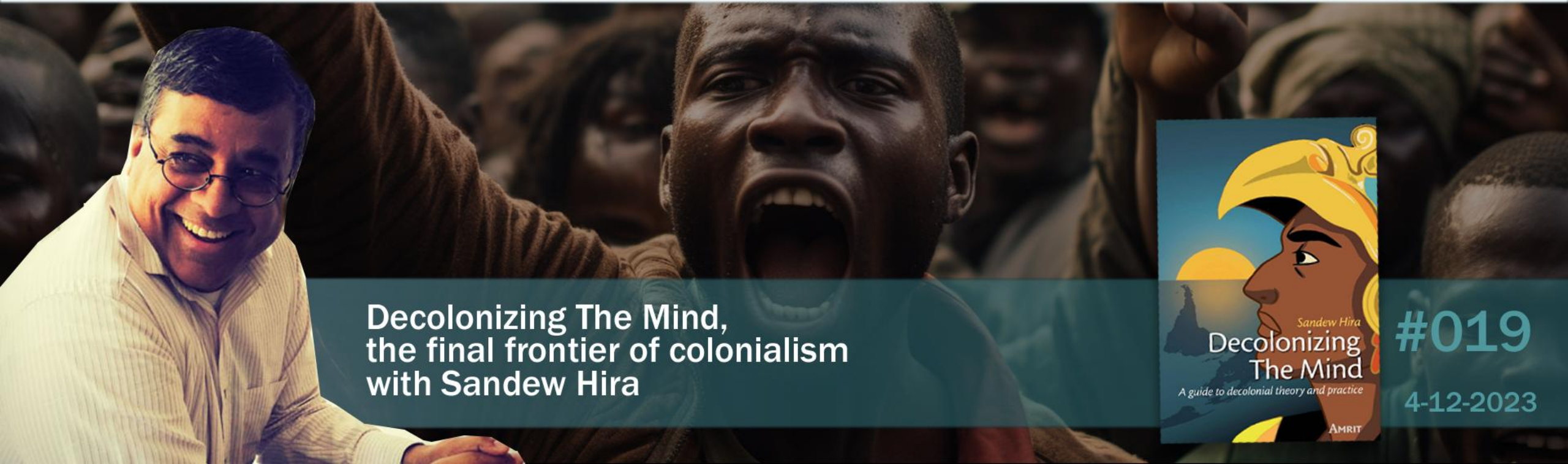


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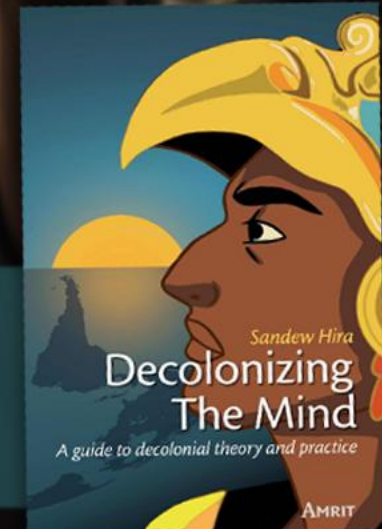
What is decolonial theory?

The background, nature, strength and weaknesses of decolonial theory and practice

The current narratives about civilization: China



Decolonizing The Mind,
the final frontier of colonialism
with Sandew Hira



#019

4-12-2023

The war of liberation in Palestine - 1

- ❑ 15.500 dead, 10.000 women and children, 41,000 wounded. No prisoners deal until war ends. 700 killed in 24 hours.
- ❑ Released Daniel Aloni and her daughter Emelia thanked Hamas for their kind and humane behavior.
- ❑ Yahya Sinwar, Hamas leader in Gaza met hostages, spoke Hebrew: They are safe with Hamas
- ❑ Hamas leader Khaled Mash'al: *'If the Algerians, the Afghans and the Vietnamese had listened to the defeatists who demanded that they surrender, Algeria, Afghanistan and Vietnam would have never liberated themselves from imperialism and occupation.'*

"To the commanders who have accompanied me in recent weeks. It seems that we will part ways tomorrow, but I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your extraordinary humanity that you have shown towards my daughter Emelia. You treated her like your own. You welcomed her in your room whenever she walked in. She says that you are all her friends, not just acquaintances. You are her true and good loved ones. Thank you, thank you, thank you for the countless hours you spent with her as caregivers. Thank you for being patient with her and showering her with sweets, fruits, and everything available, even if it wasn't readily accessible. Children should not be in captivity, but thanks to you and other kind-hearted individuals and leaders we have met during our presence here, my daughter considered herself a queen in Gaza and felt like she was the center of the world. We did not meet a single person, whether a member or leader, during our long stay [in Gaza] who did not treat her with kindness, tenderness, and love. I will forever be a captive of gratitude because she will not leave this place with a permanent psychological trauma. I will remember your kind manners, which you showed in here despite the difficult situation you were coping with yourselves, and the heavy losses that befell you here in Gaza. I wish in this world that we could be really good friends one day. I wish you all good health and well-being. Health and love to you and your families. Thank you very much. Daniel and Emelia."

The war of liberation in Palestine - 2

- ❑ Russian envoy to UN Vasily Nebenzya: *"The difficult situation on the ground in Syria is aggravated by the sharp escalation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The country, like a number of its neighbors in the region, is literally balancing on the verge of being drawn into a large-scale confrontation."*
- ❑ Hamas: release of Russian captives as an appreciation for the Russian position on Palestine
- ❑ Xi Jinping on International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People: *China has, as always, firmly supported the just cause of the Palestinian people to restore their legitimate national rights, he said. And the only viable way to settle the Palestinian question lies in the establishment of an independent Palestinian state that enjoys full sovereignty on the basis of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital.*
- ❑ Iran, Russia, China to Hold Joint Naval Drills in Persian Gulf

A regional war is developing

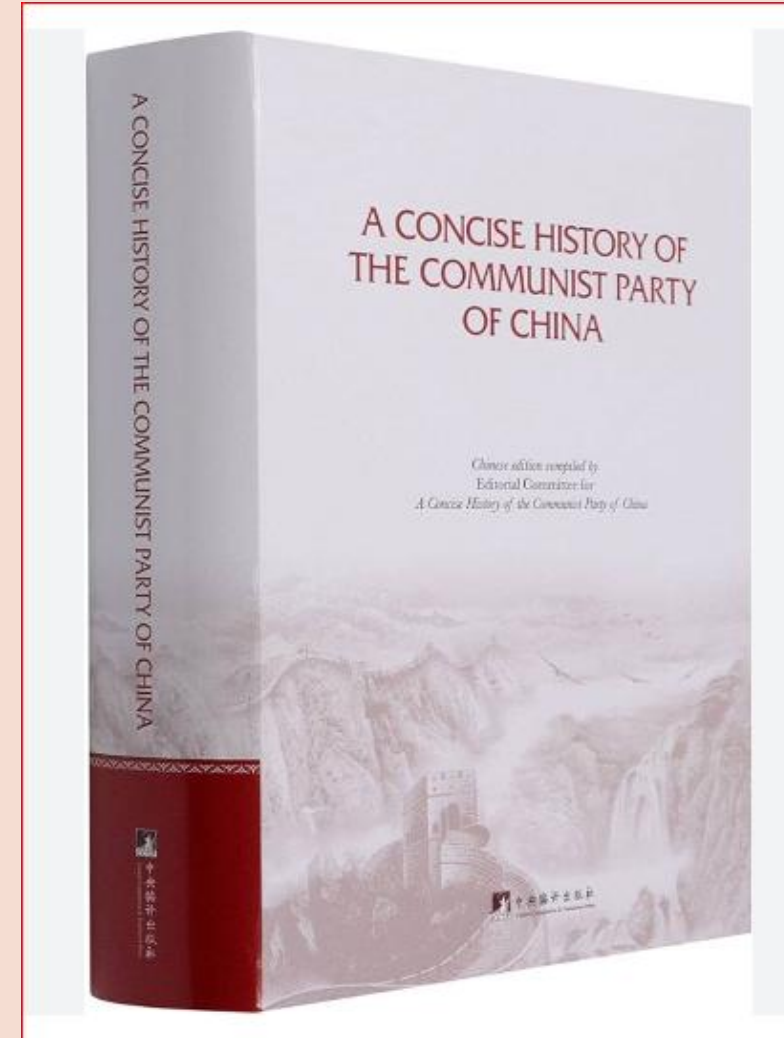
- ❑ Hezbollah: stepping up the pressure
- ❑ Yemen: capturing Israeli ships
- ❑ Iraq: shelling of USA bases
- ❑ Iran: building a coalition with Muslim countries including Saudi Arabia and Turkiye
- ❑ If genocide continues the regional war is inevitable

Topics

- ❑ History of China
- ❑ Mao Zedong and Marxism
- ❑ Deng Xiaoping and emancipation of the mind
- ❑ Xi Jinping and the narrative of civilization
- ❑ Zhang Weiwei and the concept of a civilizational state

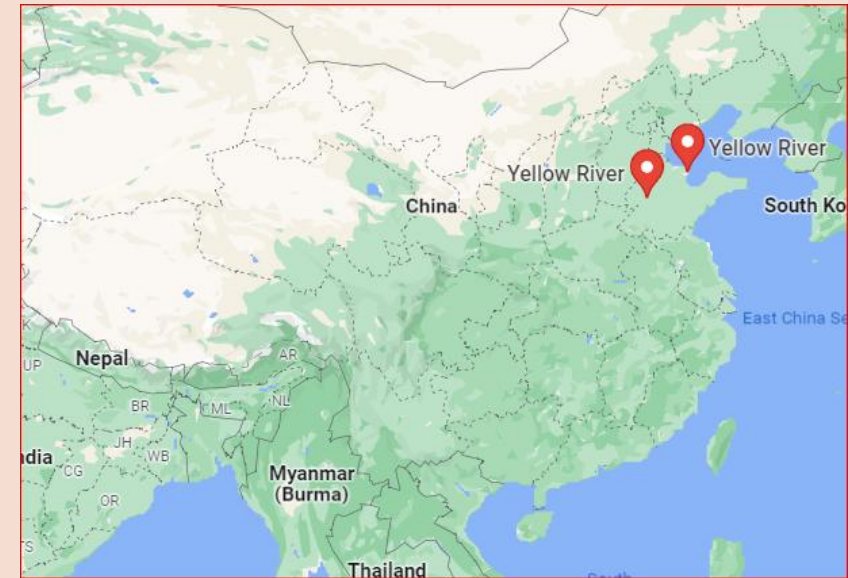
Sources

- ❑ Limitation: English
- ❑ Collected and selected works of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and books and speeches by Xi Jinping
- ❑ A Concise History of the Communist Party
- ❑ Current China:
<https://www.youtube.com/@CyrusJanssen>
- ❑ Future series on China and on Marxism



China: 1,600 BCE - 3,500 years ago

- ❑ 1600 BCE: banks of the Hwang Ho river (Yellow River) the first dynasty - the Shang Dynasty
- ❑ The great divergence: China and Europe
- ❑ Opium wars (1839-1842 and 1856-1860)
- ❑ 1912: the last Chinese emperor abdicated during the Xinhai revolution.
- ❑ May Fourth movement of 1919
- ❑ 1949: The Marxist revolution that led to the birth of the People's Republic of China.

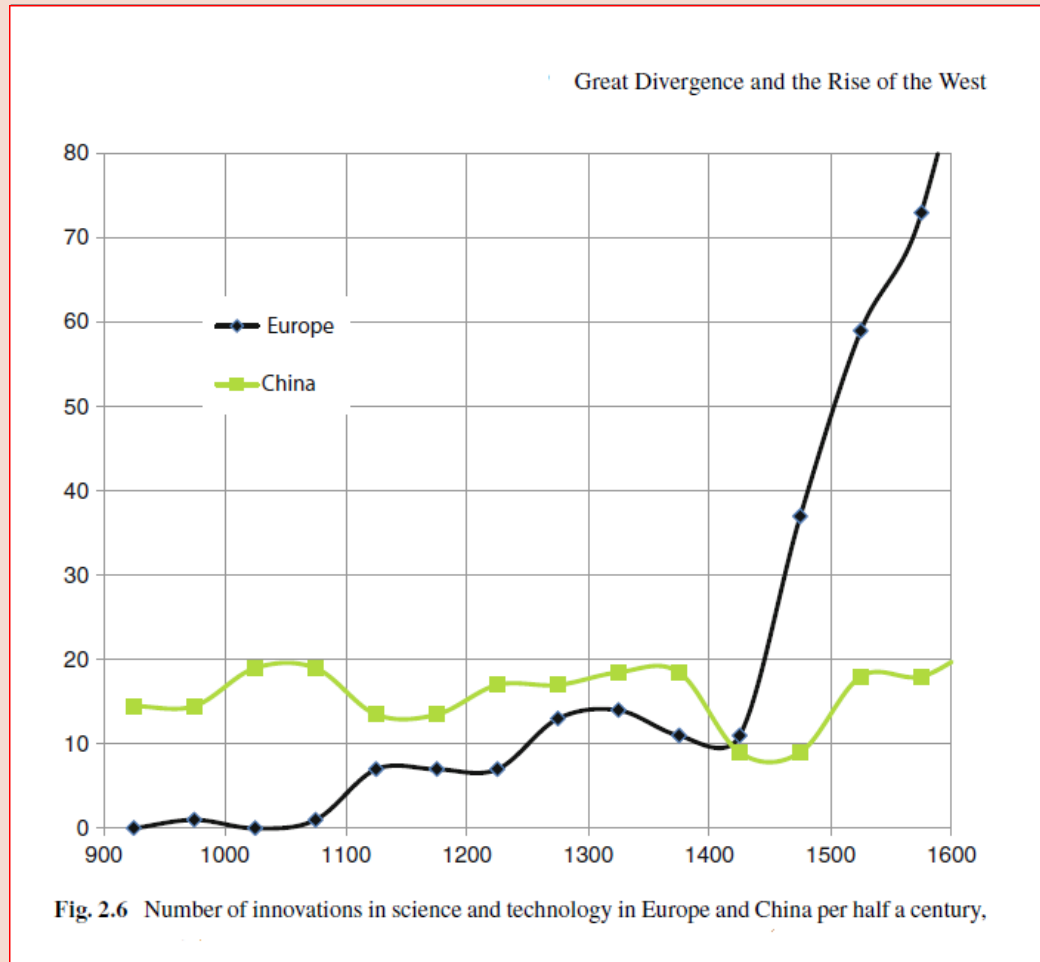


China: science and civilization

- Chinese civilization was highly developed
- Joseph Needham (1900–1995): 7 volumes, 27 books: math, physics, biology, chemistry



The great Divergency



- ❑ Max Weber: religion
- ❑ Kenneth Pomeranz:
Britain: convenient coal
supplies and access to
the abundance of the
New World

Grinin, L. and Korotayev, A. (2015): *Great Divergence and Great Convergence. A Global Perspective*. Springer. New York, p. 46

Zheng He and Columbus: discoverer and occupier



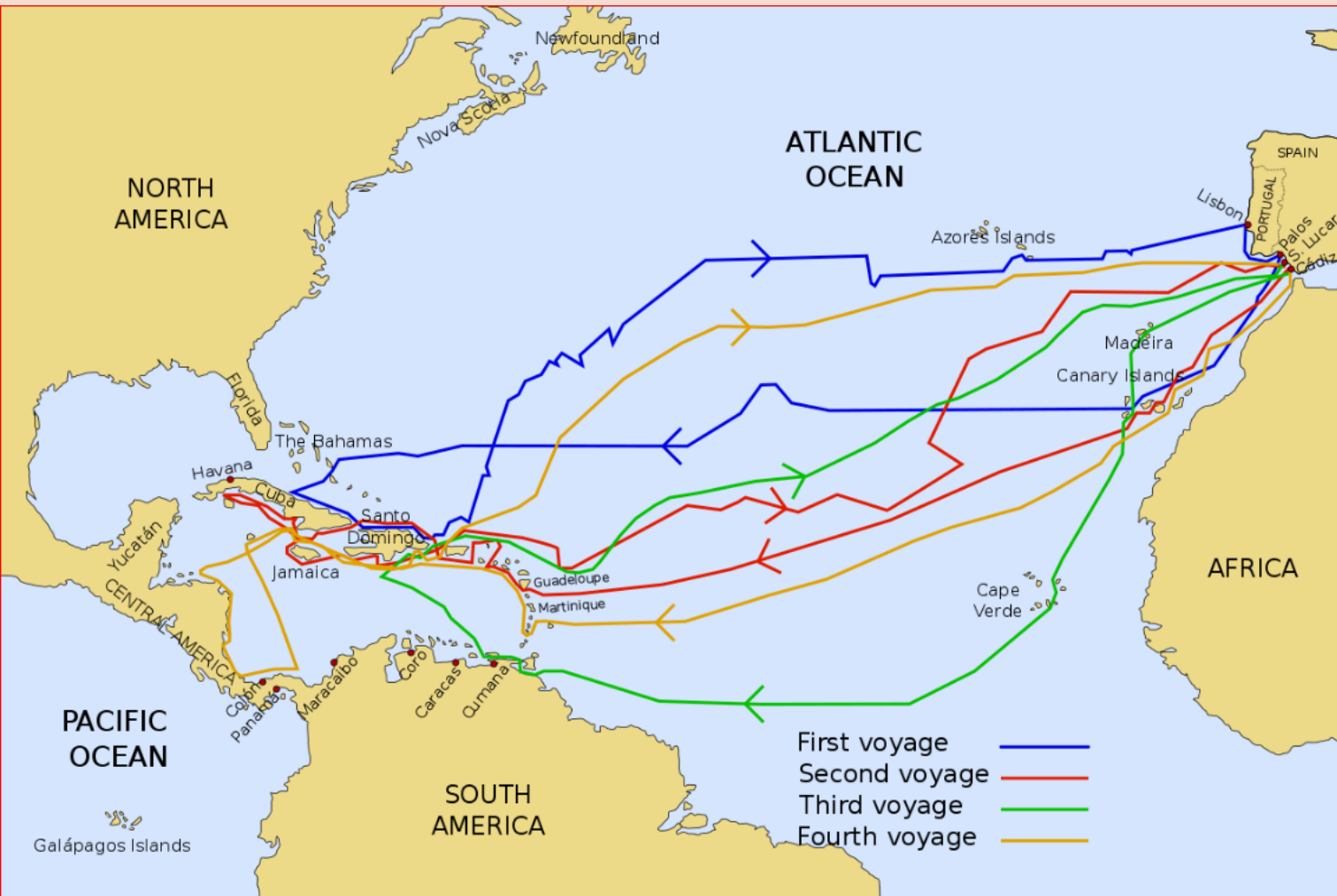
Zheng He (1371-1435)

Two civilizations



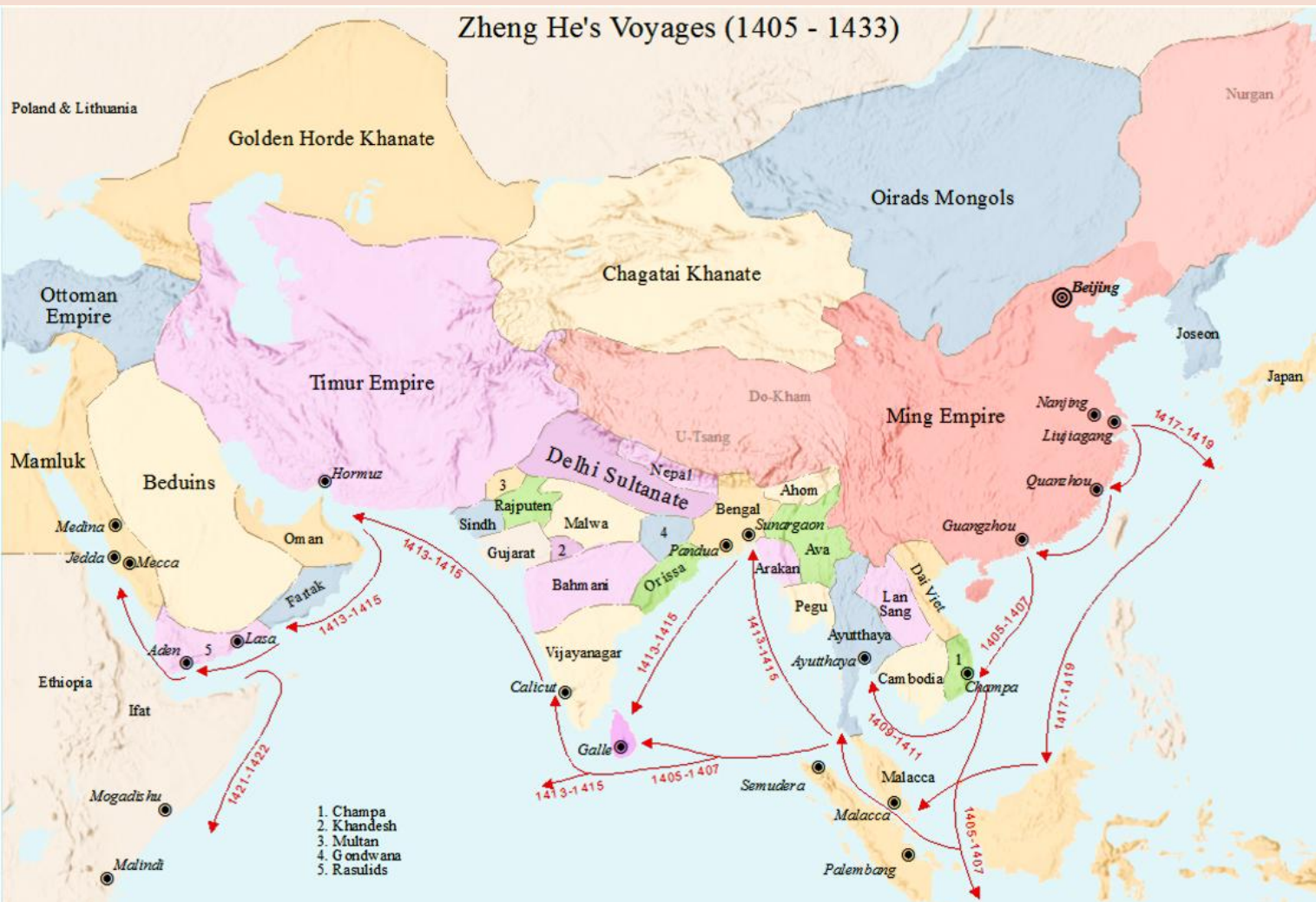
Christopher Columbus (1451-1506)

Voyages of Columbus 1492-1504: about colonization



- ❑ First voyage 1492 : 3 ships: 80 man land by accident in Abya Yala. Kidnapped seven Tainos and brought them to Spain to show the King that these people could be enslaved easily.
- ❑ Second voyage 1493: 17 ships and 1,500 men (military)
- ❑ Led to slavery and genocide, robbing of gold and silver

Six voyages of Zheng He 1405-1433: about trade



- ❑ 317 ships; 27,000 men
- ❑ visited Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Arabia and East Africa brought back foreign dignitaries who came to pay homage to the emperor of China and brought exotic gifts such as a giraffe from the ruler of Malindi in Kenya
- ❑ Emperor Yongle died in 1424, after the sixth voyage. His successor Emperor Hongxi ordered a stop to all further expeditions. Hongxi died a year later. Seven years later in 1432, his son Emperor Xuande ordered one last expedition to take the foreign dignitaries back to their homes

China century of humiliation

Opium Wars (1839-1842 and 1856-1860)

Purpose: Force the Chinese emperors to allow the British to import narcotics into China and thus addicting millions of Chinese with the devastating drugs. The British got rich, not only as enslavers and colonizers, but also as drugs dealers.

W. Hanes III and F. Sanelloin in their study of the Opium Wars: *"Imagine that the Medellin cocaine cartel of Colombia would mount a successful military offensive against the United States, then forces the U.S. to legalize cocaine and allow the cartel to import the drug into five major American cities, unsupervised and untaxed by the U.S. The American government also agrees to let the drug lords govern all Colombian citizens who operate in these cities, plus the U.S. has to pay war reparations of US \$ 100 billion—the Colombians' cost of waging the war to import cocaine into America. That scenario is of course preposterous and beyond the feverish imagination of the most out-there writers of science fiction. However, a similar situation occurred not once, but twice in China during the nineteenth century. In both cases, however, instead of thuggish Colombian drug dealers, it was the most technologically advanced nation on Earth, Great Britain, that forced similar conditions on China."*

Xinhai revolution 10 October 1911 – 12 February 1912

- ❑ Armed uprising brings down the emperor
- ❑ 29 December 1911 Sun Yat-Sen become first president of the republic of China
- ❑ February 12, 1912, the last Chinese emperor abdicated

How to deal with old corrupt civilization?

- ❑ Liberalism: move to modernity
- ❑ Marxism: move to communism

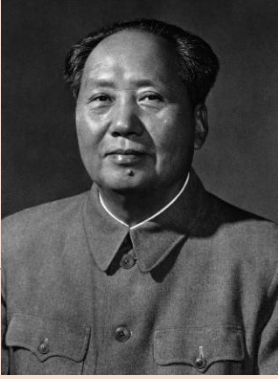
May Fourth Movement

- ❑ World War I: Germany had lost the Chinese territory of Shandong to Japan. Peace conference in Versailles in 1919: Chinese delegates at the conference were hoping to regain control of Shandong. But the European partners of Japan refused to support the Chinese demands and Shandong remained under the control of the Japanese.
- ❑ When news of the conference decision reached China students from the capital Beijing staged a mass demonstration on the morning of May Fourth, 1919 against the Treaty of Versailles. The protest spread across the country and led to the Chinese delegation's refusal to sign the treaty in Paris.

In search for Chinese identity

- The May Fourth demonstrations led to the wholesale questioning of Chinese identity and fate. It culminated in a new movement, the New Culture Movement, that took up the intellectual challenge to search for the root causes of Chinese misfortune in the modern era. Chinese culture was backward. China needed an Enlightenment like the West.
- The New Culture Movement posed the old against the new, religion against science, darkness and backwardness against light and progress. They established journals to plead their cause with titles such as *New Youth*, *The New Tide*, *New Education*, *Young China*, *Young World*, *Youth and Society*, *The New Voice of Society*, *New Society*, *The New Man*, *The New Learning*, *The New Culture*, *The New Students*.

Communist Party of China (1921)



- ❑ Marxism-Leninism is the ideology. Economy is based on central planning.
- ❑ Mao Zedong (1893-1976): adapt Marxism to Chinese reality: revolution is led not by workers, but by peasants.
- ❑ Mao Zedong on Confucius: *“A given culture is the ideological reflection of the politics and economics of a given society. There is in China an imperialist culture which is a reflection of imperialist rule, or partial rule, in the political and economic fields. This culture is fostered not only by the cultural organizations run directly by the imperialists in China but by a number of Chinese who have lost all sense of shame. Into this category falls all culture embodying a slave ideology. China also has a semifeudal culture which reflects her semi-feudal politics and economy, and whose exponents include all those who advocate the worship of Confucius, the study of the Confucian canon, the old ethical code and the old ideas in opposition to the new culture and new ideas. Imperialist culture and semi-feudal culture are devoted brothers and have formed a reactionary cultural alliance against China’s new culture. This kind of reactionary culture serves the imperialists and the feudal class and must be swept away. Unless it is swept away, no new culture of any kind can be built up. There is no construction without destruction, no flowing without damming and no motion without rest; the two are locked in a life-and-death struggle.”*

The failure of communism in China

- ❑ In the first years after the revolution there was a distribution of land belonging to landlords to poor peasants.
- ❑ Second Five-Year Plan (1958-1962) - The Great Leap Forward: The aim was to catch up with the United Kingdom within fifteen years. Private ownership was abolished, and all households were forced into stateoperated communes.
- ❑ The failure: 16.5 million people died in the Great Leap Forward.
- ❑ New reforms were announced that allowed free market and household responsibility for agricultural production.
- ❑ Opposition from Maoists: Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution 1966-1976: Millions of party members and government officials were accused of being landlords, counterrevolutionaries and rightists. They suffered public humiliation, imprisonment, torture, hard labor, seizure of property, execution or harassment into suicide.
- ❑ More than 100 million people were attacked of whom more than 20 million died.

Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997)



In October 1969 Deng Xiaoping was sent to the Xinjian County Tractor Factory in rural Jiangxi province to work as a regular worker. A year earlier, after being tortured, his son Deng Pufang, had jumped out of the window of a four-story building and become paralyzed. In 1973, premier Zhou Enlai, who still had a lot of respect in the party, brought Deng back to Beijing. Deng managed to build a following in the party and the army. On January 8, 1976, Zhou Enlai died. On September 9, 1976, Mao Zedong died. On October 6, 1976, a group from the army arrested all members of the Gang of Four. They were sentenced to imprisonment. The wife of Mao committed suicide in 1991. One member died in prison in 1992 and the remaining two were released from prison in 1996 and 1998. In the 11th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party that was convened between August 12–18, 1977, the Cultural Revolution was declared officially over after 11 long years. Deng Xiaoping was elected to the Politburo and became the facto leader of the CPC.

Deng Xiaoping: liberate the productive forces

“The aim of our revolution is to liberate and expand the productive forces. Without expanding the productive forces, making our country prosperous and powerful, and improving the living standards of the people, our revolution is just empty talk... We must emancipate our minds and we should do so even in answering the question as to what socialism is. If the economy remains stagnant and the people’s living standards remain at a very low level for a long period of time, we cannot say that we are building socialism.”

“Socialism provides more favourable conditions for expanding the productive forces than capitalism does.”

Deng Xiaoping: socialist market economy

"It is wrong to maintain that a market economy exists only in capitalist society and that there is only 'capitalist' market economy. Why can't we develop a market economy under socialism? Developing a market economy does not mean practising capitalism. While maintaining a planned economy as the mainstay of our economic system, we are also introducing a market economy. But it is a socialist market economy."

Deng Xiaoping: foreign policy

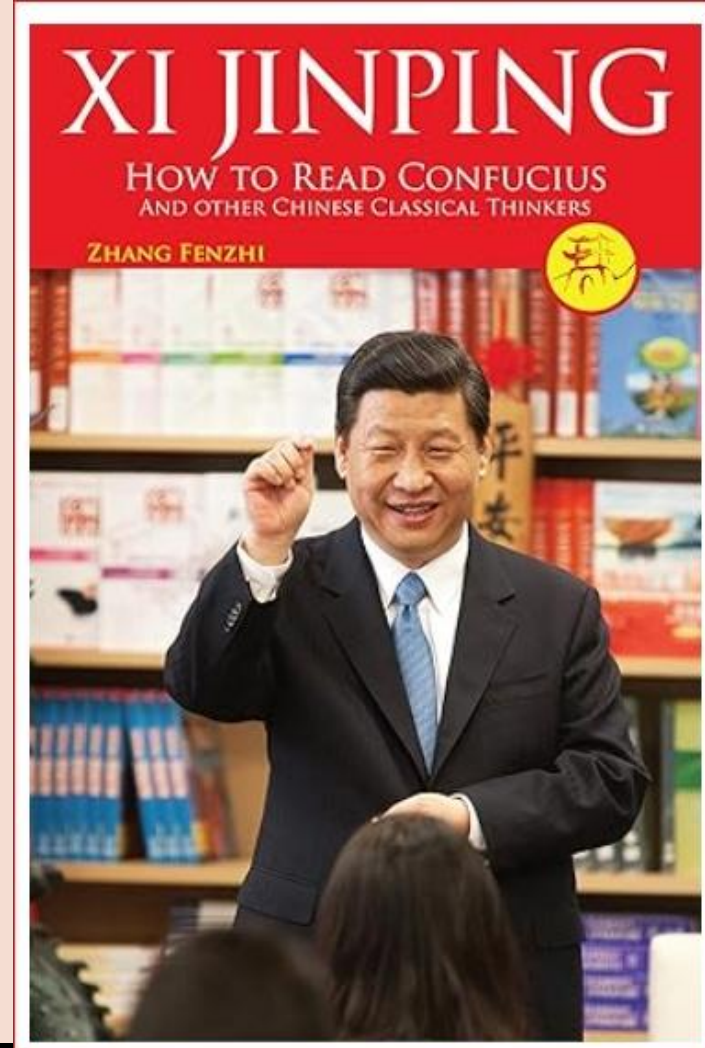
- ❑ Less ideological foreign policy
- ❑ Keep a low profile: "hide one's talent and bide one's time"

The succes of socialist market economy

- ❑ 800 million people lifted out of absolute poverty
- ❑ China needs foreign market and foreign mineral resources
- ❑ China has something to offer the world beyond low skilled labour: high skilled technology
- ❑ 2013: start of Belt and Road Initiative: build global infrastructure for economic development: everybody will gain

The philosophical base: back to Confucius

- He discusses different policy terrains (national governance, politics, diligence, education, individual conduct and foreign affairs) from the perspective of the classical philosophers.
- He takes a concept from a classic philosopher and interprets and develops the concept in such a way that it can be applied to the problems of today.



Example of a classic Chinese thinker

Lin Zexu (1785-1850) was a scholar/politician during the Qing dynasty (1644-1912). Xi Jinping takes the quote: *“The reason for the sea being so wide is that it can accept all rivers.”*

Jinping then comments: *“Civilization is inclusive. Because of the inclusiveness, human civilization has the power of exchange and mutual reference. The reason for the sea being so wide is that it can accept all rivers. All kinds of civilizations created by men are the fruit of labor and wisdom. Each civilization is unique. Blind acceptance and imitation of civilization is not only impossible, but also harmful. Any achievement of civilization should be respected and cherished.”*

May 2019: Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations

It was attended by 1,300 representatives of 47 countries. The aim was to foster exchanges between Asian civilizations, learn from each other and establish a community with a shared future.

Xi Jinping: “We need to uphold the beauty of each civilization and the diversity of civilizations in the world. Each civilization is the crystallization of human creation, and each is beautiful in its own way. The aspiration for all that is beautiful is a common pursuit of humanity that nothing can hold back. Civilizations don’t have to clash with each other; what is needed are eyes to see the beauty in all civilizations. We should keep our own civilizations dynamic and create conditions for other civilizations to flourish. Together we can make the garden of world civilizations colourful and vibrant.”

A warning from Xi Jinping (2021)

“There will be no human civilization without diversity, and such diversity will continue to exist for as long as we can imagine. Difference in itself is no cause for alarm. What does ring the alarm is arrogance, prejudice and hatred; it is the attempt to impose hierarchy on human civilization or to force one’s own history, culture and social system upon others.”

Zhang Weiwei: the civilizational state – eight features

1. a super-large population
 2. a super-vast territory
 3. super-long traditions
 4. a super-rich culture
 5. a unique language
 6. unique politics
 7. a unique society
 8. a unique economy,
- or simply the “four supers” and “four uniques”



The effect of a civilizational state Weiwei - 1

“China’s rise is not the rise of an ordinary country, but the rise of a country sui generis, a civilizational state, a new model of development and a new political discourse which questions many of the Western assumptions about democracy, good governance and human rights, and all this may well usher in a wave of change unprecedented in human history. The West may actually gain from China’s rise in power and ideas, just as many developing or transitional economies have done.”

“This sense of being a civilizational state also means confidence in its own values, discourse, model of development and political system. China has found its way to success, and this Chinese way has combined elements from China’s own fine traditions, socialist ideals and the Western and other civilizations.”

The effect of a civilizational state Weiwei - 2

“A civilizational state can exist and evolve independently of the endorsement or acknowledgment from others. Its political and economic models are different from others in many aspects. This was the case in the past, and is still so now and will remain so in the future, just as the expanding influence of the Chinese language does not require the endorsement of the English language, Sun Tzu’s The Art of War does not need the stamp of approval of Clausewitz, Confucius does not need the acknowledgment of Plato, and China’s current “macroeconomic regulation” does not need the approval of the US Federal Reserve Board.”

“When Britain ushered in the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, its population was around 10 million, smaller than that in any of China’s major cities today. When France was undergoing the process of industrialization in the 19th century, its population was around 20 million, but China today is already a nation of 1.3 billion people. It is carrying out large-scale industrial and social revolutions under very unfavorable conditions. It has to resolve all its problems internally without resorting to wars, and it does not plunder other countries.”

Next episode: Russia's narrative

- From Marxism to Eurasianism
- Putin's view on civilization and the civilizational state

2 What is decolonial theory?
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Decolonizing The Mind,
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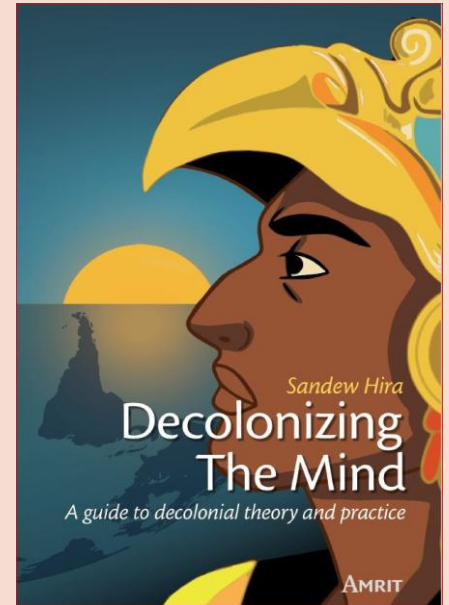
Sandew Hira
Decolonizing
The Mind
A guide to decolonial theory and practice

#020
11-12-2023

The graphic features a background image of a crowd of people, with a man in the foreground shouting. A smaller inset image shows Sandew Hira, the author of the book 'Decolonizing The Mind'. The text is overlaid on a dark green and white background.

Source in the DTM book

- Index: China
- Download the PDF of the PowerPoint on www.sandewhira.com



sandewhira.com

SANDEW HIRA
Author. Activist. Decolonial Thinker.

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