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### Dmitrii Merezhkovskii's Translations of Greek Tragedy

Dmitrii Merezhkovskii is better known as a poet, novelist, and religious thinker, but for roughly a decade before the century's turn he was engaged in important translation work. He wrote passionately to a celebrated tragic actress of his time, M.N. Ermolova: "I am going to translate and, if I live until 30 or 35, I will translate all of the best tragedies of the Greek theater" (Ostrovskaiia 1993). Despite never managing to live up to such a lofty goal, Merezhkovskii translated Sophocles's *King Oedipus*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone*, as well as Euripides's *Medea* and *Hippolytus* and Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*, which appeared in his influential poetry collection, *Simvoly* (1892). In my paper, I provide evidence of how Merezhkovskii's eccentric and better-known views on sexuality influenced his decisions as a translator of Greek tragedy. Though previous discussions of Merezhkovskii's translations have focused on their critical reception in mostly aesthetic terms (Shelogurova 2009; Uspenskaia 2013; an exception is Koreneva 1991), I show that Merezhkovskii's decisions as a translator are best explained by religious rather than artistic questions. Merezhkovskii used Greek myth as a hermeneutical tool to investigate Greek tragedy as the site of a fundamentally erotic conflict. A closer look at Merezhkovskii's translations provides a more complete picture of his generation's collective search for alternatives to conventional erotic love.

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