

VICTIMS

25th Anniversary AEDEI International Conference

University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU), Vitoria-Gasteiz

May 27–29, 2026

This edition of the AEDEI International Conference will mark the 25th Anniversary of the Spanish Association for Irish Studies, AEDEI. To commemorate this milestone, a series of special events and activities will be held throughout the annual conference to celebrate AEDEI's twenty-five years of scholarship, collaboration and cultural exchange.

Ireland has been profoundly shaped by experiences of victimhood and resilience throughout its history. From the devastations of colonisation and famine to the enduring legacies of institutional violence and “the Troubles”, Irish society has continually negotiated the complexities of trauma, injustice and remembrance. In the face of such histories, Irish literature has served as both a repository of collective suffering and a creative space for resistance, reconciliation, and renewal. The interplay between victimisation and voice—between silence and testimony, between abjection and agency—thus continues to define some of the most compelling narratives in Irish writing today.

This international conference seeks to explore the ways in which Irish literature and culture have represented, reimagined and contested the figure of the victim, examining the intersections between historical experience, artistic expression and cultural memory. It aims to analyse how Irish authors, poets, and dramatists across different periods and traditions have articulated narratives of violence, vulnerability and endurance, and how these narratives engage with questions of ethics, identity and collective responsibility.

Special attention will be given to the role of literary forms in mediating experiences of trauma and to the transformative potential of storytelling as a vehicle for solidarity, remembrance and resistance. By addressing these issues, the conference intends to situate Irish writing within broader global debates on trauma, human rights, and the politics of representation. Possible topics and approaches include, but are not limited to:

- Literary representations of victims and survivors in Irish fiction, poetry and drama.
- Trauma and narrative form: fragmentation, silence and memory in literary discourse.
- Victimhood, gender and sexuality: feminist and queer readings of Irish literature.

- Institutional violence and moral responsibility: the Magdalene Laundries, Mother and Baby Homes, industrial schools and clerical abuse.
- The Troubles and their literary afterlives: memory, guilt and reconciliation.
- Colonialism, postcolonialism and the politics of representation.
- Bodies in pain: corporeality, precarity and the aesthetics of suffering.
- Witnessing and testimony: ethical implications of representing trauma.
- The ecology of victimhood: environmental degradation, displacement and eco-trauma in Irish writing.
- Comparative and transnational perspectives: Ireland and global literatures of trauma, exile and survival.
- The Irish diaspora to the United States after the Great Famine: displacement, resilience and cultural memory in narratives of migration and victimhood.

Special consideration will be given to proposals that draw on theoretical frameworks such as trauma studies, memory studies, postcolonial theory, feminist and queer theory, and the ethics of representation; however, contributions informed by alternative critical or methodological approaches are equally welcome. The conference also welcomes reflections on the intersections between literature and other cultural forms—film, music, theatre and the visual arts—that expand our understanding of how victimhood and resilience are articulated across media and generations.

The following plenary speakers and keynote writers and scholars have been confirmed:

- Kate Costello-Sullivan
- Nuala O'Connor
- Emilie Pine
- Donal Ryan

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 aedei2026@gmail.com by January 12th, 2026. 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 January 22nd.

For queries or further information, please contact us at aedei2026@gmail.com

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