THE MACHINE
OF THE WORLD
a zine on modernity & decolonization
THIS IS MODERNIZATION

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What is to be done is something very different: to liberate the production of knowledge, reflection, and communication from the pitfalls of European rationality/modernity. The alternative, then, is clear: the destruction of the coloniality of world power. First of all, epistemological decolonization, as decoloniality, is needed to clear the way for new intercultural communication, for an interchange of experiences and meanings, as the basis of another relationality which may legitimately pretend to some universality.

(Aníbal Quijano)

The task of decoloniality after decolonization is redefined and focused on epistemology and knowledge rather than the state; or, in Western political theory that sustains the idea of the state. It still means to undo, but the undoing starts from "epistemological decolonization as decoloniality." But beyond all of that, decoloniality focuses on changing the terms of the conversation.

(Walter Mignolo & Catherine Walsh)

"Fixing" the "social ills" without addressing the politics of land and body dispossession serves only to reinforce settler colonialism, because it doesn't stop the system that causes the harm in the first place while also creating the opportunity for neoliberalism to benevolently provide just enough ill-conceived programming and 'funding' to keep us is a constant state of crisis, which inevitably they market as our fault.

(Leanne Simpson)

Over the past two hundred years, without our permission and without our consent, we have been systematically removed and dispossessed from most of our territory. We live with the ongoing trauma of the Indian Act, residential schools, day schools, sanatoriums, child welfare, and now an education system that refuses to acknowledge our culture, our knowledge, our histories, and experience. This is the context within which I experience resurgence. This is the very real urgency of resurgence.

(Leanne Simpson)
Background images illustrate the environmental disaster caused by the break down of a tailings dam in Mariana, Brazil. Several Black and Indigenous rural communities were flooded and covered in toxic mining waste.

I am interested in freedom, not survival, and as kwe, I understand my freedom is dependent upon the destruction of settler colonialism. (Leanne Simpson)
ELEGIA 1938

CARLOS DRUMMOND DE ANDRADE (1978)

Trabalhas sem alegria para um mundo caduco,
onde as formas e as ações não encerram nenhum exemplo.
Praticas laboriosamente os gestos universais,
sentes calor e frio, falta de dinheiro, fome e desejo sexual.

Heróis enchem os parques da cidade em que te arrastas,
e preconizam a virtude, a renúncia, o sangue-frio, a concepção.
À noite, se neblina, abrem guarda chuvas de bronze
ou se recolhem aos volumes de sinistras bibliotecas.

Amas a noite pelo poder de aniquilamento que encerra
e sabes que, dormindo, os problemas te dispensam de morrer.
Mas o terrível despertar prova a existência da Grande Máquina
e te repõe, pequenino, em face de indecifráveis palmeiras.

Caminhas entre mortos e com eles conversas
sobre coisas do tempo futuro e negócios do espírito.
A literatura estragou tuas melhores horas de amor.
Ao telefone perdeste muito, muitíssimo tempo de semear.

Coração orgulhoso, tens pressa de confessar tua derrota
e adiar para outro século a felicidade coletiva.
Aceitas a chuva, a guerra, o desemprego e a injusta distribuição
porque não podes, sozinho, dinamitar a ilha de Manhattan.

ELEGY 1938

CARLOS DRUMMOND DE ANDRADE (1978)

You work without joy for a worn-out world
whose forms and actions set no example.
You laboriously perform the universal motions,
you feel heat and cold, lack of money, hunger, and sexual desire.

Heroes fill the city parks where you drag your feet,
and they preach virtue, renunciation, fortitude, vision.
At night, if it drizzles, they open bronze umbrellas
or retreat to the tomes of sinister libraries.

You love the night for its power to annihilate
and you know, when you sleep, the problems stop requiring you to die.
But you fatally wake up to the Great Machine existing,
and once more you stand, miniscule, next to inscrutable palms.

You walk among dead people and with them you talk
about things of the future and matters of the spirit.
Literature has ruined your best hours of love.
You've wasted time for sowing, too much time, on the phone.

Prouthearted, you're in a hurry to confess your defeat
and postpone collective happiness for another century.
You accept the rain, the war, unemployment, and unfair distribution
because you can't, by yourself, blow up the island of Manhattan.
CAN THE UNIVERSITY REALLY BE DECOLONIZED?

By far the largest attack on Indigenous Knowledge systems right now is land dispossession, and the people that are actively protecting Nishnaabewin are not those at academic conferences advocating for its use in research and coursework, but those who are currently putting their bodies on the land.

(Leanne Simpson)
Research is one of the ways in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized. Whose research is it? Who owns it? Whose interests does it serve? Who will benefit from it? Who has designed its questions and framed its scope? Who will carry it out? Who will write it up? How will its results be disseminated? 
(Linda Tuhuiawai Smith)

If academy is concerned about not only protecting and maintaining Indigenous intelligence but also revitalizing it on Indigenous terms as a form of restitution for its historic and contemporary role as a colonizing force (of which I see no evidence), then the academy must make a conscious decision to become a decolonizing force in the intellectual lives of Indigenous peoples by joining us in dismantling settler colonialism and actively protecting the source of our knowledge: Indigenous land. 
(Leanne Simpson)

Are the state-run education system and the academic industrial complex really a house worth inhabiting? 
(Leanne Simpson)
In 1572, Portuguese poet Luís Vaz de Camões first published the epic poem "The Lusiads," celebrating the "discovery" of a maritime route from Europe to India. The poem praises Portuguese colonization and the "voyages of discovery" of the time. The machine of the world is a spectacle offered to Portuguese colonizers by mythical sirens, in which the secret and divine machinations of the world are explained to their "deserving" "corporeal eyes."

In 1951, Brazilian poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade published the poem "The machine of the world," describing man walking slowly on a dirt trail. The heavens offer him an opportunity to see the machine of the world that reveals all the mysteries of how the world works. The man, tired, refuses.

Carlos Drummond de Andrade was born and raised in the small town of Itabira - not far from Mariana - and saw the landscapes of his childhood ravaged and destroyed by ore mining.
Radical change means changing from the roots.

Abolition requires that we change one thing: everything.
(Ruth Gilmore)
Thanks to: every person that contributed to the creation of this zine through conversation, feedback, and presence.