



Confucianism, A Habit of the Heart: Bellah, Civil Religion, and East Asia

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Employs Robert Bellah's notion of civil religion to explore East Asia's Confucian revival.

Can Confucianism be regarded as a civil religion for East Asia? This book explores this question, bringing the insights of Robert Bellah to a consideration of various expressions of the contemporary Confucian revival. Bellah identified American civil religion as a religious dimension of life that can be found throughout US culture, but one without any formal institutional structure. Rather, this “civil” form of religion provides the ethical principles that command reverence and by which a nation judges itself. Extending Bellah’s work, contributors from both the social sciences and the humanities conceive of East Asia’s Confucian revival as a “habit of the heart,” an underlying belief system that guides a society, and examine how Confucianism might function as a civil religion in China, Korea, and Japan. They discuss what aspects of Confucian tradition and thought are being embraced; some of the social movements, political factors, and opportunities connected with the revival of the tradition; and why Confucianism has not traveled much beyond East Asia. The late Robert Bellah’s reflection on the possibility for a global civil religion concludes the volume.

Philip J. Ivanhoe is Chair Professor of East Asian and Comparative Philosophy and Religion at City University of Hong Kong. His many books include *Mortality in Traditional Chinese Thought* (coedited with Amy Olberding); *Taking Confucian Ethics Seriously: Contemporary Theories and Applications* (coedited with Kam-por Yu and Julia Tao); *Religious and Philosophical Aspects of the Laozi* (coedited with Mark Csikszentmihalyi); and *Essays on Skepticism, Relativism, and Ethics in the Zhuangzi* (coedited with Paul Kjellberg), all published by SUNY Press.

Sungmoon Kim is Professor of Political Theory at City University of Hong Kong. He is the author of *Confucian Democracy in East Asia: Theory and Practice* and the editor of *Confucianism, Law, and Democracy in Contemporary Korea*.

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