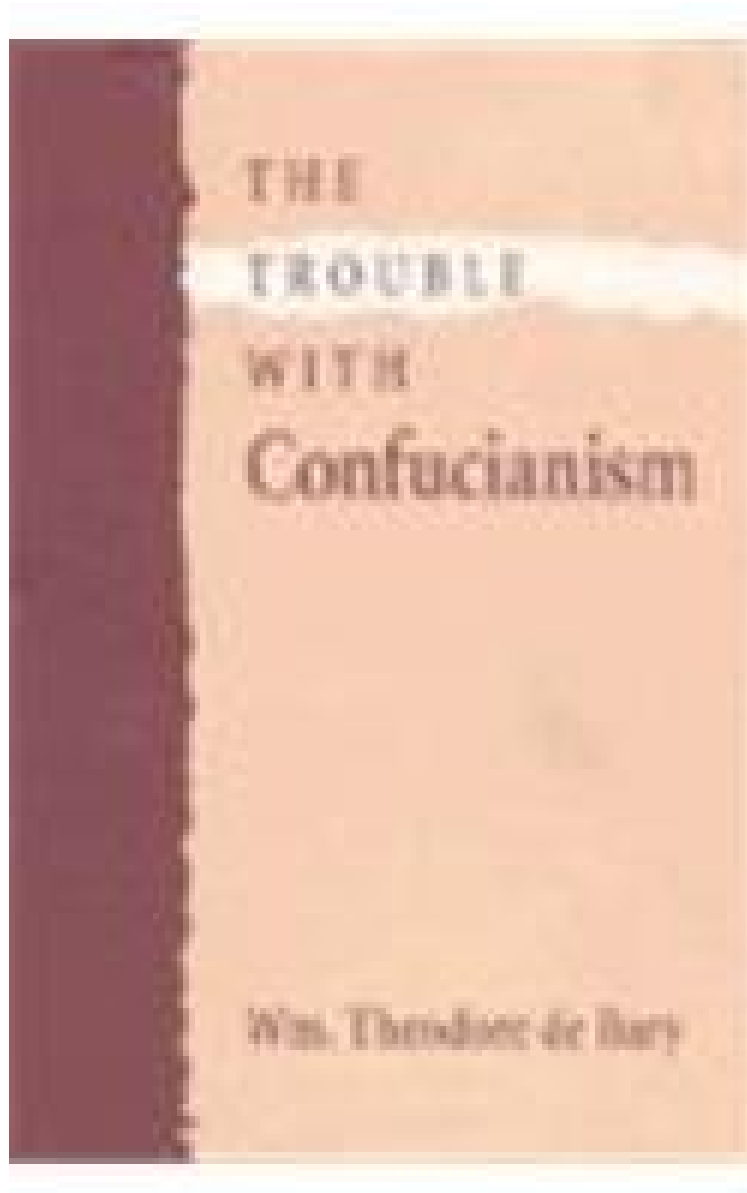


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## The Trouble with Confucianism (The Tanner Lectures on Human Values)

*Wm. Theodore de Bary*  
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**Wm. Theodore de Bary : The Trouble with Confucianism (The Tanner Lectures on Human Values)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Trouble with Confucianism (The Tanner Lectures on Human Values):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Monograph by a masterBy AveryThis is a 100-page monograph expanded from a talk about the resurrection of Confucianism which is freely available online. De Bary takes a sympathetic but unsparing look at Confucian government and its downsides. Of course, he is not the first to do so; Confucius himself was the first to criticize the shortcomings of other scholars. Anyway, it's an interesting attempt to navigate Confucian waters.

In Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and other parts of East and Southeast Asia, as well as China, people are asking, "What does Confucianism have to offer today?" For some, Confucius is still the symbol of a reactionary and repressive past; for others, he is the humanist admired by generations of scholars and thinkers, East and West, for his ethical system and discipline. In the face of such complications, only a scholar of Theodore deBary's stature could venture broad answers to the question of the significance of Confucianism in today's world.

.com As Confucian thinking makes a comeback in contemporary China, people are wondering if it will merely serve as a conservative tool for a despotic government as in imperial times, or if it could act instead as a liberalizing force. Wm. Theodore de Bary, depicting Confucius and certain later Confucians as Old Testament prophetlike figures, suggests that the true Confucian spirit is one of protesting and rectifying governmental injustices. This model of Confucianism, de Bary illustrates, is not a backward dogmatist intent on maintaining the status quo at all costs, but a whistle-blower, a moralizing evangelist responsible to the people and to heaven for speaking out against existing evils and abuses. Throughout, de Bary sympathizes with the scholar-official who feels trapped between the needs of the people and the will of an autocratic government, which reflects a parallel dilemma in today's China. It is a pleasure to read a book by a fine scholar who is not distracted from his discussion of the evolution of Confucianism from the time of Confucius himself (who drew on earlier traditions) by the trouble Confucianists had, and created, over the millennia. Gu Jiegang, who said we should study one Confucius at a time--he changed from a historical figure to a mythological one (even a magician) and a sage--would have liked this book. (Asian Studies )From the Back CoverIn Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and other parts of East and Southeast Asia, as well as China, people are asking, 'What does Confucianism have to offer today?' For some, Confucius is still the symbol of a reactionary and repressive past. For others, he is the humanist admired by generations of scholars and thinkers, East and West, for his ethical system and discipline, among other qualities.