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**Representations of feminine body in religious literature.**

**Examples from mediaeval Indian bhakti and Greek tragedy**

This research compares the ways in which two sets of texts from different cultures and religious contexts deal with the representation of feminine body. The selected corpus includes hymns of the Rajasthani princess and mystic poetess Mirabai (1498-1546) and classical Greek tragedies such as Euripides' *Bacchae*. The selected material is now available as an edited text but initially was an oral performance given in a particular religious context. All sets of female figures surveyed (gopis, Mirabai / the Maenads) are viewed as models of devotion to a male god (Krishna / Dionysos). However, texts also bear witness to traces of persecution against these women devotees. The implicit motive of persecution is the transgression by these paradigmatic female entities of the patriarchal norms structuring the society in which the devotional practices take place. Thus, one of the main issues of this research is conformity and transgression by female figures of the societal norms. The body is used to seek union with the male god, and at the same time it acts as a place and tool of transgression. This communication will focus mainly on methodological issues such as the use of comparison and gender related questions in the study of religion.