Further, though Naomi decides she must learn the Japanese language and customs, she never takes these skills beyond basic words; instead, the Japanese characters in the book speak to her in English. Naomi acquires a new name, Now-mee, but it is rarely used by her or anyone else. (Incidentally, this Eurocentrism is not entirely Naomi's; she refers to a teacher as Takenaka-sensi, but the narrator favours the prefix Mr.) As a cultural outsider exiled to a Japan that is exoticized and essentialized, Naomi does experience racism to a certain extent, but the racist lexicon is limited to *gaijin*, the Japanese word for "outsider"; for the most part, she is likewise exoticized because of her "interesting strawberry-blonde hair" (55).

Problematic, too, is the back cover's attempt to link Naomi to a Canadian popular icon exoticized in Japan, calling her a "modern day Anne of Green Gables." No one in the actual text makes that connection; instead, Naomi idolizes a girl who masquerades as Anne at Canadian World for her self-assurance. (Equally noticeable is the book's misspelling of the name of Anne's author: L.M. Montgomery's middle name was Maud, not Maude.)

Ultimately, Naomi is exoticized for her hair and for her language, giving her a monopoly on identity and voice, while the Japanese characters are mostly cardboard replicas of each other and are constantly "searching for their words." My biggest concern with this book is the way Naomi learns these cultural lessons by essentializing and universalizing cultural practice: she gradually understands "the Japanese way of life" (14) by seizing cultural artifacts and realizing again and again that everything is "just like Manitoba" (17, 40, 55); rice fields viewed from a train are perhaps "what Alberta looks like" (17). This strategy is even validated by Keiko, the story's grandmother figure (and one of the story's most believable characters): "you took the situation you found yourself in and you turned it around. You made it ... yours" (her ellipsis [151]).

I wonder, then, about the implicit messages Schreyer seems to be transmitting to her younger audience about affirming a strategy of taking everything "different" and foreign and making it the same. This validation of white appropriation and white privilege should be examined, not taken for granted; otherwise, the "lesson" of the book is that cultural artifacts can be manipulated to ensure that everything becomes "just like Manitoba."

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When the Piper Speaks

When Night Eats the Moon. Joanne Findon. Red Deer, 1999. 175 pp. $9.95 paper. ISBN 0-88995-212-4.

"There are many ways of fighting and of winning." The words of the sorcerer Borekarak carry the central message of this time travel fantasy. In order to convey

this message, Joanne Findon works some magic on time that goes beyond the journeys of her central character. The story is set in Britain, both modern day and Iron Age (about 600 BCE) in and around Stonehenge. But, as the author's own historical note acknowledges, the dates and events she suggests ignore archeological conclusions that Stonehenge was not in use ceremonially after 1100 BCE. Findon alters time in this way in order to bring together the invading Celts and local people in a conflict only the maregi can resolve. The maregi, anticipated as a great warrior, is instead Holly, a thirteen-year-old Canadian girl, caught in personal battles and conflicts of her own.

Fate and choice are central questions in this book. Holly is still young enough to find her choices limited by the adults in her life, old enough to resent and struggle against this. As the maregi, she finds herself manipulated by the magic of another time, but chosen loyalties and values allow her to find her own ways of winning. The mystery of her British born mother's past, the pain of an impending divorce between her parents, the antagonism she feels for a sullen cousin — these form the contemporary backdrop to her involuntary journeying between the times. Peace is sometimes hard won not just between peoples but in individual hearts as well.

Findon's story is appealing in the way of all time travel fantasies, bringing the dry facts of history to life. But this novel is not without difficulties. The portents and symbols are often heavy-handed: a librarian named Mrs. Witcher; the Raven's Nest cafe with its meaningful paintings and pottery; and a repeated reliance on the veiled messages of dreams. As well, the confusion of Holly's experiences is conveyed through a great deal of "lurching" by all concerned and too many episodes of spinning heads.

In the end the story is anticlimactic. Does a peaceful resolution have to be so lacking in punch and reliant on lecture? "'You have to make peace not war,' she told them. 'Your two peoples have to become one. You have to share this land, not fight over it.'" Findon offers intriguing possibilities in Holly's nickname, Piper, as in the Pied Piper, and in the universal call of music and tangled threads of fate, but lets the story wind down with sermons and a denouement that goes on too long.

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Time-Travel into Mennonite Culture

The Tramp Room. Nancy-Lou Patterson. Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1999. $14.95 paper. ISBN 0-88920-329-6.

Imagine yourself in a museum. You pick up some artifact of life 150 years ago — a tool, say, or some item of clothing — and muse about the person who used it, and likely made it too. If musing gives way to fantasy, you may project yourself to that past scene, imagining a life lived to a different rhythm, yet with a common human-