Diet Advice from Classical Antiquity

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Data, the plural of one's life choices, is voluntarily exchanged for cheap snacks that never seem to satisfy the mind but leave one craving further indulgence in the images projected by other individuals and by well-staffed departments at organizations. The individual is but an organization of one, and the principles of a free society depend on the efficacy of one's leadership at this job. Certainly, leadership of an organization of more than a single person proceeds from the multitude within the unit of the Self, the sum total of one's subjectivity, but without direct organizational compulsion, the popular social media platforms have succeeded in distributing the societal invoice for their services. Like the manner in which food trains the microbiome of the stomach, the consumption of information, especially in the form of simple memes, leads one to expect consistency in their ideological trough and reinforces one's tastes. In fact, the trough itself is an artificially intelligent force, measuring libidinal and sensory response and adjusting its feed content to maximize consumption. This is not unlike the techniques of factory farming, where animals are confined to cages and force-fed a mixture to maximize the yield of meat harvested from their carcasses. In the United States, this is a primarily corn based mixture, and lack of nutritional content in the feed is evidenced by the resulting diminishment in meat quality. Corn is the feed of choice because it is cheaply produced in bulk and subsidized by the government, and despite its lack of complete nutritional content, it still contains a minimum level of sustenance. While the modern human is not born for the purpose of such slavery unless he or she is born into

the worst of circumstances, we have voluntarily submitted ourselves to a diet of information without substance.

This trend is not new. In the United States news media for example, the surface level analysis and outright manipulation of current events can be seen in late 19th century yellow journalism, American war propaganda, and the false dualism and dichotomy of the interdependent political party narratives. The onset of rapid horizontal methods of communication — those channels that, to an increasing degree, lack an institutional gatekeeper and allow for communication directly between any group of persons — only provide a bandwidth increase, an enlargement of the aorta and sophistication of the capillaries. Questionable facts painted with the broad brush of targeted narrative present a set of abstractions to be debated, but the political meme and the Wonderbread: the Tik Tok video reposted on Instagram and the Twinkie: the free to play mobile game and state subsidized corn, these are empty calories for the stomach of the individual. The aphorism that there is nothing new under the sun does not hold categorically. Never before has the human faced such a rapid barrage of information as that which has begun to circulate within the past few decades. The question of whether the archetypes present in this information are novel is beside the point, as the endless and restless feed of novelty satiates and overfeeds the appetite for novelty itself.

Investigations — such as the documentary *The Social Dilemma* (Orlowski)— point out that many of the more popular feeding mechanisms are intentionally designed to foster addiction, a sense of wanting it more but liking it less, a greater desire for novelty but less of an appreciation. A large subset of this feed can be identified as memes of one form or another in the sense introduced by Dawkins, ideas that spread and persist by a type of Darwinian fitness in a similar manner to the way that edible species spread and persist by targeting human appetites. In his words, " Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain" (Dawkins 192). I will use the term memetic to refer to the transmission of these cultural ideas by symbolic means, especially over the internet. This

emphasizes an important aspect of content consumed from the internet, that ideas propagate not due to their similarity to Truth or reality in itself in the scientific, predictive sense, but rather due to their ability to get humans to repeat and propagate them. Memetics is the cultural propagation of the fittest ideas, rather than those that are most correct or even most useful to the individual.

One may simply consume or one may invest through one's consumption. This is no dichotomy, as even the healthiest meal is both an act of consumption and yet an investment in ideal bodily function. Through digestion and the processing of the digested material, a human becomes what he or she is, and what one is and is not definitionally defines one's identity. Creation is not required of the human, as one may simply take the communicated output of the creations of others and build their identity out of these images. As these images can be served through the intelligent troughs that provide the human with a novel feed of information, rapid memetic transmission of these ideas can provide a basis for the rapid development of a social, group identity, even without actual social interaction or the usual benefits of community. I will refer to the contents of these informational troughs throughout this essay as novelty feeds. However, the identity of the individual is based on the manifestation of his or her own potential for creativity, as the incommunicable subjective processes that underlie the creative process are unique to the individual and therefore define the individual in contrast to any other person, creating a unique identity emergent from unique subjectivity.

That personal and social investment into individual human potential is the fertilizer and sunlight for the creative fruit of his or her self. For to create as the human is to reproduce beyond one's biological means. However, the condition we find ourselves in as humans is not so conducive to the concentration of the direct sunlight of pure inspiration, as each of us has to absorb what we can through the small window in the prison wall of our flesh body, and neither can we communicate well without screaming, perhaps incomprehensibly, for who will hear us through the thick stone walls of our cell? If one uses his or her own words, one risks

being misunderstood. These individuals put their vision into original form and compete with established memetic form. To create is to scream and possibly be heard, to demonstrate to the beings who may exist beyond oneself that there is life on the other side of the walls, that perhaps such things as novelty and subjectivity beyond one's own do indeed exist.

But the human of today is far from the first to attempt to come to terms with his or her prison and with his or her diet of information. Millennia of records preserve the attempts of the human to shatter his or her walls and to consume a diet of information that constitutes an investment in his or her individual subjectivity. As citizens of the United States, we inherit some philosophical continuity from the Greco-Roman world, and it is to this antiquity that I will now turn the attention of this essay. First, I will look at the danger and limitations of the individual, the risk he or she faces in a world that wishes to transmute the subjective into something that can be viewed in a spreadsheet. Then, I discuss the relationship of the Roman individual to his or her society and state, and how the individual must support the structure of the state for the state to support the structure of the individual. To emphasize the fragility of this exchange, I turn to examples of societal collapse, both historical and mythological.

Many great individuals forged identities that became social entities unto themselves. From Plato come the Platonists and Neoplatonists, from Pythagoras the Pythagoreans, and from Caesar an entire etymological origin for the title of emperor. Certainly not all individuals forged an identity in this manner, and it wasn't necessarily the case that this phenomenon was conducive to the formation of strong individual identities of the followers of these creative persons. Platonist Academics, in the era soon after his death, argued over what Plato meant rather than striving to create for themselves. Pythagoreans notoriously attributed every discovery to their eponymous founder, creating great difficulty for mathematical historians. Countless men perished in their lust for imperial power, following in the ideal created by Caesar. What creative individuals did and do today is not a matter of formula, nor a matter of interpretation, for the individual must put reality into his or

her own words, images, and structures, and by definition one cannot be taught how to do that. To an observer, the apparently stable individual identity is characterized by internal subjective creative instability within the observed person, without which the content of the mind would stagnate and lose its creative velocity.

An individual assimilates observations into his or her subjective instability. The process of learning, therefore, is more than just a simple append to one's mental map, it is, in the words of Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius, far more of a consumptive act:

> Our inward power, when it obeys nature, reacts to events by accommodating itself to what it faces—to what is possible. It needs no specific material. It pursues its own aims as circumstances allow; it turns obstacles into fuel. As a fire overwhelms what would have quenched a lamp. What's thrown on top of the conflagration is absorbed, consumed by it—and makes it burn still higher. (Aurelius IV.1)

Obstacles, Aurelius says, can be consumed and turned into fuel with the right attitude, the infamous stoic will to Nature. I read this appeal to Nature as almost theologically pantheistic, but mysterious as it may be, he points out a distinction of importance. Not every attitude towards the unknown will result in successful assimilation of that which is faced by the individual. In fact, the individual cannot face the onslaught obstacles consistently without social support, especially when it comes to his or her more base desires. Consider the episode of Odysseus, also known as Ulysses, in his encounter with the Sirens in Homer's Odyssey. No man can resist their song, but with the help of his men, he is able to hear what no other living man has heard, to survive by instructing his men to restrain him and not listen to his demands to be freed:

> Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
> The gods allow to hear the dangerous sound.

Hear and obey; if freedom I demand,

Be every fetter strain'd, be added band to band. (Homer XII)

Odysseus, the hero of the narrative, demonstrates and develops his individual identity, through an act of dangerous consumption. He wishes to feed from the temptation, to taste the information that leads men to their deaths.

He is certainly tempted to "Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise! / Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise!" but his men stay strong, their ears protected by wax. Though Odysseus says " I give the sign, and struggle to be free;", this does not persuade his men, whom Odysseus has bound by their word to the individual in him whose subjectivity has become lost in this moment, consumed by and consuming the forbidden fruit of the song of the Sirens. "Swift row my mates, and shoot along the sea" (XII), Odysseus describes his men bringing him to safety.

From this timeless episode, modern medicine derives the notion of a Ulysses pact, an agreement that an individual may enter in a time of health and sanity, such that in the case that one were to lose their ability to decide with a sound mind, he or she would remain bound by their pact. Though a song that leads men to their death is an extreme example to compare to the pull of social media, I do not think it is unfounded. Though a scroll though Facebook or Instagram has a very low direct mortality rate, it is certainly not a stretch to say that it consumes your time, a death of moments and a distraction from creativity to which there is no doubt many can relate. Some studies have even shown a potential link between increases in depression and suicide rates among adolescents and the rise of social media (Twenge et al.). Furthermore, I have experienced a similar apparent destruction of personal willpower, as I can recall many times when I wished to consume a feed of internet novelty for a short period of time, to taste the song, but found myself consumed by it, with no men to tie me to the mast. In the more extreme cases, I've lost hours of time this way and frequently with very little to show for it. The Sirens of modern times seem to reside in the internet, not infesting it completely, for much valuable content is accessible, but the

mythological archetype can arise in many different forms, from the carefully personalized and cultivated feed of Tik Tok, to the many pages of a random blog, and even the most literally Siren-like phenomena of all, the endless repository of internet pornography.

There is no need for me to go into detail on that last point, for if the reader is not familiar, the reader is invited to do his or her own research. To address this need for self-restraint, the market has produced technological mechanisms to tie oneself to the mast and give control of their ship to automata in the form of various computer applications that try to help one focus. Some of these require one to refrain from leaving an application for a specified amount of time, others may outright block access to the source of the Siren songs. These may be effective for some individuals in some cases, but the Sirens to not lurk on any particular website or service, nor can one row their ship past their shores without finding them on another island, for the Sirens, the libidinous desire for consumption, lie within the very mind of the individual. Despite social media and streams of internet novelty being social constructions, the Siren song is sung from within the individual to himself or herself. The social propagation of the information present in the novelty feeds manifests as the content of the song but does not create the potential for the individual to be consumed by it, as that potential lies *a priori* within the individual. In response, I return to the thoughts of Marcus Aurelius, that one may yet accommodate the novelty, when our inward power obeys "nature." I posit that this nature lies in the creative potential of the individual, a universal trait of the human. As Marcus Aurelius puts it:

> those who revere that other mind—the one we all share, as humans and as citizens—aren't interested in other things. Their focus is on the state of their own minds—to avoid all selfishness and illogic, and to work with others to achieve that goal. (Aurelius VI.14)

This again emphasizes that the social structure must support the individual in order for the individual to flourish. Individuals resist the Sirens in part by social support and in part by a "focus on the state of their own minds". Creativity then is a two-way street,

since social participation requires some exposure to the Siren song. We have both a social responsibility to support individual cultivation as well as a personal duty to ourselves to avoid the Siren song of "selfishness and illogic", not only as humans, but at citizens. We must work together, to help bind others to their masts of self-discipline and in turn to be prudent enough to ask for this help when it is necessary. Only with social cooperation can we restructure our society to be more conducive to the management of this metadiet — the informational content one consumes — and thus support the development of one of society's greatest fruits, the creative individual that builds human potential to greater heights on yet more gigantic shoulders. We have molded our social processes towards greater exposure to novelty feeds and we are reaping what we have sown.

The ability of the individual to manage his or her informational diet, to moderate his or her exposure to novelty feeds, is far from a simple duty to oneself. If society threads the needle of practical interaction through the web of novelty feeds — especially those specifically designed to consume the user's time in order to sell one's informational essence as a product — then retreat from these services becomes not simply an act of resistance to certain corporate digital behemoths but also a withdrawal from sections of society. One cannot easily be a musician, for instance, without having a presence on Facebook and other social media. I spoke to one practicing professional in this discipline, and he compared a lack of presence on these digital feeding services to nonexistence. Thus, social life has become a constant battle with the Sirens, a mediation between ones appetites and limited time, and the ravenous and cavernous all-consuming novelty feed. In recent years, the effects of these consumption patterns have exploded into political life, which many speculate threatens the stability of the state, the collapse of which would open a Pandora's box of catastrophes, and the scale of which we could only speculate.

On this issue, I turn to Cicero and his work on the nature of duty, for the founders of the republic of the United States explicitly based their system, to an extent, on the Roman Republic. Cicero personally experienced the dying last gasps of this system of government,

and this led to his own dying last gasps. Remembering the dictatorships and proscriptions of Marius and Sulla, the foiled plot of the Catiline Conspiracy, and watching the Republic torn apart in his own day by Caesar and Antony, he writes, "there is no social relation among them all more close, none more dear than that which links each one of us with our country" (Cicero I.57). This is an important note, and though Cicero and the senatorial assassination of Caesar failed to save the republic in his time, his words survive and serve as a prescient warning to our current era. He writes further, in words that almost prophesize the onset of the rapid media machinery has have developed into the novelty feeds of today, that because of the importance of the bonds of country, "So much the more execrable are those monsters who have torn their fatherland to pieces with every form of outrage" (I.57). I want to contrast the individual identity developed through creation with individual self-interest, for the former, when publicized, serves to contribute to society, where the latter Cicero describes as "traitors to social life, for they contribute to it none of their interest, none of their effort, none of their means" (I.29). Certainly, there is no issue with an individual deriving a degree of personal benefit from his or her actions, but when the social and political structure has provided the foundation of freedom necessary for one to engage in this work, it is not admirable to contain their result of one's work entirely within oneself.

Betrayal of this structure by individual citizens is a great danger to the state and its society, even when self-interest demands it. To this end, the Romans placed a premium on honesty, even in the context of a promise made to their worst enemies. When Hannibal inflicted a crushing defeat on the Romans by full encirclement of their army at the battle of Cannae, he sent ten prisoners back to Rome to negotiate the release of Carthaginian prisoners of war, under oath to return to the camp of their enemy. Despite this being a promise made to the enemy, the Roman officials kept these men "degraded and disfranchised, because they were guilty of perjury in not returning" (I.40). Furthermore, when one man made an excuse to return to the camp because he forgot something and then returned to Rome, claiming he was released from the oath due to having technically returned to the camp, he was punished

like the others who did not return, as he kept his promise "according to the letter of it, but not according to the spirit" (I.40). This leads me to another important point on the subject of the relationship of an individual to society, the duty of the individual to use his or own words, to put his or her ideas in terms of the mapping of one's subjectivity, and to digest the content of her or her perceptions and serve a new flavor in one's speech. Cicero saw the manifestation of this in the chicanery of state officials as a failure of their individual duty to the state. Chicanery he defined as an exercise of power "through an over-subtle and even fraudulent construction of the law (I.33)", a fixation on a particular interpretation of the wording rather than a more nuanced understanding of the meaning or spirit behind it. In our time, we can identify some evidence of this particular societal failing, as great social emphasis is placed on the usage of particular forms of language. Large organizations are expected to issue the socially desirable incantations of the day for fear of mob reprisal. Little popular pressure is placed on them to actually abide by the spirit of whatever official stance they take, perhaps because that would not be feasible for a mob, nor would it please their collective stomach as does righteous indignation over perceived aesthetic violations. As much of modern memetic conflict is conducted by textual means, that may simply be the only apparent vector of collective attack. In any event, memetic warfare constrained to the internet is far preferable to a physical mob, as rising anger only results in more furious scrolling and angry typing, rather than arson and looting.

Drift in the meaning of words and phrases has long been characteristic of revolutionary phenomena. Thucydides writes of the changing meanings of phrases in the tide of revolutions that swept Greek city states during the Peloponnesian war, beginning with Corcyra. As cities spiraled out of control, "words, too, had to change their usual meanings." What was once referred to as 'thoughtless aggression" became "the courage one would expect to find in a party member," a suggestion towards a course of moderation "was just an attempt to disguise one's unmanly character [as] fanatical enthusiasm was the mark of a real man." But as the words changed, the fact of the actions remained the same, and later revolutions built upon

the extremes of the former and initiated "unheard of atrocities in revenge" (Thucydides 242) against their enemies. This descent into the worst of human nature led fathers to slay their own sons and factions to butcher their enemies on the altars of temples. Thucydides places the blames for all these evils on the "love of power, operating through greed and personal ambition" (243) on the part of the leaders of the factions. In these civil conflagrations, Thucydides writes that men "began repealing those general laws of humanity", without regard to the thought that "there may come a time when they, too, will be in danger and need their protection" (245). This may refer to actual legal statutes just as well as it applies to established social conventions of decency, norms that one may easily come to take for granted until they are broken.

In the description of these events, we see an example of a mob that cannot vent its frustrations via Twitter or whose memetic ambitions transcend the internet landscape and manifest as physical violence. There is an apparent epidemic of comfortable citizens of first world countries fetishizing the idea of revolution, perhaps due to some association with an idealistic vision of some utopian economic system that will somehow alleviate the failings of human nature, or an allegedly ethical hallucinatory vision that might claim some similar far-fetched end. I suspect five minutes in a Greek city state in one of these revolutions would provide them with ample self-doubt as to their supposed convictions. A similar sentiment — in terms of the importance of names — is expressed by Confucius in his Analects, as he warns that "If names be not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language be not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success" (Confucius XIII.5), and thus punishments by the state cannot be carried out and the people lose their freedom. I would argue that words are constantly losing their meaning, that the written word is always either dead or dying and it is the job of the living individual to revivify the meaning behind the words through creation. This act saves words from the deadness of static symbols. Such revivification of the dead meaning of the past is represented in the mythological origin of the Roman state, Virgil's Aeneid, for in his account of the sack

of Troy, the hero Aeneas takes great effort to save his father, though himself in the midst of escaping one of the worst situations an individual can find themselves in, the sack of a city. Through his piety and reverence for tradition, Aeneas is rewarded by the gods with the founding of the city of Rome by his descendants (Virgil). Though this account is very much not historical in the modern sense, it is certainly of mythological importance, for the Romans considered it to be a history of their civilization as the Greeks considered the Iliad. Thus, an ideal Roman is specified by Virgil as the individual who revivifies the past through piety and creativity, and Aneas founding the city of Rome is representative of this archetype.

But in Rome too, a similar shift in the meaning of words occurred. Cicero notes that sometimes a euphemism came to mean the same thing as that which it attempted to euphemize. His ancestors called a "fighting enemy" by the name "guest", but by his time the latter term had simply come to mean the former (Cicero I.XII). I see this as an example of a term being digested by a society, a failure to sustainably provide aesthetic cover for an ugly concept. Rather, the thin veneer of pleasantness is quickly broken down due to the reality of the underlying concept. Without going into too much detail, certain taboo ideas of today are initially disguised with euphemism, but as the meme underlying the euphemism takes a more direct hold of the signifier, the effect of indirection disappears. Specific discussion of this phenomenon is beyond the scope of this essay, but consider the manner in which ugly news is integrated into the gated institutional narrative of the legacy media or the memetics of distasteful political ideas, ample examples of which can be found in the Youtube comment section of any mildly controversial video on politics.

But something new under the sun has emerged since the era of the Greeks and Romans, a great acceleration. Even in the time of Nietzsche, the individual was subject to the rolling tides of society, not quite yet bombarded and fed from the novelty feeds of the current era, but yet exposed to the emerging mass media. I relate the metaphor of Zarathustra:

> Because they learned badly and not what is best, and everything to early and
> everything to hastily, because they *ate* badly, that is why they have upset stom-

achs — for their spirit is an upset stomach: *that* is what counsels them to die!

For verily, my brothers, the spirit *is* a stomach! (Nietzsche 179)

In his inversion of the Platonic idea of Reason overcoming Necessity by persuasion as the mythological foundation of the world, Nietzsche describes will as "my *own* necessity" (187) and for him, this individual will is what drives creative potential. Plato himself describes the spirit in relation to the stomach in his Timaeus. He tells that " the appetites natural to man are of two kinds — the desire of food for the body and the desire of wisdom for the divinest part in us " (Plato 88A-B). In Plato's system, the stomach contains a lower part of the soul and the head contains a higher one. The lower soul strives for nutrition, for sustenance, while the higher soul strives for rationality, for wisdom. With food and information more abundant than ever, it was clear to Nietzsche how the two are even more closely linked by the nature of their mechanisms and their effect on the body and spirit. In some respects, they can even be considered to be two differentiated instances of the same concept. As a chronic sufferer of stomach pains himself, this idea was quite dear to Nietzsche's spirit, for the pains of the stomach — and hence the spirit — whether from sickness or from oversatiation, can lead one to weariness, "but whoever has become weary is himself merely 'willed', and is the sport of every wave" (Nietzsche 179). We see examples of this quite clearly in our contemporary period's novelty feeds. Individuals are frequently swept up in memetic waves of one form or another, as no one is immune to propaganda. In its potential to upset the stomach, this becomes dangerous for individual creativity.

There is no shortage of memetic indigestion on Twitter for instance, as to breach the collective narrative in such a character limit is yet a further constraint on the creative will. I identify memetic force, the cold rationality of artificially intelligent novelty feeds, with inverted Platonic Reason. Necessity, the limitation of will, is called upon by Nietzsche to overcome the Reason in the tablets of values, and brew change within individual subjectivity. With the freedom from the established societal values of Reason, a decaying ideological structure represented by Nietzsche as the death of God, Zarathustra says "I still cook up

every chance event in *my* pot. And only when it is quite cooked do I bid it welcome, as *my* food" (148). But to cook chance perception well, one must cultivate concentration and not give in to the masses of cooks with their many ingredients, for surely this will spoil the creative broth. As such, the creative individual must stew in his or her own juices and manage his or her informational appetites, for "to eat and drink well, O my brothers, is truly no paltry art" (177) to Nietzsche, and to Cicero it is a fundamental duty of the individual even in a social context, as "appetites, moreover, must be made to obey the reins of reason" (Cicero I.102). Thus, it is the duty of the individual, for one's own creative potential as well as the stability of one's society, to manage one's informational appetites, to learn from the cows and chew one's cud, as a beggar implores Zarathustra (Nietzsche 234). Recalling my comparison to the factory farmed animals above, I note that cows given a feed of corn instead of grass do not digest quite as well. We too, gorging ourselves on our own novelty feeds, lack peace of mind and stomach.

So the human faces a new challenge, and humanity must rise to it. The rise of industrialized food has created a need for the conscious management of one's diet, a phenomenon that would have puzzled our hungry ancestors in more food-scare times. In such a paradigm, the goal was simply to not starve. Being overweight was a signifier of wealth. Exercise too, is a phenomenon that would baffle most humans from most times, as a sedentary life of physical leisure would be difficult to conceive of except for the most elite members of a society. Lack of bodily stress, in that paradigm, was a luxury. In fairly recent eras, we have seen the dawn of the need to consciously manage our consumption of food and the need to consciously exercise our bodies. The rise of information superhighways has been followed by the rise of novelty feeds of a scale and quality which could only have been dreamed of but a few decades ago, and with it the dawn of a new responsibility of consciousness, to be mindful in our consumption of information. We must manage our metadiet. This task is comparable in difficulty to the withdrawal from excessive sugary foods. The rise of rapid horizontal communication empowers the individual human, but the resulting scale of cultural output is

a demon of scale, a monstrous many-faceted complexity, a hydra with an uncountable array of parasitic tendrils. We both feed on this beast and feed the beast. To manifest creative potential, we must alter our societal strategy towards management of this monster. We can domesticate this new wild animal and perhaps grow our civilization to empower and invest in the creative human, or we could let ourselves be consumed, let our society become factionalized and divided, descending into violence and knocking the creative human from the shoulders we have reached, down from greatest heights the creative human has ever known.

The individual human "Cannot remake himself without suffering. For he is both the marble and the sculptor" (Carrel 144). These words were spoken with respect to collective society as an argument for society to remake itself as an individual would, but societal change is the emergent behavior resulting from the propagation of creative ideas born from within a mind, and in this sense the individual is both the chef and patron of his or her own establishment. The autonomous flourishing of the creative potential of the individual person is the fruit of any society.

The goal of a liberal society, a free society, is to maximize the degree to which this produce of the societal tree is able to form from its bloom, for many a springtime hope wilts due to a lack of nutrients. The triumph of the current era lies not only in the technological, but in a great ideological innovation, that of the generalized separation between church and state, an idea symbolized by the first amendment restriction to the Federal Government of the United States, but living beyond that textual form, as an evolving and living spiritual principle. Religion, defined in a more general sense to be that from which the first amendment protects us, is a moral dogma driven by specific ideological interpretation, a fetishized map of the territory and a call to action. This freedom of religion is furthermore a cultural freedom from ideological compulsion, enforced by the community for the sake of the individual. The degree to which the individual has been elevated beyond the status of any particular group identity correlates with the degree to which a particular society is able to be creative. If we are to preserve this potential in our own society, if we are to continue to be a civilization that

gives birth to and nurtures the creative human, we must manage our informational diets and cook our own creative food. If we resign ourselves to the feed of novelty and let ourselves be seduced by the Siren song and divided into violent factions, we will perish and leave our children only a memory of civilization. But the creative human yet lives, so there is hope for the future.

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