and neglecting Americans’ exportation of their own ideologies as well as the native contexts of imported Eastern ideas.

But even if future scholarship by those versed in both American and Asian traditions will likely supersede Weir’s summation, value remains in housing such a diverse population of authors and thinkers under one roof, particularly for newcomers to the emerging field of transpacific studies but perhaps for older hands as well. Weir articulates some rewarding comparisons, for instance, between the syncretism of Emerson, which casts all faiths as indistinguishable at their core, and that of T. S. Eliot, which holds that the importance of reflecting upon other faiths lies in the revelation of one’s own. The book also suggests many intriguing parallels that he does not adumbrate. Weir notes that Ezra Pound, for example, translates the inscription on King T’ang’s bathtub as “make it new,” which Pound then invokes in support of fascism (p. 133). He neglects to mention that Confucius’s quotation of this same inscription appears in a different translation in Thoreau’s Walden (1854), where bathing becomes a religious exercise: “Renew thyself completely each day.”

Like many taxonomies, Weir’s phase-based arguments are useful as generalizations, even though they might not bear deeper scrutiny. His discussions of the twentieth century, of modernism, and of Pearl S. Buck strike me as particularly edifying, whereas his account of transcendentalism may capitulate too readily to received wisdom that elevates Thoreau over Emerson as a devotee of Asia. But, on the whole, American Orient is a fairly useful summation of America’s reception of the East, the narrative of one side of an exchange that, hopefully, will be treated more holistically in the coming years.


Given America’s daunting, post-Revolutionary agenda of forming a government and ensuring the survival of the republic, it seems plausible that citizens of this era would have had little concern with
the creation of a national culture until Emerson delivered his call for cultural independence in the 1830s. Therefore, when considering the ways in which Americans shaped and defined their culture after the Treaty of Paris was signed, many historians focus on—or even begin with—Emerson’s “Nature” and “The American Scholar.” Kariann Akemi Yokota upends this scenario, however, not summoning Emerson until the final pages of Unbecoming British. She does not think him unimportant; rather, he takes up residence in her conclusion because America’s cultural cleaving from Britain has a long and complicated history that began more than a half-century before his famous essays were published. It is in detailing this process and in skillfully applying postcolonial theory that Yokota’s nuanced, well-researched, and well-written book offers a fresh perspective on the construction of American cultural identity. Yokota draws upon a wide variety of primary and secondary sources to accomplish her task. To discover the ways in which ideas and attitudes crossed the Atlantic in both directions, she judiciously examines maps, English and Chinese commercial goods, and the trade in specimens and scientific equipment in addition to late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century manuscripts and printed sources.

The methods by which mapmakers came to define and understand the new nation’s physical space forms the basis for her first chapter. Here, she shows how Americans copied English maps while simultaneously introducing a “subversive American geographical narrative . . . that . . . immediately found other, less civilized groups around which to orient its assertion of civility, the South being one important example” (p. 61). Thus, Americans countered Britons’ technical and cartographic expertise, turning mapmaking into a weapon of cultural identity and independence.

Yokota’s exploration of the importance of the trade in and nature of the consumer goods that flowed from England to America perhaps best exemplifies Americans’ conflicting desires both to emulate and escape British culture. Americans’ craving for British manufactured products—especially ceramic wares—complicated the whole endeavor of separation. Building on Timothy Breen’s path-breaking The Marketplace of Revolution (2004), Yokota reveals how one can mine material culture to understand the complexities and the contradictions of postcolonial societies; indeed, the material culture of elites and ordinary citizens may be the best source for investigating these tensions and their resolution.

Americans’ unceasing and apparently insatiable demand for ceramics (and silk) led American merchants and seafarers into open
competition for trade goods, and Yokota’s analysis of the dynamics of exchange and international relations with Canton is adept and illuminating. The embarrassments and triumphs in the dance and scramble of the English, French, Chinese, and American traders exposed the possibilities as well as the limitations of the United States’ power in the wider commercial and cultural spheres. In the end, it was Americans’ good fortune to live on a continent full of vast woodlands in which a curiously shaped root grew in abundance—a root that provided Americans with an advantage over their more sophisticated and experienced competitors. “Eventually, Americans would learn that their most valuable asset for carrying on trade with the Chinese was their ability to procure natural products: namely, the ginseng root and pelts they could obtain from Native Americans” (p. 144). Attentive to the part Native Americans played in this trade, Yokota, to paraphrase Daniel Richter’s Facing East from Indian Country (2003), “faces east” not only “from Indian country” (and by extension, from North America as a whole), but, also, from China’s ports.

The Chinese were not the only people interested in natural materials native to the New World. European and British naturalists and scientists were eager to accumulate specimens for scientific inquiry and for their personal collections and gardens. Her discussion of the trials and successes of William Bartram and others who hoped to gain notoriety, respect, and scientific equipment from Great Britain places Unbecoming British squarely in the center of the burgeoning study of the history of science in the Atlantic world in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Her further examination of the transmission of medical knowledge from Scotland (and in particular Edinburgh) reminds readers of the central place Scottish writers, philosophers, scientists, and medical practitioners occupied in this period.

Yokota’s chapters on cartography, trade goods and material culture, the China trade, botanic and animal specimen commerce, and Americans’ acquisition of medical knowledge are splendidly researched and carefully argued. But her concluding chapter on race and culture is in many ways her best. She weaves together the evidence of material goods and visual materials—from figurines to cartouches, cartoons, paintings, and prints—to show that what unified the British and the Americans “was a reliance on the link between American ‘whiteness’ and the materiality of civilization. . . . Like tea sets and refined objects of knowledge, whiteness was a property that joined people in London and New London together even as the upheavals of the Revolution and independence tore them apart politically” (pp. 218, 219).
Culture in its manifold manifestations would serve as a counterforce to the fears of racial decline that haunted those who saw the wilderness and the frontier as an environment that could turn back the racial and cultural clock. This worrisome possibility endured long after the Revolution, providing a counterpoint to the pervasive optimistic swagger of those who saw only progress in the advance of white Euro-Americans across the continent. For these expansionists, “whiteness [became] the foundational symbol of national belonging in postcolonial America” (p. 225).

*Unbecoming British* is a brilliant book. Yokota’s wide-ranging research, careful argumentation, and learned analysis place her among the best young historians in the United States. Readers with further interest in the United States’ transformation into a powerful imperial force will no doubt hope that Professor Yokota continues on this research trajectory—to the Pacific and beyond.

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Albert J. von Frank’s long-in-the-making, masterfully edited variorum edition of Emerson’s *Poems* is a landmark study of the poetry of the nineteenth-century’s most famous philosopher and writer. There is much to praise about this volume, beginning with von Frank’s introduction, an astonishing, albeit ambiguous, critique of the representational force of language. Arguing for the complexity of Emerson’s poetics, he draws ideas from such works as the well-known essay “The Poet” and obscure journal notes to examine Emerson’s philosophy of metaphor. In so doing, von Frank reveals the intrinsic relationship between Emerson’s prose and poetry—thus rendering each impossible to understand apart from the other—and compels the reader to reconsider the artificial categories of “essays” and “poems” that usually organize Emerson’s opus.

Von Frank’s detailed tracing of the philosophical and poetic ideas that helped shape Emerson’s poetry is also worthy of praise. Readers know that Emerson fashioned these works largely under the influence
This appears to be modelled after the foreign agent registry the United States brought in using the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). The proposals also include an expansion of the Official Secrets Act to allow foreign cyberattackers targeting the UK to be prosecuted and a significant widening of what type of intelligence theft is punishable under law. Though Johnson claims the reason for expanding these powers is the ever present spectre of Russia – the “most acute threat to British security in Europe, apparently” – the real threat to British citizens’ security comes from how the UK government and the governments of its allies are using, and could use, this type of legislation. When people hear for the first time that I am a lawyer practicing and teaching something called “space law,” the question they ask most frequently, often with a big smile or a twinkle in the eye, is: “So tell me, who owns the moon?” Of course, claiming new national territories had been very much a European habit, applied to non-European parts of the world. Edwin E. “Buzz” Aldrin Jr. poses for a photograph beside the U.S. flag deployed on the moon during the Apollo 11 mission on July 20, 1969. Neil A. Armstrong/NASA/AP Photo. Most likely, this is the best-known picture of a flag ever taken: Buzz Aldrin standing next to the first U.S. flag planted on the Moon. For those who knew their world history, it also rang some alarm bells. Totsuka Yukikazu was a student in the peaceful Japan, when suddenly during class break, he and his classmates were caught up in a summoning to another world. In the otherworld he got offered a position as an otherworldly warrior that would fight for the kingdom or the choice to take his freedom and walk his own path. With a mysterious voice in his head that told him to abandon the castle life, he decided to take his own path and become an adventurer! After he finishes his 2 year mandatory military service. Show more. MANGA DISCUSSION. Leave a Reply Cancel reply. Your email address will not be visible. Thoreau stayed with Emerson for a while and was affected by his ideas, especially relating to the individual and Thoreau’s beliefs in the individual, our country would not have the rights and equalities that make it America. America was founded on individualism. The need to create a government catering to individual needs sparked a revolution against the biggest world power of the time. This led to a detailed study of Bacon’s literature and claims that similar distinct words appeared in the texts of Shakespeare and Bacon. The Francis Bacon Society was founded in 1886. The group asserted that Bacon was the founder of the Rosicrucians, a mysterious hidden occult organization centered on pro-Western ideals. Supposedly, they wrote many things, including the full Shakespeare legacy. Edward de Vere was the 17th Earl of Oxford and is believed to be the centerpiece of one of the most likely theories that currently exists. Writer J. Thomas Looney first introduced the idea in 1920 and based it around the fact that Shakespeare’s low status and education were not in line with the literature that he was able to produce. Someone such as de Vere seemed much more probable.