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A review of *World Christianity: A Historical and Theological Introduction*  
by Lalsangkima Pachuau

In the burgeoning academic field of World Christianity, which has only been around for some 25 years, Lalsangkima Pachuau's eponymous book is a fresh addition to the literature. The author certainly embodies his credibility, being someone from the Majority World (specifically, India), but teaching in the Western world (Asbury Seminary in Kentucky). Yet, the breadth of his scope is not just an East-West comparison, but one which models a much broader swath of understanding of Christianity in its different forms around the world. This is a difficult task, as many missiologists (often having been former missionaries) are quite well-versed in one particular part of the world, but to be truly a "jack [or master!] of all trades" is a tall order beyond the reach of most. This book, as such, is an excellent primer—in a succinct 183 pages—to introduce anyone to the study of World Christianity.

Therefore, the freshness inherent in this book's contribution lies not so much in its unique content, but in its ability to distill a vast amount of information into an accessible form. The author does a great job surveying the literature in the field, as well as touching upon the multidisciplinary branches of missiology: history, theology, anthropology, demography, and missions strategy. My main critique of his history of Christianity in the Majority World would be the focus almost exclusively on the twentieth century, rather than also acknowledging its presence (with the exception of Latin America) in the first century or even the first millennium. Pachuau also—though veering somewhat Evangelical—does give sufficient air time to Catholic, mainline Protestant, and Evangelical theologians (there is perhaps a paucity of Orthodox

representation). He is not afraid to challenge the interpretation and data of sources like Philip Jenkins, the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, or the World Council of Churches, showing original thinking and not simply regurgitation of extant thought.

One of the most interesting answers in the work is the question of why the Majority World (Africa, Asia, and Latin America) tends to be lumped together, as critics might protest there are significant differences amongst them. But Pachau shows this grouping is legitimate, as he identified three areas of commonality: Religiosity; Poverty and Inequality; and Tensional Existence. If I had to add a fourth area, it would be a collectivistic honor/shame worldview.

Overall, this volume encourages the reader to explore further. It makes the study of World Christianity less daunting to the novice reader, and gives a sense of the forest over the trees, something most volumes in this field are unable to do. The accessibility of *World Christianity* makes this book a must for every lay Christian's bookshelf.