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The word "blood" awakens ancient ideas, but we know little about its historical representation in Western cultures. Anthropologists have customarily studied how societies think about the bodily substances that unite them, and the contributors to this volume develop those questions in new directions. Taking a radically historical perspective that complements traditional cultural analyses, they demonstrate how blood and kinship have constantly been reconfigured in European culture. This volume challenges the idea that blood can be understood as a stable entity, and shows how concepts of blood a