

SIMONE WEIL'S ROAD TO GOD THROUGH BEAUTY

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Abstract: The Christian art played a crucial role in Simone Weil's conversion. Her refined sense of beauty was often in raptures guiding her closer to God as a result. Weil discovered beauty primarily in nature and subsequently in works of art. She also came to appreciate it in other people, church services and the virtues taught by Jesus Christ. She would transfer all these experiences and revelations into spiritual and ethical dimensions along the lines of Kantian and Platonic philosophy and aesthetics.

Keywords: contemplation of beauty, sense of aesthetics, deus absconditus, ethic, contemplation or possession, decreation

1. "The Word of Beauty Addresses All Hearts"²

Simone Weil is a highly exciting and, at the same time, controversial character of the 20th century, whose philosophy is definitely permeated by Christian impulses. Her philosophy attracted the attention of many. She is controversial, because she defies any attempt at categorization. She was born into a Jewish family, but gave up her connections with Judaism. She was a Marxist, but did not believe in revolution. She often appeared to be agnostic, but her most important desire was to reach truth and knowledge. She was a philosopher who did not create a system. Weil considered herself as a Christian, but she had balked at baptism for a very long time. One of her outstanding and lasting merits is that she was a fully trustworthy person, who always adhered to her principles and beliefs, so "we are

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² WEIL, S., *Vorchristliche Schau* 1941/42, quoted by BETZ, O., *Schönheit spricht zu allen Herzen. Das Simone-Weil-Lesebuch*, (Hrsg. BETZ, O.), München 2009, 20.

all able to learn a lot from her.”³ Her trustworthiness, credibility and authentic personality are reflected by her works, lifestyle, and her attitude to sufferers.⁴

One of Simon Weil’s objectives was improving people’s sense of aesthetics, leading them to beauty. In a lot of her writings we find her intention to relay a new way of seeing and feeling to others. For Weil, showing beauty to others is not merely done within the framework of aesthetics; it is embedded into a religious dimension. The beauty of the created world and that of the works of art all talk about the deeds of God to Simone Weil. For her, beauty and God are often the same. Aesthetics thus become a key in the hands of man in the quest for supernatural truths, and beauty is revealed as ”the most enigmatic mystery on Earth,” and it is not simply a subjective judgment, but a ”fact”.⁵ Since Weil’s philosophy does not constitute an organized system, her ideas regarding beauty cannot be arranged into a strictly systematic framework of aesthetics. As we shall see, Weil’s goals did not include the intention of providing more and more exact definitions of beauty. Instead, with some sort of a therapeutic intention, she wished to open human eyes to beauty.

At her youth, the French philosopher clearly regarded herself as an agnostic and atheist, who ”did not wish to talk about something she did not know.” Her first serious religious experiences were attached to her journeys in Portugal and Italy, where her permanent travelling companion was the beauty of land and artifacts. In Milan she saw Leonardo da Vinci’s mural *The Last Supper*, and later she commented that ”she could spend her entire life in front of the painting”. Weil found the face of Jesus the most important element of the composition, as

³ Cf. BETZ, O., *Schönheit spricht zu allen Herzen. Das Simone-Weil-Lesebuch*. (Hrsg. BETZ, O.), München 2009, 10-11.

⁴ Katalin Füzesséry summarizes Weil’s life: she worked in the Renault factory, in Spain she fought on the side of the Republicans, her lungs were not healthy and she was tortured by permanent headaches, but at work she kept pace with the hardworking peasants. When, with her whole family, she fled to America to escape the German occupants, she expressed her solidarity with those suffering at home by only eating as much as the food rations were in occupied France. She had the best time when she was able to anonymously mingle with the poor and outcasts of society. Cf. FÜZESSÉRY K., „A kegyelem és a nehézkedési erő”, in *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (translated by: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 308-317.

⁵ WEIL, S., *Vorchristliche Schau 1941/42*, quoted by BETZ, O., *Schönheit spricht zu allen Herzen. Das Simone-Weil-Lesebuch*. (Hrsg. BETZ, O.), München 2009, 130, 132.

it always drew the attention of the spectator to Christ. The face radiates the utmost calm and transcendental. Weil spent a considerable time in Umbria, where she walked in the footsteps of Saint Francis. The cities of Perugia and Assisi impressed the philosopher, who also found Giotto's murals that she saw in Florence extraordinary. Weil had similar experiences in France, where she visited the Benedictine monastery of Solesmes. She spent a Good Friday in the monastery.⁶ After such experiences she often made positive remarks about the beauty of the melodies and words of the songs performed at Catholic liturgies. Simone Weil was blessed with a sophisticated sense of beauty, and in her philosophical work she attributed "a sacred function to beauty".⁷ It is aptly illustrated by the fact that she keeps incorporating ethical elements as important points into the discussions of beauty.

2. Beauty as Determination Innate in Material

In the works of the French philosopher beauty is a phenomenon that simply captures humans, since somebody who is beholding a beautiful sight often forgets about themselves and the surrounding world, abandoning themselves into that sight completely. In order to explain the process how beauty captures humans, Weil uses a mythological story, in which the way Persephone is captured symbolizes how humans are captured, it describes the helplessness and ecstasy caused by beauty. Demeter's daughter is playing in a picturesque field, redolent hyacinths and other flowers are smiling around her, she is taken into an embrace by the whole world and the oceans. Persephone stretches her hand to pick a flower, *and immediately falls into the trap of Hades; she is in the hands of a god. When she escaped, she ate the seeds of the pomegranate, and committed herself for the whole her life: she became the consort of the god. Persephone is the symbol of the soul captivated by the beauty of the world.*⁸ At other places captivity means the trap of God in which man opens his soul for something transcendental. "The

⁶ Cf. BETZ, O., *Schönheit spricht zu allen Herzen. Das Simone-Weil-Lesebuch*. (Hrsg. BETZ, O.), München 2009, 21-25.

⁷ VETŐ M., Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája, (La métaphysique religieuse de Simone Weil, Paris, Vrin 1971, translated by BENDE J.) L'Harmattan, 2005, 117.

⁸ WEIL, S., *Attente de Dieu* 122. Translation VETŐ, M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 120-121.

natural attraction of human souls to the love of beauty is God's most common trap that He uses to open human souls for divine messages."⁹

The beauty that captures us is most easily observed in nature, the material world surrounding us. For Weil, the most important element in antique philosophy is the powerful presence of the beauty of the world in it. Greek Stoicism was impressed by the order of the cosmos, its cyclical and regulated nature. In the regularity of natural processes they saw harmony. Early Christianity entered into this Stoic sense of beauty. Christians at the same time saw before them the descriptions of beauty found in the books of the Old Testament. The Psalms, the books of Job, Isaiah, the Proverbs all talk about the beauty of the world. Weil attributes great importance to the life of Saint Francis, since the example of the saint's simple life exemplifies what an *"important role the beauty of the world played in the real Christian spirit. Not only is the poem a perfect one, but his entire life is a perfect poem in itself, manifested in deeds and action. It is well illustrated by his choice of a place for lonely meditation and his choice of the places where monasteries were to be erected. [...] He even converted wandering and poverty into poetry; he became naked in order to be able to get into a direct contact with the beauty of the world."*¹⁰ The saint of Umbria in fact wandered around as a beggar because in this way he was able to directly experience the beauty of the world.¹¹

In an analysis of the beauty of the world, Weil grasps the essence of beauty in the determination of the material constituting the universe. All material processes are, as it is well-known, subject to the laws of nature. The laws determine and shape the processes and their future. The laws of nature are looked upon as binding forces that cannot be escaped, and that is what provides the order and balance of the world, as all small building blocks of the material world obey to the same laws. Everything that exists in the world is subject to mechanical laws, and these laws are just as blind and predictable as the laws of free fall. Weil believes that the most important moment in the act of creation is that God transfers his power to the laws of natural determination, and the material manifests itself

⁹ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejklik az Isten, in *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 133.

¹⁰ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejklik az Isten, in *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 131.

¹¹ Cf. WEIL, S., Ahol elrejklik az Isten, in *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 137.

in accordance with the natural laws and determination. "Determination is the boundary that God drew around chaos," and "that is what rules over the world", and permeates, as an arranging principle, the entire nature. Therefore everything that takes place in the material world is necessary and pre-determined, and this pre-determination of the material world is received directly from God.¹² "When we are on our own out in nature, and we are able to concentrate, something makes us love what surrounds us, although it only consists of rough, motionless, deaf and dumb material. The more obvious and tangible determination is, in the shape of mountains, formed by gravitation, the waves of the sea, or the movement of the stars, the more powerfully the beauty of nature will reach us."¹³ We thus have a sense of beauty attached to the cosmos in which the constitutive element, that is, the blind obedience of material to the natural laws, shines through as beauty as such. It is also to be noted that the love of nature, the love of universe is easy to learn and it is the most universal love, since all people are beholders of nature.

3. Beauty as a Medium and its Grades

Simone Weil uses the beauty of the material world, the obedience of the material to the laws of nature, to improve human existence. When we contemplate the determination of the world, our appropriate behaviour is affectionate acceptance. Everything that surrounds us reflects obedience, and man, as part of the material world, experiences that expectation of obedience is also extended onto him. When we fall ill, we fall into mortal illness, or our body is exhausted after a tiring day's work, we experience that the rules of nature blindly apply to us also. When we are undergoing physical suffering, and the natural laws affect our own body, pain and suffering may make us rebels against the rules of nature. Weil, however, believes that we are destined in our suffering—if that is medically, physically incurable—to imitate the material world in quiet acceptance and obedience.¹⁴ Through the beauty of the pre-determination prevailing in the world,

¹² Cf. VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 27-29.

¹³ WEIL, S., *Intuitions Pré-Christiennes* 158. Translated by VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 120.)

¹⁴ Weil discusses the interrelation between obedience in suffering and the concept of decreation, connected to God in her work titled *Szerencsétlenség és istenszeretet* [Misfortune and the love of God].

man is able to grasp the necessity of obedience. In the meanwhile, beauty is not only an attribute of the external world, of the material universe, but it is a part of the link between human perception and the outside world. When we perceive the beautiful external world, the determination and obedience to the laws of nature, that also apply to ourselves, that perception will always take place within our human sensibility.

A further analysis of Simone Weil's ideas concerning the concept of beauty will soon make it clear that she often uses the conclusions of Kant's aesthetics. Weil defines beauty as something that does not in itself carry the image of an objective, nonetheless it appears to be purposeful.¹⁵ Kant's paradox appears here, since what is beautiful affords universal satisfaction, without raising any sensual or intellectual interest in the beholder. "*Beauty is the only objective in this world. An objective that, as Kant so appropriately put it, does not have any objective whatsoever. A beautiful thing does not contain anything good, only itself, as it appears in its entirety in front of us. It offers us its own existence.*"¹⁶ In Kant's aesthetics beauty as a characteristic feature usually relates to the shape and form of objects. When we see it, it contains the promise of pleasure. An important criterion is, however, that the viewer must like it without any interest involved! What is pleasant for us raises an attraction in us, what is beautiful, does not imply that attraction, it only provides a contemplative pleasure to the viewer! "*Christ commanded us to watch as sunshine and rain falls indiscriminately on both good and evil people, because the lack of a goal, the lack of intention constitutes the beauty of the world. [...] Similarly, Plato suggests in his 'Timaeus' that we should use the power of meditation in order to become similar to the harmony of cyclical motions that start and feedback day and night, month, season and year. In these cyclical processes we may also observe the lack of purpose and intention, and the*

¹⁵ In her manuscript titled *Le Beau et le Bien*, Weil provides the following example: "*When I see a church, my first reaction [...] is that I stop. [...] my entire soul is under the impression of the church. [...] The church is the cluster of stones arranged into a particular format, but it is not simply a mechanical order, as it comprises a purpose. [...] this purposefulness is in fact purposelessness, as there is no remote, ultimate goal for it.*" WEIL, S., *Le Beau et le Bien*, manuscript, 1926. Translated by VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 125.

¹⁶ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejlik az Isten, in: *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 136.

pure beauty shines through them." Ordinary people tend to term things beautiful when they merely describe some kind of an attraction,¹⁷ but *"every person, even the most ignorant or the dullest one, is aware that it is only beauty that is entitled to and worthy of our love!"*¹⁸

These lines appear to suggest that beauty does not captivate us because it means the fulfillment of one of our desires or aspirations. Instead, beauty is a phenomenon that engages our contemplating ability, relaying the intelligible things behind the world, and what is immanently present in the world, to us.¹⁹ Following this logic, we will come to the justified conclusion that Weil does not simply incorporate elements of Kant's aesthetics into her own thoughts, but also assumes Platonic ideas. The concept that the sequence of attractions, the layers of attraction built upon each other will lead and elevate man to the heights of beauty, is one of the keystones of Platonic philosophy. Miklós Vető in that context sees the elevation of man through the layers of attraction in Weil's philosophy: *"Ultimately, physical love is derived from the love of the order of the world. When looking at the mountains and the sky, experiencing the quiet of nature and feeling the warmth of sunshine, every human being is overcome by some obscure love, but this love is incomplete and is not happy, since it is directed to dumb material, that is, something, that is unable to answer. Humans therefore attempt to direct their love towards other human beings, who are able to respond to them, to say yes, and to give themselves over. When we attach the concept of beauty to another human being, we believe that we are able to transfer love to that person, but our desire continues to be concentrated onto universal beauty as the ultimate goal."*²⁰

¹⁷ "Several types of attraction have nothing to do with beauty, but for lack of proper judgment and knowledge we tend to term the objectives of these attractions beautiful." WEIL, S., *Ahol elrejlik az Isten*, in: *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 135.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The beauty of beautiful things is provided by their underlying principle, idea that generates an image of proportionality, shape and through which the truth of the thing concerned shines through.

²⁰ VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 121.

4. Beauty as God, as a Divine Presence

When Simone Weil is talking about God, she is not talking about some transcendental reality only, but about somebody who is immanently present in our world as well. About the beauty of the world she claims that it coincides with the pre-determination and necessity bound to material; in her *Formes de l'amour implicite de Dieu*, however, she identifies beauty with God. "The only true and real beauty is that of the presence of God, the beauty of the universe. Whatever is lesser and smaller than the universe, is not beautiful."²¹ In accordance with Christian mentality, *deus absconditus*, Weil believes that God will only appear for us in a disguised form. As God surpasses the world and everything in it, His appearance will only be disguised, and the condition of man's redemption is the recognition of God behind the disguise!

The influence of Plato's philosophy on Weil is perhaps the most palpable when she identifies God and beauty. In Plato's *Symposium*, people talk about erotic excitement. Eros is primarily shown as something through which man will become capable of seeing real beauty. In his writing titled *Phaedrus*, Plato presents beauty as something that is the most suitable for leading man from sensual beauty to moral beauty. As the Greek philosopher grabbed beauty in human deeds, he immediately took his readers further on, to noetically tangible beauty. Sensual beauty is definitely important, but is certainly not absolutized. It is, instead, a starting point of the emergence of the power of beauty that elevates man. Eventually, Plato identifies Beauty with the Only One in *Hippias*. This Only One is the solid and permanent foundation of all perceivable beauty. Plato's philosophy will then, through the Neoplatonism, reach Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, in whose interpretation beauty is one of the manifestations and attributes of God who is thus revealing Himself to humans. For a Christian philosopher, above all the previous observations, beauty coincides with the highest level of human perception, as it aims at the universality of things.²² In possession of all that philosophical heritage, Weil formulates the following ideas: "God created the universe. Out of that, His Son, our first-born brother, created beauty for us. The beauty of the world is Christ's gentle smile, radiating towards us through the material. He is

²¹ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejlik az Isten, in *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 145.

²² Cf. SCHEER, B., *Einführung in die philosophische Ästhetik*, Darmstadt 1997.

*really present in the beauty of the universe. The love of that beauty is derived from God, who descends into our soul, and in turn the love shall rise back to the God who is present in the universe.*²³

At other places the disguised God is identified with the person of our fellow human beings and the services of the church as well. *"God's hidden love has but three direct objects in which God is really, though mysteriously, present. The three objects in this world are the following: the services of the church, the beauty of the world, and our fellow beings.*²⁴ When God and beauty are eventually identified, then another manifestation of God is mentioned: the ultimate purity! *"The ultimate purity can be nothing but God, present among us."* This perfect purity is the only possible remedy to all human weaknesses and faults, capable of transforming all human evil. The perfect purity, representing God, is the cause of man's moral purification: *"If it were not God, it would not be pure. If God were not present, we would not be redeemed. In the soul of those who have found their connection with purity, the terror of all bad things is transformed into the love of divine purity. That is why Mary Magdalene and the criminal on the cross on Christ's right-hand side are privileged by divine love.*²⁵

5. The Ethics of Beauty

After seeing how beauty appears for Simone Weil, how it is connected in human sense of beauty with the world and God, we are not surprised to find that there is also a system of ethics. This system of ethics is intended to direct people's life towards the right way, to lead the entire existence of people towards a completely new direction. The ethical elements actually follow all Weil's important observations and concept about beauty. Weil's almost axiom-like statement is that *"man's greatest pain, that follows him from childhood to death, is that watch-*

²³ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejlik az Isten, in *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 135.

²⁴ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejlik az Isten, in: *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 110.

²⁵ WEIL, S., Rendszertelen gondolatok Isten szeretetéről, in: *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigila 1983, 43-48, 45.

ing and eating are two different activities."²⁶ This short sentence indicates that mankind has almost always chosen eating instead of contemplating since the original sin, or rather, as a consequence of the original sin. Adam and Eva longed for the fruit, and their picking the fruit is the reason, and at the same time the paradigm, of the present state of the existence of the whole mankind. Man is standing in front of the world, and either snatches up its objects for himself, or respects and contemplates them. A grave situation of the former attitude is when the other person is just an object that can be picked up and used at will without hesitation, whenever our needs and interests so dictate. We are aware that Heavens belong to those who prefer contemplation to possession, but man is most often characterized by actions instigated by an insatiable greed. Weil classifies sins in their relation to greediness and voraciousness. "*Perhaps sins, moral deterioration, crimes in essence almost always conceal efforts at devouring good, devouring things that should only be contemplated.*"²⁷

When man approaches and touches something, those gestures may easily deteriorate into an unholy behaviour that brings about the contamination and or even destruction of the object concerned. As opposed to that, "*the sense of beauty will result in the emergence of the intention to resign from things in us.*"²⁸ From that aspect, beauty is the "*opposite of desire, the intention to possess that conceals all that I wish to devour. That sense of detachment will be generated in me when I contemplate something that I do not intend to change, not even in my imagination (a cathedral, a beautiful statue), that is, when I am looking at beauty.*"²⁹ In the process of contemplation, there is a distance between the person and the phenomenon contemplated. One of the characteristic features of beauty is that it does not involve any interest on the side of the viewer, it allows a distance between the beholder and object, and the process is not broken by greed or sensual attraction. According to Weil, the man living in the world makes a mistake by immediately starting to work on his own satiety upon seeing a phenomenon. The essence of

²⁶ WEIL, S., *Attente de Dieu* 122. Translated by VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 124.

²⁷ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejklik az Isten, in: *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigilia 1983, 110-180, 136.

²⁸ VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 124.

²⁹ It is quoted from Weil by Bousque, but we do not know the data of the source. JOË BOUSQUE, in VETŐ, 124.

beauty is, however, that it always remains a promise, and does not provide food, since human soul will only find its satiety when reaching the transcendental. What is beautiful is therefore not to be approached with greed and is not to be touched with the intention of modifying it.³⁰

When Simone Weil formulates her ethics in connection with beauty, she makes it clear that virtuous deeds are also beautiful in themselves. Their beauty is derived from the application of eternal laws.³¹ Who is virtuous and carries out virtuous deeds, does not follow his subjective inclinations and interests. On the contrary: that person detaches himself from his subjectivity and surrenders to the eternal law. Man needs virtuous deeds because such deeds lead to his own decreation. Decreation means the suspension of man's sinful self. Man as an autonomous creature thanks God for his existence, but his autonomy also involves his sinful state, as Adam and Eve's original sin became the paradigm of human existence. Decreation is, in Weil's opinion, the opposite of that sinful existence. Decreation means our abandoning of autonomy, self-centeredness in order to replace these with God.³²

A person striving to achieve their own decreation will realize that no real objectives exist in this world! In her mystical approach, Weil declares that only not decreed persons are unable to live without goals and objectives in this world, while those who wish to achieve decreation believe that the essence of the world is determination and not purposefulness! Consequently, man's duty is to transform purposefulness into determination, and it can be achieved through obedience. The suffering attached to purposefulness will make man understand the

³⁰ "Something shining attracts our attention, but it does not provide us with any kind of driving force. Beauty always remains a promise, and does not give us anything; it makes us hungry, but it contains nothing that would nourish the part of our soul that seeks food here on Earth; it only offers food to the attentive part of the soul. It fans our desires, but makes it clear to us that there is nothing desirable in it, since we ourselves do not want it to change in any way." WEIL, S., *Ecrits de Londres et dernières lettres*, 37, translated by VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 124.

³¹ In a virtuous deed man imitates what is true and does it in the most rational manner.

³² In Weil's opinion, in creation God intentionally remains in the background, so as to make room for the existing world by His withdrawal. Human decreation is supposed to imitate that divine act: by decreating our own sinful self, we make room for God. VÖ. VINCZE K., A szenvedés realitása és méltósága Simone Weil filozófiájában, in: *Vigilia* 79, 2014, 589-597.

purposefulness without a purpose. "Purposefulness will be interpreted as obedience to God's will," and "we shall learn that in this world there are only reasons and causes but never objectives." We thus "give up our own personal point of view in exchange for the universal perspective of purposelessness."³³ Beauty becomes a spiritual means for Simone Weil, because it has a potential larger than that of any other means to place man into the universal perspective for a while. The universal perspective is what the ego-centric person is unable to see, since the selfish person regards himself as the center of the universe, and believes that everything is subordinated and coordinated. So as to illustrate that, Weil uses a self-explanatory Biblical example: the story of the good Samaritan. In that example the good Samaritan is in the state of attention that characterizes a person in the universal perspective: "*There is no human being in the lifeless body by the road. The Samaritan, who stops and takes a look at it, is still looking for the missing human being, and his subsequent motions prove that his attention was real.*" Weil also refers to one of the texts of Paul in a way that it directs our attention to the close interrelation between faith, Christian religion, and that particular perspective: "*Faith, says Paul, is the ability of seeing invisible things. At that moment of attention, faith is present, and so is love.*"³⁴ Beauty is a source of energy that is located at the level of our spiritual life, because "the contemplation of beauty involves detachment."³⁵ When one is contemplating, when recognizes beauty, when looks upon the world and himself from the universal perspective, then he has been able to forget about himself and abandon himself.

In view of these interrelations we may see that in Weil's opinion there is a close connection between experiencing beauty, the contemplation of beauty, and the sympathetic perception of the pains, suffering and misery of universal human existence. It in fact means that the more readily is one able to contemplate beauty, the more readily that person will be able to feel sympathy with those living in misery and deprivation. For Simone Weil, beauty is a gift and manifestation of God that will help the person impressed by beauty to surpass himself.

³³ VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 129.

³⁴ WEIL, S., Ahol elrejlík az Isten, in *Ami személyes, és ami szent. Válogatott írások*, (transl.: REISINGER J.) Vigília 1983, 110-180, 121.

³⁵ WEIL, S., *La Source Grecque*, 120. A fordítás: VETŐ M., *Simone Weil vallásos metafizikája*, L'Harmattan 2005, 131.

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