23rd International AEDEI Conference
University of Huelva, Spain
28-30 May 2025

"The uses and abuses of Irishness"

CALL FOR PAPERS

In the Western world and throughout history, multiple socio-political systems have grounded their hegemony upon practices of categorisation that made certain people and/or products valid, while excluding others. Much of their governing principles and policies have been informed by a utilitarian understanding of individuals and communities articulated around the binary of usefulness/uselessness, thus generating contexts of discrimination, non-normativity and frequently, abuse. As Sarah Ahmed observes in her study *What's the Use?: on the Uses of Use* (2019), the notion of "use" stands as a technique in itself, being traditionally employed by international establishments and their institutional apparatuses with selective and extractionist purposes, not simply in economic or material terms, but also with biopolitical and cultural aims. On the contrary, Ahmed proposes a "queering" of use, whereby those people or circumstances that do not comply with the expected paradigms embrace possibilities that transcend the dialectic of useful and useless. For her, "misfitting can be understood as generative precisely given it involves friction; when bodies do not fit seamlessly into space, things happen" (224).

In the particular case of Ireland, the configuration of national identity both before and after Independence drew substantially from ideological and cultural devices that generated hierarchies, and they led to an exclusionary matrix where heterodoxy and diversity have been difficult, if at all fully possible, to accommodate. To a large extent, the uses of "Irishness" as a term and for the sake of a broader, superior national project can be said to correlate with the uses, and very often abuses and exclusions, of certain groups and realities. Such conditions require an engagement in critical debates that can usher in new possibilities of Irish identity and which, not dwelling on traditionally utilitarian mindsets, allow for a more inclusive, sustainable and just world.

The 23rd International AEDEI Conference, entitled "The uses and abuses of Irishness", and organised by the Department of English at the University of Huelva and the Research Cluster WAÉIRE, invites papers, panels and roundtables that deal with the broad topic of use, its description and representation, and the various ways in which this theme has been discussed and imagined from all disciplines and fields of knowledge within Irish Studies. Papers should not exceed the 20-minute delivery in English, and may address the following topics, among a wider list:

- ❖ The discursive uses of the Irish language
- ❖ Legal (re)enactments of Irishness
- ❖ Religious principles and moral (mal)practices
- ❖ The values of history: Ireland's past, present and future
- ❖ Misfits and incompatibilities of cultural paradigms
- ❖ Critical theories and trans-formative practices of gender and sexuality
- ❖ Institutionalisation and corporeal (ab)use
- ❖ The causes and effects of environmental policies
- ❖ Queer experiences of use and abuse
- ❖ Redefinitions of use in literary and cultural productions
- ❖ Mechanisms of violence in Northern Ireland and the Republic
- ❖ Artistic devices of cultural (re)articulations
- ❖ Old and new strategies of political action
- ❖ Irishness, migration and diaspora: re-signifying identities
- ❖ Affective turns for an ethics of care and vulnerability
- ❖ Public mobilisations of the body
- ❖ Generic techniques and literary creation for social justice
- ❖ Critical debates of inclusion in multicultural Ireland
- ❖ Technology and social media reclaimed
- ❖ Disrupting hierarchies through Posthumanism and Transhumanism
- ❖ Resisting disposability in neoliberal Ireland and beyond

Besides, in honour of the late AEDEI member and dear friend Eibhear Walshe, papers or panels devoted to his work as writer and academic will be much appreciated.

The following plenary speakers and keynote writers have been confirmed:
- ➢ Prof. Katherine O'Donnell (University College Dublin)
- ➢ Prof. Sylvie Mikowski (Université de Reims Champagne-Ardenne)
- ➢ Catherine Dunne (writer)
- ➢ Louise Walsh (writer and director)

Submission
To propose a paper, panel or roundtable at the annual AEDEI Conference, you will have to be a paid-up member of AEDEI. To become an AEDEI member, which will automatically make you member of EFACIS, please visit the website: www.aedei.es

Abstracts, of around 250 words, should be submitted by e-mail attachment (as .docx, or .pdf file) to aedei2025@gmail.com by **January 17th, 2025.** They should include:
-Name(s) of author(s)
-Institutional affiliation(s)
-E-mail address(es)
-A 250-word abstract (500 words for round tables)
-A biographical note of the author(s) of around 200 words.

Authors will be notified of acceptance before February 15th.

For queries or further information, please contact us at aedei2025@gmail.com

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