This is a remarkable account of the revolutionary impact of modern dance on European cultural life in the early twentieth century. Edward Ross Dickinson uncovers modern dance’s place in the emerging “mass” culture of the modern metropolis, sufficiently ubiquitous and high profile to spark media storms, parliamentary debates, and exasperated denunciations even from progressive art critics. He shows how modern dance spoke in multiple registers – as religious and as scientific; as redemptively chaste and scandalously sensual; as elitist and popular. He reveals the connections between modern dance and changing gender relations and family dynamics, imperialism, racism, and cultural exchanges with the wider non-European world, and new conceptions of selfhood. Ultimately the book finds in these complex and often contradictory connections a new way of understanding the power of modernism and modernity and their capacity to revolutionize and transform the modern world in the momentous, creative, violent middle decades of the twentieth century.

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DANCING IN THE BLOOD

Modern Dance and European Culture on the Eve of the First World War

EDWARD ROSS DICKINSON

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Abbreviations

DC    Dance Chronicle
DRJ   Dance Research Journal
DTAK   Deutsches Tanz-Archiv Köln/SK Stiftung Kultur, Cologne
GSAPKB   Geheimes Staatsarchiv preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin
JRDD   Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, New York City
JRDD-IDC   JRDD, Irma Duncan Collection of Isadora Duncan Materials
LAB    Landesarchiv Berlin
MAE    Museo de les Arts Escèniques, Institut del Teatre, Barcelona
MPDSF  Museum of Performance and Design, San Francisco
STAM   Staatsarchiv München, Munich
TBCUA  Theatercollectie, Bijzondere Collecties, Universiteit Amsterdam