

## **COMPLETE FREEDOM PART 1**

### **The Unicorn of Philosophy**

*Dr. Marcus Aurelius Roe (2023)*

"The World has never had a good definition for the word liberty."

- Abraham Lincoln

"You find out the necessity of liberty as you find out the necessity of air — by not having enough of it and gasping."

- G. K. Chesterton

The many historical attempts at defining freedom philosophically put to mind the concept of the unicorn. Unicorns are majestic and coveted for unique features, such as a horn, with however little reason. Its unique and identifiable profile being the greatest consequence of said horn. It is a magical beast most known for its rarity, however poorly understood for any actual value.

### **UNICORN**

The myth of the unicorn includes the limit of survival based in liberty. Unicorns are not able to survive captivity. They can only live if they are able to maintain control over their lives. The novelty imparts a desire in the reader or viewer for more unicorns to exist which, subconsciously, should mean more liberty. This is a good metaphor despite strangely referencing itself, however a good definition for freedom still eludes. Perhaps more can be extracted from this self-referential metaphor.

The archetype of the unicorn relates the nature of freedom and its scarcity. The twin tropes of unicorn scarcity and fatal captivity combine to suggest a deeper relationship between the fragility of liberty and its scarcity. This would mean freedom is rare because it is difficult to maintain, and that it is often lost the

moment it is secured because of the contradiction of the usual definition of neutral liberty and the security needed for it.

Just as the unicorn, these ideas fail at the moment of capture. Every freedom granted includes parameters and restrictions. However, restrictions contradict fundamental requirements for most definitions of freedom. So, does there exist a non-contradictory or good definition of freedom that can function? A more robust definition of liberty must be sought after that does not contradict its own security.

I begin with the unicorn metaphor and work backwards. What is liberty to the unicorn and what is liberty to humanity? Are they the same simply because of a fictional metaphor, a construct in fact external to whatever human liberty is entirely? On the surface the unicorn appears appropriate enough, however informative yet useless. In fact, this is because it does not describe the mechanics for this 'death' on capture, it simply mirrors it in loose representation.

The unicorn at liberty is mythological and magical, needing only its self-description to persist. It is perfectly complete as an abstract idea, however apparently failing to aid humanity in fully capturing freedom, historically. Does the unicorn's weakness represent liberty's fragility or does the idea of the unicorn represent the lifespan of liberty?

Then the weakness of the definition itself would not represent a 'fragility' of liberty *per se* but that weakness in that contributing conception of it. Liberty then is not at fault, as experienced, but rather the seeming inability to stabilise a consistent and useful definition. However, the reason for this fragility in unicorns is, ultimately, fictional status; once a unicorn is captured, it is discovered to be something else. This is also strangely appropriate.

## **OTHER DEFINITIONS**

Buddhists teach freedom is giving up on desires but how can they essentially recommend the same lifestyle for householders as mendicants, begging monks? Do their vastly different lifestyles have the same demands? The non-desirous mental state may work for monks who have given up on the World, but a wider application

of this practice (i.e., Kant's categorical imperative) would prove quite demonstrably disastrous, that a planet of beggars would starve. Giving up on all desire is not something human society can do, and continue to progress. What is freedom without a society? Further what is freedom worth without a progressive society?

Is human liberty the same as unicorn liberty, or does it not rely upon so many other things? Humans require love, light, education, sustenance, meaning, and attachments. Unicorn liberty in neutrality is completeness for the unicorn but this cannot be so for humanity, because humans are real.

Is human liberty a neutral thing? With the majority of definitions of liberty, there is a common value of neutrality expressed. But how does this unicorn, or neutral, liberty relate to human liberty? How does the unicorn maintain its own liberty? Simply, it does not and cannot.

A person 'at liberty,' in a neutral sense, is instantly in need of more. With mere neutral liberty and little else, a person is beholden to needs. This is because a person is rather incomplete without a great number of other things. Is an incomplete person capable of freedom? What is it that can make a person complete? The unicorn is imaginary and maintains itself, much like the concept of neutral liberty.

A definition of freedom between species, or societies, is simpler than within societies. A person is either captured or they are not. However, this is not useful inside societies, where freedoms have certain expectations and responsibilities. For instance, an individual within a suboptimal society cannot expect to attain an optimal freedom. Do the philosophical definitions of freedom match the practise of law and general expectations? Perhaps a definition of freedom can be more easily attained by describing examples of individual freedoms, and then manipulating them in theory.

## **NEUTRAL LIBERTY**

Being allowed to build a structure on a piece of land is generally considered a freedom. On the other hand, suppose one is allowed to build a structure in a way

that will collapse, killing them and their whole family. Is this freedom? By the strictest philosophical definitions, it should be. However, definitions that do not touch upon reality, should not remain.

What is the difference between the constructions? The easy answer is one is causing harm and the other is not. "Do as thou will," philosophers often adjust their definition of freedom to work out an exception here, "so long as nobody is injured." Aside from being an ungainly definition, it lacks utility in that it provides no guidance.

In either case, one has the freedom not to build a structure at all. However, is the option to refrain from desired actions freedom? Most people would wish to say no, but how do the common definitions of freedom account for this?

Say one were allowed to build a tower that blotted out the Sun of neighbours' gardens, is this freedom? Theoretically, there should be nothing to stop a person in many communities, however most would agree it is a terrible thing to do. If one owns the land around a river, does that include the right to divert it away from its current course, to the property of other people?

Taking such actions without agreements in the community are poor decisions, most people would agree. Should a person be allowed to make those poor decisions? Is this freedom? How might this be handled and explained philosophically?

## **SUMMARY**

A definition of human liberty that cannot maintain itself is necessarily an instruction manual for human enslavement, therefore it must be logical and consistent. So, what is freedom? Unicorns and neutral liberty are ephemeral. A neutral liberty does not exist for humans as freedom must not be neutral for them, it demands qualifications. Unicorn liberty ceases at capture, just as with human liberty. Can a proper definition of liberty guide the construction of a more appropriate archetype than the unicorn? The next article defines freedom philosophically.

## **COMPLETE FREEDOM PART 2**

### **A Philosophical Definition**

*Dr. Marcus Aurelius Roe (2023)*

"Most modern freedom is at root fear. It is not so much that we are too bold to endure rules; it is rather that we are too timid to endure responsibilities."

- G. K. Chesterton

"Freedom is the right to tell people what they do not want to hear."

- George Orwell

Principally, societies do not allow criminal behaviour, or behaviour destructive to the common good. This is an already universally agreed upon limitation on liberty. The major problem is that most philosophical definitions treat this limitation as a necessary yet unnatural rider to a seemingly unencumbered definition of liberty. An unencumbered definition of liberty, however, is unnatural itself as it never exists.

There is a legitimate freedom in the option to refrain from a desired action, especially when nothing good can come of it. For instance, refraining from deep water cliff diving if one is likely to pass out mid-dive or building a house without the training. Refraining from any willed action should be an option. This is an over-referenced part of a liberty, but it is not a weakness. So, a good definition of freedom must contend with this as well. However, in most 'free' or 'freer' nations, there are requirements which one cannot refrain.

### **HAPPINESS**

What of the pursuit of happiness? To most definitions, this is a pleasant nicety but nothing intrinsic to the usual working definition of freedom. With neutral freedom, it is a quality to specify, much as all the other limitations and additions listed above. It is not required, but it absolutely *should* be. It is blatantly obvious that

this neutral freedom is more like a neutralised freedom. Not only is it a freedom that cannot sustain itself, it is freedom that cannot define itself alone, apparently. A definition that fails to account for all qualities of the thing so labelled, is useless and accounts for failures of application.

Happiness as a qualification, delineates the examples of the built structures posited in the last article. The pursuit of happiness within freedom implies wisdom. It dictates one cannot build a house without proper training and blueprints, doing otherwise would not bring happiness. What is happiness, though? Is it not the accounting of internal good over bad? Good, in the form of that which is done by and for a person, is a prime qualifier for happiness.

However, happiness cannot be the most important aspect of a complete definition of freedom. Most of those who think they are free, are not, they have simply found a way of being happy which is good enough for a lot of people. For the majority, freedom is this elusive non-concept of being left alone and unbothered, the neutral definition. People of this mindset remain enslaved to all the things that distract them from complete freedom, no matter how happy they might be in the moment. Happiness is then part of a complete freedom but simply hedonism by itself. Such people are trapped and are not free, but why?

## **DOING GOOD**

The unicorn cannot escape its element nor the element of its freedom, which is to say it does not have the freedom to choose captivity, as this would directly contradict freedom. The same must be true of freedom generally. One cannot be free to entrap oneself, this is not freedom. Therefore, the freedom to do bad cannot apply to the definition. Doing evil, then, is merely an extension of captivity in self-enslavement to the material.

If this is true then the better definition for freedom is "the optimal ability to recognise and do good." A free person is simply an agent of good, then. This fits all criteria demanded of the already universally accepted facets and limitations on

liberty. It effectively removes all necessary riders or additional qualifiers. It cuts through all lies and presents the simplicity of freedom as an absolute moral truth.

The reason that liberty falls apart at the moment of definitional capture is the same as why it falls apart the moment implemented politically, it is because the focus is completely wrong. The focus upon constructs of abstracts can only map out paths to enslavement, whereas legitimate freedom is immanent. Free people are not born free in a 'free' nation, nor do they become free upon moving to a 'free' nation. Free people become free through the power of the mind, thought and spirit. A nation may become free by enabling their people to learn this lesson.

To test this new definition of freedom, another example can be used. Theoretically, an American bison is neutrally 'free' in a large field among cows, given all the food, sunlight, and exercise it needs. However, this is not freedom for it. The American Bison is a herd animal and needs its natural community in order to do good. It is without purpose away from the herd. Away from its true community and among cows, it is without the ability to seek optimal positive benefit or true good. It cannot even recognise good without its herd. There is no chance of optimal outcome for a bison in a herd of cows. In other words, it is only a free bison when it is wisely within its own element. If human freedom is more complex than animal freedom then, it is only on account of the complexity of culture and intellect in the herd.

How much freedom could a person attain 2,000 or 20,000 years ago? Can people in the current era accurately judge the qualities of freedom then and ascertain how free that person was? How much freedom should an individual have in a given era and within a culture in order to secure their optimal contribution?

Nobody can ever give or demand freedom. This is an internal transformation of the spirit. It is educational and cultural. Then the best defence for liberty is a liberty-loving culture that surrounds it. The civilising tendencies of natural human communities are brought about through education and a love for wisdom. It is here that freedom is truly secured in the *trust* of a natural community, as instilled from an early age. The most philosophically advanced cultures had it based on a *trust*

(Hellenic: PISTIS, often translated as "faith") of that which was founded in the love of wisdom, the grand discourse or LOGOS. This discourse is represented by phenomenal residency within the master and power states of the Logos domain in Resurrexit Theory (Roe 2023).

Similarly, one is only a free human in their element. Humans cannot do optimal good outside of their natural community. When a human is given everything needed to survive outside a naturally formed and complete community with all cultural nuances, their ability to do good is totally stunted. Whatever their full potential might have been is unknown. Love of wisdom and meaningful connections to a natural community allow for the optimal ability to recognise and do good within its particular cultural nuances. So, it follows, those people most free are also as completely absorbed within their culture as philosophy can permit.

## **SUMMARY**

I suggest the unicorn is representative of the philosophical attempts at defining a neutral liberty, as failed. However, I propose the American bison archetype as representative of a complete freedom, or freedom holistically defined from the internal individuated perspective within their natural environment. This is freedom.

## **REFERENCES**

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