

Waves, No Anchors

America is not a tribe. It was never meant to be. No bloodline binds us, no shared ancestry defines us. Instead, America is an experiment—an ever-changing organism made up of ideals, collisions, contradictions. Liberty. Self-determination. Progress. Special interest groups. Movements. Marketing. Money. It's fluid, like water. Shifting. Powerful. Unstable. That's the brilliance—and the burden.

But human nature was not designed for chaos. We crave rootedness. We want our place, our people, our purpose. That desire doesn't vanish just because borders open and identities become optional. It simply adapts—and sometimes, it fractures.

And nowhere is that fracture more visible than in the American youth.

They grow up in a culture that tells them they're free. Free to believe anything, wear anything, become anything. Free to curate identity like a playlist. Free to reject labels, rewrite meaning, even redefine truth. But freedom without formation is disorientation. And many young people—despite being more connected, more expressive, and more “empowered” than ever—are drowning.

They mistake options for identity. They scroll endlessly through tribes of the moment—movements, microcultures, virtual causes—not realizing that these are often commercial, performative, or manipulated. Not realizing that their tribal instinct is holy—but it's being sold back to them in fragments.

They search for self in a hall of mirrors. When you tell someone they are whatever they feel, you give them a paradox: the self becomes a shapeshifter. But deep down, every soul knows it was made for something fixed, something real, something eternal.

America misunderstands youth because it misunderstands the soul. And youth misunderstand America because they believe the hype: that freedom is enough, that feeling is truth, that identity is self-made. But in the end, we all come back to the ancient questions: Who am I? Whose am I? What story am I a part of?

In a tribal culture, those questions are answered by ancestry. In a theocratic one, by religion. In America, the answers are... outsourced. To media. To ideology. To algorithms. That's why youth form new tribes—activist collectives, fandoms, online identities—because the hunger hasn't gone away. The hunger for belonging, transcendence, and truth is eternal.

The danger isn't that America is a failed tribe. The danger is that it forgets the soul is tribal by design. And if we don't give youth something real, they will give themselves to anything—even to lies.

So what's the way forward?

We need truth with roots and freedom with form. We need to re-teach what it means to be human:

that the soul is not a brand, that belonging requires sacrifice, that identity requires boundaries, and that freedom is the beginning of responsibility—not the end of it.

America is a wave. It always has been. But waves without anchors become shipwrecks.

And youth deserve more than that.

