelings

To understand Edith Maryon's challenges and the uniqueness of her path, we will turn to the new Mystery art and then more specifically to sculpture. Some of Rudolf Steiner's indications offer us food for thought about what is ultimately expected in the realm of architecture or sculpture, and that to which Maryon's soul earnestly aspired. As an example, speaking about the far-reaching impact of forms Steiner indicates that out of the wholeness of the forms of the Goetheanum effects could be produced to such an extent that "… even if it should actually happen that someone's small-mindedness causes them to sneer or make a cross face, the eyes in this face will turn to the shared, peaceful forms of these buildings and, because forms engender thoughts, a smile of peace and contentment will smooth out such distortions of the countenance."[15]

True art in general, and anthroposophical in particular, aim beyond the purely representative, that kills the forces that are at play in Nature in a dynamic fashion, by offering only the frozen results present to the senses. An opposite tendency would take refuge in the symbolic/allegorical, but this one too rejects true artistic feeling.

Anthroposophical art goes into neither excess. A true artist does not just reproduce the external world; rather she lets its imprint bear upon her soul by changing it, transforming it, idealizing it and so forth, in other words offering something more than what is merely perceived. "That is precisely the essential thing, that art represents neither the sensual nor the supersensible, but the sensual-supersensible, something in which the sensual is directly mirrored by a supersensible experience."[16] In so doing art hints at the forces which are suppressed by the "higher life", which is to say the life of the mind.

The perception and conception of the external world takes place in artistic creation in a more refined way than in normal sensory perception. In fact "there is something spiritual in the way of perceiving and creating, which

[14] Peter Selg, *The Figure of Christ*, 128.
[15] Quoted in Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon, Rudolf Steiner and the Sculpture in Dornach*, 46.
[16] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 17 February, 1918.

freely intervenes and rules over perception and imagination and over what lives in the artist as memory and the content of memory."[17]

In some instances, artistic perception can come very close to true spiritual experience. Artists who seek to attain inspiration from the spirit, like storytellers, may speak of a truly living experience, of seeing characters/figures appear in front of their eyes and of how these respond and act when they engage with them. They have the feeling of entering in contact with these figures or even that these interact with each other. If this does not have a compulsive character Steiner indicates we find ourselves here in a borderline between artistic vision and seership.[18]

Apart from these rare examples, the more general theme is that there is a tendency in the life of soul for something to unconsciously rise from the depths that has an urge to manifest in consciousness as a vision. However, in a healthy individual this should not take place in normal consciousness. Steiner predicates that there is a fine line between aspiring for these visions and confining the wish to a striving without the visions arising. The latter is the healthy activity of soul. In confronting a work of true art our artistic sensitivity will dictate the need to confine to the depths of soul what wants to rise up as vision.

> "This work of art then, this outer form of what is thus striving to arise, will confine in a beneficial way to the depths of the soul what is actually wanting to become vision. We offer the soul, as it were from outside, the content of the vision, but we offer it a real work of art only if we are able out of our legitimate striving for the vision to divine what form, what plastic impression, we have to offer the soul to compensate for its longing after the visionary."[19]

Ultimately the above amounts to satisfying the need for the vision through Intuition:

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[17] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of May 5th, 1918.

[18] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lectures of May 5th and 6th, 1918 An interesting example in modern time is that of Owen Barfiled's two fairy tales of *The Silver Trumpet* and *The Rose on the Ash-Heap*. In these two early tales the content of Barfield's later work is preannounced in precise imaginations. For more detail see Luigi Morelli, *J. R. R. Tolkien, Owen Barfield and the Cosmic Christ,* Chapter 7. Another example is that of Frank Baum's writing of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Baum described quite clearly how the story and the characters conversed with his soul and how he could hardly change the course of what presented itself to his inner eye. For more detail see Luigi Morelli, *The Wizard of Oz and the High Tor Legend: Stories for America's Future* available at https://millenniumculmination.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/wizard-of-oz-and-high-tor-1.pdf.

[19] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of February 15, 1918.

> "What is visionary comes into being in the soul because the superphysical experience is pressing to discharge itself, is surging up out of the soul. *The outward experience that is spiritual experience, not through vision*—which in spiritual science is purified till it becomes Imagination—*but through Intuition*. Through the vision we place what is within us to a certain degree outside, so that the inner becomes in us the outer. *In Intuition we go outside ourselves—step out into the world*. This stepping out, however, remains an unreality as long as we are unable to set free what is spell-bound in nature and is always wishing to overcome nature by a higher life. If we made our way into what belongs to nature when this is freed from enchantment, we then live in Intuitions. In so far as these *Intuitions* prevail in art, they *are indeed connected with intimate experiences possible for the soul when, outside itself, it is united with external things*."[20] (emphasis added)

And further, through art we can free what is present in Nature, we can release what is kept in check by the higher life. Thus we can produce art that doesn't imitate, reproduce the external appearances. Instead of releasing visions we can nourish the soul by allowing it to perceive the deeper impulses at work in Nature through the fact that a higher life kills what lives in the lower impulses. And herein lies the secret which the sculptor perceives; he conjures the deeper essence from the human form. He discovers what has been overcome. It is under this perspective that Steiner brings up for example the polarity between the head and the rest of the body, of which more will be said shortly.

In the artistic mood the direction of the soul toward the world of the senses through perception, imagination and memory is not suppressed, rather it is deepened. In fact in the artist everything that has met him in the world continues to leave an imprint on the soul, and the more abundant and deeper these impressions are, the more creative will be his artistic output. His ability to imagine and remember will work in his artistic fantasy. In contrast with this, the spiritual researcher has to silence outer impressions and most of all the memories into which perception and imagination coalesce. Even the seer, however, only unfolds these activities when he deliberately sets out to live in the spiritual world. He knows the beginning

[20] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 15 February, 1918.

and end of such an activity, and otherwise lives in the ordinary world that we all know.

Artistic percpetion exalts the life of feeling. The following is worth quoting at length:

> "Now it may be said that *from a certain boundary of perceptive feeling*—from a lower boundary up to one that is higher, which in many people has to be first developed—*artistic feeling in life makes its appearance everywhere*. Even if not in the form of art itself *this feeling arises* when, in the ordinary physical existence met with in the world of the senses, what is super-physical and occult somehow makes its presence known. *It arises within the super-physical, the result of pure thought, what is feelingly perceived and experienced in spirit*—not by means of empty symbols or lifeless allegories but *as if it would itself take on life in a physical form—lights up in a form that is perceptible to the senses.* That what is ordinarily physical in everyday life has within it the super-physical, as if conjured there by magic—this is perceived by everyone who confines his mood of soul within the two boundaries mentioned."[21] (emphasis added)

And in artistic creation thought plays a marginal role:

> "If one avoids the thought and directly confronts the sensory form, one has established the connection between the human being and what has been artistically created, whereby the thought is eliminated. And one may say: That is precisely the essential thing, that art represents neither the sensual nor the supersensible, but the sensual-supersensible, something in which the sensual is directly mirrored by a supersensible experience."[22]

By avoiding the thought the artist seeks to recognize what lies enchanted in sense appearance, to recognize the parts that are suppressed by the higher life of soul and spirit. The same is true in artistic appreciation.

In the instance of the Group what is potential but suppressed by a higher life

> "… is depicted so that the whole form initially becomes gesture, and the gesture is then in turn brought to stillness. In sculpture the attempt has been made to awaken gesture suppressed in the

[21] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 15 February, 1918.
[22] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 17 February, 1918.

> ordinary human figure—not the gesture one makes to express the soul, but the gesture that is only deadened and suppressed in the soul through the life of the soul [the higher life], and then to bring it to stillness again. … By doing this we came very naturally to the sense that what is also predisposition but is self-evidently held back by higher life, the asymmetry that exists in every person—for no one is configured the same on their left side as on their right—could be accentuated more strongly."[23]

Nature then synthesizes a whole out of different drives and tendencies immediately concealed from sight, but this is no longer hidden to true artistic perception when it has developed a feeling for what is expressed in forms. What concerns the attempt to accentuate the aspects that are present externally in the asymmetry of the human body is fully explained in the following passage, which contributes greatly to an understanding of the Group:

> "When everything that exists as a predisposition or potential in the human form assumes form by sprouting forth from drives and desires, whereas otherwise it is overlaid by higher life—by the life of the mind or rational life that configures itself, realizes itself in the human head, then it is possible to unlock from nature the spell of its open secret, to draw this forth by representing parts, aspects, that nature otherwise deadens or kills in order to fashion a whole from them, to present these parts separately so that viewers of the work must accomplish in their sensibility what nature has otherwise performed before them. Nature has done all this. It really has attuned the human being, composed him from diverse separate parts into a harmonious whole. … Thus we become able, really, to be supernaturally naturalistic."

Obviously, this presenting of separate parts that normally work together under a higher guidance is what is rendered visible in the Representative of Humanity, to which we will return. Steiner gives an archetypal example of what he means above in the metamorphosis that takes place between the head and the skeleton, which can be discerned through a feeling perception through a feeling for form. "If you want to do more than observe nature in an abstract way but instead to bear the essence of nature herself *within your own feeling and sensibility*, thus *feeling the natural object* to be as it inevitably must, then it is self-evident that a vision of the skeleton of

[23] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 15 February 1918.

the head will arise for you out of the skeleton of the body."[24] (emphasis added) Here Steiner is depicting the feeling sensitivity that lived among others in Goethe.

In the head the sculptor perceives something that contains the whole human body and in the rest of the body something capable of being transformed into a human head. Moving on to the experience of sculpting the two parts, Steiner indicates that in modeling the head the sculptor has the feeling of being absorbed by a material that wants to draw her into itself, and that she is working out of it. Into sculpting the rest of the body the sculptor has the impression of pushing into the material from outside, that she is working inside it.[25]

Pursuing this polarity more fully and consciously from a spiritual scientific perspective, we know that in the head are present the forces that lived in the rest of the body of a previous incarnation, and what lives in our body will be transformed into a head in our next incarnation. Thus the sculptor is able to sense the great contrast of what lives in the past and in the future in the human body. "What the formative forces of the physical body are, and how they work from incarnation to incarnation, is expressed in plastic art. What is now seated deeper in the etheric body, which is our equilibrium carrier, the carrier of our dynamics, comes out more in architectural art."[26]

Before moving on to Maryon's path to the Christ being in sculpture it will be useful to mention some of the premises that apply to the understanding of Christ and the adversaries in the Representative of Humanity. The Group has been described by Rudolf Stiener in his 1915 lectures as "Representative of the highest human nature that could develop on earth." or the "Christ-permeated human being."[27] The Representative of Humanity stands not only for the Resurrected Christ but also for the one who announces the reappearance of the Christ being in modern time and in the future. In fact he could be said to represent the future Jupiter Christ-permeated human being.

The Christ is situated between Lucifer and Ahriman but he does not bring about their fall since there is nothing aggressive in him, because there is no hate, nor unjustified love in the Christ being. It is the two adversaries themselves who recoil from Christ, who cannot endure His presence. Lucifer plunges downward because of his inner brokenness. He cannot endure the

[24] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 15 February 1918.
[25] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 12 September, 1918.
[26] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 12 September, 1918.
[27] Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 68.

purity emanating from Christ. Nor can Ahriman stand the pure compassion of Christ and therefore he fastens himself even more strongly to the physical element. He contracts and twists himself because of what lives in his own being.



Steiner expressed that there is a deep tragedy at play for example in the hands of Ahriman, a great pain and longing. At the same time there is something that can be felt artistically: Ahriman is contorted, cramped, hardened; he tends to become smaller than the human being. The contrary is true for Lucifer, whose being expands into the realm of the cosmic music, the sound ether. In both adversaries lies the seed of their demise. In essence then Christ acts upon them solely by nature of who and what He is.

Edith Maryon had to try to approximate these exalted feelings, for example in wiping out all trace of pride in the Christ being, or in erasing all sentimentality which came from the styles she had been steeped in. This path complemented all that she consciously absorbed from anthroposophy.

Edyth Maryon's Artistic Path to the Christ Being

In the discovery of all the above Rudolf Steiner's and Edith Maryon's collaboration rests on one of those secrets of world history that Judith von Halle has rendered explicit. On one side was an initiate with clairvoyant perception. On the other a human being who had walked alongside Christ at the time of Golgotha—one who had witnessed His suffering and His resurrection, even if she may not have been to able to consciously recall all these memories in any other form than a dream.[28]

In light of the above their encounter and collaboration was part of world karma, when we consider the fundamental impulse that was present in the first-ever sensible-supersensible representation of the Christ being. No artistic work of earlier times had grappled with the historical/supersensible countenance of the Christ being. Steiner commented that in spiritual realism "It is not a matter of merely symbolic representation but rather of every trait in the three beings being drawn in every minutest detail from spiritual-scientific vision."[29] Here in effect he is pointing to a sculptural process that goes beyond anything that Maryon alone could have achieved, as we will see below.

We can look at the collaboration between Steiner and Maryon as the quintessential coming together of two polar views of the supersensible based around how conscious the process can become. On one hand we have the initiate who can witness consciously and report exactly what he sees, on the other the gift of the sculptor to reach into the forms present in the human body and their genesis and is able to raise what lives in the

[28] Judith von Halle, *Sculpter dans le bois l'essence du Christ*, 30-31.
[29] Rudolf Steiner, *Human Destinies and the Destinies of Nations*, lecture of 10 June 1915.

unconscious into the finished artistic product consciously achieved. Rudolf Steiner revealed that he had in effect requested, or compelled, the adversaries to "pose" for the artistic rendition of the Group.[30] In so doing these felt exposed and unmasked and this did not please them. They sought revenge, as we will see in the case of Lucifer.

The above points to how different was Rudolf Steiner's process from what would have been Edith Maryon's one. As we said, whereas in artistic creation such things intervene as subconscious perceptions and memories, truly supersensible knowledge is completely detached from perceptions, from ordinary thinking and from memory. Ultimately, the difference between supersensible perception and knowledge and artistic creation lies in the fact that the former draws nothing from the forces of the body.

> "Thus we can say that basically the sources from which the artist draws, who is to be taken seriously and has a relationship to reality, are the same sources from which the seer draws, to whom only that which is to remain an impulse in its effect now appears in consciousness, while when the impulse remains in the subconscious, he brings up what is brought to view by the artist."[31]

Something more can be gleaned from the initiate's perspective in considering art. Whereas normal phenomena are explored completely beyond the sphere of the senses, there is a difference in the experience of the seer between exploring a sensory phenomenon or a work of art.

> "When confronted with a sensory phenomenon, the seer is always able to exclude sensory perceptions and memories, but not when confronted with a work of art. Even though everything that can be perceived or imagined is of course excluded, the seer is always left with important inner content that he can neither exclude nor wants to exclude. The work of art gives something that turns out to be related to his seership."[32]

The initiate cannot exclude some of the inner content of the work of art when he places himself in the state of vision. In each artistic discipline Rudolf Steiner finds something that is akin to what he experiences in spiritual research. He finds a different aspect of the whole in architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry, provided these be genuine artistic

[30] Judith von Halle, *Sculpter dans le bois l'essence du Christ*, 23.
[31] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 6 May, 1918.
[32] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 5 May, 1918.

expressions permeated by true artistic feeling. In looking in broad brushstrokes at the arts as a whole this is what Steiner has to say:

> For those who can perceive it in the right way, painting becomes a revelation of the spiritual world that surrounds us in space and permeates us from space, in which we find ourselves between falling asleep and waking up. Sculpture and architecture bear witness to the spiritual world that we live through between death and a new birth before conception, before birth; music and poetry bear witness to how we live through life post mortem, after death. In this way, that which is our share in the spiritual world penetrates into our ordinary physical life on earth.[33]

In genuine artistic expression the initiate finds objective forces he employs in his spiritual inquiries, different ones according to each art. We will return in more detail to what these are in the realm of sculpture.

In essence seer and artist do something similar. The artist tries to incorporate the laws of the world into the material but he does so unconsciously. The seer tries to apprehend the spiritual consciously.

> "And what works and weaves as an independent spiritual reality, unconsciously by the artist, consciously by the seer, is what is common to the seer's perception of the world and the artist's creation, except that it is also expressed spiritually by the seer, and by the artist, because he cannot express it, but only has it unconsciously in his hands, in his imagination, to which 'material can be incorporated.'"[34]

What is expressed above leaves room for new impulses, such as the aspiration to unite conscious spiritual research with the artistic process, which will become more and more important in the future.

> "But we live in an age in which, through the historical necessity of human development, the soul is pushed to transform into consciousness what was naively present in the subconscious. Only those who increasingly transform the unconscious into the free grasp of the conscious understand the times in which we live."[35]

Rudolf Steiner offers us an example of an individual pursuing a conscious deepening of the artistic impulse in the character of Johannes Thomasius, a pupil of the initiate Benedictus, in his *Mystery Dramas*. When Johannes

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[33] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 12 September, 1918.
[34] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of June 1st, 1918.
[35] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 5 May, 1918.

makes a portrait of his friend Capesius, the latter is deeply moved. His friend Strader confesses that "… Capesius, whom I thought I knew, is for the first time revealed to me. I thought I knew him well. The portrait shows me clearly how little I have really known of him."[36] This scene and other ones offer us a sense of how deeply the artistic path can become a path of self-knowledge.

The difference between master and pupil in the achievement of the Group is a shining example of the above. Maryon wasn't a merely passive disciple. She too was trying to deepen her conscious spiritual perception, witness the example given above of her work with the prologue of St. John. Obviously we are at the beginning of a long process and even an artist as accomplished and perceptive as Maryon only walked the first steps of it.

Sculpture, Spiritual Research and the Group

The goal of the Group that Maryon and Steiner attempted to achieve was "Firstly to reunite at a higher level in the central figure something that is also united in the human being, but by nature herself, where the member parts are suppressed or destroyed by a higher principle."[37] In referring to the Group Rudolf Steiner offers two examples of what would happen by enlarging the influence of one part into the rest of the body. If, sculpturally speaking one enlarges the human trunk into the whole human being, "Then we would have living in the outer form what rises from the trunk into the head as drives and instincts, which we could call the Luciferic." Lucifer tends to extend especially what lives in the middle sphere of heart and lungs and invade with it the forces of the head which it renders softer, in similarity with the organization of the middle sphere. Lucifer's wings are inflated and expanded in such a way that they resemble oversize ears that listen into the tone ether, into the harmony of the spheres.

Referring to the other pole, the Ahrimanic, Steiner adds: "On the other hand, what seeks in the human head to become a whole human being, becomes ossified and rigidified when we elaborate it into a whole human figure."[38] Here he is referring to the Ahrimanic pole in which the qualities of the head take hold of the middle and lower sphere and harden them excessively. Ahriman renders them as hard as they would be in the skull, and consequently his wings too are sclerotized, ossified.

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[36] Rudolf Steiner, *The Portal of Initiation*, Scene 8.
[37] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 15 February 1918.
[38] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 15 February 1918.

Steiner concludes "Here the sensory-super sensory view of the human being makes it possible to recreate in separate figures what nature herself secretly composes in the single human form."[39] Whereas we have in Christ something partly physical, partly spiritual, Ahriman and Lucifer are entirely spiritual.

> "Lucifer and Ahriman are entirely gesture and entirely facial expressiveness. Spirit figures do not have finished and circumscribed forms. … In the figures of Lucifer and Ahriman, therefore, nothing but gesture has been fashioned, and to a degree we had to attempt this for the central figure also, who is of course a physical figure, that of Christ Jesus."

It's in dealing with spiritual figures that asymmetry comes most strongly into play. However, as Sergei Prokofieff has highlighted, asymmetry also manifests in the central figure of the Group.

The asymmetry in the Representative of Humanity can be noticed with the forms on the right side of the forehead and the wavelike forms on his chest. This relates to the connection of the spiritual forces of the heart and head as described in the fourth panel of the Foundation Stone Meditation and with the knowledge of the phenomenon of etherization of the blood. "[The three streams issuing from the heart] stream towards one another almost as a matter of course and achieve the union of wisdom and love in a mighty, upward flowing form which connects the head and heart of the representative of humanity to one another in a threefold way."[40] Here is depicted the etherization of the blood in the heart which streams toward the head.

Something more can be said about the new sheaths of the Christ being becoming the spirit of the Earth in our time as it represents the future human being. This is the importance of wonder/astonishment, compassion and conscience in fashioning respectively His astral, etheric and physical bodies. To penetrate to the form of Christ's head "If you seek to portray the Christ you must not look upon something that is already in existence, but you must allow to work within you, must inwardly imbue yourself with everything that a spiritual contemplation of the world's spiritual evolution can endow you with through the three important impulses of wonder, compassion and conscience."[41] The figure shows compassion in His eyes, and

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[39] Ibid.
[40] Sergei Prokofieff, *Rudolf Steiner's Sculptural Group: A Revelation of the Spiritual Purpose of Humanity and the Earth*, Chapter 6, The Mystery of the Etherization of the Blood and the Figure of the Representative of Humanity.
[41] Rudolf Steiner, *Earthly and Cosmic Man*, lecture of *14 May 1912*.

in the forehead a great capacity for wonder at the mysteries of the world. Such head as the one of the Group is an ideal that cannot be found among present-day humanity.

To conclude, the Group represents something unprecedented in art history as was underlined by Rudolf Stiener on April 9, 1923:

> "A nine-meter-high sculptural Group in wood, in which Christ is portrayed as the Representative of Humanity between the temptations of Ahriman and Lucifer, was to sum up everything that lived in the forms of the Goetheanum and all that could ever have been said there or artistically presented."[42]

Edyth Maryon and the Path of Spirit Mindfulness through the Arts

The beginning of the work with the Group took place two and a half years after Rudolf Steiner first spoke about it. In this endeavor Edith Maryon collaborated with Steiner in ways similar to how Ita Wegman worked with him in the writing of *Fundamentals of Therapy*. Maryon came up with the first plasticine model of the Group. Rudolf Steiner molded the next model. Maryon enlarged this first to three feet, then to six feet. Steiner duplicated the figures of Lucifer and Ahriman in the following fifth model. There was a last small and final sixth model, close to what we now know.[43] With each model Maryon learned to modify her relationships to the adversaries. An example: even up to model sixth she had incorporated a gesture of aversion toward Lucifer, which Steiner wanted to temper down and transform so that no hint of aggression would be present.

Beside her relationship to sculpture, Maryon confronted in the Christ being a very particular subject to portray. In everything connected with the Christ being the soul has to be deeply stirred inwardly, deeply moved. This is how Steiner expresses himself in *The Fifth Gospel*:

> "What is important is to develop a living feeling of what the soul of Jesus underwent in experiencing what has been described here; to enter with feeling into the pain of loneliness, of endless pain... The importance of Jesus' experience as preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha is something you can come to know not so much through recounting to yourselves or others the events I try to

[42] Rudolf Steiner, *What Did the Goetheanum Want to Accomplish and What is the Purpose of Anthroposophy?*, quoted in Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 179.
[43] Judith von Halle and John Wilkes, *The Representative of Humanity between Lucifer and Ahriman*, 57.

> describe, but really only by gaining a vivid picture which profoundly moves and shakes your soul: a picture of what this man Jesus of Nazareth has to suffer before he could approach the Mystery of Golgotha, so that the Christ impulse could flow into earthly evolution."[44]

Peter Selg points out to other places where Steiner offers similar indications. An example: "People will have to exchange the spirit of what is merely thought for the spirit of immediate vision, of immediate feeling for an experience of the spiritually living Christ who walks beside all human souls."[45] And further: "From the twentieth century onwards the life of Christ will increasingly be felt in human souls as a direct personal experience."[46]

The above is all the more true in looking at the Representative of Humanity, in which the soul has to be moved to say:

> "This is the Christ being. But this also requires an artistic sensibility. It should not be a merely intellectually spent thought—oh yes, that's Christ. Rather *it has to be felt*. The whole is conceived artistically, and what comes to artistic expression in the forms is the most important thing. *In a purely feeling way, with exclusion of intellect if you like—which ought only to guide us toward feeling*, this should invite a person to look toward the East and say, 'That art thou.'"[47] (emphasis added)

The above does not detract from the fact that the Group can only be understood from the culture that generated it. The same could be said for the work of Raphael, Michelangelo or any other great artist. They can only be understood from the background of the culture that they lived in.

Edith Maryon grew in her artistic understanding of the Christ figure and His relationship to the adversaries, by strengthening her life of feeling, by relinquishing all attachment to old forms and by accepting how short she could be from the goal. We saw that Maryon had to slowly overcome the gesture of aversion from the Christ being toward Lucifer in model after model. No doubt, her understanding of Christ thus grew in purely artistic fashion. The artist's transformation and overcoming was also underscored by some touching and humorous episodes. An example of Maryon's humility and willingness to stand aside came about when she was chided by Rudolf

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[44] Rudolf Steiner, *The Fifth Gospel*, lecture of 18 December 1913.
[45] Rudolf Steiner, *Precursors to the Mystery of Golgotha*, lecture of 14 October 1913, quoted in Peter Selg, *The Figure of Christ*, 43.
[46] Rudolf Steiner *Precursors to the Mystery of Golgotha*, lecture of 2 May, 1913.
[47] Rudolf Steiner, *The Mysteries of Light, of Space, and of the Earth*, lecture of 13 December, 1919, quoted in Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 73.

Steiner approaching the Group after a long absence. It was recorded by Assya Turgenieff: "'This English Lord is not my Christ,' [Steiner] said laughing; 'My Christ is not so muscular, he has no fat on him.' And energetically he drove his chisel into the lovely form. No trace of annoyance, nor any sense of hurt at all could be discerned in Miss Maryon."[48]

Overall Rudolf Steiner acknowledged how far Maryon had gone on the artistic path thus:

> "In the process it is often difficult to overcome contradictions that arise from the clash between customary forms of art and new intentions. With Maryon I could collaborate in sculptural form without this clash having any significance. For her, the freely felt necessity for the work to be created stood above and beyond all possible artistic opinion. And sustained by this feeling, Maryon allowed all that she was accustomed to in art stream into the new impulses in quiet yet energetic fashion."[49]

From the above we have a living understanding of how much the carving of the Group implied for Maryon's soul. Here she was approaching through her feelings for form something that she first had to awake into a stirring experience in her soul. She had absorbed everything that the Christ being had endured and suffered before being able to transcend and had to convey it in art over the space of many years.

Steiner and Maryon's collaboration was for the most that of master and pupil, one rendered possible by the deep reverence and humility of the English woman. However, it was at time an equal relationship, or exceptionally one in which the terms were reversed. We mentioned earlier that Rudolf Steiner had somehow obliged the adversaries to sit and pose for him. Lucifer's vengeance came about when Steiner was explaining to Maryon the gesture of Lucifer's falling. If Maryon hadn't been present and fully alert, Steiner would have fallen from the scaffolding onto a sharply pointed column of metal that would have likely killed him. Judith von Halle depicts how this happened: "Rudolf Steiner performed an arm movement in front of the upper falling figure of Lucifer in order to emphasize for Edith Maryon what he had been saying. Whilst doing this he almost fell from the scaffolding—in the same way as Lucifer was falling in the model presentation—but

[48] Quoted in Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 86.
[49] Rudolf Steiner, *Correspodence with Edith Maryon*, 1912-1924, quoted in Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 76.

in the nick of time Edith Maryon prevented this happening."[50] As a consequence of this incident and its prevention, according to Assja Turgenieff, Rudolf Steiner explained in that he was now "karmically connected" with Maryon.[51] This also meant that the pupil had now the complete trust of the master and whatever changes she made on the statue were vouchsafed by Steiner's implicit assent.

We can now look at the subtler aspects of Edith Maryon's karma. In first instance her health was always precarious, giving substance to Steiner's claim about the obstacles posed by the body to the full manifestation of her capacities. Already during the Easter weeks of 1914, Dr. Felkin indicated that in Dornach, previous to returning to visit London, she could have succumbed to tuberculosis.[52]

Steiner guided Edith Maryon to overcome two of her shortcomings: fear and dissatisfaction. He indicated that through the overcoming of fear she could render heart and lung healthy and by dispelling dissatisfaction she would bring healing to the lung apex, concluding in a note: "To accept circumstances with composure heals the workings of the digestion and regulates blood circulation."[53] In Maryon's soul two challenges were playing out through which she needed to find balance between the adversaries. The Luciferic dissatisfaction with aspects of her life—such as her financial limitations hampering her desire to follow Steiner in his lecture tours, the limitations imposed by her health and consequently being bound to life in Dornach—was contrasted by the fear generated by the Ahrimanic pole, fear that in her youth was close to continuous fright, as we have seen. Here was lived out the tension of soul of a particular human being between the two adversaries.

The Goetheanum fire was a great trial for Maryon's soul and consequently for her body. Judith von Halle indicates that after witnessing powerless the death of her beloved teacher at Golgotha, she was now witnessing Rudolf Steiner's weakening and slow death due to the poisoning.[54] Ironically, it was Maryon herself who phoned Steiner to inform him about the Goetheanum fire. This became the seed of her further suffering and untimely death. The fire had brought about the destruction of her life's work and the changes that she saw in Steiner's being must have been extremely taxing

[50] Judith von Halle and John Wilkes, *The Representative of Humanity between Lucifer and Ahriman*, 52-53.
[51] Quoted in Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 79.
[52] Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 50.
[53] Quoted in Peter Selg, *Edith Maryon*, 175.
[54] Judith von Halle, *Sculpter dans le bois l'essence du Christ*, 37.

since we know how much she fretted at the risks her master took prior to the Goetheanum fire.

Rudolf Steiner had received a premonition of the Goetheanum's doom and wanted to prepare Maryon inwardly to confront the shock. To that end, in December of 1922 he gave her a mantric verse to protect her from too great a shock:

When human beings discover the way the world
dispersed endlessly in atoms
they accepted an understanding of the death of nature;
They should now strive to find in spirit what will overcome
the dead remains, and they will direct their understanding
to the world becoming.[55]

The verse apparently offered Maryon "a new direction for the Group." After the fire Rudolf Steiner pointed to Maryon that the essence of the Goetheanum still survived in the Group after the fire "They have not been able to take the essence of it away from us."[56] We can surmise that Steiner was trying to infuse Maryon with new strength in pursuing her mission in spite of all obstacles.

When her etheric body suffered from the blow of the fire Steiner himself took care of Maryon's health. He visited her at her sickbed for over a year and even then their artistic collaboration deepened. This caused some envy and resentment among other collaborators.

Maryon's willpower had collapsed with the disappearance of the Mystery temple project, so close to her life's mission, and she succumbed to a tuberculosis of the lungs on May 2, 1924, an echo of what she had already suffered ten years earlier.

Still hoping for recovery, she had consented to heading the Fine Arts Section of the School of Spiritual Science. In referring to this Steiner mentioned "… to her the esoteric sphere was of the utmost importance, and she lived within it with the greatest intensity during the years she was among us on the physical plane..."[57] The esoteric path and the arts formed a pivot around which turned much of the English woman's life. We will close our exploration by looking at the path of the sculptor and how it converges with what we have called Spirit Mindfulness (also called "Spirit-Awareness" or "Spirit-

[55] Judith von Halle and John Wilkes, *The Representative of Humanity between Lucifer and Ahriman*, 88.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid, 83.

Sensing”) of the second panel of the Foundation Stone Meditation, the one that is characterized as the path to truly feeling.

Soul of Man!
You live within the beat of heart and lung,
Which leads you through the rhythms of Time
Into your own soul-nature's weaving feeling:
Practise spirit-awareness
In balance of the soul,
Where the on-surging
Deeds of world-becoming
One's own I
And I of world Unite;
And you shall truly feel
In the soul-working of Man.

For the Will of Christ in all around holds sway
In the world rhythms bestowing grace on souls:
Ye Spirits of Light
Let from the east flame up
What through the west takes form;
This resounds:
In Christ death becomes life.
This the spirits hear in east, west, north, south.
May men hear it.

Whereas the transformation of our thinking takes place in the “quietness of the head” and the transformation of our will quite logically in our limbs, which express themselves in motion, here motion is expressed in a way that appears outwardly at rest. It is present in rhythm, an inner motion.

In the contrast of the first and third panel we live in the contrast between the “ocean being of the spirit” and the “ground of eternity.” To the contrast between the world of space and eternity, we find in between that of “the rhythms of time.” And the activity of feeling expresses itself, not in depths of soul, nor in quietness of the head but in a more dynamic expression of equilibrium, found in the expression “balance of the soul,” qualitatively reminiscent of the rhythms of time.

We can now contrast the path of the second stanza in Spirit Mindfulness with the probably most well-known path of transformation of our thinking, or Spirit Beholding. We can see the contrast in the way Rudolf Steiner worked at recognizing the adversaries and Maryon deepened her way into Christology through the sculpting of the Group. To start with let us look at some characteristics of spiritual vision that are common to the artistic experience of scultping.

In pure spiritual vision a completely different thinking arises that flows from feeling and willing. It's a thinking in forms that could "represent forms of the distribution of power in space, proportions in space."[58] It is a thinking that bears a kinship to true sculptural and architectural creations. And we can recognize what the feeling for forms of the artist represents in relation to the activity of the initiate. "He who wants to penetrate into the spiritual world must have something as a thinker, which creates plastic or architectural, but living forms in himself. Through this one comes to the conclusion that the artist enters into an experience of forms in the subconscious." These forms strive to rise to the surface of consciousness of the artist and this explains how architect and sculptor create their works of art.

> "The only difference is that what underlies the architectonic and sculptural work as the essential form-giving element arises from subconscious impulses, and that the seer discovers these impulses as what he needs to grasp the great interrelations of the spiritual world. … And what he, as a seer, sees through and lives through, that lives in an unconscious way in the architect and sculptor, permeating his work as he creates it."[59]

In the path of Spirit Beholding that humanity can follow at present we can take the first steps of initiation that allow us to cross the threshold consciously and transform our daily thinking into Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. This is not what Maryon was doing, at least not what she was doing through the discipline of sculpting since this comes from an ability that lives more in the unconscious, even though she can lift it to consciousness through a feeling for form.

Rudolf Steiner leads us to something more specific in the process of sculpting, which he relates to the sense of balance and its related senses of movement or of touch. What he says is very pertinent to the way of working of both Steiner himself and Maryon, and the way they complemented each other.

> "Of the senses of balance and movement we only have a limited awareness, an awareness much lower than the one relating to seeing or hearing. The two kinestethic senses are not only related to our inner life, but they convey us a sense of belonging to the cosmos. They tell us where we are in relation to the cosmos, they give us the feeling of being part of the whole world. They do so in

[58] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 5 May, 1918.
[59] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 5 May, 1918.

> such a way that we can say: 'man in his movement is constructed as a microcosm out of the macrocosm and experiences as a microcosm his being placed in the macrocosm through such a sense.'"[60]

The above experiences are unconsciously present in and artisitically expressed by architect and sculptor. "The seer does nothing other than to bring this sense of placing oneself in the world to full consciousness. He develops it in the same way that the architect, the sculptor, is artistically prompted by what he feels in his body to shape as forms in the external material."[61]

The sculptor gives form to what is unconscious or suppressed (e.g. the sense of movement in the perception of the eye).

> "The sculptor actually models forms which the eye indeed sees but sees so dimly that this dim vision remains in the subconscious. The sculptor makes use of that point where the sense of touch is just passing over into the sense of sight. Therefore he must, or will anyway try to, reduce the quiescent form, which to the one-sided eye is only an object, to reduce this form to gesture that is always inciting imitation of itself, and then to bring back this gesture, that has been thus conjured up, into a state of rest."[62]

What appears outwardly in architectonic forms (column, beam, capital, etc.) and in sculpture is experienced by the observer inwardly. The feelings experienced with architecture and sculpture are very similar to the inner process of remembering, but a recalling of a higher level than the daily one. They point to the pre-birth memories experienced subconsciously. What lives in the realm between death and a bew birth is recreated in both arts. The above points in fact to the origin of the two arts in the attempt to bring in front of our eyes what lived in the soul in relation to the experiences underwent before birth.[63] And in Maryon some of these pointed to her living experience of the Christ being at Golgotha.

In conclusion, Edith Maryon's personal development offers us an under-standing of what it means to follow a coherent path of self-development that leads to an understand of the Christ being through art. In this instance both process and content mutually strengthen each other. Not only does the artistic process move the soul through feeling, so does the deeper

[60] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of June 1st, 1918.
[61] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of June 1st, 1918.
[62] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 15 February, 1918.
[63] Rudolf Steiner, *Understanding Art*, lecture of 12 September, 1918

understanding of and loving participation into the Christ Mystery that lived in earnestness in Maryon's soul. What touches us deeply in our feelings in art is mirrored by the content of the Christ subject which must deeply stir our soul and deeper being.

In the path of Spirit Mindfulness (truly feeling) that we have portrayed we find an intermediate stage between Spirit Beholding (truly thinking) and Spirit Recollection (truly living). On one hand thinking leads us to what is most conscious and truly universal, whereas truly living addresses what is most unconscious and purely individual to start with. In Spirit Mindfulness, in this case through sculpture, we find the spiritual expressed in a material medium through a highly developed individual quality that lives in the sub-conscious. What is supersensible is manifested in the sense-perceptible. What is manifested in art becomes universal, though it still keeps the individual stamp of the artist.

This path led Edith Maryon to the status of becoming a full co-worker, not only a pupil, with Rudolf Steiner in the artistic realm. Maryon was a sculptress who developed a great "*feeling perception*", a feeling for form. " She was able to work *"in a purely feeling way, with exclusion of intellect* … safe for that *which ought only to guide us toward feeling*." She shows us an example of an individual walking with assurance the path of Spirit Mindfulness, one who did so in "balance of the soul" and in full devotion to the "Christ-will."