

THINK World Religions

Roy R. Robson

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Roy R. Robson : THINK World Religions before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised THINK World Religions:

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is sad for it to end, so to speak. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Although it did have a good bit of information in it By Yoggles This "book" reminded me more of a magazine rather than a higher educational reference book. Although it did have a good bit of information in it, I don't like feeling as if my intelligence is being insulted and or the material being "dumbed-down" in order to appeal to the younger generation of college goers.

THINK Currency THINK Relevancy THINK World Religions THINK World Religions is informed with the latest research and the most contemporary examples, allowing you to bring current events directly into your classroom with little additional work. An engaging visual design developed through extensive student feedback will appeal to your students and deliver the core concepts of World Religions in a way that they can actually understand. In addition, a groundbreaking instructor supplements package will help you bring the core concepts of World Religions to life without burdening your students with heavy, too dense or too expensive learning solutions. For your students, www.TheThinkSpot.com, the text's open access website, provides them with a large resource of tools to help them achieve a better grade.

"This is a satisfying, highly useful text that not only covers the standard content of a comparative religions course but also delves into interesting questions of interreligious and interideological dialogue." -Dennis Feltwell, University of the Sciences and LaSalle University, Philadelphia PA as reviewed in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Winter, 2011)

About the Author In This Section: I. Author Bio II. Author Letter I. Author Bio Roy R. Robson is Professor of History and Director of the Honors Program at University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. He teaches courses on modern Europe, Russia, and world religions. His interdisciplinary teaching includes *Intellectual Heritage: Time and Views of the Cosmos*. Robson writes extensively on Russian history and world religions. His last book, *Solovki*, won praise from the *New Yorker*, *The Times* (London), *Cond Nast Traveler*, and the *Journal of Modern History*. Robson serves as the series editor on *Orthodox Christianity* for Northern Illinois University Press. This year, the National Endowment for the Humanities honored the University's Intellectual Heritage program by granting Dr. Robson a fellowship to expand his course on Time. Dr. Robson is president-elect of the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies, the largest regional association of Slavic scholars in America.

I. Author Letter Dear Colleagues, Over the past year, I've started to call *Think World Religions* the "anti-textbook." The term came to me, frankly, after a very tough reader review on .com. In it, a professor said that TWR was not a true textbook because it lured students with bright graphics, bold photographs, and a magazine format. After losing a couple of nights sleep, I decided to respond. I sent the professor a heads-up that I would be replying, asked for feedback on ways to improve the book, and posted a response online. As I wrote about TWR, I realized that the reviewer was right. My goal all along has been to create a new kind of textbook: lively, accessible, affordable, and true to a spirit of dialog. Thus the "anti-textbook." As a scholar of lived religion focusing on Orthodox Christianity, I seek ways to help students understand how religion interacts with every aspect of human life. Theology and ideology are important. So are relations of power, domination, and revolution. But to me, those cannot take the place of colors, smells, movements, bodies, music, and art that infuse sacred experiences for people around the world. With those ideas in mind, I have written TWR with some traits unusual for world religion textbooks. My prose is unabashedly personal, I tell stories about my experiences and my work. By keeping the prose anecdotal, active, and narrative, I hope students will consider TWR to be one voice in a conversation that includes me, them, and people around the world. In the introduction, I describe TWR as a guidebook. No textbook is truly encyclopedic, and I hope that students will see this text pointing them toward their own learning rather than pretending omniscience. In asking students to consider football (especially my beloved Pittsburgh Steelers) as a form of religion, TWR acknowledges how difficult it can be to define and discuss religion. By asking the same four questions to each sacred tradition, TWR offers students a path toward comparison and analysis. Photographs and diagrams consistently enhance critical thinking and discussion. How, for example, might a Greek Orthodox cross, a medieval Spanish crucifix, and a Chagall painting of the Crucifixion offer different visions of Christianity? By including both sacred places and contemporary problems, TWR helps students to see the sacred all around them, part of both their own landscape and that of foreign lands. As I wrote the first draft of each chapter, I asked my Honors Introduction to World Religions class to read and comment on the text. That dialog helped me to create *Think World Religions*, and I hope that you and your students will continue that conversation. Please do contact me if you have any questions, comments, or improvements for *Think World Religions*. My email address is r.robson@uscience.edu. Sincerely Roy R. Robson University of the Sciences