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Joseph W. Ho, *Developing Mission: Photography, Filmmaking, and American Missionaries in Modern China*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021. ISBN: 9781501760945 (hardcover, \$109); 9781501761850 (paperback, \$29.95).

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Christian missionaries were an important group in modern Chinese history. As early as the late Qing period, missionaries arrived in China by the thousands to spread the gospel. For them China was still a virgin land for the Christian mission, waiting to be exploited. Interpretations of the impact of the missionaries have varied. On the one hand, some Chinese scholars regard them as the representatives of Western imperialism.¹ On the other hand, some scholars focus more on the contributions of missionaries in transmitting Western knowledge and technology and thereby facilitating China's attempt at modernization in the late Qing and Republican eras.² In this sense, missionaries served as a bridge between the East and the West.

Since the 1980s, the study of missionaries in China has become a popular subject among Chinese scholars. In the early days, scholars were simply interested in exploring the role of missionaries in modern Chinese history.³ However, their view of foreign missionaries were usually negative, a likely effect of the extremely leftist ideology produced by the Cultural Revolution. Beginning in the late-twentieth century, more and more studies began to shed light on the relationship between Christianity and aspects of China's early

¹ For example, Li Shiyue, *Jindai Zhongguo fan yangjiao yundong* (The Anti-Christian Movement in Modern China) (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi shanlian shudian, 1962); Gu Zhangsheng, *Chuanjiaoshi yu Jindai Zhongguo* (Missionaries and Modern China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1981); Sichuan sheng zhuexue shehui kexue lianhehui ed., *Jindai Zhongguo jiaobuishi* (A Study of Anti-Missionary Riots in Modern China) (Chengdu: Sichuan sheng shehui kexue chubanshe, 1987) etc.

² For example, Su Jing, *Zhu zhi dai ke: Chuan jiaoshi yu Zhongwen yinshua bianju* (Missionaries and the Transformation of Printing in Modern China) (Taipei: Guoli Taiwan daxue chuban zhongxin, 2014); Wang Lixin, *Meiguo chuan jiaoshi yu wanqing Zhongguo xiandaihua: Jindai jidu xinjiao chuan jiaoshi zaibua shehui wenhua hu jiaoyu buodong yanjiu* (American Missionaries and Modernization of China in Late Qing Dynasty) (Tianjin: Tianjian renmin chubanshe, 1997) etc.

³ Some significant works between 1980 and 2000 include Gu Zhangsheng, *Cong Ma Lixun dao Situ Leideng: Laibua xinjiao chuanjiaoshi pingchuan* (From Robert Morrison to Stuart Leighton: A Study of Protestant Missionaries in Modern China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1985); Zhang Li and Liu Tang, *Zhongguo jianan shi* (The Anti-Missionaries History in China) (Chengdu: Sichuan sheng shehui kexueyuan chubanshi, 1987); Gu Weimin, *Chuanjiaoshi yu Jindai Zhongguo shehui* (Missionaries and Modern Chinese Society) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1996); Wu Yixiong, *Zai Zongjiao yu Shisu zhi jian: Jidujiao xinjiao zai Huanan yanhai de zaoqi buodong yanjiu* (Between Religion and Secular: A Study of the Early Activities of Protestant Missionaries in South China) (Guangzhou: Guangdong jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000), etc.

modernization, such as education,⁴ medicine,⁵ cultural exchange,⁶ etc. There are many publications that focus on a particular missionary, studying his or her experiences, journeys, and works in modern China.⁷

Differing from these earlier studies, Joseph W. Ho's work attempts to establish ties between technology, Christian missions, and modern Chinese history. In studying the visual practices of the missionaries, such as photographing and filmmaking, Ho notes that these images represent important historical sources of transnational cultural experience. Unfortunately, these images are usually neglected by scholars who study the history of Christianity in Chinese and Sino-American relationships. He believes that these photographic objects connected the East and the West. By analysing their content in detail, Ho argues that many significant historical meanings can be discovered (10).

With the advancement of optical technology at the turn of the twentieth century, the camera became easy to use and its price affordable for ordinary people. Given that some missionaries were keen on photography, Ho provides an in-depth study on how they documented their evangelistic work through their cameras. He examines some cases in depth, such as Julia McDermott's baptism photography, to illustrate that the images not only facilitated the connection between photo-makers and the subjects being baptized, but also provided a media by which to connect the Christian missions in China and their supporters around the world through sight and imagination (74–77). Ho is also well aware of the disjunction between images-producers and their audiences' readings and interpretations of the images themselves, since the Passionist magazine editors had the power to reinterpret or reshape visual images that were submitted by the missionaries in China (86). However, Ho does not provide an evaluation of the impact on the overseas missions' supporters or a detailed illustration of their actions after seeing the images produced by missionaries in China, for example, whether or not they sponsored much money to the missionary works in China. It is understandable, however, that insufficient source material may have hindered further research.

Ho's work shows that the visual practices of the missionaries changed over time. In the early 1930s, the newly invented movie camera was a luxury commodity to many people, but not for the church. Missionaries received this innovative equipment from their churches, and began to make films during their missions in China. Ho argues that these films served as a two-way visual bridge between missionaries and their supporters: the missionaries not only showed their films shot in China to US audiences, but also showed films of the US screenings and social gatherings to their Christian friends in China (116–117). Although scholarly discussions about missionary practice in promoting Christianity in modern China exist, few of them focuses on its transformation.⁸ We simply have a perception that the methods that modern missionaries used in the

⁴ For instance, Wang Lixin, *Meiguo chuanjiaoshi yu wanqing zhongguo jindaibua* (American missionaries and modernization of China in Late Qing dynasty) (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 1997); Sun Banghua, *Xixue dongjian yu zhongguo jindai jiaoyu bianqian* (The Western Influence and the Transformation of Education in Modern China) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2012).

⁵ For instance, Li Jingwei, *Xixue dongjian yu zhongguo jindai yixue sichao* (The Western Influence on Medical Thought in Modern China) (Wuhan: Hubei kexue jishu chubanshe, 1990); Fan Xinghuai, *Mingji Xiyangchuanru zhi yixue* (The Import of Western Medical Science during the Ming Dynasty) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2012).

⁶ For example, Zhuo Xinping, *Shengsheng yu shisu zhijian* (The Christian Influence on Chinese Ethics and Culture) (Haerbin: Haerbin renmin chubanshe, 2004); Cao Zengyou, *Jidujiao yu mingqingji zhongguo shehui* (Christian Missionaries and China's Society during Ming and Qing Dynasties) (Beijing: Zuoqia chubanshe, 2006).

⁷ The latest relevant publications include Chen Guyun, *Chuanjiaoshi yu hanxuejia: Lijage zai zhongxi wenhua sheng de chuanyi gongxian* (Missionary and sinologist: James Legge and his contribution in translation) (Taipei: Xiuwei zixun keji youxian gongsi, 2020); Duanmu minjing, *Rongtong zhongxi, shouwang, jiyi: yingguo chuanjiaoshi, hanxuejia Su Huilian yanjiu* (Bridging East-west Guarding Memories: A Study on British Missionary and Sinologist William Edward Soothill) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 2020).

⁸ For example, Li Yaping and Wang Zhitong, "Jindai Zhongguo Neidihui Qinghai chuanjiao celue yu fangshi" (The Peaching Strategies and Methodologies of China Inland Mission in Qinghai Province in Modern China), *Qinghai Minzu Yanjiu* 25, no.2 (2014): 167-171 etc; Tang Lianjian, *Weiqu qinquan: Zaoqi laibua xinjiao chuanjiaoshi hanying*

early twentieth century in China were similar to what their precursors had done a century before. Ho reminds us that since the techniques of missionaries were constantly changing, this perception is incorrect.

Ho utilizes many case studies to illustrate how the change in China's political situation affected missionaries and their photographic and filmmaking practices. In the late 1930s, the Japanese authorities gave the missionaries plenty of leeway, although they kept them under surveillance. The missionaries were allowed to continue their mission in the occupation zones until the United States joined the war after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, at which point many of them were captured and sent to internment camps. Through the films they produced in the early wartime period, we can see themes related more to war than their original missions, such as the horror and violence that the Japanese soldiers unleashed on the Chinese civilians, the daily life and resistance of Chinese in the Free Zone, etc. The wartime atmosphere and missionaries' personal experiences were certainly the reasons behind this change. After the war, while some missionaries returned to China and attempted to restore the inland missions, they found this difficult due to the Communist army's overwhelming of the Nationalist troops during the Civil War. The films they produced were thus full of the feeling of hope, loss, and nostalgia.

The images and films produced by the missionaries are the heart of Ho's study, for which he undertook solid archival research. He visited many collections, such as the Henke Family Collection in the University of Michigan Library, the Jesuit Archives in the Jesuit Research Center in St. Louis, the Passionist China Collection at the University of Scranton, and some private family collections. He provides a comprehensive analysis of these visual images in order to uncover the experiences of missionaries in China and their views on Chinese society. This gives us a new angle in studying the history of American missionaries in modern China.

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fanyi shilun, 1807-1850 (The Chinese-English Translation by Early Protestant Missionaries to China, 1807-1850) (Beijing: Qinghua daxue chubanshe, 2015).