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Book Review Forum: **Review 3: Sacred Subdivisions: The Postsuburban Transformation of American Evangelicalism.** By Justin Wilford. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

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This review demonstrates that Justin Wilford's central argument that Saddleback Church reframes post-suburban spaces of ennui into purpose-driven ones added precision to the claims of Asian American evangelical activists. On 23 September 2013, Saddleback's senior pastor, Rick Warren, posted a photograph of a Chinese Red Guard on his public Facebook page, captioning it, 'The attitude of Saddleback staff as they go to work every day.' When concerned Asian American evangelicals commented on the distastefulness of the photo as it reminded Chinese Americans of the trauma of the Cultural Revolution while exoticizing Asian Americans within American evangelicalism, Warren replied in a comment, 'It's a joke, people!' and then suggested that those who did not understand the joke were like the 'self-righteous' in Jesus' day who later crucified Christ while 'the disciples would have been giggling'. Asian American bloggers then contested Warren's statement for framing Asian Americans as outsiders to American evangelicalism, while some Protestants in Hong Kong discussed whether it was appropriate for someone with this attitude to be planting a satellite church in Hong Kong in two weeks' time. While these conversations led to an initial personal response from Warren on one blog, an article on the incident written by Religion News Service's Sarah Pulliam Bailey prompted Warren to issue a conditional apology: 'If you were hurt, upset, offended, or distressed by my insensitivity I am truly sorry.' Yet two weeks later, a church planting conference (incidentally held at Saddleback) held a performance of an orientaling skit, prompting the publication of an 'open letter to the evangelical church' authored by Asian American evangelicals to further contest orientaling tendencies in American evangelicalism.

While participating in both contesting the photo and issuing the open letter, I insisted that attention be paid to Wilford's insistence on keeping the analytical focus on the fragmentation of Southern California's postsuburban geographies. While Wilford points out that Saddleback's 'small group' model is drawn from a Korean megachurch and that Warren states that Saddleback is heavily populated by Asian Americans, the fragmentation that Wilford describes suggests that the large Asian American population in southern California may not necessarily be a community with which Warren has had frequent interactions. In other words, offensive images are not necessarily posted out of malicious intent, but may be due to the insularity of these geographies framing Asian Americans as the perpetual other. In turn, Wilford's analysis of Saddleback's global initiatives keeps the focus on a southern Californian geography, not, say, the relevant destination geographies in Rwanda with Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan and in Hong Kong with his global church planting initiative. While some questioned the launch of Saddleback Hong Kong because of Warren's orientaling insensitivity, Wilford's reading suggests that the satellite church has little to do with the actual geographical context of Hong Kong, per se. Again, cultural geography matters: Saddleback's geographical concern is to help Orange County churchgoers to discover their purpose through participation in missions abroad, not so much to contextualize its model for a destination location.

Wilford's insistence on keeping the geographical analysis within Orange County postsuburbanism proved helpful in checking the exaggerations generated by heated activism. Indeed, some pastors and online activists unearthed a *Huffington Post* article from 2009 in which Warren's 2005 speech to a packed Anaheim stadium used followers of dictators such as Hitler, Stalin, and Mao as models for devotion to Jesus. Wilford's text discourages an interpretation that frames Warren as a leader with totalitarian aspirations. Instead, as Wilford points out, Warren's political aspirations in his Civil Forum do not signal a participation in the religious right, but rather an attempt to bring Orange County post-suburbanites into a discussion of socially relevant issues. An appeal to notorious dictators simply notes that the followers of these dictators displaced their ennui with fervent devotion, and that is the purpose for which Warren hopes for his churchgoers as well.

In short, Wilford's moderating influence suggests that one contribution of cultural geography to activism is its insistence on the precision of activist claims. Such moderation does not imply that Sacred Subdivisions is a depoliticizing text. Instead, it suggests that exaggerated claims do not serve activist causes well, and that creative geographical interpretations can lead to more pointed forms of activism. Indeed, by the time that the open letter was released, the tenor of the activism had shifted from protest to invitation, calling Warren out of his own post-suburban fragmentation into conversation with Asian American evangelicals. This precise and conciliatory call was arguably made possible by Wilford's meticulous analysis, shaping the conversation so that it dealt directly with Saddleback's geography as it was actually being operationalized. Geographers can thus be encouraged to emulate Wilford's precision, for community activists depend on these works to shape their own claims.

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