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Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion

Thomas A. Tweed

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Beginning with a Cuban Catholic ritual in Miami, this book takes readers on a momentous theoretical journey toward a new understanding of religion. At this historical moment, when movement across boundaries is of critical importance for all areas of human life?from media and entertainment to economy and politics?Thomas Tweed offers a powerful vision of religion in motion, dynamic, alive with crossings and flows.

A deeply researched, broadly gauged, and vividly written study of religion such as few American scholars have ever attempted, *Crossing and Dwelling* depicts religion in place and in movement, dwelling and crossing. Tweed considers how religion situates devotees in time and space, positioning them in the body, the home, the homeland, and the cosmos. He explores how the religious employ tropes, artifacts, rituals, and institutions to mark boundaries and to prescribe and proscribe different kinds of movements across those boundaries; and how religions enable and constrain terrestrial, corporeal, and cosmic crossings.

Drawing on insights from the natural and social sciences, Tweed's work is grounded in the gritty particulars of distinctive religious practices, even as it moves toward ideas about cross-cultural patterns. At a time when scholars in many fields shy away from generalizations, this book offers a responsible way to think broadly about religion, a topic that is crucial for understanding the contemporary world. Lucid in explanations, engaging in presentation, rich in examples, *Crossing and Dwelling* has profound implications for the study and teaching of religion in our day.

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