

Type the number of the topic AND the name of the author of the quotation here

1.Aristotle

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1.At first I'd like to give my definitions to some word collocations mentioned in the quotation. These definitions may not be identical to what Aristotle meant, but, none the less, they are needed as I want to avoid any misunderstandings.

a)*Spoken sounds* – information expressed by parts of our body which are responsible for speaking (mouth, throat and etc.). Basically, it means that whenever we pronounce words we create *spoken sounds*. By the way, I do not think of music or simplistic sounds (such as screams, for example) as *spoken sounds*. *Spoken* implies that we need to *speak*, not to simply produce sounds with our mouth.

b)*Affections in the soul* – our thoughts, emotions. Anything that our consciousness may make us feel.

c)*Written marks* – information expressed non-orally, using only text. I do not consider art paintings or any visual information that may be written as *written marks* because according to the quotation *written marks* are symbols of *spoken sounds* which means that *written marks* are supposed to express words while visual information mostly expresses feelings.

d)*Actual things* - our environment, to make things short. And by "environment" I mean our planet as whole. After all, in the age of globalism we are not limited by our area of habitat.

2.Now let's analyze the quotation. According to my definitions written above a more simplistic version of the quotation sounds like this: we express our thoughts and feelings by speaking, and we use text information to record our speeches. But there are a lot of languages and, as the result, a lot of ways to speak and write, which leads to a diversity of *spoken sounds* and *written marks*. But despite the fact that there are a lot of languages, a lot of ways to express ourselves we are not really different from each other because we express the identical thoughts and emotions caused by identical environment. At least that's how I understand this quotation.

3. There are a lot of people who agree with Aristotle. The previous century was full of wars, genocides and weaponized conflicts. Without any doubt, it was the most destructive period in humanity's history. And everyone understands that. That's why today's modern society is so determined to vanquish any sense of hostility between different nations. We all try to correct mistakes of the 20th century. It can be seen anywhere: movies, books, cartoons, TV shows and etc. People are taught to be tolerant, taught that despite national diversity we are all still humans. And, unsurprisingly, it made things better. Nowadays there are a lot of areas where representatives of multiple cultures live in peace and cohesion. Of course, there are still some conflicts happening but not on such a big scale as before. It's enough to show that Aristotle was right. But to a certain extent.

4. If we look at Aristotle's quotation as a pacifistic plea we won't have any problems with it. However, it may seem that Aristotle wanted to deny the diversity of personality. Basically, "We are all humans" changes into "We are all the same". And then a lot of theories that do not correspond with this quotation come up. For example, there is a big number of linguists that support the theory of linguistic determinism. To explain this theory I will mention Romanian philosopher Cioran. He claimed that it's not the place of birth that determines one's nationality but the language one speaks and most importantly THINKS. Since his birth human is influenced by things around him they shape his personality and language is one of those things. Language takes part in forming one's identity and in fact, identity forms language as well. For example, certain nations have a lot of synonyms of the word "lazy" and have 2-3 synonyms of the word "labour". It may seem unimportant but that indicates that majority of the nation was lazy. All of us are brought up by language. And each language does it differently thanks to language's contents. It influences our mindsets, our way of thinking and experiencing emotions. Which means that our *affections in the soul* are not really the same, though they may be similar.

5. Besides that, some post-modernistic philosophers could have disagreed with Aristotle as well. One of the most famous post-modern traditions is doubting what we say and write. Are we really sure that we express our feelings? Do words, both spoken and written, really mean anything? For example, let's imagine that someone's grandmother died. All his friends and relatives tell him that they are sorry. But how many are really saddened? Some of them said so only because it's a tradition. That's where words start to disconnect from emotions. Words do not express anything, there is no point in them. After they lose their value of expressing, words become something that just fills a gap in society. We can't even call it a "word" anymore. It's existence is limited within the bounds of itself. And since *written marks* express *spoken sounds*, *written marks* stop being themselves as well.

6. In addition to things mentioned above, there is one issue that bothers me even more. Aren't our thoughts and emotions influenced by our perception of *actual things*, not by

actual things themselves. For an instance, one certain object may cause different feelings depending on a person interacting with it. But how can it do so while maintaining the same state. There's nothing different about it and at the same it brings various emotions. In my opinion, there's only one explanation - each one of us perceives things differently. But then it turns out that it's not the object that causes emotions but our perception of the object. It's a process that doesn't include interaction with outside things. It all happens inside our mind. That's why I disagree with Aristotle on this subject.

7. I guess, it's already clear that I disagree with Aristotle. His rather simplistic way of treating people doesn't match my world outlook. Indeed, it'd be better if all of us were the same. We are still being separated in every possible way although technological progress made it look like we are getting closer in some way. A British singer Roudon Reynolds has a good line about that in one of his songs: "Is it the distance that separates us or are we all ethnocentrically inclined?". Indeed, we are brought up in different areas, in different ways, with different values. Indeed, it creates a clash of culture which may result in weaponized conflicts or, speaking about larger scale events, wars. But being the same as everybody else would be just as bad, if not even worse. Of course, there would be no quarrels, no fights, no killings. But there would be no peace as well. After all, then there would be no need to define what peace is. When there is only one parameter left in differentiation system, differentiation system stops existing. That's why we need a little bit of evil and unhappiness in our world – so we would not forget what does "good" and "happiness" mean.

8. There would be no progress in case of peaceful existing. According to Toynbe, sometimes civilization is posed with a "challenge" – a very big problem that threatens civilization's existence. In this situation civilization is supposed to come up with a "solution". If the "solution" is wrong civilization will perish, which is bad, but in case "solution" is right civilization will continue existing and enter in a new phase of its development. What I am trying to say by mentioning this is that we would not be that technologically and socially developed if not for "challenges". It's something that we need to accept. There were a lot of tragic events in history that we'd gladly erase. But these events are what makes us what we are right now. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was a horrendous thing to do. However, thanks to this, right now we are being in a state of nuclear deterrence, which keeps us away from world's nuclear doom. Every mistake is a part of our life experience both on personal and world scale. We can't simply erase them.

9. Admitting that we are separated from each other is the first step on the road of unity. Without that, it's pointless to fight with inequality and intolerance. There are double standards even when it comes to activities that have a good cause. Understanding that is crucial for a bright future. There were moments when one country was enforcing democracy on another which contradicts first country's main doctrine of democratical life. Sometimes socialization only leads to exile. An American musician Geoff Rickly said about that: "And so

often we form communities, only to use them as exclusionary devices.” There is a need to take another look at what we are doing even if we are sure that we are doing it out of good intentions. One of the Russian sociologists has a work called “One step forward, two steps back”. In our case, we need to make a step back in order to make two steps forward.

10. Trying to make everyone equal is a waste of time. If that was possible, we would be witnesses of a communistic formation now. And, please, don't think of me as authoritarian. I just think that there is a fine line between “equality” and “equal treatment”. Misconceptions of this lead to terrible consequences. USSR repressions in the first half of 20th century greatly exemplify that. Aiming for an utopia may be considered a suicide, both cultural and political. This is something that we will never achieve simply because it requires everyone to abandon their needs and work for the sake of everyone else which is rather untempting, to be honest. The best thing we can do is to give everyone equal rights. But eliminating cultural differences and social differentiation is a huge mistake, one we should never make. There is still a lot of things to do in order reach a perfect society but, none the less, it's always important to know when to stop. So let's embrace our bad traits, get rid of high expectations and start to do something which is possible to achieve in society's current state. Of course, doing that is harder than it sounds, but who said life is easy?