Cultural Memory and Irish Identity

25th International Conference of the Spanish Association for Irish Studies
University of Almeria, Spain
May 26–28, 2027

Call for Papers (closes January 11th 2027)

As Susan Sontag observes in *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), what we call collective memory is an act of cultural stipulation –a deliberate process that establishes "the story about how it happened" and locks it into place through representative images and narratives. In the context of Irish Studies, cultural memory is a powerful source of knowledge, serving as the foundation upon which contemporary notions of Irish identity, belonging, and nationhood are continuously constructed, contested, and renewed.

Yet, as James E. Young reminds us in *The Texture of Memory* (1993), no site of memory is everlasting; each is shaped in relation to its specific time and place, and its meaning remains deeply contingent on evolving political realities. Contemporary transformations –including globalization, migration, multi-national capitalism, European integration, digital media, shifting gender politics or the post-ceasefire peace process among others– have further complicated what it means to articulate an Irish identity today.

Cultural memory in Ireland operates as a dynamic field where historical actualities intersect with "Irelands of the mind" –imaginative projections, ideological constructions, and symbolic representations across language, political discourses, academic debates, literature, cinema, music, theatre, mass media, social networks, etc. This conference offers a critical platform to explore how cultural memory functions in shaping Irish identity across temporal, spatial, and disciplinary boundaries with the purpose of enriching Irish Studies scholarship.

The following keynote speakers (scholars and/or artists) have already confirmed their participation in the conference:

- **Declan Kiberd** (member of the Royal Irish Academy and professor emeritus of Irish Studies at the University of Notre Dame).
- **Lia Mills** (writer).
- **Martin Doyle** (writer, critic and literary editor of *The Irish Times*).
- **Zelie Asava** (lecturer, author and public speaker on race, gender and representation in screen studies).
- **Jim Culleton** (artistic director and CEO of Fishamble: The New Play Company).
- **Conor Montague** (playwright, theatre director, and actor).

As part of the cultural programme, the conference will feature two theatrical performances (***Katie***, written by Lia Mills, and ***De Valera and the Armadillo***, written by Conor Montague), a flamenco show, and a guided tour to discover Almería and its Alcazaba, one of the largest surviving Moorish fortresses in Spain.

Submission

As the purpose of this conference is to explore the multi-faceted relationship between Cultural Memory and Irish Identity across different disciplines, we invite proposals for individual 20-minute papers that engage with themes including, but not limited to:

- The "Irelands of the Mind" framework.
- The role of political, social and cultural discourses in shaping national identity.
- Memory and literary imaginations.
- Irish history through autobiographical works.
- Cinematic constructions of Irishness.
- Popular music as performance and critique.
- Irish theatre interrogating the past and the present.
- The Irish language question.
- Memory and gender construction.
- Cultural memory among migrant communities in Ireland.
- Race and nationhood.
- The portrayal of Ireland through its past and present institutions.
- Commemoration and contested histories.

To propose a paper, you will have to be a paid-up member of AEDEI (**www.aedei.es**). Abstracts of 250 words should be submitted to the organisers at **aedei2027@gmail.com** before the closing date of 11 January 2027. They must include the title of the paper, a short biography (approx. 200 words), e-mail address, and institutional affiliation. Within 15 days after reception, authors will be notified of acceptance and given a booking code to get a 15% discount in accommodation at Cabogata Jardín Hotel 4*, the conference venue (https://www.cabogatajardin.com). This is subject to room availability, so early booking is advisable.

Please, visit our website **http://www2.ual.es/AEDEI2027** for further information and deadlines, including programme, registration fees and accommodation.

Organising committee

María Elena Jaime de Pablos, María Ferre Fernández, Eric Kumin Frimpong Yeboaa, Ariadna García Carreño, Sanae Kichouh, Vladyslav Shapoval y J. Javier Torres Fernández.

Scientific Committee

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