

Title: The Rehabilitation of the Dancing Body: Akim Volynskii and Vasiliï Rozanov
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The complex and at times contradictory work of Russian dance critic Akim Volynskii has much in common with the idiosyncratic thought of the early 20th-century Russian writer and philosopher Vasiliï Rozanov. Both prominent figures in the Silver Age literary scene, Volynskii and Rozanov shared a number of common influences and aesthetic concerns. Their writings on the body and dance open up rich possibilities for comparison. Fin de siècle Russia had a particular interest in (or anxiety about) the body and sexuality; both Volynskii and Rozanov's writings on the dancing body reverberate with these concerns. Through looking to the dancing body, both writers developed a philosophy of synthesis of the flesh and spirit. They believed that the body had a metaphysical, or spiritual, capacity, and they actively sought to "rehabilitate" the body in modern society, to raise it to the level of the spirit, as a living vessel of the soul. Volynskii's pseudoreligious exultation of the beauty of flesh, which is imbued with the spirit and governed by the human will, and his belief that new life could be breathed into antique art through the art of ballet bears a strong resemblance to Rozanov's understanding of the antique body. While Rozanov and Volynskii both sought the "metaphysical body," and discovered it in the art of dance, they located it in very different dancing bodies—for Volynskii in the classical ballerina, for Rozanov in "oriental" dance or the free dance of Isadora Duncan. Their thoughts on the "rehabilitation" of the body, its metaphysical capacities, and on such concepts as the "third sex," on plant and animal bodies, and on dance in general, are explored in this paper.