Labour, Gender and Class in the Struggle for Irish Independence, c. 1918-24

NUI Galway, 7th – 9th November 2019

Free public conference co-organised by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Irish Centre for the Histories of Labour and Class (NUI Galway) with the support of An Roinn Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta

Over the two-and-a-half days of this major labour history conference, which is part of the Government of Ireland’s Decade of Centenaries programme, sixty scholars will scrutinise the interplay between labour, gender, and class during the revolutionary period in Ireland. At the core of the conference, a series of five expert panels will discuss contentious questions: the role of trade unionists (including Irish immigrant trade unionists) in the revolutionary events; the impact of the struggle on the lives of women; the existential challenges presented by sectarian polarisation in the North-East; and the several competing ideologies in the labour milieu. Equally important are eleven spotlight panels, featuring original research from established and emerging scholars, which will shed particular light on the regional experience. The conference also includes an innovative theatre workshop, theatrical presentations, music, a History Ireland hedge-school, and a walking tour.

THURSDAY, 7TH NOVEMBER
6.00–7.30 From ARTS CENTRE, DOMINICK ST: WALKING TOUR
The ‘Galway Soviet’ of May 1922, led by John Cunningham

7.30 – 8.30 GALWAY MECHANICS INSTITUTE LIVE INTERVIEW
Sarah-Anne Buckley interviews Linda Connolly about women, class, and violence during the revolutionary period

GALWAY MECHANICS INSTITUTE BOOK LAUNCH
Conor McNamara’s Liam Mellows: Soldier of the Irish Republic: Selected Writings, 1914-1922 (Irish Academic Press) is launched by Des Geraghty

FRIDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER
9.30–11.00 UNIVERSITY VENUES SPOTLIGHT PANELS

SPOTLIGHT 1A: CLASS AND DIVISION IN THE NORTH-EAST O’DONOGHUE THEATRE
Eoin Magennis and Lesa Ní Mhunghaile
Gender and Class in the North-East border region, 1918-1924: The case of Nano Aiken
Laurence Marley
Class sensibilities and political murder in North Belfast, 1921-22
Peter Rigney
Sectarianism intimidation and labour markets, 1920 to 1923: the case of the Great Northern Railway

SPOTLIGHT 1B: THEORISING THE IRISH FUTURE O’DONOGHUE SEMINAR ROOM, GO10
Patrick Doyle
Catholic Social Teaching, Capitalism, and an Economic Vision for an Independent Ireland, 1917-1924
Seán Donnelly
Republicanism and Revolution in Treatyite Political Thought, 1921-23
Niamh Reilly
Tom Kettle’s The Open Secret of Ireland: Theorising the nexus of labour, nationality and religion before 1916
SPOTLIGHT 1C: SOCIAL ATTITUDES AND LOYALTIES

Mark Loughrey
‘A Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Nurses’: The Establishment of the Irish Nurses’ and Midwives’ Organisation

Ceri Owen,
Social Attitudes Towards Unmarried Mothers in Ireland, 1922 – 1924

Noel Ward
The INTO and teachers’ loyalties, 1916-20

11.00
COFFEE BREAK

11.30
O’DONOGHUE THEATRE
KEYNOTE PANEL

KEYNOTE PANEL 1: TRADE UNIONS AND THE REVOLUTION
Tish Gibbons (moderator), Mary Muldowney, Dónal Ó Drisceoil, Peter Rigney, Padraig Yeates, (discussants)

12.45
O’DONOGHUE CENTRE FOYER
LUNCH

1.15 – 1.35
O’DONOGHUE THEATRE
LUNCHTIME TALK
James Curry will talk about R.M. Fox’s book Rebel Irishwomen (1935) and the twelve remarkable women featured in it.

1.45 – 3.15
UNIVERSITY VENUES
SPOTLIGHT PANELS

SPOTLIGHT 2A: DRAMA WORKSHOP, CLASS, DEMOCRACY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

Donal O’Kelly:
The workshop is built around the Democratic Programme of the First Dáil.

Catherine Morris:
Places limited; reserved places for drama and history students

SPOTLIGHT 2B: REVOLUTION AND CLASS CONFLICT IN RURAL IRELAND

Anne Boran
Labour, social divisions and contested freedoms in the Castlecomer coalfield, 1917-1924

Terry Dunne
Farm Workers in the Transport Union: The Case of South Kildare

Liam Alex Heffron
Land Hunger and Revolution in North Mayo, 1917-1923

Tony Varley
Linking Land and Revolution: Comparing the Stances of Liam Mellows in 1916 and 1922

SPOTLIGHT 2C: PUBLIC SERVICE IN TURBULENT TIMES

Martin Maguire
From Servant of the Crown to Servant of the Nation: the Irish civil service and the Struggle for Irish Independence.’

Geraldine O’Neill
The Department of Labour and IRA Intelligence, 1919-1921

Pádraig Yeates,
Labour’s dubious allies: The IRB and Fr Tom Dowling, labour relations mediator

3.15 O’DONOGHUE THEATRE
KEYNOTE PANEL

KEYNOTE PANEL 2: THE IRISH LABOUR DIASPORA AND THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE
Terrence McDonough (moderator), Brian Hanley, Theresa Moriarty, Patrick Mahoney (discussants)

6.30 GALWAY MECHANICS INSTITUTE
CATERED MEAL
7.45 GALWAY MECHANICS INSTITUTE

Donal O’Kelly PERFORMANCE

8.00 GALWAY MECHANICS INSTITUTE: HISTORY IRELAND HEDGE SCHOOL

KEYNOTE PANEL 3: LABOUR, THE NORTH, AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION
Tommy Graham (moderator), Brian Hanley, Emmet O’Connor, Margaret Ward (discussants)

8.15 KEYNOTE PANEL 3: LABOUR, THE NORTH, AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

9.30 GALWAY MECHANICS INSTITUTE MUSIC AND SONG
Various Artists: Songs of Labour and Class

Saturday 9 NOVEMBER

10.00 – 11.30 UNIVERSITY VENUES SPOTLIGHT PANELS

SPOTLIGHT 3A: HOPE AND DISAPPOINTMENT IN PROVINCIAL IRELAND O’DONOGHUE THEATRE
Moira Leydon ‘The coming men – Ireland’s hope’: organised labour in rural Sligo, 1917 - 23
Patrick McCarthy ‘And you still break stone’: The farm labourers of Waterford and the Irish Revolution, 1919-23
Kieran McNulty The Defeat of Working Class Radicalism in Kerry, 1921 to 1923

SPOTLIGHT 3B: ELECTIONS AND BOUNDARIES O’DONOGHUE SEMINAR ROOM, GO10
Elaine Callinan Labour and the 1918 general election
Cormac Moore Labour and the partition of Ireland
Peter Murray Safeguarding electoral integrity in an independent Ireland: the Labour Party and the Prevention of Electoral Abuses Act, 1923

SPOTLIGHT 3C: VISIONS OF A NEW IRELAND O’DONOGHUE STUDIO, GO11
Peter Connell W.T. Cosgrave’s ‘million pound scheme’ and the housing crisis in Irish provincial towns, 1919-1924
Paul Hughes An Irish Commonwealth in context: Crompton Llewelyn Davies and Sinn Féin’s ‘middle way’
Martin O’Donoghue ‘A large percentage of the people of Ireland seem to have lost their bearings’? Gender, class and the place of the AOH in a changing Ireland

11.30 COFFEE

11.45 O’DONOGHUE THEATRE Donal O’Kelly PERFORMANCE

12.00 O’DONOGHUE THEATRE KEYNOTE PANEL

KEYNOTE PANEL 4: LABOUR IDEOLOGIES
Shay Cody (chair), Aindrias Ó Cathasaigh, Emmet O’Connor, Niamh Puirséil (discussants)

1.15 O’DONOGHUE CENTRE FOYER LUNCH
### 2.00 UNIVERSITY VENUES

#### SPOTLIGHT PANELS

**SPOTLIGHT 4A: GENERAL STRIKES**

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<td>Liam Cahill</td>
<td>The Limerick Strike Against British Militarism, April 1919 – Developments in its Historiography</td>
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<td>Olivier Coquelin</td>
<td>A Strikers’ ‘Soviet’ in Belfast? The Great Belfast Strike of 1919</td>
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<td>Dominic Haugh</td>
<td>The general strike in the revolutionary period in Ireland</td>
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**SPOTLIGHT 4B: DUBLIN ALLEGIANCES**

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<td>Shay Cody</td>
<td>The Dublin Trades Council and the struggle for independence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Hughes</td>
<td>Work and Class in the Dublin IRA, 1919–21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerry Watts</td>
<td>The difficult relationship between labour and Irish nationalism in Jim Larkin</td>
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**SPOTLIGHT 4C: GENDERED AND SECTARIAN VIOLENCE**

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<td>Síobhra Aiken</td>
<td>Gender and Class Ideologies in the Medical Management of Revolutionary ‘Trauma’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Byrne</td>
<td>‘Keeping company with the enemy’: Gender and sexual violence during the Irish War of Independence and the Civil War (1919-1923).</td>
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<td>Gerard Madden</td>
<td>‘Follow in the footsteps of Belfast?’: Anti-Protestant intimidation in Ballinasloe and its hinterland in June 1922’.</td>
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**3.30 O’DONOGHUE THEATRE**

#### KEYNOTE PANEL

**KEYNOTE PANEL 5: WOMEN, LABOUR, CLASS AND REVOLUTION**

Micheline Sheehy Skeffington (moderator), John Borgonovo, Mary McAuliffe, Margaret Ward (discussants)