Twitter Thread by Thabiti Anyabwile



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It strikes me that much of the anti-CRT pieces that charge Black Christians with being CRT proponents go to great lengths to root CRT in European philosophical streams of thought. This despite actual proponents rooting their thoughts elsewhere in the Black intellectual trad.
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So one has to ask the question: Why this tendency? Why press a movement often self-consciously located in one tradition into a tradition it sees as foreign to its thinking?

I'm sure there are many answers. But one answer seems to me to be it's an attempt to control the debate./2

A lot of the historical and philosophical excursus, insofar as it overlooks what the actual proponents claim, is simply another effort at colonizing thought, of insisting on a certain philosophical priority, and of demeaning the constructive thoughts of a group being rejected.
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This is partly why so little progress is made or can be hoped for in these discussions. The critics aren't willing to take justice proponents at their word and engage their actual arguments and tradition.

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Some need to "other" justice advocates both by (a) alienating the advocate from their own philosophical and theological resources and (b) positioning them within rejected and anathematized streams of thought in western society. It's a double-alienation that rigs the convo.

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Disguised as intellectual history, little of it is really about understanding justice claims on their own terms. It's about power to control the discourse. Whoever frames the discussion wins. But, of course, winning a discussion so framed only ends in losing bros/sis's and truth.

My honest recommendation, though as someone who has engaged a lot of debates for a lot of years it saddens me to make it:

Simply ignore the think pieces and invitations to debate CRT, etc. Move on from voices seeking control of discussion by misrepresenting you. Go do the work.

So when @JawnO takes a hard pass on Carl Trueman's take by saying, "He ain't talking about me," John is, in fact, responding in the only way that makes sense if you care about the *actual* problems and can see the intellectual sleight of hand that's repositioning you.

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@JawnO Well done, big fella. May all the rest of us follow suit. Ignore the distractions and the power plays in the garb of intellectual histories that aren't your history or your theological/intellectual starting points. Ignore the distractions and do the work. Neh. 6:3.

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