

“For man, when perfected, is the best of animals; but, when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all.”- Aristotle

Every person in this world aspire to some kind of a perfection. But what does it mean to be perfect? Is perfection individual or common quality, notion, characteristic or it might be both? How do people manage to fulfill all of their “possibilities”, how can they become a complete, “perfect” person? Is perfection in harmony with human nature and finally with our culture? Who are perfect people – are they creatures of community? Is perfection possible? These are some of the questions I will try to answer in this essay and I hope I’ll explain them in the spirit of philosophy.

One of the topics of this essay will be living in a community which I think is very close to the idea of perfection. Aristotle once said that a person is “zoon politikon” and being a creature of community, person cannot complete itself without having other people around. The final goal for Aristotle is happiness and if person wants to be happy, it must aspire to the “golden middle” values. All that happiness is united in the happiness of community. Community for Aristotle was “polis” which brings peace, happiness and safe life for all people. If someone is outside the community, that person is either the beast or God. That person doesn’t pay attention to the laws or justice, for them the leadership has nature and they follow their unbridled passions, emotions without concerning about the affect that might have on the other people. That’s why they are the worst of all animals. But people who live in community are responsible, they are under obligation and should respect the laws of community. When everything is well organized and in order, the result is pure happiness, and even perfection. So, this means that the perfection is the common thing of all people, it’s the thing of community. Something similar I find in Plato’s philosophy. The basic notion in his philosophy is justice. The perfect, ideal community for him is community of justice, so

people who live in that community are representatives of justice. They all have their positions in that community, fair for all, and the rulers are the smartest people, the most educational ones, the best ones and those are, of course, philosophers. That's the system of justice and perfection.

Some philosophers tried to justify the existence of laws like T. Hobbes and J. Locke. Hobbes said that community and laws are necessary because they help to control the people and to guard them. The natural state is awful, people are fighting and there is greed all around them so there must be something that can change that situation. Because of that, people contract some kind of a common deal and while they are under contract, they have to respect some laws, and that's justice for all. Locke said that the main reason why laws exist is protection of human life, freedom and private property. People prove one's worth they are creatures of community and that they can only exist as complete human beings inside that community where they accomplish all their needs, goals..., and because of that they need laws, different kind of rules and regulations to learn how to act in community. This opens another question about the freedom, is it too much limited, how can people accomplish perfection like this? But, that's another topic to write about.

All this what I previously wrote is describing the necessity of living in community and explaining the perfection as the thing of community. But, perfection is not only the thing of community, first of all it is the personal aspiration of every individual as a reflective, unique human being trying to complete itself as a person. The truth is that we are creatures of community, but community wouldn't exist if there wouldn't be individuals. Individuals are the base for the happiness of all community. The first goal is the perfection of individual. And how can people be perfect? Is it possible? Often in life we can hear the sentence: "Nobody's perfect, we all have mistakes, being a perfect person is impossible. ". Is this sentence true? Well, I would say yes, but it's very hard to define what perfect means. That's relative thing and it is different for each of us. For

someone being perfect means being so beautiful, for someone it means living in harmony with life ideals, religion, some other rules, for someone else it means accomplish all of his/her possibilities, wishes... Perfection is an abstract idea and I would describe it as complete unity of our aspirations we manage to fulfill. For example, my aspirations are to graduate at law university, work as a well – paid lawyer, have a great, happy family, travel all around the world, learn about everything, help this world to become better..... They are infinite. Will I ever accomplish all of them, and if I managed to do that, would I be perfect then? Well, that's a pretty hard question. Moreover, who is to decide who's perfect and who's not? Myself or the other people?

Karl Jaspers said that being a human means to becoming human. I completely agree with him, because all our life we are learning how to survive in this world, how to interact with other people, how to live life and be a human being, how to be perfect. We must always aspire to something new, something better, something more and we must never stop acting, after all as H. Arendt said, we are "vita activa". Person is a complete, unique unity of its deeds, that's what human life is and as individuals we have our destiny in our own hands. That's what one of my dearest philosophers, Sartre said. I like this because I believe we have power to organize our life and prepare the road which will lead us to perfection, and only we can decide what's perfection for us. The only thing we can't know is will we ever reach that perfection and will we be perfect, because in my opinion we cannot say for ourselves that we are perfect. After all, we are aspiring to perfection all life which is in our nature, and human is only a human if he/she is always aspiring to something more, but I mean in spiritual way, not in materialistic.

So, in the end, perfection- individual or common characteristic of community? I would say both. But the questions that will stay open are what the perfection truly is, is it possible and how? It's up to each and every of us to ask ourselves these questions

and answer it as we wish. Maybe, if we found “correct” answers, we’ll be perfect? Hm...