



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

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### **Confucianism, a Habit of the Heart: Bellah, Civil Religion, and East Asia**

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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.

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### About the Author

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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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