Twitter Thread by Champagne Sharks Podcast

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A belief I feel has developed on the left, at least the segments I see online, is that belief in collective, socialist solutions must therefore mean that any attempt at personal development, self-improvement and improvement of interpersonal relations is vanity and neoliberalism.

...or even more extreme, counterrevolutionary. The idea becomes then that all solutions must then come from things that sound communal or systemic. Even too much introspection is counterrevolution. Which is why I think I once saw a class reductionist call meditation neoliberal

Even discussions about mental health instead of being about which type best provides you self-love and self-awareness and self-esteem and nourishes you spiritually, focus more on making sure insurance gives you optimal access and you can get necessary medications

I think this blind spot of treating introspection and personal and interpersonal improvement s selfish exercises in vanity and neoliberal has several results. One is that all communication has to remain irony poisoned and detached unless discussing systemic issues

For the ones who do discuss personal issues in earnest, they feel obligated to do it in a way that tries to couch them in language of systemic change, radicalism and mutual aid in ways that ends up muddying the waters, disguising the personal issues and rendering it ridiculous...

...and overwrought. Like when I saw some radical socialist podcasters call their couples counseling "restorative justice," Black radicals call the interprersonal needs they feel they need met by their white allies, friends and lovers as "reparations," etc...

...there is almost this feeling of bourgeois guilt that comes with admitting any individualistic or interpersonal relational goal or striving that leads to all this ridiculous systemic reframings or this fantasy socialist societal revolution will solve personal issues

It also opens the door to weird cottage industries of things like selling personal solutions under silly labels like "revolutionary self-care" to allow yourself to buy a gift basket or labeling your sex work as socialism, revolutionary or mutual aid almost as branding exercises

Anyway, all this is to say I think ultimately this is the low key entry point for a lot of the people who get sucked into the Jordan Petersons of the world of much of the new right in general. I think the right ends up more willing to exploit the human need for self-actualization

The right is more willing to at least admit this needs for self-actualization and personal improvement and interpersonal relationship happiness and a tribe are real and valid, even if their prescriptions for them are really messed up.

These needs don't disappear on the left, they just end up repressed or sublimated or redirected into other things. You can talk about alienation but mainly the marxist definitin as something social but arising from class stratification, inequality, worker exploitation in industry

...which is absolutely true! but for a lot of people in pain, telling them they're going to have to wait for class stratification, inequality and capitalism to end before they feel real relief from their crushing social alienation and anxiety from feeling powerless is rough

The resurgence of Jordan Peterson I think is what has me thinking about him. I feel too many radical and leftist intellectuals who try to address the problem of Jordan Peterson attack the political content too much and not the trojan horse of self-help and alienation solutions...

...that he smuggles the intellectual political content within. For a lot of people, they view the racist, sexist, classist, patriarchal belief as correlated with the self-help and sense of community he offers and even believe those beliefs are responsible for the personal relief

They start believing that asking them to give up their toxic political, sexist, racist beliefs will also mean giving up their promise of relief from self-hatred, social alienation, sexlessness, friendlessness, lack of purpose, etc.