SESSION 2

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN CHINA AND THE “WHITE MAN’S BURDEN”
Christian China, American Euphoria
Late Delineations of “Cultural Imperialism” in China

Latourette:
- “using the Church as a stalking horse for Western political, economic, or cultural imperialism”
- a form, or as a part of “foreign imperialism”
- “invasion of the country by the Westerner and his culture...wrought a revolution in every phase of Chinese life-political, economic, social, intellectual, and religious. All Chinese institutions and customs are being modified, some of them drastically, and some are even disappearing”
- economic forces, “the desire of merchants, manufacturers, and investors for access to the markets and the raw materials of China”
- propaganda: “this is clearly propaganda which, if successful, works fully as great a change in basic Chinese customs and institutions as does the spread of a new religion”
- resistance
Christian Missions in China

→ London Missionary Society, 1807
→ East India Company
→ Protestant missionaries: 3,500 in 1905; 5,500 in 1915; 8,000+ in the 1920s
→ Chinese Protestants: 100,000 in 1900; total of 330,000 baptized by 1915
The Equation of Cultural Imperialism

Morton Fried

“The government cannot abandon the human beings of the Middle Kingdom to the following of the life-denying…religion of a foreign country”

Boxer Rebellion of 1900

Number of mission stations increased by 95% between 1900 and 1920. Number of missionaries from 3,445 to 6,250, an increase of 103% in the period from 1907 to 1922. Chinese Church membership rose from 180,000 to 366,000, an annual growth rate of 6%.
Reversing Cultural Imperialism?

→ Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976
→ Mao Zedong
→ “the four olds”: “ideas, culture, customs, and habits of the exploiting classes”

→ effort — response

Theodore von Laue,

*The World Revolution of Westernization*
The “Blessings of Civilization” Trust Today

→ “the white man’s burden”
→ neocolonial civilizing mission: “good governance” (“gender empowerment,” “participation,” “human rights”)
→ “universal” human rights?
→ Noam Chomsky