

Transitions within Irish Worlds: Reflections and Revisions in Irish Studies

LIUNA Station, Hamilton, Ontario, May 30 – June 2 2022

As Ireland and Canada emerge from the global Covid-19 pandemic, it is appropriate to reflect on the transitions that have occurred in Ireland, in its diasporic communities, and within the multidisciplinary field of Irish Studies. The sense of transition suggests a variety of historical timelines. One hundred years ago, the island of Ireland was beset by dramas associated with partition, the Anglo-Irish Treaty, and then civil war. At the same time, conceptions of Irishness have shifted over the succeeding decades, not least in the past twenty to thirty years as the Republic of Ireland experienced the 'Celtic Tiger' economy and Northern Ireland transitioned to more peaceful times under the Good Friday/Belfast agreements.

The island's demographics have also transitioned in terms of sustained population growth and with cities and small towns becoming home to immigrants from other parts of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The lives, aspirations, and achievements of these newcomers' children present one of several points from which to re-envision Ireland and Irishness in the twenty-first century in several arenas, from the economy to music, sport, and popular culture and media. Encounters with peoples differing in ethnicity and race have, however, been a feature of everyday life for the Irish abroad for at least three centuries, which have in turn shaped conceptions of Irishness in multiple diasporic locations.

The Canadian Association of Irish Studies looks forward to welcoming members and guests in person once again for its traditional mix of the scholarly and the social. The conference venue is the former CN Railway James Street Station in Hamilton, Ontario, now under the ownership of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA). This building, now rechristened LIUNA Station and originally completed more than ninety years ago, is both architecturally impressive and symbolically significant in Irish migration history, given the prominent Irish role in the construction of transportation routes (roads, canals, railways) in this cross-border region. Irish immigrants have also been a driving force in the history of trade unionization in twentieth-century Canada, including in LIUNA. We will also be glad to see papers that address themes of labour and social class at the conference.

The City of Hamilton was incorporated in 1846 and received Irish famine immigrants the following year. It continues to be home for many Irish, with the Hamilton Irish Club founded in 1952. Known variously as 'Steel Town' and the 'City of Waterfalls', Hamilton straddles the Niagara escarpment and contains attractive nearby hiking trails. Within an hour's drive or rail ride is the Niagara fruit belt and winery region, the Greater Toronto Area, and Niagara Falls itself. The transition from spring to summer is the perfect time to enjoy these various locations.

CAIS/ACEI 2022 welcomes papers from all disciplines in English, French, and Irish that connect with the themes of transition, reflection, and revision as described above. Possible paper topics include:

- Irishness and Otherness in Irish literature, music, and theatre
- Transitions in Irish culinary culture
- Representations of diversity in Irish media and popular culture
- Defining and contesting Irishness in sport
- Brexit as a transitional moment in Anglo-Irish political relations
- Unwelcome transitions: Irish population change and the housing crisis
- New perspectives and reflections on the Irish Civil War
- The Anglo-Irish Treaty debates
- Irish engagements with (settler) colonialism in Canada in fiction and non-fiction
- The Irish language in a multilingual Ireland
- Immigration and the social geography of Irish cities and towns
- Transitions in commemorative practices in Ireland and the Irish diaspora
- The Irish borderlands in transition
- Engagements with ethno-racial diversity in the Irish diaspora
- New perspectives in Irish labour studies
- Gender politics in Ireland, past and present
- Irish ethnic memories and practices within French-Canadian settings

CAIS/ACEI also welcomes other general topics concerning Irish Studies and the Irish in Canada. Individual papers and full panel proposals (three papers plus chair) are equally encouraged.

Presenters must be members of the Canadian Association for Irish Studies. For more information, please visit our website <https://www.canadianirishstudies.org/>

The deadline for submissions is **31 January 2021**. Please send abstracts of 200-250 words with a 50-word bio and correspondence details, including an email address, to **canadianirishstudies2022@gmail.com**. Panel submissions should include a title and short overview alongside abstracts and presenter bios. The submission deadline is subject to extension.

COVID-19 Advisory

CAIS/ACEI 2022 is designed to be an in-person event. The organizers are monitoring national, and international, regulations on travel constantly, and direct you to <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> for the latest updates.

Please also consult your airline, car rental, or other carrier for additional information.

Information on COVID in the province of Ontario can be accessed at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>

All attendees of the conference are encouraged strongly to be vaccinated against COVID, and to wear masks indoors where appropriate.