



# Island Possessed

*Katherine Dunham*

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## **Island Possessed** Katherine Dunham

Just as surely as Haiti is "possessed" by the gods and spirits of vaudun (voodoo), the island "possessed" Katherine Dunham when she first went there in 1936 to study dance and ritual. In this book, Dunham reveals how her anthropological research, her work in dance, and her fascination for the people and cults of Haiti worked their spell, catapulting her into experiences that she was often lucky to survive. Here Dunham tells how the island came to be possessed by the demons of voodoo and other cults imported from various parts of Africa, as well as by the deep class divisions, particularly between blacks and mulattos, and the political hatred still very much in evidence today. Full of the flare and suspense of immersion in a strange and enchanting culture, *Island Possessed* is also a pioneering work in the anthropology of dance and a fascinating document on Haitian politics and voodoo.

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