



Citation: M. del Mar González Chacón (2023) “Do not destroy me before my time”: Iphigenia’s Versions and Appropriations in Contemporary Irish Theatre. *Sijis* 13: pp. 43-58. doi: 10.13128/SIJIS-2239-3978-14617

Copyright: © 2023 M. del Mar González Chacón. This is an open access, peer-reviewed article published by Firenze University Press (<https://oajournals.fupress.net/index.php/bsfm-sijis>) and distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Data Availability Statement: All relevant data are within the paper and its Supporting Information files.

Competing Interests: The Author(s) declare(s) no conflict of interest.

“Do not destroy me before my time”: Iphigenia’s Versions and Appropriations in Contemporary Irish Theatre*

María del Mar González Chacón
University of Oviedo (<gonzalezmar@uniovi.es>)

Abstract:

Iphigenia in Aulis has been adapted by Irish contemporary playwrights such as Marina Carr, Edna O’Brien or Andy Hinds. This article offers an introductory analysis of the reasons behind the Irish interest towards the Greek tragedy, followed by a comparative study of the three versions mentioned. The identification of the overarching themes will unveil the spaces for transformation: while Carr focuses on the depiction of a modern and corrupt Agamemnon and the rewriting of strong women, O’Brien adds extra plots and characters to highlight feminist voices, and Hinds eliminates, adds and relocates lines from the original play, to write a more performable version. Conclusions reveal the rewriting of the concept of sacrificial women, and present the three plays as relevant contributions to the reception of Euripides in Ireland.

Keywords: Andy Hinds, Edna O’Brien, Irish Sacrificial Women, Iphigenia, Marina Carr

1. Irish Playwrights and Greek Tragedies: Creating (Women’s) Spaces for Transformation

What the myths have in common is their antiquity. What the myths have in common is their novelty. What the plays have in common is their attachment to issues from then. What the plays have in common is their attachment to the now.
(Walton 2002, 8)

Contemporary Irish playwrights rewrite classical Greek tragedies through the creation of spaces for transformation, where new meanings are evoked, as the myths travel in time, and where

*I would like to express my gratitude to Jennifer Thomas, for sharing the manuscript of Andy Hinds’ play.

the plays maintain their attachment to the now¹. Modern Irish settings offer a new location to Greek texts in a society where theatre still plays an essential role, since it is considered “as the natural place to juggle ideas” (*ibidem*). Within this scope, Euripides has been one of the most revisited tragedians: his depiction of women and social injustices, and his focus on the less privileged, match the recent social concerns in Ireland, and his heroines have been often rewritten to represent these anxieties. This can be exemplified through the references to *Alcestis*, which can be found as early as in J.M. Synge’s *Shadow of the Glen* (1903); the *Bacchae* Women were rewritten in 1905 by George Bernard Shaw in his *Major Barbara*, and in *The Bacchae: After Euripides* (1991) by Derek Mahon, *Wonderful Tennessee* (1993) by Brian Friel, *Bacchai* (2002) by Colin Teevan, or *The Bacchae of Baghdad* (2006) by Conall Morrison. Echoes of Helen can be appreciated in W. B. Yeats’ *Deirdre* (1906) and, more recently, in Frank McGuinness’ *Helen* (2009); Brendan Kennelly adapted *Medea* in 1988, and so did Marina Carr in *By the Bog of Cats ...* (1998); in the new millennium Kenneth McLeish and Robin Robertson, in 2000 and 2010 respectively, also addressed the myth; *The Trojan Women* were revived in the plays of Brendan Kennelly (1993) or Aidan Carl Mathews in *Trojans* (1994); Electra can be identified with the main characters of *The Mai* by Marina Carr (1994), and Frank McGuinness offered his vision of the same myth in 1997. McGuinness and Carr also rewrote *Hecuba* in 2004 and 2015, respectively. Carr has recently adapted Phaedra in *Phaedra Backwards* (2011).

As regards the main intentions behind this interest, authors such as Declan Kiberd, Marianne McDonald, Edith Hall or Brian Arkins have addressed this question. Kiberd identifies the *fili* as the first Irish artists to evoke Greek culture; the bards, who created their poems in the Gaelic Ireland, from 1200 to 1600, included in their works references to Greek and Roman texts. After the system of the English plantations had tried to acculturate Ireland, and “the world evoked in Gaelic poetry offered the one remaining social institution through which an underground consciousness might reveal itself” (Kiberd 2002, xiii), references to ancient Greece became for the Irish people a weapon to fight the colonisers, and a symbol of a rebellious attitude to be adopted since the classics “still provided a discourse in which the contexts between the various forces contending for power in Ireland could be represented” (ix).

Marianne McDonald shares this position, and relates the beginning of this Irish acquaintance with the classics to the Irish hedge schools of the seventeenth century: created after the plantations to preserve Irish culture, Greek and Latin were taught in these spaces as an attempt to escape Irish acculturation and the influence of English literature, but also to dissent or “to feed their own subversive protests” (2002, 37), and to reformulate the effects of the colonisation, or “the imposed culture on their own terms” (38); thus, the Greeks are used for political expression, and adapted to the contexts of reproduction. For instance, the initial translations from the first half of the twentieth century gave way to the election of tragedies such as *Trojan Women* or *Medea*, to be rewritten as representations of the importance of freedom and (women’s) human rights, in moments when these were debatable in the Irish society. Within this context, Euripides –who had represented men and women confronting themselves, helpless when facing the powerful gods and goddesses, and also passionate women as major characters, with a psychological depth that strengthened their role in his tragedies– was one of the most revisited playwrights in the twentieth century. His “celebrating the victim, and his appreciation of suffering and its effects on human beings” (42), represented in his tragedies, matched the reality of an Irish society, that continued struggling for independence and immersed in the debate of their own identity.

¹ This interest has been addressed in McDonald, Walton 2002; Dillon, Wilmer 2005; Arkins 2010, and, most recently, Hill 2019.

Edith Hall has confirmed this revival of Euripides since the 1990s, and highlights the recovery of some characters for this purpose; this is the case of Iphigenia, closely related to the societal debates that existed in the context of reproduction, specifically to the “conviction that mendacious political rhetoric has in recent years become more effective, and that the rise of spin-doctoring has been made possible only by the epistemological and metaphysical vacuum situated at the centre of the Western collective psyche” (2005, 3), which allows to understand the rewriting of characters such as Agamemnon. In addition, Hall identifies the character of the king with the power that the Church had in Irish society, and the negative effect this had on women: “[t]he *patria potestas* which the established Catholic Church has for centuries exerted over its congregation in Ireland – especially through its continuing opposition to contraception, abortion and divorce – could with little difficulty be symbolised by the paternal power Agamemnon exerts over his family” (14; italics in the original).

Hall concludes that this power over his family had its most relevant consequences in the case of her daughter. Concurrently, the situation of the agency of women in the classical text demands a reassessment in the modern stage since “*both* Iphigenia and Clytemnestra suffer passively, without assuming moral agency or putting up any appreciable resistance” (19; italics in the original), and, thus, the spaces for transformation for women emerge in the hands of contemporary playwrights.

Brian Arkins, on his side, identifies similarities in the use of myth by the classical tragedies and contemporary Irish playwrights: in both cases there is a distancing technique used to comment on utterly dramatic events; additionally, the spaces of transformation, which here names as the myth’s flexibility, allow the current dramatist to include innovations. Arkins also analyses the paradoxical presence of women, and their importance in the tragedies as powerful female roles, despite their position within the society in classical Greece: women were confined to their homes, subject to arranged marriages when they were girls, and leading “extremely restricted lives” (2010, 9). This matches the situation of women in Ireland, defined by the 1937 Constitution as State guardians who must not intend to become individuals, but fight for the common good instead; therefore, life within the homes is preferred:

1º In particular, the State recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved.

2º The State shall, therefore, endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home. (Foley, Lalor 1995, 122-123)

Thus, an identification is established between the Euripidean heroines and Irish women: Hecuba, Medea and also Iphigenia, as depicted in classical tragedies, were strong, but also sacrificial and suffering, which echo the traditional cultural iconography of Irish women as defenders and representatives of their land, community and family. These stereotypical roles are related to the construction of iconic figures used to represent the country during different moments of the history of Ireland. The Celtic mythological goddesses of Cailleach Bhéirre, Medb, Deirdre or Gráinne, can be considered the first examples of characters who became symbols of the Irish land; these images were reproduced in the eighteenth century, through the *spéirbhean* or sky-woman, who in the aisling poems, metaphored Ireland during the period of the British oppression. Ireland continued being constructed as a woman in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the English colonizers depicted it as Hibernia, a weak woman in need of the British masculine protection. This was answered back by Irish Nationalism through the character of Dark Rosaleen, who embodied Catholic beliefs, and demanded the freedom of her country;

within the same fashion, Cathleen Ní Houlihan, represented as an Old Woman in Yeats' play (1902), grieved for the loss of Ireland, and called her countrymen to fight and die for her, and to accept the sacrifice in order to gain fame for ever:

Old Woman. It is a hard service they take that help me. Many that are red-cheeked now will be pale-cheeked; many that have been free to walk the hills and the bogs and the rushes will be sent to walk hard streets in far countries; many a good plan will be broken; many that have gathered money will not stay to spend it; many a child will be born and there will be no father at its christening to give it a name. They that have red cheeks will have pale cheeks for my sake, and for all that, they will think they are well paid.

She goes out; her voice is heard outside singing.

They shall be remembered for ever,

They shall be alive for ever,

They shall be speaking for ever,

The people shall hear them for ever. (Yeats 2008 [1902], 219)

This iconic figure of Mother Ireland, as the embodiment of a mother ashamed of her children, who had failed to defend her, has continued existing in the country. In the 1990s, contemporary representations were identified in the Irish society; it can be illustrated through the Derry Mother, a woman who embraced martyrdom – and, hence, sacrifice. The concept was defined by sociologists of the time as a woman who was expected to be strong, but silent and decent at the same time, for whom the notions of decorum and reputation were essential, and who played an essential role within the institution of family. For the Derry Mother “martyrdom was a worthy goal in itself” (McLaughlin 1993, 560). Consequently, all these figures evoked: “un patrón de sacrificio – de la madre que ofrece el martirio de sus hijos por el bien de la nación y de los hijos que mueren por la “Madre Irlanda” [...] que atrapa a las mujeres irlandesas en unos determinados roles reduccionistas y opresores” (Rosende Pérez 2008, 264)².

Iphigenia, the myth of the sacrificial woman, has been revisited in the new millennium by Irish playwrights: Colin Teevan's *Iph* (1999) performed at the Lyric Theatre in Belfast; in 2001 Katie Mitchell directed *Iphigenia at Aulis* at the Abbey Theatre; in the same year Carr's *Ariel* premiered, also at the Abbey, and, two years after that, Edna O'Brien's version was first represented at the Sheffield Crucible. Hinds' *Iphigenia in Aulis* was first produced by Classic Stage Ireland in 2011. The plays studied in this article, by Carr, O'Brien and Hinds, can be categorised as versions, adaptations or appropriations, according to the latest theorisations about these concepts. Hence, following Brian Arkins' definition of a version, where “the Irish playwright preserves the invariant core of the Athenian tragedy [...] but feels free to add to, subtract from, manipulate the original” (2010, 25), Hinds' play could be ascribed to this type. Secondly, considering the concept of linguistic acculturation by Heing Kosok, that states that Irish writers have local audiences in mind and, thus, they adapt their versions because the English translations had not taken this into account, Carr's play comes to mind; for Kosok, the playwrights employ to achieve this “Irish speech patterns and Irish expressions, sometimes even Gaelic words in order to place them in an Irish cultural context” (Kosok 2004, 43), and this can be related to Carr's *Ariel* and her use of the Irish accent. Finally, the concepts of adaptation and appropriation, as addressed by Julie Sanders, specify that, while adaptation can constitute “[an

² A sacrificial model – of a mother that offers the martyrdom of her children for the good of the nation, and the children who die for the Mother Ireland, that imprisons Irish women in specific reductionist and oppressive roles. (Unless otherwise stated all translations are mine).

attempt to make texts ‘relevant’ or easily comprehensible to new audiences and readerships via the processes of proximation and updating” (Sanders 2006, 19), which would match Hinds’ play, appropriation involves “a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain” (26), which is closer to Carr and O’Brien’s works – in fact, O’Brien subtitled her play *A Loose Adaptation*, while Carr’s work has been considered a “more radical reworking” (Hill 2019, 141).

Apart from this classification of the three plays, it is also relevant, for the purpose of this article, to briefly consider some aspects related to the evolution of the concept of sacrifice, tragedy and myth. In this sense, the notion of willing sacrifice, has been redefined by Raymond Williams as connected to a new form of tragedy, that makes that “the ceremony of sacrifice is drowned, not in blood but in pity” (2006 [1966], 190), and this implies that the notion is rewritten to leave aside its connection to a ritual, and involves an emotional commitment to the man –or woman– who dies. It is my assumption that the adaptations examined here rework the concept of myth, and, more specifically the mytheme of the sacrificial women: considering Iphigenia’s story as the paradigm of the sacrifice myth, and examining this trope in the context of the Irish society, where the myth is revived, myth can be approached as “tending to create or recreate certain narratives which human beings take to be crucial” (Coupe 1997, 4). Thus, it will be possible to highlight the relevance of the recreations in the representation of new models of women in Ireland. Additionally, if we agree that “the work of myth is to explain, to reconcile, to guide action or to legitimate” (Cupitt 1982, 29), we will understand the relevance of these literary works for the (Irish) society: myth can open new horizons if taken as “a disclosure of unprecedented worlds, an opening on to other possible worlds which transcend the established limits of our actual world” (Ricoeur 1991, 490); in other words, it also “carries with it a promise of another mode of existence entirely [...] It is not only foundational [...] but also liberating” (Coupe 1997, 8-9), in this case, for Irish women, who are rewritten to be represented as dissenting voices and who refuse to conform with their mythological past. Myth is being used in this theatre to be reconciled with the society where it exists, as Losada suggested, since: “El mito no es un constructo mental ajeno a las vicisitudes socioculturales: lleva marcada en su piel y sus entrañas la huella de cada individuo y sociedad. El mito es un esclavo ilusionado con la [Libertad]”³ (2015, 9).

2. *Iphigenia in Classical Greece: A Citizen by Courtesy*

Do not kill me before my time.
The light of day is sweet: don't drive me
Into the darkness of the underworld.
(Euripides 2012 [c. 409 BC], 81)

In order to understand how the myth of Iphigenia is transformed in the new context of reproduction, it is essential to consider the original story, as well as its context of creation. Women in Greek society were seen as “the mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters of Athenian citizen men [...] ‘citizens’ only by courtesy” (Cartledge 2001 [1997], 27). Without presence in the public sphere, except for the public activity of religion “in which Athenian women might achieve parity or even superiority” (28), their religious role was linked to the spheres of death, burial and

³ The myth is not a mental construct unconnected to sociocultural vicissitudes: it has engraved in its skin and guts the trace of each individual and society. The myth is a slave excited to achieve Freedom.

mourning. Furthermore, they were eligible for the posts of priesthood: their presence in these rites was associated to Maenadic or Dionysiac cults where they entered a state of frenzied ecstasy when worshipping the god. Consequently, they “were regarded as more susceptible to invasive passions than men, especially eros and daemonic possession; women were thus both plausible instigators of tragic events, and effective generators of emotional responses” (Hall 2001 [1997], 106).

Women’s absence from public spaces in Greece was linked to the preservation of a man’s reputation, since “political enemies might attack him by targeting his dependants, especially his wife, for litigation or ridicule. The convention that respectable women were not even to be named in public stems from the same ideal” (105). This had as a consequence that they remained under the legal control of men, being regarded as weak and frail, without authority; additionally, they were not expected to be alone outdoors—this could damage their reputation, as did being with men alone. Thus, they showed apologetic attitudes when speaking or acting in public, and considered their involvement in religious activities and their own death for their community as honourable. This paralysis contributed to the creation in the Greek tragedies of female characters who were women in waiting, Penelopes or “static household-bound women awaiting and reacting to the comings and goings of men” (107). Female transgressive actions in this context usually happened in the absence of their fathers or husbands, i.e. in the absence of a male authority that controlled them, precisely to exclude any male responsibility. To add to the picture, female solidarity did not exist, since “friendship between individual women is consistently portrayed as a dangerous phenomenon” (108). The tragedies then depicted “the disastrous effects on households and the larger community of divinely inspired madness, anger, sexual desire, or jealousy” (109), and, paradoxically, all performers were men performing women characters who engendered “social and political dislocation, disharmony or destruction” (Cartledge 2001 [1997], 30). It was then paramount to control these citizens by courtesy.

Within this context, classical Iphigenia conformed to the expected role, and the character was built as a paradigm of submission and obedience. Euripides’ *Iphigeneia at Aulis* (409 BC) has as some of the main themes the concepts of sacrifice, related to women’s agency, and reputation, linked to men’s ambitions. The play has as the major characters the king of Argos, Agamemnon, his wife Clytemnestra, and their daughter, Iphigenia; the prince of Phthia, Achilles, and the king of Sparta and brother of Agamemnon, Menelaus, also play important roles. Agamemnon opens the play recalling the story of Helen: a stereotypical powerless woman who passed from the authority of her father to that of her husband. Her affair with Paris is not presented as an abduction, but as an attraction that both felt and made them run away together. Even though some freedom is suggested here for women in society, the fact that they were given to their husbands through a legal contract, that included a dowry, impedes their independence. This lack of individuality is also affected by divine intervention: the gods announce that their will must be fulfilled through the prophecy of Calchas, and Agamemnon’s daughter shall be sacrificed, so that the army might sail successfully to Troy. The sacrifice is presented as an unavoidable act and, although Agamemnon tries to resist at first, he will finally be convinced by his brother about the necessity of his loss to achieve common good, or, in other words, to sacrifice the woman for benefit of the whole community.

Opposed to this, masculine characters in the classical play have political concerns, that set them apart from the domestic sphere, and manifest their ambitious personalities; they consider reputation as their means to achieve glory, since honouring the ancestry could bring them “undying fame” (Euripides 2012 [c. 409 BC], 41). This is, for instance, represented in Menelaus and Agamemnon: when the former finds out about his brother’s intention to stop the sacrifice of Iphigenia, he threatens to tell all the Greeks, and appeals to the importance of the moral and

social obligation towards those who helped him achieve power. Although Agamemnon makes some complaints about the disadvantages of having to preserve reputation for the public service position—“Nobles have nothing but misfortunes. Our life is ruled by pride, we are the slaves of the mob” (33)—the fact is that this rhetoric will be later transformed to justify his actions, and he links reputation to obligation, to conclude that “This is what I have to do” (83), i.e., excluding any personal responsibility. In addition, Agamemnon contributes to Iphigenia’s immobilisation when he links her sacrifice to her daughter’s duty towards Greece; to achieve this, he personifies the country, and uses the symbol to explain his doubts: “[i]t’s Greece that I pity. She embarked on a noble mission, but now those barbarian nobodies are left off the hook, to laugh at her” (27). However, this reveals that he is moved by reputation, but also by fear of being killed by the angry mob.

Considering that murder, or any physical violence, could not be shown on the Greek stage—these episodes were hidden— Iphigenia’s death and transformation in the classical text are presented as a ritual, rather than as a slaughter. Her initial reaction to her death evolves, and her appeal to her father is first logically based on her youth and the tragedy of death: “Do not kill me before my time. The light of day is sweet: don’t drive me into the darkness of the underworld” (81). For her “a miserable life is better than a noble death” (83). Nevertheless, the concept of the honourability of a woman’s sacrifice for her country grows through the play as a strong argument for her acceptance; Agamemnon uses it repeatedly: “it is Greece, for whom [...] I must sacrifice you. We are powerless against this. Greece must be free” (85); and the idea is reinforced later through divine intervention: “Artemis has taken me as a sacrifice to win glory for Greek girls” (87). Her final transformation into a sacrificial woman is based on her conviction that “I have resolved to die. I want to do it with dignity, in no way ignobly” (91). She decides to become a martyr for Greece, and the admiration that her action will cause becomes a reward for her as “fame as the liberator of Greece will be revered” (*ibidem*). She refuses to fight the gods’ will, and concludes: “I dedicate my body to Greece” (93). Thus, sacrifice becomes self-sacrifice, a ritual and a symbol of nobility for women. In addition, the concept of death, as a ritual passage into a new existence, is present in the play when the plot is resolved through a supernatural intervention: Iphigenia is miraculously turned into a deer, and her ascension to the gods serves to evoke her patriotism, but also to kill her.

3. *Iphigenia in Contemporary Ireland: A Rebel Citizen*

Come and get me, will ya? Ud’s awful here, ud’s awful. There’s a huge pike after me, he lives in the belfry, two rows a teeth on him and teeth on hees tongue, bendin back to hees throah. He won’t rest till he has me. Come and get me, will ya?
(Carr 2002, 56)

Carr, O’Brien and Hinds’ plays premiered at the beginning of the twenty-first century, when women in Ireland had gained presence in the public domain (Kirby 2010). Notwithstanding, referendums about their rights still showed there were debatable issues concerning their agency,⁴ and, despite the fact that globalization brought financial independence to many

⁴ The 25th Amendment to the Constitution of Ireland, dated 6 March 2002, about the subject of abortion, was proposed to exclude the risk of suicide to the mother as one of the reasons to terminate a pregnancy – it had already been proposed in 1992, rejected then by 65.4% – and this was defeated only by 50.4%.

women, it also caused “the commodification of women’s bodies, as well as inequality regarding the impact of economic growth” (Hill 2019, 137). Religion, on the other hand, was questioned as an institution with a relevant role within the society, and the publication of several reports, in 2009 and 2013, denouncing child and women’s abuse in contexts related to religious-run institutions—like the Murphy and Ryan reports, and the McAleese Report, associated to the Magdalene laundries—contributed to the erosion of the church authority, and the denounce of the situation of women. Within this context, rewriting the myth of a woman who had willingly accepted her sacrifice for the common good, reveals meanings related to the new situation of women in Ireland and, mostly, to their demands.

These three plays should be considered as relevant contributions to the reception of Euripides in Ireland; while Carr’s theatre receives much critical attention, *Ariel* is one of the plays which demands further analysis in relation to the presence of myths. O’Brien’s version has been studied, but not closely compared with its original source, which allows to reveal the spaces for transformation the playwright built; Hinds’ *Iphigenia* has not been considered as it deserves, and the careful selection of the playwright when it comes to decide which parts to extend, reduce or relocate, should be addressed to find new meanings for the myth in contemporary society. In all the three cases, Iphigenia is not any longer a citizen by courtesy, but a rebel woman who refuses to accept the myth and asks her father to bring her back to life.

3.1. *Ariel* (2002) by Marina Carr

Judy Friel, at the Abbey, asked me to write the program note for *Iphigenia at Aulis* earlier this year, and that forced me to revisit it. So it was a case of just going back to it and being hungry to write at the same time.

(Carr 2001, 55)

One of the aspects that defines Irish theatre at the beginning of the twenty-first century is “the search for a binding mythology with which to express and unify conceptions of Irish identity for the contemporary stage” (Fitzpatrick 2007, 170). Within this context, Fintan O’Toole, in *Critical Moments: Fintan O’Toole on Modern Irish Theatre* (2003), argues that new frameworks have to be used to analyse the adaptations of Greek tragedies, in order to consider how these are affected by the concepts of a society which is “in disarray” (188): globalization and the integration of Ireland within Europe contributed to the loss of commonalities, which brought changes in the representation in Irish theatre, and micro-narratives are used to rewrite the meta-narrative. In Carr’s play the sacrifice of the Irish Iphigenia, Ariel, acquires a new significance “becoming a demonic act in pursuit of foul ambition, reversing the normative meaning of the act” (175), and creating a new myth which symbolises the dissenting voices of women in Ireland.

In *Ariel* Carr imagines another of her disarrayed, decadent and upsetting sagas, the Fitzgeralds, who live in a house surrounded by “Grake columns” (2002, 32). In the first act Fermoy Fitzgerald and his wife Frances celebrate their daughter’s sixteenth birthday. Very early in the drama we learn about Fermoy’s political ambitions, as well as his desire for power. His self-assurance is based on an exchange with God, which serves to introduce the theme of sacrifice: for the heartless and unscrupulous Irish Agamemnon, power “[u]d’s mine for the takin, I know ud is, all ud nades on my part is a sacrifice” (18). Though we do not know about Fermoy’s intentions to kill Ariel until the second act, Carr has already built the Greek altar, and the concept of sacrifice appears related to a corrupt politician’s ambitions, rather than to a fair king. Fermoy

also develops the theme of reputation, used in the classical version to explain Agamemnon's duties and justify his daughter's death, and reconstructed by Carr as a lame excuse for the unstoppable ambition of political candidates, who diminish the dignity of their voters, part of their community, defining them as:

All chirpin the wan tune like there's no other – aqual wages, crèches in the workplace, no ceilin on the women, the pace process, a leg up for the poor, the handicapped, the refugees, the tinkers, the tachers, the candlestick makers. In Sparta they were left on the side a the hill and that's where I'll lave em when I've the reins. (17-18)

Fermoy also departs from his Greek counterpart in the depiction of their countries: rather than praising Ireland, as Agamemnon did with Greece, he laments the fact that Ireland has lost prestige, since it has been occupied, not by great conquerors such as Napoleon, but by the British, who “have left us [...] the till” (42). In addition, Fermoy becomes a dictator who thinks of himself as in charge of rewriting history: “we nade to re-imagine ourselves from scratch” (*ibidem*). From this position, he boasts of his one-to-one relationship with God, depicted as a vengeful and cruel character demanding “blood and more blood, blood till we're dry as husks” (19). The relationship between gods and men in the Irish tragedy has changed, as can be seen from the conversations Fermoy has with his brother Boniface, where He is depicted as an absent entity: “Facts are he hasn't been seen for over two thousand year, for all we know he's left the solar system [...]. Times I wonder was he ever here” (15). Through this, Carr is isolating Fermoy as the only one to be blamed for the murder of his daughter, and eliminating the classical image of him as the gods' puppet.

The use of rhetoric in the classical tragedy is still present in *Ariel*, but it has been transformed: Carr's characters use the Midlands accent and, while Agamemnon's rhetoric was very much constructed around the expression of his doubts about the killing of Iphigenia, or his insights about his duties as a loyal servant to his country fellows, Fermoy, very early in the play, states his decision, which is far from being hesitant but based on his own benefit: “If I refuse this sacrifice, I'm facin the grave meself and, worse, facin him after refusing me destiny and, worse agin, after refusin him the wan thing he asks as payment for this enchanted life” (19). Additionally, moderation and worries about the advantages of a public life are not part of the speechmaking displayed by the Irish politician, who declares his intention to become powerful and his refusal to “spind any more a me life on the margins” (*ibidem*). His objective is achieved in act two, when ten years have passed, and we learn that he has held three ministries and has been involved in some scandals that corroborate his lack of morality. Rhetoric is used at this point to express his grandiloquence, to try to disguise his real intentions, and to show his need to serve the political party, which “cannot be sacrificed to wan individual, whaever our privahe estimations of thah individual may be” (40). Rhetoric has been transformed into spin doctoring, displayed by Fermoy in the press conferences, where the use of Ariel's death to arise the feeling of pity in the voters is presented as a dirty strategy to achieve power – a metaphor of the situation of the contextual Ireland, where the Celtic Tiger had given way to recession and economic crisis, very closely related to the corruption of some (Hill 2019). This ambition brings again the lack of female solidarity, which can be seen in the character of Elaine, Ariel's sister and Fermoy's accomplice in Ariel's death:

FERMOY Elaine, what do ya think?

ELAINE Three things. Ya can't admih ya love power. Thah has to go. God. Papple's fierce touchy abouh God. We may pare thah back. And three, Ariel. Ariel's your trump card. Play ud. Ya nade to go wud the emotion of ud more. Thah's whah papple wants, details of your personal life. Don't be afraid to give ud to them. Don't be afraid to give em Ariel. (Carr 2002, 45)

The character of Ariel is absent until act two. Carr explains first the background that framed her death. For this, it is essential to describe what type of person his father was: after he has become Taoiseach (Prime Minister of Ireland), Boniface, a monk who is Fermoy's older brother, reveals that the politician killed Ariel ten years ago, and the sacrifice was not a ritual but a blood sacrifice: "ya tould me, Fermoy, thah nigh ya were goin an abouh blood sacrifice" (2002, 50). Thus, the play dismantles the classical version, and this is highlighted through Ariel's depiction as a character whose existence in contemporary Ireland seems impossible; a woman who had willingly accepted her fatal destiny, is rewritten by Carr as a ghostly girl –echoing the airy spirit freed by Prospero from the tree he had been imprisoned by a witch, Sycorax, in *The Tempest*–, having wings and, most significantly, asking her father to bring her back to life, disrupting the traditional ending where she had died peacefully. Her supplication to her father is consequently reworked as the plea of an innocent girl who begs to be rescued from a dark place, to unmask the myth, and demands her right not to be killed before her time:

Come and get me, will ya? Ud's awful here, ud's awful. There's a huge pike after me, he lives in the belfry, two rows a teeth on him and teeth on hees tongue, bendin back to hees throah. He won't rest till he has me. Come and get me, will ya? (56)

Carr adds more spaces of transformation when she leaves aside the original plot of Iphigenia and turns to Aeschylus' *Oresteia* and Sophocles' *Electra* to depict the struggle between Frances/Clytemnestra and Elaine/Electra, in her attempt to create strong women. Frances will kill Fermoy in this version, and Elaine will stab Frances to avenge her father –adding another twist, since in the classical counterpart it was Orestes/Stephen the one who killed her mother. Frances differs from Clytemnestra in so far as she does not conform to her husband: despite the fact that she is bounded by the weight of the past, and is then part of a generation of women tied to a fatal destiny – her mother's body was found at Cuura Lake, her daughter Elaine hates her– and although she is aware that, as a wife, she depends on her husband's success: "I'm the wan'll suffer if he doesn't geh in. I'm the wan'll be blemt" (26). However, she refuses to conform with her role of a caring mother, becomes firmer and avenges Ariel's death by killing Fermoy. Furthermore, she regains freedom when she fights for her life, and, as Ariel did before her, refuses to die willingly, to end up prophesizing: "I'll rise agin in spihe a your efforts to wipe the ground wud me" (65), to rewrite the myth again, and to contribute to the eradication of the role of the sacrificial woman.

3.2. *Iphigenia (2003) by Edna O'Brien*

Iphigenia was incomplete and finished by another hand. The other hand is what gives the play as we know it a false and substanceless ending. At the very last moment the sacrifice is aborted, Iphigenia whisked away and a deer put lying on the ground, the altar sprinkled with the necessary blood. It seems unthinkable that an artist of Euripides' unflinching integrity, with a depth and mercilessness of sensibility, would soften his powerful story for public palliation. (O'Brien 2003, 63)

Edna O'Brien's *Iphigenia* was first premiered at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, in 2003. For the Irish playwright the story's main theme was "why men go to war. Why they have gone to war down the centuries. Is it for right? Is it for morality to be better or is it for human beings or is it partly to do with their inner sense of conquest?" (qtd. in Stock 2014, 66). Furthermore, she rejects the classical ending, which she reads as trying to please the expectations of the Greek

audience. Thus, she will introduce innovations in her play that include new characters, plot variations, and the rewriting of Iphigenia, to avoid her depiction as a frail and naïve woman, who does not protest for being killed and is rewarded with her miraculous and celestial transformation.

O’Brien adds novelistic features through the presence of extra narrators – Agamemnon’s concubine, the Old Witch and Iphigenia’s nurse –, who contribute to the plot variations, such as the suggestion that “Agamemnon was sexually attracted to Iphigenia” (Hall 2005, 15), in order to explain his abhorrent crime. These references also serve to match the context of reproduction of the myth: an Ireland, where child abuse by the Catholic Church and marital violence against women, especially in rural areas, were societal debates that could inspire these theme choices. Furthermore, O’Brien increases the number of characters, through the inclusion of five young girls, and the sixth girl, to highlight feminist voices and question, again, the concept of sacrificial women and their acceptance of this role.

The play starts with the character of the Witch announcing that Zeus has stopped the winds because Agamemnon has refused to fulfil his vow to Artemis, the sacrifice of her daughter. The five young girls and the sixth girl replace the classical chorus, and offer a fresh and lightened feminine perspective of the events, that exclude the classical praises to feminine chastity and include, instead, their blatant comments about their sexual desire, as can be seen, for instance, in their description of the arrival of the ships to their shores “to glut our women’s eyes” (O’Brien 2003, 70). By cutting some of the chorus sections O’Brien gives more prominence to women’s voices which reject the sacrifice, or, in the playwright’s words, the slaughter:

I have two women. One is the voice of the appetite for war. The appetite for sacrifice. The appetite for blood. And her opposite is the one who prays that the Goddess—in this case, it could be the God, but it’s a Goddess—would avert this slaughter. (67)

The sixth girl becomes a major character, despite being a servant and, thus, not of exalted rank: she is Agamemnon’s lover, and this role allows her to speak out; in her interchanges with the king, she rewrites (hi)stories of other women, reworking the theme of female solidarity. This is the case of Helen, for whom she feels admiration: she has become now a model for women who “can learn marvellous things from captivating women” (72); to add to the picture, she is not ashamed of her affair with Agamemnon, or her own ambition for power, and openly states that “every woman desires a king” (*ibidem*), disrupting traditional classical roles related to chastity.

Iphigenia’s sacrifice is presented as an unavoidable act in this version: Agamemnon announces it, and acknowledges the evilness and premeditation of his plan: “And so I plot and weave and slither against her that I love so dearly” (90). When Clytemnestra and her husband meet, O’Brien inserts the “I will” scene, to depict sacrifice as the result of a man’s actions, as it happened in Carr, without any other divine intervention that might have previously served to justify; the scene confirms Agamemnon’s guiltiness, and highlights, at the same time, Clytemnestra’s strength and power over her husband:

CLYTEMNESTRA Isn’t one death enough to contemplate in one day, your own daughter’s at that. Who will draw the sword across her child’s neck?

Echo of “Who will draw the sword across her child’s neck” *twice*.

AGAMEMNON I will.

CLYTEMNESTRA Who will slit it?

Echo of “Who will slit it” *once*.

AGAMEMNON I will.

CLYTEMNESTRA Who will hold the cup for the ... torrent of blood?

AGAMEMNON I will. [...]

CLYTEMNESTRA I will not let this happen. (97-98)

Goddesses are prayed to in order to stop Iphigenia's slaughter, and their role redefined through the weakening of their arguments: Artemis, for instance, talks through the figure of the Witch, adding the effect of magic powers as elements which played an important role to convince Iphigenia about the importance of being remembered as an honourable martyr; the words of the goddess serve also to highlight Iphigenia's lack of agency through the repetition of "For it is time", which makes reference to the girl as an essential part in the divine plan:

When you have fulfilled your destiny
 You shall be raised among the blessed
 And our dear land will honor you for ever
 For it is time
 For it is time. (103)

Notwithstanding, none of these reasons will convince the princess and, when his father states that the sacrifice is "for Greece. She must be free. If it is in our power, yours and mine, to make her so, we must" (104), Iphigenia alters the original plot, and answers back, claiming the recognition of her loneliness in the fight for her country: "It falls to me alone ... without you" (*ibidem*). The reworking of Iphigenia is concluded in her supplication to her father, where the classical "do not kill me before my time" (Euripides 2012 [c. 409 BC], 81) becomes "do not destroy me before my time ... I love the light ... do not despatch me down to the netherworld ... hell is dark and creepy and I have no friends there ..." (O'Brien 2003, 104), coinciding with Carr's depiction of the princess as an innocent girl who does not understand death, or the role of women in those rituals, and rejects the obligation to serve their communities. After this, the moment of the sacrifice is reconfigured by describing it as a scene where violence, blood and death are shown on stage: Iphigenia screams while she is lifted, significantly, by the men. When she is killed by her father, the blood drips and other women appear on the scene in the form of female shrieks which are heard. The sacrifice has turned from a ritual into a slaughter, the female death is staged, avoiding the beauty of the sacrifice in classical times, and presenting women's deaths as the result of the "patriarchal drive to contain woman through the imposition of passivity and silence, and, concurrently, to maintain the status quo" (Hill 2019, 136):

Iphigenia is raised up and carried offstage toward the altar.
Agamemnon follows. [...]
Death shrieks — all female.
The blood begins to drip.
That sound held for a moment. (O'Brien 2003, 108)

The final scene reinforces this by presenting Clytemnestra covered by blood, while the Young Girls rise their feminist voices "vivified [...] speaking the prophecy of the fate to come" (109), and announce Clytemnestra's revenge on men, a symbol of strong women who refuse to accept their (mythological) endings:

He falls on the silver-sided bath, his brain awhirl, in death convulsion, his eyes staring in disbelief at you, at you his queen.
 Will add her hand to the hand of Aegisthus and drive the blade clean home into your king's breast, exacting the full price... (110)

3.3. Iphigenia in Aulis (2011) by Andy Hinds

Whether the ending we have has been appended to Euripides’
intended ending, or is replacing an ending by Euripides now lost as
a pay-off to the end of the play, it neither convinces nor satisfies.
(Hinds 2017, 15)

In 2017 *Iphigenia in Aulis*, by Andy Hinds, was published, although the play had been first produced in 2011 by Classic Stage Ireland. Hinds worked on the original text from two perspectives; first, he translated the text, from a medieval manuscript. Secondly, he wrote a more performable, stage version of the play, marked by his decisions about which sections of the prevailing Euripidean text were to be kept, eliminated, or relocated, in order to gain consistency; by analysing these variations, the spaces for transformation and the myth flexibility can be identified, as well as the intentions behind this.

To make it more performable and attractive to the modern audience, Hinds is more explanatory. This can be seen, for instance, in the parodos, or first entry of the chorus in the Euripidean version: when the young married women describe the famous heroes, who made the Greek army assembled at Aulis, Odysseus, originally described as “Laertes’ son, / Who has come from his island crags” (Euripides 2012 [c. 409 BC], 17), becomes in Hinds’ play, in a more illustrative fashion, “Laertes’ son, Odysseus/ From the craggy hills of Ithaca” (2017, 116); similarly, “The Fleet of the Myrmidons from Phthia” (Euripides 2012 [c. 409 BC], 19), are in this Irish version “Were Myrmidons / The force of Achilles brought from Phthia” (Hinds 2017, 117); and Odysseus is introduced as “Seed of Sisyphus” (129), to remind the audience of his family tree. Hinds also reorders the information at some points, so that the story line is easier to follow; this happens, for instance, when the chorus, in the first choral ode, addresses, in Euripides, the importance of moderation, of nature and nurture, and, then, the story of Paris, before Clytemnestra and her party arrive. Hinds changes the order of the events, and situates Paris’ background first, adding ten lines, to remind the plots of the distant classical myths.

On the other side, some lines are eliminated: Hinds chooses those parts of the Euripidean play that are considered later additions, i.e., not original. For instance, the first scene between Agamemnon and Menelaus has lost the part where Menelaus criticizes Agamemnon remembering his past. The effect is that the action is faster; moreover, the cut lines do not affect the understanding of the play. In the same scene, Agamemnon responds, and Hinds removes his first lines where he explains to Menelaus that honour is precisely what has made him change his mind about Iphigenia: rhetoric is not present and, consequently, the focus changed to Agamemnon’s refusal to kill his daughter. This is reformulated from “I will not kill my own child” (Euripides 2012 [c. 409 BC], 29) to the more tragic “I will not kill my flesh and blood” (Hinds 2017, 122). Hinds also reduces the lines in the first encounter between Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, and excludes the part where, in Euripides, Agamemnon had lamented the loss of his daughter, as well as the first lines of Clytemnestra, where she had shown agreement with her husband as regards this feeling. Subsequently, the tragedy increases its dramatic effect, since there is no space left for the lamentation of the parents.

Furthermore, Hinds adds and rewrites some of the lines for the main characters: Clytemnestra’s words for Agamemnon become harsher: she does not use the adjective “weak”, as she did in the classical version, to refer to him, but the sentence “He is a coward!” (148). This depiction of the queen as a stronger woman coincides with Carr and O’Brien’s interest in

making women speak the unspeakable. Besides, Hinds problematizes the citizens' obligation towards their country: when Agamemnon answers to her daughter, saying that it is impossible for him not to commit the sacrifice in the name of Greece, Hinds adds the line "We must bow to her" (156), to emphasize the excess of the obedience demanded by their community. This behaviour from the king affects the rewriting of other characters: Achilles and Clytemnestra's meeting is marked by his explicit words towards the king, which question the recognition of the sacrifice as a noble act: "Do not imagine / I will greet this with forbearance; / I too am full of anger with your husband" (145).

Hinds relocates some lines belonging to main characters, and these are given to the chorus; for instance, very significantly, some parts that originally belonged to Iphigenia, such as the moment when she decides willingly to face her sacrifice, excluding the self-sacrifice as a possibility. As a result, Iphigenia's first song is shortened, starts by asserting the betrayal of her father, and does not sing about the fate of Paris, to compare this with her own destiny. Hinds does this during the whole song, and alternates the chorus and Iphigenia's lines so that, as he states in a stage direction "It is as though the chorus are giving voice to her thoughts" (157): the playwright provides more voices to voice Iphigenia, and, at the same time, less lines to justify her servility to Greece.

Finally, Hinds alters the ending: even though he was aware of being acting against the rule for tragedies, that the most relevant events happened behind the scenes, he also chooses to show Iphigenia's pain in the form of her speech where, while she willingly walks to her death, refuses to be touched by any Greek man:

And so, you see, no Greek
Need lay his hands on me;
Unflinching on the altar,
I shall bare my neck myself
Before the blade. (164)

Her death is portrayed as a murder: It is Achilles who cuts her throat on stage, while all are still and silent, before they hear a breeze in the distance that announces that the war is about to start after the sacrifice, since the ships will finally be able to lay siege to Troy, to war. Hinds seems to define the ultimate meaning of Iphigenia's death, related in this case to human's need to siege and conquer.

4. Conclusions: "Do not destroy me before my time"

Iphigenia, a classical paradigm of sacrifice, complying with men's authority, is rewritten in contemporary Irish theatre and refuses to be killed before her time; in the versions and appropriations of Marina Carr, Edna O'Brien and Andy Hinds, she questions obedience to her father and her country, and refuses to die peacefully. Consequently, her character is redeemed by the Irish playwrights, rescued from victimhood, and able to achieve individuality and abandon the classical role. Carr's Ariel supplicates to be rescued from a dark space where the light of the promised eternal glory cannot be found; O'Brien's Iphigenia discovers that the fight for her country falls to her alone, and rejects the burden; Hinds eliminates the part where, in the original play, Iphigenia had decided to die, rejecting the idea of self-sacrifice. Thus, the Irish Iphigenias are not any longer paradigms of female submission, and this extends to other female characters, such as Clytemnestra, previously demonized for challenging male power, and now reacting to oppression through rage and the aspiration to power, as can be seen, for instance, in *Ariel*.

This study has revealed the spaces for transformation created by the contemporary writers in the form of the creation, or elimination, of some scenes, characters or plots. There are more women characters in the modern-day plays, and their parts gain importance; they are not representative of chaos, but the ones in charge of restoring order; they speak the unspeakable, while corruption is attributed to men – Agamemnon is signalled in the three versions as the main instigator of his daughter’s death –, and they have ceased to be the instigators of tragic events; they are no longer weak, frail or apologetic, do not consider their deaths as honourable, and do not resolve to die to liberate their oppressed countries. These variations mirror the situation of women in the context of reproduction: An Ireland where these issues still demand a reappraisal, since modern Iphigenias still have to cry out “Do not destroy me before my time” (O’Brien 2003, 104).

The three plays studied here reveal how contemporary Irish playwrights revive classical myths through the creation of spaces for transformation which represent the changes in the Irish society, and, thus, the resulting versions and appropriations can keep the attachment to its moment. This use of mythology unveils the situation of women as one of the main concerns that continues being debatable and considered as a social injustice in Ireland. The myth is, in this sense, a symbol of rebellion, a provider of a dissenting discourse, and an attempt to escape stereotypes and to represent subversion. By unmasking the myth of Iphigenia, Carr, O’Brien and Hinds, also unmask the myth of Irish women as defenders and representatives of their country, a role perpetuated through Irish history through the creation of a myth or narrative which was considered crucial; the explanatory quality of myth legitimates now new behaviours which transcend the limits imposed previously and, thus, the myth connects to the new sociocultural context. The creation of these new Iphigenias, who refuse to represent their countries and to die for it, contributes to the destruction of the stereotypical roles of female iconic figures used in Ireland for centuries, and the concept of sacrifice, closely related to these symbols, is deconstructed to suggest that it cannot any longer be considered as a ritual, but as an abhorrent act that does not symbolise contemporary women.

This analysis has contributed to palliate the lack of critical attention over Carr, Hinds and O’Brien’s versions and adaptations of the myth of Iphigenia. It has proved the relevant role played by contemporary playwrights in the creation of spaces for transformation that emerge during the process of rewriting the Greeks, and it has also revealed the meanings behind those transformations, which are closely related to the situation of women in Ireland. The three plays must be considered as relevant contributions within the canon of Irish versions of Euripides’ plays, and they confirm that the Irish interest towards classical Greek tragedies continues being related to an intention to depict rebellious attitudes, subversive characters, but also the victims and the suffering of human beings. These works confirm the revival of Euripides, albeit reassessed in the modern stage, through the depiction of women who, in the hands of contemporary playwrights, refuse to die before their time.

Works Cited

- Arkins Brian (2010), *Irish Appropriation of Greek Tragedy*, Dublin, Carysfort Press.
 Carr Marina (2002), *Ariel*, Oldcastle, The Gallery Press.
 — (2001), “Marina Carr in Conversation with Melissa Sihra”, in Lilian Chambers, Ger FitzGibbon, Eamonn Jordan (eds), *Theatre Talk: Voices of Irish Theatre Practitioners*, Dublin, Carysfort Press, 55-63.
 Cartledge Paul (2001 [1997]), “‘Deep Plays’: Theatre as Process in Greek Civic Life”, in P.E. Easterling (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge UP, 3-35.
 Coupe Laurence (1997), *Myth*, London-New York, Routledge.

- Cupitt Don (1982), *The World to Come*, London, SCM Press.
- Dillon John, Wilmer S.E. eds (2005), *Rebel Women: Staging Ancient Greek Drama Today*, London, Methuen.
- Easterling P.E., ed. (2001 [1997]), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge UP.
- Euripides (2012 [c. 409 BC]), *Iphigenia at Aulis*, trans. by Holly Eckhardt, John Harrison, Cambridge, Cambridge UP.
- Euripides (2017), *Iphigenia in Aulis of Euripides*, trans. by Andy Hinds, London, Oberon Books.
- Fitzpatrick Lisa (2007), "Nation and Myth in the Age of the Celtic Tiger: Muide Éire?", in Patrick Lonergan, Riana O'Dwyer (eds), *Echoes Down the Corridor. Irish Theatre – Past, Present and Future*, Dublin, Carysfort Press, 169-179.
- Foley A.J., Lalor Stephen, eds (1995), *Gill & Macmillan Annotated Constitution of Ireland, 1937-1994*, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan.
- Hall Edith (2001 [1997]), "The Sociology of Athenian Tragedy", in P.E. Easterling (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge UP, 93-126.
- Hall Edith (2005), "Iphigenia and Her Mother at Aulis: A Study in the Revival of a Euripidean Classic", in John Dillon, S.E. Wilmer (eds), *Rebel Women: Staging Ancient Greek Drama Today*, London, Methuen, 3-41.
- Hill Shonagh (2019), *Women and Embodied Mythmaking in Irish Theatre*, New York-Cambridge, Cambridge UP.
- Kiberd Declan (2002), "Introduction", in Marianne McDonald, J.M. Walton (eds), *Amid Our Troubles: Irish Versions of Greek Tragedy*, London, Methuen, vii-xiii.
- Kirby Peadar (2010 [2002]), *Celtic Tiger in Collapse: Explaining the Weaknesses of the Irish Model*, Basingstoke-New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kosok Heing (2004), "Translation, Adaptation, Translocation, Acculturation, Appropriation: Contemporary Irish Playwrights and Continental Drama", *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 10, 1-2, 41-50.
- Losada J.M. (2015), *Nuevas formas del mito. Una metodología interdisciplinar*, Berlin, Logos Verlag Berlin.
- McDonald Marianne (2002), "The Irish and Greek Tragedy", in Marianne McDonald, J.M. Walton (eds), *Amid Our Troubles: Irish Versions of Greek Tragedy*, London, Methuen, 37-86.
- McLaughlin Eithne (1993), "Women and the Family in Northern Ireland: A Review", *Women's Studies International Forum* 16, 6, 553-568.
- O'Brien Edna (2003), *Triptych and Iphigenia*, New York, Grove Press.
- O'Toole Fintan (2003), *Critical Moments: Fintan O'Toole on Modern Irish Theatre*, ed. by Julia Furay, Redmond O'Hanlon, Dublin, Carysfort Press.
- Ricoeur Paul (1991), *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination*, ed. by M.J. Valdes, New York-London, Harvester-Wheatsheaf.
- Rosende Pérez Aida (2008), "La iconografía femenina de Irlanda. Creación y re/construcción de una nación en femenino", *Lectora* 14, 251-267.
- Sanders Julie (2006), *Adaptation and Appropriation*, London-New York, Routledge.
- Stock Francine (2014), "Iphigenia", in A.H. Kersnowski (ed.), *Conversations with Edna O'Brien*, Jackson, The University Press of Mississippi, 66-68.
- Walton J.M. (2002), "Hit or Myth: The Greeks and Irish Drama", in Marianne McDonald, J.M. Walton (eds), *Amid Our Troubles: Irish Versions of Greek Tragedy*, London, Methuen, 3-36.
- Williams Raymond (2006 [1966]), *Modern Tragedy*, ed. by Pamela McCallum, Peterborough, Broadview Press.
- Yeats W.B. (2008 [1997]), *The Major Works*, ed. by Edward Larrissy, Oxford, Oxford UP.