Finding Indigenous Place in Colonial Space: Place-Based Redress in Leanne Simpson's *This Accident of Being Lost*

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When asked by Shelagh Rogers about the significance of the title of *This Accident of Being Lost* in a segment of *The Next Chapter* for CBC Radio, Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg author Leanne Betasamosake Simpson stated that in "thinking a lot about what it means to be an Indigenous woman in 2017 . . . one of the reoccurring feelings for me was feeling lost" (00:02:01-00:02:21). Simpson added that "you never set out to be lost, it's always an accident to become lost" (00:02:42). And, of course, this accidental condition of being lost is a deeply colonial condition that reflects how settler colonial systems of domination are ongoing structures that aim to delink Indigeneity from the land. Simpson has been known for advocating the roles of land-based pedagogies and embodied geographies in both her critical work and her poetic and artistic practice. For Simpson, despite ongoing colonial dispossession, "everyday acts of resurgence" continuously enact Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty, which her characters also animate in her creative endeavours (*As We Have* 195). Simpson's 2017 collection, *This Accident of Being Lost*, makes important contributions to a decolonizing politics of land by engaging in a poetics of place making that confronts and disrupts settler colonial spatial practices of control. A significant part of the collection's dynamic representation of decolonial acts is attending to quotidian acts of spatial disruption within different colonial contexts: the dichotomization between city and reserve; the management and containment of Indigeneity through recognition-based discourses, surveillance, and encounters of conflict with non-Indigenous settlers; as well as the implications of ecological devastation for different human and non-human communities on Turtle Island.

In this essay I explore the embodied spatialities of Indigenous self-determination in Simpson's work and their importance for articulating land-based commitments in conversations about redress. Focusing on the role of spatial epistemologies of resistance and the assertion of Indigenous presence in the collection's topographies, I suggest that *This Accident of Being Lost* provides readers with place-based literacies that are important in movements of redress. In other words, spatiality and the specific meanings of land in Indigenous ontologies inform how resistance to colonial dispossession *takes place* in the geopolitical space that has become known as Canada (Coulthard 61). This in turn necessitates a broader critique of the role of place in efforts at redress that need to depart from state-sanctioned projects of recognition. I am interested in place- and land-based literacies as important directives for discussions, practices, and movements of redress because of the potential that reading, and more specifically responsible and engaged critical reading, can have for building cultures of accountability. In this context, literary reclamations of land and representations of its material, ethical, and political networks of relationality are key in redefining the conditions of redress, especially in terms of challenging the "teleological pursuit of closure" of official forms of apology and reconciliation (McCall 184). In rethinking redress through the literary, I also hope to engage responsibly with a question posed by Seneca scholar Mishuana Goeman regarding narrative as a form of resistance. In *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations*, Goeman asks "how do poetry and literature intervene in the colonial logics that continue to erase Native presence on the land and continue to accumulate Native land and bodies into the imaginative geographies of empire?" (26). To put this otherwise, how do Indigenous creative practices enact Indigenous emplacement against ongoing colonial structures of "replacement" (Wolfe 388)? In this sense, although "decolonization is not a metaphor," as Unangax̂ scholar Eve Tuck and settler scholar K. Wayne Yang have argued (3), Indigenous creative practices of storytelling imagine, exhort, and materialize a decolonizing politics of place and land. Often such creative acts themselves become pedagogical tools that strengthen meaningful redress. As Simpson asserts in *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence*, "storytelling is at its core decolonizing, because it is a process of remembering, visioning and creating a just reality where Nishnaabeg live as both *Nishnaabeg* and *peoples*" (33). In this sense, land for Simpson is pedagogy and story

(*As We Have* 160), and the way in which Indigenous literatures and narrative arts enact this relationship is extremely important for necessary epistemic shifts from resistance to settler colonialism to agency (Simpson, *Dancing* 17).

Just as it is important to acknowledge the role of Indigenous creative practices in terms of politically vigorous and ethically instructive visions of place in movements of redress, it is also important to reckon with the different contexts and knowledges with which one approaches such creative practices. My reading of Simpson's work reflects my own self-location as a settler reader and an uninvited inhabitant of unceded Algonquin land and as someone also interested in the connections between place and shared agency beyond my own personal narrative of different locations. As someone born outside Canada, I did not immediately realize my own settlerhood. In fact, only recently did the identity "settler" become legible to me when looking more critically at my experiences as a European woman and a naturalized citizen in the geopolitical space of Canada. I would like to think, however, that, if cultivating ethical place-based literacies is a cumulative and ongoing process, then this process will necessarily involve confronting multiple misreadings, rereadings, and continuous trying work. As such, the reading that I offer in this essay is not and cannot be fixed or complete — not only in terms of my critical agency over Simpson's text, but also in terms of thinking about place *here*.

Land and Redress: Recognition, Reconciliation, Placelessness

Calls for shifting discussions of Indigenous rights from paradigms of recognition to understandings of Indigenous rights as inherent forms of sovereignty and self-determination necessitate a broader questioning of how efforts at redress have been articulated. As Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel assert, Indigeneity is understood as an "oppositional, place-based existence, along with the consciousness of being in struggle against the dispossessing and demeaning fact of colonization by foreign peoples," and not a form of racial and cultural difference within multiethnic and multicultural societies (597). Indigenous relationships to land are therefore inherent conditions of self-determining pasts, presents, and futures through "grounded" relationships (Coulthard 13). Rights-based discourses of recognition, in this sense, have exhausted meaningful forms of redress that could support Indigenous sovereign-

ties. Furthermore, as Corntassel has argued, "the rights-based discourse has resulted in the compartmentalization of indigenous powers of self-determination by separating questions of homelands and natural resources from those of political/legal recognition of a limited indigenous autonomy within the existing framework of the host state(s)" (107). Discourses of recognition also perilously reproduce colonial relationships, which Glen Coulthard has discussed in *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. More specifically, he argues that the Canadian politics of recognition reproduces colonial relationships through the guise of a liberal democratic state. Instead of recognition, Coulthard argues for "a *resurgent politics of recognition* premised on self-actualization, direct action, and the resurgence of cultural practices that are attentive to the subjective and structural composition of settler-colonial power" (24). Discursively close to recognition, the politics of reconciliation mobilizes a similar discourse of compartmentalization instead of "a politics of enactment" (McCall 178).

Many scholars — such as Taiaiake Alfred, Glen Coulthard, Paulette Regan, Pauline Wakeham, Jennifer Henderson, Sophie McCall, and others — have argued that discourses of reconciliation, especially carried out through state-mandated projects such as the 2008 apology for residential schools and the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission, continue to evade the question of land in ways that hamper meaningful redress. For example, Kanien'kehá:ka scholar Taiaiake Alfred has argued that "without massive restitution, including land, financial transfers, and other forms of assistance to compensate for past harms and continuing injustices committed against our peoples, reconciliation would permanently enshrine colonial injustices and is itself a further injustice" (152). In this sense, reconciliation continues to reproduce intricate forms of placelessness via visions of closure and benign imaginings of cohabitation and coexistence. In this regard, "terranulism" is a helpful term for understanding how statist paradigms of reconciliation occlude land. The term is attributed to Cree scholar Lorraine Le Camp as it appears in "Decolonizing Anti-Racism" by Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua, and it is defined as "the erasure of an ongoing post-contact Indigenous presence" evident in postcolonial discourses of the nation that reproduce forms of misrecognition and oppression (132). The term arguably also describes the ways that place-based relations and land are taken up by dominant — usually official — forms of reconciliation that claim to recognize inherent Indigenous

rights to governance, sovereignty, and self-determination, but in effect fail to do so, as has been evident in the long histories of territorial disputes in Canada (McCall 4).

Given the strong land-based calls that scholars have been making for redress, I hope to explore how place in *This Accident of Being Lost* is integral to what Pauline Wakeham and Jennifer Henderson describe as the wider "epistemological restructuring" that meaningful forms of redress require (10). I focus on different ways in which embodiment renders land relations as necessary for renewed forms of place-based pedagogies in two of Simpson's stories in *This Accident of Being Lost*. I begin by analyzing "Plight," which follows Indigenous life in the city, and "Circles upon Circles," which takes place in a non-urban setting near Ball Lake, Ontario. In looking at how forms of spatial epistemologies take place in these different topographies, I suggest that embodied forms of knowing and living place contribute to wider forms of decolonizing engagement with location.

Not an Ethnography: Place-Based Literacies and Grounded Redress

Political and cultural works of Indigenous resurgence intervene in the spatial orders of settler colonialism by "refusing" such spaces and instead looking to create spaces of decolonial possibility (Simpson, *As We Have* 195). Turning to space and spatial thinking as analytics for redress, I hope to engage with what Goeman terms "discourses of spatial decolonization" (1): that is, the anticolonial challenges and reorganizations of settler colonial spaces through practices of what Goeman calls *(re)mapping*, that is, geographical strategies of place making that seek to assert Indigenous presence on the land (5). According to Goeman, (re)mapping produces "decolonized spatial knowledges and attendant geographies" (11), which in turn emphasize the potential of Indigenous anticolonial resistance in dominant geographies. Practices of (re)mapping can also be found in literary reclamations of land and place and, by extension, in critical methods of reading and analysis that need to be cognizant of how narrative and discursive acts can unsettle dominant cartographies. Part of my interest in attending to place-based resistance in Simpson's work therefore stems from the implications of such work for advocating for "attendant geographies" and land-based literacies as critical tools for redress (11).

Given the physical reality in which this analysis is produced, it is

more appropriate to frame place as a "practice" and not only a physical space that is "exchangeable, saleable, steal-able" (Tuck and McKenzie 43, 64). Thinking about Doreen Massey's contributions to critical space studies, Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie suggest that place is and involves "practice" (43). According to the authors, practising place evinces how incommensurability defines grounded relations of tension and of potential solidarity (43). For Tuck specifically, incommensurability is a critical tool for approaching redress that seeks to ground accountable relationships in decolonial place-based contexts and not only in theoretical or solely affective terms. As Tuck and Yang argue in "Decolonization is not a metaphor," understanding redress through "an ethic of incommensurability" means understanding relationships on shared spaces as both divergent and not simply diverse (28). Incommensurability, though capable of highlighting meaningful shared struggle in some ways, is not a homogenizing or equivocating mechanism. As Tuck and Yang mention, an "ethic of incommensurability" not only highlights difference as a site of possibility but also informs a pedagogy of critical social justice projects that seeks to decentre the state while calling attention to a collective sense of living and acting in incommensurable place (31). Thinking along the lines of this "ethic of incommensurability," Tuck and McKenzie argue that "to *practice* place or land productively toward versions of critical Indigenous and environmental politics will mean different things to different people and communities" (43). That is, to practice place involves both the understanding of the integrity of place-based relationships, and at the same time place as a practice also challenges movements of redress to engage more vigorously with Indigenous self-determination (Walia 252). Place as practice in this sense becomes an important directive toward redressing colonial injustices and land theft and moving toward accountable ways of coexistence.

To this end, land pedagogies and critical place inquiries depend on Indigenous decolonizing methodologies that strengthen place as an important political agent. However, although critical place inquiry is central in rethinking spatial relations from decolonizing perspectives, Tuck and McKenzie point out that, despite the many calls made by several Indigenous artists, critics, philosophers, educators, and community leaders, non-Indigenous settler scholars often do not engage with place in ways that support Indigenous self-determination, and as a result "the saliency of land/place is frequently left out of the picture"

(17). This problem speaks fundamentally to the conceptual difficulty of engaging in conversations about place, especially when these conversations concern Indigenous occupied lands. The attempt to define place generates intellectual difficulty since as a concept it does not afford straightforward or fixed understandings, and at the same time place tends to be depoliticized, especially with regard to heightened global and neo-liberal presents.

In this context, the differences between Indigenous and Eurocentric ontologies of place are significant in understanding how forms of redress on Turtle Island require renewed attention to grounded relations and accountability. For Coulthard, for example, the importance of land as an ethical structure is conceptualized as "grounded normativity" (13). In this regard, he coins the term "grounded normativity" to conceptualize Indigenous relationships to land. For Coulthard, grounded normativity is "the modalities of Indigenous land-based practices and longstanding experiential knowledge that informs and structures [Indigenous] ethical engagements with the world and [the Indigenous] relationship with human and nonhuman others over time" (13). According to Coulthard, Indigenous grounded normativity is what the settler state threatens to obliterate and depoliticize, exactly through critiques of essentialism that do not recognize the role of land in Indigenous political, cosmological, and ethical systems. Moreover, he emphasizes how grounded forms of relationship building depend on and promote non-exploitative relations (60). In this regard, he expands the meaning of reciprocity and shared systems of responsibility that take place on/with land in a broader definition of place that reflects those embodied systems of reciprocity. Accordingly, for Coulthard, "place is a way of knowing, of experiencing and relating to the world and with others" (61). Through embodied forms of living and acting with others, that is, place is an epistemology that reflects Indigenous connection to grounded normativity. And it is exactly this relationship to place that "guide[s] forms of resistance against other rationalizations of the world that threaten to destroy [an Indigenous] sense of place" (61).

Building upon Coulthard's concept of grounded normativity, in *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*, Simpson theorizes Nishnaabeg grounded normativity or what she calls Nishnaabewin or "Nishnaabeg intelligence" (23). For her, the place-based ethico-political meanings of grounded normativity fuel Indigenous embodiment as a resurgent praxis of rejection and refusal

of settler authority and structures of white supremacy. Simpson argues that "grounded normativity is the base of [Indigenous] political systems, economy, nationhood, and it creates process-centred modes of living that generates profoundly different conceptualizations of nationhood and governmentality — ones that aren't based on enclosure, authoritarian power, and hierarchy" (22). Grounded normativity also translates into "all of the associated practices, knowledge, and ethics that make us Nishnaabeg and construct the Nishnaabeg world" (23). Fundamentally, then, these place-based extended networks of interdependence and non-oppressive relationality sustain resurgence, which for Simpson is "a flight out of the structures of settler colonialism and into the processes and relationships of freedom and self-determination encoded and practiced within Nishnaabewin or grounded normativity" (17). It is exactly through multiple embodied forms of flight into grounded normativity that *This Accident of Being Lost* enacts an ongoing refusal of "colonial spatialities" (195).

This Accident of Being Lost: Refusing Colonial Spaces

True to its title, in *This Accident of Being Lost*, the songs and stories convey the realities of Indigenous dispossession in various contexts: via the text's often mixed (humorous and uneasy) responses to technology and media vis-à-vis Indigenous grounded normativity; the conditions of Indigenous diasporas both in urban centres and in non-urban or rural areas where negotiation is different yet equally heightened; and the intensified anxiety about the climate crisis, ecological devastation, misrecognition, and inadequate responses from the settler state and communities. In these contexts, Simpson's poetics can be described as what Cree scholar Neal McLeod has termed "the poetics of being lost," often counterbalanced by a "poetics of retrieval" (10). For McLeod, "one of the challenges of contemporary Indigenous poetics is to move from a state of wandering and uprootedness toward a poetics of being home" (10). According to Simpson in her interview, her text takes up this challenge by emphasizing embodied practices as an "antidote to the condition of being lost" (00:02:24). That is, the collection asserts Indigenous presence across different scales and aspects of Nishnaabewin by rejecting colonial scripts of management and containment. This form of refusal manifests variously across the text's representation of different spaces (cities, rural areas, waterways, firearms safety classrooms,

etc.) through what Brenda Vellino has characterized as "fugitive acts of counter-theft" that recreate those grounded ethical structures in sites where colonial space encroaches on Indigenous place (139-40). Through these "acts of counter-theft," Simpson suggests ways to reject and refuse the ubiquity of colonial spatiality, thus exhorting Indigenous people to "put aside visions of 'back to the land,' and just think land — some of it wild, some of it urban, a lot of it ecologically devastated" (*As We Have* 195). For Simpson, "every piece of North America is Indigenous land regardless of whether it has a city on top of it, or it is under threat, or it is coping with industrial development" (195).

The story "Plight," which figures at the beginning of *This Accident of Being Lost*, captures the sentiment of uprootedness in an urban spatial reality. Simpson situates "Plight" within the broader climate of negotiation that Indigenous communities face when it comes to engaging with land-based practices in settings where surveillance and harassment are typical outcomes from encounters with settlers and authorities. Despite the representation of dispossession in the city, however, the story also urges movement away from victimhood. "Plight" follows the story of three Nishnaabeg characters, Lucy, Kwe, and the narrator, who harvest maple sap in an urban setting that is also Mississauga territory. From the outset of the story, Simpson constructs the city as a space of struggle, both because of the material dangers that Indigenous bodies face and because of dispossession by alienation evident in the liberal identity of the Canadian neighbourhood:

> The neighbourhood we're going into mostly votes NDP or Liberal in provincial and federal elections, and they feel relief when they do. They have perennials instead of grass. They get organic, local vegetables delivered to their doors twice weekly, *in addition* to going to the farmer's market on Saturday. They're also trying to make our neighbourhood into an Ontario heritage designation; I think that mostly means you can't do renovations that make your house look like it isn't from the 1800s or rent your extra floors to the lower class. (5)

For the three Nishnaabekwewag of the story, the neighbourhood is both a space of diaspora and a space of reclamation at the same time. That is, though "Plight" takes up dispossession and negotiation in often humorous ways, it also comments on the implications of plight as a concept that locates Indigenous people as objects of sympathy in liberal rubrics

of recognition that de-emphasize land-based self-determination. The episode begins with the three Nishnaabeg women, a baby, and occasionally a shapeshifter figure visible only to the narrator, looking for ways to translate the fact that they are acting on their land in a way that will not attract surveillance and even violence. The group, according to the narrator, humorously name themselves The Fourth World Problems Collective, and they write a letter to their non-Indigenous neighbours in which they frame harvesting maple sap as an "urban sugar-making adventure" (6). Although the narrator conveys the problematic of negotiation and their need to "get the proper balance of telling, not asking, while sidestepping suspicion" (6), it is also evident that appealing to a discourse of reconciliation and recognition is a necessary means to avoid harassment in this space. Negotiation in this story is both affective bartering in a site that has been transformed into an urban centre of development and extraction that sustains "settler futurities" (Tuck and Yang 9) and a material fight for literal place.

"Plight" depicts two significant forms of emplaced resistance that intervene in the spatial orders of the urban Canadian neighbourhood. The first way in which resistance takes place in this spatial reality is through the rejection of the politics of recognition and reconciliation as mechanisms that ultimately despatialize Indigeneity from urban grounded normativities by reproducing uneven power dynamics. Indeed, the Nishnaabeg characters in "Plight" have to present their ceremonial practice of making sugar in terms of a reconciliation-based frame of coexistence and collaboration with non-Indigenous settlers. For example, the narrator conveys satirically the uneasy feeling that the three Nishnaabeg women have as they describe the process of engaging in Nishnaabeg practices in the city:

> We know now to do this so they'll be into it. Hand out flyers first. Have a community meeting. Ask permission. Listen to their paternalistic bullshit and feedback. Let them have influence. Let them bask in the plight of the Native people so they can feel self-righteous. Make them feel better, and when reconciliation comes up at the next dinner party, they can hold us up as the solution and brag to their real friends about our plight. (5)

"Plight" is arguably a direct critique of how a liberal politics of recognition contributes to a sense of deterritorialization, an abstraction of land into an urban identity. Indeed, the discourse of reconciliation, governed

by a limiting form of recognition that appeals to white sentiments, is depicted as equally problematic and destructive as the potential for physical danger that Indigenous people face in such spaces of heightened surveillance. As the narrator notes, "no one feels good about hiding the fact that we are Mississaugas and this is us acting on our land" (6). In this regard, "Plight" specifically addresses reconciliation as a liberal ideal inscribed in the urban space through the way in which its settler residents *practise* dwelling. The story, in this sense, is concerned not only with the struggle of urban Indigenous people in terms of land-based and place-based practices but also with how urban place more broadly has assumed a settler colonial identity that has rendered Indigenous presence *out of place* in the colonial spatial order of the city.

However, far from being a story about victimhood, "Plight" is a narrative of "re-embodiment, repatriation, re-presencing, and re-forging of intergenerational communities of memory" (Vellino 132). Another spatial intervention happens through rejecting the colonial cartographic reality that makes Indigenous presence in the city at best alien and at worst criminal and thus subjected to surveillance, harassment, and physical harm. Through these forms of claiming urban place as Indigenous land through self-determining actions, Simpson's story challenges problematic divisions that attempt to contain Indigeneity in specific geographies. The story showcases how place-based practices of grounded normativity, in Nishnaabeg epistemology a form of learning that prioritizes reciprocal non-exploitative relations with the land, disrupt the spatial orders practised by non-Indigenous settlers in this urban setting by inserting and asserting Indigenous presence and epistemologies on urban land. In a project similar to Goeman's (re) mapping, the Indigenous narrator in "Plight" states the following as the group engage in collecting maple sap from a tree: "I mumble some Anishinaabemowin and put my offering in the fire. I think this is in English because I don't know how to say any of it: This is our sugar bush. It looks different because there are three streets and 150 houses and one thousand people living in it, but it is my sugar bush. It is our sugar bush. We are the only ones that are supposed to be here" (7). The narrator here disrupts the cartography of settler space by reclaiming Indigenous place through land-based epistemologies that reflect on the relationship between land and systems of knowing and learning. This type of reclamation is both discursive and material: discursive in that naming and claiming territory as Nishnaabeg in this case break, even

for a moment, the Eurocentric cartographic practices that have made this location an urban neighbourhood.

Like other stories and songs in *This Accident of Being Lost*, "Plight" shows that resurgence is possible through everyday embodied realities that arguably unsettle spaces of colonial domination. Against this form of exploitative transformation of land into property, ceremony becomes a way to unsettle colonial cartographies of place, to borrow from Goeman. As she defines "(re)mapping," it is both a representational praxis for Indigenous authors and communities and a critical interpretive practice that necessarily reorients how colonial national pedagogies render space as surface, property, resource, object to conquer (3). Reframing space in emphasizing its multiplicity in the discussion of activism, representation, and critical justice literacies, "(re)mapping" takes its cue from representation to unmake it. In a similar way, in "Plight," in which settlement is represented either in erasure or in liberal politics of containment and management, ceremony cuts across the urban spatial order that has made Nishnaabeg land into an "Ontario heritage designation" (5).

Refusing Geographies of (Mis)recognition and Reconfiguring Encounter

"Circles upon Circles" is another example in *This Accident of Being Lost* that represents how the politics of (mis)recognition attacks Indigenous embodied geographies, but at the same time the story also poses questions about coexistence and the sharing of space. "Circles upon Circles" is the second text of the third part of *This Accident of Being Lost*, titled "Stealing Back Red Bodies" (71). Following the previous section, which ends with a poem that epitomizes what Vellino describes as "acts of counter-theft" with Kwe and Akiwenzii freeing a canoe from "canoe jail" (69), "Stealing Back Red Bodies" begins with attending to the Nishnaabeg practice of harvesting rice. Attuned to the exhortation to "steal back" by engaging in acts and practices of embodiment, "Circles upon Circles" breaks open the discourse of recognition and poses a form of embodied reclaiming of space through encounter, ultimately asking important questions about how coexistence can take place in ways that do not threaten Indigenous grounded normativities.

In "Circles upon Circles," the narrator and their family launch a canoe and harvest wild rice near the location of Ball Lake. This story,

like "Plight," begins with a sense of uneasiness and negotiation, which Simpson intricately conveys in different places in *This Accident of Being Lost*. That is, as in the urban setting where the practice of harvesting maple sap and making sugar is coded in both difficulty and agency, in this textual topography the sense of negotiation is also prevalent. In the narrator's words, "We're happy because the kids didn't fight the whole time, because there's rice in our blue tarp, because it's warm and sunny, and because we didn't have to try so hard" (75). Also, despite the development to which the land has been subjected, indicated by the presence of multiple cottages that have destroyed the rice beds, the narrator practises place by imagining land as free from forms of development and settler ownership: "I see a couple approaching you, and I hang back and wait. I look out onto Ball Lake and disappear the cottages, the docks, the manufactured beaches and waterfront. I imagine just two people in a canoe, with un-fancy sticks from the bush, knocking rice into the boat. I imagine my arms circling, circles upon circles" (76). As the narrator highlights that such land-based practices are becoming difficult because of how hard it is to find natural areas that have not been negatively affected by development, such visions of land are disturbed by the use of a derogatory racial slur by a settler, who does not know or think that the narrator is Nishnaabeg. In the narrative, the woman, an owner of a nearby cottage, questions the family's wild rice picking as a practice inherently alien to her conception of place, not an Indigenous land but a beach, a settler spatiality: "*I thought only the Indians did that*," says the woman to the narrator's partner (76). In this encounter, the issue of shared space becomes coded in attitudes of misrecognition and erasure that certainly run against the ways in which redress imagines coexistence and cohabitation. This form of erasure acts as "settler emplacement" in this rural setting (Tuck and McKenzie 67), which carries the same degree of struggle for Indigenous people in accessing land-based forms of self-determination as urban settings in *This Accident of Being Lost*.

In the narrator's confrontational response, "What makes you think I am not an Indian?" (76), the reader sees the same material and affective bartering with regard to space and place. After this encounter, the narrator considers the realities of dispossession and how such encounters continue to generate threats to grounded normativities by directly addressing Minomiinikeshii, "the spirit of the rice" (75). According to the narrator, "I'm old enough to know this isn't about how I look and

I'm glad she is not here. I'm glad I don't have to explain the cottagers who poison the rice. I'm glad I don't have to explain how to hunt geese over cottages. I'm glad I don't have to explain that this is a road allowance and that's why we are allowed to launch a canoe here" (76). For the narrator, however, the greatest danger in the realities of erasure and dispossession is that of giving up. Still thinking about the spirit of the rice picturing her in this situation, the narrator mentions that "the most terrifying thing in the world is for [Minomiinikeshii] to see me here, in the ruins of my people, because what if she thinks, even for a second, that we're trying too hard with too little, that we are no longer" (77). Ecological destruction and environmental precarity are key moments in the collection's engagement with decolonizing space through highlighting the multiple agencies at play in land-based and place-based structures of living. A decolonial reading of space and place-based redress thus provokes questions about materialist theories of agency that intersect with environmental concerns. As Jeff Corntassel and Cheryl Bryce argue, for Indigenous peoples, environmental destruction threatens cultural survival (151), and therefore conceptions of sustainability go hand in hand in the political imperative to protect grounded normativities: "[W]hen examining Indigenous community resurgence, questions of sustainability and subsistence become key starting points for assessing cultural harm, and, ultimately, for the restoration of cultural practices" (156). Importantly, apart from commenting on the spatialized reality of encounters based upon misrecognition and erasure, this story also presents Indigenous responsibility to place itself, to those grounded structures that are modes of living (Coulthard 65), as the narrator of "Circles upon Circles" imagines how the land itself feels: "Minomiinikeshii, I am sorry. We are sorry. We are sorry we let them destroy so much of your body. We are sorry we're trapped in a hurricane of guilt and shame. All you want is for us to love you anyway" (77).

Yet, again despite the difficulty of accessing and sustaining grounded normativities in spaces coping with extractive forms of development, "Circles upon Circles" could raise awareness of how redressed forms of respectful sharing of space need to be structured on activist place-based literacies that teach communities that collective action and collective responsibility can take place through understanding how the incommensurability created by settler colonialism has informed emplaced relations. "Circles upon Circles" arguably proposes Indigenous presence over settler emplacement and "futurity" (Tuck and Yang 38), yet it does

so in a way that questions the violent material realities of dispossession through colonialism highlighted in the dissonance between "they want a beach. We want rice beds. You can't have both" (78). In this dissonance, the forms of capitalist development that destroy Indigenous land through the presence of cottages over rice beds also figure. Apart from commenting on how erasure takes place through settler forms of claiming rural and urban spaces, "Circles upon Circles" can be read in a way that poses questions about ecological accountability and place-based practices of redress.

Redefining the Terms of Redress: Critical Indigenous Place Pedagogies as Theory

In *Protest as Pedagogy: Teaching, Learning, and Indigenous Environmental Movements*, Métis scholar Gregory Lowan-Trudeau asks, "what possibilities exist for seriously considering and incorporating a critical Indigenous pedagogy of place?" (23). In lieu of a conclusion, I would like to circle back to the concepts of place-based literacies and place-based pedagogies to consider how works such as *This Accident of Being Lost* contribute to redefining the terms of redress. If we, as different and incommensurable communities of readers, are to have meaningful conversations on literature about place and pedagogies of accountability, then our reading practices and literacies should adopt a hermeneutic of questioning emplacements. In connecting place to literature and literacy through frames of respatialization, narrative evinces the ways that different emplacements eclipse reality to support specific narratives of dominance. In this context of reading and discerning through radically resurgent visions of place in Indigenous literary studies, I want to conclude by considering McLeod's insightful argument in *Indigenous Poetics in Canada*, in which McLeod discusses Indigenous poetics of embodiment as "theory" (5). For him, "Indigenous consciousness" (5) is both poetic and theory, a critical mode. More specifically, McLeod argues that

> Indigenous poetics can move toward the richness of knowledge stored in the manifold plurality of Indigenous consciousness. Within these poetic condensed cores of Indigenous consciousness, we can find the tools to not only articulate the beauty of our tradition, but also deal with our collective trauma as experienced in residential schools and the spatial diasporas from our own

> homelands. Indigenous poetics, while an articulation of classical poetic knowledge at the cores of narrative centres, is also a critical impulse. (5-6)

To consider Indigenous poetics as "a critical impulse" adds to discussions of redress by redefining the terms of engagement with redressing ongoing colonial injustices through place-based thought and grounded shared agencies. In this sense, Indigenous pedagogies of place, whether in land-based education contexts or in textual and artistic practices, provide discussions and enactments of redress with new frameworks and new sets of demands and responsibilities. In this regard, how Indigenous scholars frame relation, cohabitation, and co-resistance in specifically land-based terms can reinvigorate the ways in which movements of redress and possibilities for solidarity are rethought. For example, Coulthard and Simpson, in their article "Grounded Normativity/Place-Based Solidarity," draw attention to such solidarity as a renewed form of co-resistance that challenges the forms of alliance and "shallow" solidarity that tends to deterritorialize Indigenous sovereignties (252). Place-based solidarity is understood within the epistemological practices that land and land-based structures define as Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. Accordingly, an "[Indigenous] relationship to the land itself generates the processes, practices, and knowledges that inform our political systems, and through which we practice solidarity" (254). This idea of grounding solidarities to places speaks to how land and the ethico-political structures that come from the land define not only agency and responsibility but also any potential for decolonial solidarities based upon mutual accountability and renewed forms of redress.

The events that took place specifically during the Idle No More movement indicated different directions in Indigenous forms of resurgence and protest that necessitate a more rigorous engagement with land and material realities visible not only in Indigenous literary studies and other creative representational practices but also in resurgent organizing, which makes central the issue of place and land as the basis for inherent Indigenous rights to self-determination. Examples of activism that directly involved place and space in organizing and mobilizing resistance during that time included many different forms of place-based practices, such as round dances and blockades, that took place in different Canadian cities, as well as the walk of sixteen hundred kilometres in 2013 by six Indigenous youth from Whapmagoostui First Nation to Ottawa in support of and solidarity with Theresa Spence, or the

ongoing action for renaming Mount Douglas in British Columbia to its original name, PKOLS, by members of the Songhees, W̱SÁNEĆ, and Tsawout Nations (Tuck and McKenzie 45). Such practices, then, are not only symbolic in their attempt to reclaim land and relationships with land but also present an affront to colonial territorial practices of organization that assert settler sovereignty and emplacement in Indigenous place. Stated otherwise, to engage meaningfully with forms of redress that recast relations among Indigenous peoples, non-Indigenous settlers, and diasporic peoples under the rubric of respect and accountability, critical scholarship on writing produced by Indigenous writers also needs to take up a renewed politics of place that reimagines a meaningful renarrativization of how place is lived here.

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