

# Second Great Awakening in the North

Religion in America

## New England diaspora

- ▶ After 1783 into New York
  - ▶ Erie Canal 1817-25
- ▶ Northwest Territories
- ▶ Iowa, California

## Transplanting New England

- ▶ Best-organized migrants: State-chartered companies
- ▶ New England township
  - ▶ Long house lots, separate farmland, commons, Congregational Church

## Yankee Culture

- ▶ Yankees establish church, school, often a college
- ▶ Yankees dominate local and state governments
- ▶ Thrifty & righteous (or greedy & sanctimonious)
- ▶ Orderly, prosperous landscape

## Fire in the “Burnt-Over District”

- ▶ Charles Grandison Finney
  - ▶ Presbyterian minister, from Connecticut
    - ▶ Rejects Calvinism
  - ▶ “New measures,” 1825-1835
    - ▶ “Protracted meetings”
    - ▶ The “anxious seat”
    - ▶ Role of women
- ▶ The fires of revival spread!

## Fervor sweeps the nation

- ▶ 1820s-1836: High expectations
- ▶ America: a new kind of nation
  - ▶ Freed from constraints of history
- ▶ Confidence that all would be solved
  - ▶ 1500 years of error to be overcome
- ▶ Widespread expectation of the Millennium

## Democratization of religion

- ▶ Faith in the “common man”

- ▶ Right to decide for oneself
- ▶ Sola scriptura: pure Bible, pure doctrine
- ▶ Arminianism replaces Calvinism
- ▶ Vernacular preaching
- ▶ Mass-market religious press
- ▶ American popular religious music

## Effects of the Second Great Awakening

- ▶ Ministers: From office to profession
- ▶ Feminization of Christianity
- ▶ Christianization of the nation
  - ▶ Association of nation with Protestantism
- ▶ Split between North and South
  - ▶ Northern Puritan influence: goal of godly, just society
  - ▶ Southern slave society: individualistic, gather the saved
    - ▶ Attack personal sins: dancing, drinking, gambling, etc.

## Disciples of Christ

- ▶ Dismay at proliferation of denominations
- ▶ Goal of Christian unity recedes
- ▶ Restorationism
  - ▶ Thomas & Alexander Campbell, 1808
    - ▶ "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent"
    - ▶ Simple creed; radical ecclesiology
  - ▶ Popular on frontier, along Ohio River

## The Mormons

- ▶ Joseph Smith, Palmyra, NY
  - ▶ Confusion of denominations
  - ▶ Treasure seeker
  - ▶ Angel Moroni, Mt. Cumorah, golden plates
    - ▶ Translation of Book of Mormon, 1827-30
- ▶ Restoration of the true church
- ▶ Conversion in Kirtland, Ohio
- ▶ Battle in Far West, Missouri, 1839

## The Mormon Zion

- ▶ Nauvoo, Illinois
- ▶ Schism & strange new doctrines
  - ▶ Revelations

- ▶ Polygamy
- ▶ Arrested for destroying presses
  - ▶ Killed by mob, 1844
- ▶ Brigham Young
  - ▶ Trek to Utah, 1846-48

## Millennialism

- ▶ William Miller, Baptist minister from Vermont
  - ▶ Predicts millennium 1843
  - ▶ Recalculated for 1844
  - ▶ The "Great Disappointment"
    - ▶ Hiram Edson: cleansing of temple in heaven
- ▶ Seventh-Day Adventists, 1860-63
  - ▶ Ellen G. White

## Spiritualism

- ▶ The Fox sisters, Hydesville, New York, 1848
- ▶ Craze for séances
  - ▶ Spirit rappings
  - ▶ Spirit guides
  - ▶ Levitations