

True Milestones *(Anon.)*

There are two types of milestone, those that we define, and those which define us.

Milestones defined by us are usually arbitrary. Birthdays only carry meaning because we say that they do. Significance is only attached to anniversaries because we dictate it to be so. By attaching meaning to them, their value as real milestones can be nullified.

True milestones, however, are not invented by humans. True milestones invent humans. Events with far-reaching consequences. Decisions made by others. Occurrences which fall outside of one's own control. Sometimes actions and reactions which are under our own control. These are the true milestones, the moments in life which define who we are.

Whereas arbitrary milestones have little bearing on the development of individuals or groups, leaders or peoples, the real milestones truly bring change and definition.

Individuals are all defined by certain moments, by particular successes or events. Often is the case, though, that individuals are defined by their failures. Not the failures themselves, but their response to their failures. Personal milestones are often errors. Errors (can) cause reflection. Errors (can) cause remorse. Errors (can) cause growth, humility and reconciliation.

True milestones also define groups. Countries. Peoples. Organisations. Certain key moments drastically influence the identity of groups. An attack that brings a country to its knees, which in turn jerk into a reaction. A leader whose disregard towards his people provokes unrest and revolution. It is the reaction to such occurrences that defines individuals and groups. Conflict forges identity. If not visibly respected, identity forces more conflict.

Consider your life so far. What moments have defined you? Are they the arbitrary birthdays? Or are they particular incidents? Are those defining moments your own successes and failures?

Consider this College. What moments have defined us? Are they the arbitrary anniversary celebrations? Or are they particular events? Are those defining moments our successes and failures? Most importantly, do the milestones which define us point us in the right direction?