The author of the article “Beauty Is in Simplicity” tells us about what beautiful code is.

In the beginning John Olmheim quotes Plato: “Beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depends on simplicity”. As you know, Plato was a philosopher in Classical Greece and the founder of the Academy in Athens, the first institution of higher learning in the Western world. He is widely considered the most pivotal figure in the development of philosophy. And his ideas are still widely disseminated and actual.

But let return to our theme. We can describe the whole article with this quote. Perception of beauty depends on individual background. In author’s mind beautiful code is simple code. In my opinion it is true. Somebody says that code must be well documented and we need to comment almost every line of it. And then code will be beautiful. But if code is complicated and there are many unobvious moments in it, you won’t like it. Even if it’s full of comments. It will be hard for you to read and understand such code. Another thing is simple code. You can look on it and understand every action, every idea.

There is a principle in programming called “Single Responsibility Principle”. Robert C. Martin expresses it as, “A class should have only one reason to change”. This principle states that every module should have responsibility over a single part of the functionality provided by the software. And simple code is fully consistent with it. Each individual part of simple code is kept simple with simple responsibilities and simple relationships with the other parts of the system. This is the way we can keep our systems maintainable over time, with clean, simple, testable code, keeping the speed of development high throughout the lifetime of the system.

Simplicity is the basis of everything. Every organism consists of simple cells, every object consists of atoms and every atom consists of more simple parts. It is great. And isn’t it beautiful?