

Connected Oppressors, Interwoven Struggles: Countering US and China's Imperialism

The webinar was developed in partnership
between andIsland, Asians Supporting Tino
Rangatiratanga, Inclusive Aotearoa
Collective Tāhono, Indigenous Pacific
Uprising, Koekoeā, People Against All
Imperialisms, Uyghur Solidarity Aotearoa.

Moderated by Anjum Rahman.
Ngā mihi to Tāwhana Chadwick for
opening and closing the kōrero.

zine by Liz_artistry based on a webinar
of the same name featuring:

Tina Ngata (Ngāti Porou, Aotearoa)
Bali Nangavulan (Bunun, Taiwan)
Brian Hioe (Han, Taiwan)

*Oppose colonialism regardless of
who is operationalizing it.*
-Tina Ngata

Is China a better choice vs. US Empire?

Operationalizing Colonialism

China models itself after western colonial imperial frameworks. Charting history shows 1) that colonialism as a system can be operationalized by any state, and 2) that we need to oppose the system itself rather than side with one nation state over another.

Indigenous models of leadership and ways of being, doing, and knowing have existed for millennia.



"The [nation-state] is the problem to indigenous people - we really need a country that puts Indigenous people at the center, not just focusing on humans, but land and nature."
-Bali



"Age of Discovery"

The western imperial and colonial model is exported throughout world.

Post-WWII

Global hierarchy dominated by US while China begins to operationalize the western imperial and colonial model



Chinese economic imperialism

- based on trade and immigration in the Pacific and infrastructural and financial development models throughout and beyond Asia, exemplified by the Belt and Road Initiative



Western imperial model based on military and NGO frameworks

- began to shift from Latin America and the "Middle East" to Asia and the Indo-Pacific under Obama, e.g. the 2010 Wellington Declaration on military cooperation between New Zealand and the U.S.

Swapping out oppressors is no choice at all.

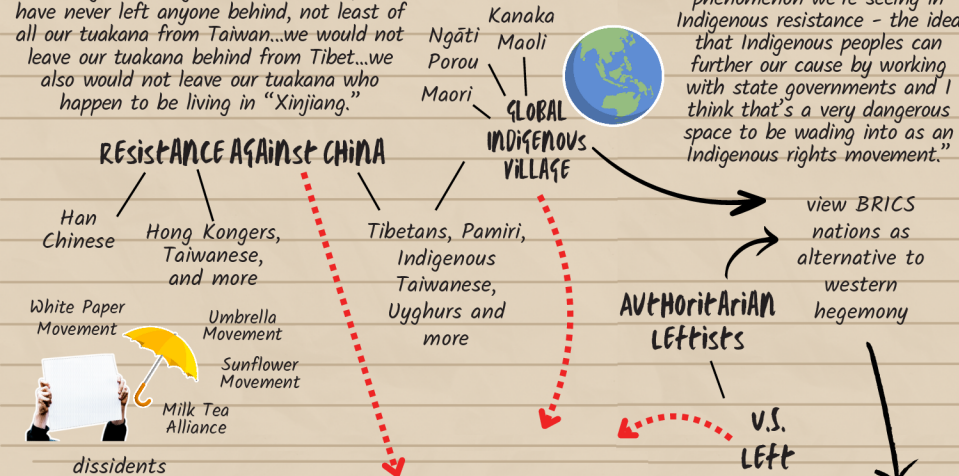
-Tina Ngata

"Oppose colonialism wherever it's happening."

-Tina Ngata

"As a global Indigenous movement, we have never left anyone behind, not least of all our tuakana from Taiwan...we would not leave our tuakana behind from Tibet...we also would not leave our tuakana who happen to be living in "Xinjiang."

"This is a very new phenomenon we're seeing in Indigenous resistance - the idea that Indigenous peoples can further our cause by working with state governments and I think that's a very dangerous space to be wading into as an Indigenous rights movement."



ANTI-COLONIAL ANTI-IMPERIALISTS*

oppose colonialism regardless of who operationalizes it
- against China in relation to Taiwanese people,
against US in relation to Kanaka maoli

forced to flee to U.S.



seek support and platform

defend, and support China



Marxism can resemble Indigenous economic practices and can be seen as alternative to capitalism and western settler colonialism BUT need to be careful because isolating as an economic model ignores geopolitical context, e.g. China operationalizing class western economic imperialism since WWII

dissidents ally with right-wing forces that provide support and a platform

... "Support Indigenous rights and models wherever they are ...provide space for [Indigenous peoples] to speak to their own solutions...Indigenous rights are about supporting the continuity of ways of knowing, being, doing, relating, that extend from the soils and the waters through the peoples of those soils and those waters wherever you may be. That's the model to be supporting, not any particular nation state."

China does not offer anything functionally different from the western and U.S. imperial settler colonial model.



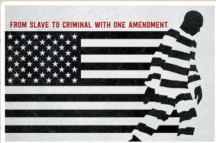
The US spreads freedom and democracy to the world!

rhetoric of "democracy" and "civilization"

same justification of "saving" "backwards" countries

China is a rising country that supports the Third World!

rhetoric of "anti-imperialism" and "modernization"



openly admits to slave labor but calls it "inmate work assignments"

forced labor



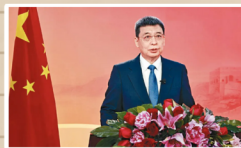
openly admits to re-education camps but calls them "vocational training"

"Counter Terrorism"



War on Terror

Check out "From Palestine to 'Xinjiang': Settler Colonialism and Surveillance State" with Darren Byler via PSAN



WOT with Chinese Characteristics

When the Colonized becomes Colonizer.

Co-optation of Indigenous struggle is a known strategy to destabilize the west.

China establishes relations with Indigenous people by offering to diplomatically shame western oppressors on their behalf. At the same time, China denies its own human rights violations against Indigenous peoples by expanding its own borders and oppressing and annexing other states and then claiming Indigenous people don't exist in China. This mirrors rhetoric used to erase the Indigenous peoples of New Zealand by saying anyone born in New Zealand is Indigenous.

Aotearoa

Ngāti Porou are currently being colonized by Maori political leaders in the names of Shane Jones, Winston Peters and David Seymour.

Taiwan

"Sometimes Han people, in trying to show support for Indigenous people, actually end up reaffirming oppressions. This often happens when Taiwanese identity is being emphasized, for example, during the movement to separate from China."

-Bali

"Just because you're indigenous tuakana doesn't mean you can't also be a colonizer."

-Tina Ngatu

The Chen Shui-bian era saw new partnership with Indigenous peoples and then Tsai Ing-wen issued a formal apology. But rights and voices are easily pushed aside unless Indigenous issues are actively prioritized.

Dzungarstan and Altishahr

Dzungarstan and Altishahr is a more inclusive term for the region also known as "East Turkestan" or "Xinjiang" that doesn't exclude the many ethnolinguistic groups living there, including Santa/Dongxiang, Sarikoli/Tashkurgani, Uyghurs, Kachee, Salar, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, and Uzbek peoples.

Check out linktr.ee/dzungarstan.altishahr to learn more.

"This is a very new phenomenon we're seeing in Indigenous resistance...the idea that Indigenous peoples can further our cause by working with state governments and I think that's a very dangerous space to be wading into as an Indigenous rights movement."

-Tina Ngata

ORIENTALISM ON THE LEFT AND RIGHT



* dehumanize peoples resisting Chinese state violence as pawns in chess game



Read We have not heard from my Baba-jaan's relatives in Kashgar for almost ^{seven} two years now by Nurdoukht Taghdumbashi

"The work of resistance and dismantling all systems of oppression is messy."

* CHINA THE STATE = CHINESE PEOPLE

conflate China the state with Chinese people



Read Fighting anti-Asian violence cannot include apologism for the Chinese state by Promise Li

"The movement against anti-Asian violence must not become yet another bargaining chip between two repressive super powers."

* ignore/deny economic cooperation between US and China, e.g. interdependent supply chains



Read Imperialism as Antagonistic Cooperation by Promise Li

The Colonized becomes Colonizer.

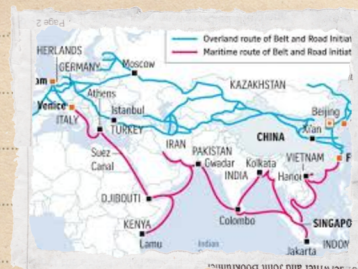
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Ethnonationalist Rhetoric

- "Xinjiang" literally means "New Frontier"
- "Toqja," term used for Indigenous people, literally means "dirt people"

Embracing hypercapitalism

- BRI development projects, (e.g. polluting plants in Central Asia branded as "eco-friendly")
- Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank modeled after World Bank
- Offshoring 3D jobs (Dirty, Demeaning, Dangerous), e.g. rare mineral extraction offshored to Myanmar under military regime
- Exploiting migrant labor and glossing over displaced migrants with flashy billboards and high speed trains



Military Strategy

China engages in wars in Southeast Asia and backs authoritarian regimes (e.g. Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia)

China adapts US military strategies (e.g. constant threat of war plans overhead Taiwan) but w/o need for overseas bases given shared borders with 12 nations



- Genocide Denial:** Same arguments used by Zionists to deny Israel's genocide of Palestine are used to deny China's genocide of Muslims in "Xinjiang," e.g. calling reeducation camps "vocational training"

- Saving the Backwards:** Similar rhetoric of "free world democratizing backwards countries" modified by China into "rising country that supports the third world"