Keynote Speaker

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Abstract

An End to Famine? Perspectives from Ireland and Beyond

Human history, not least Irish history, is pockmarked by famine. Recent famines have been small in scale, however, and different in character from cataclysms such as the Great Famine. Where has this left aid agencies traditionally dependent on revenues raised during famines? In Ireland one the result has been a shift from disaster relief agency to government-assisted development-focused NGO. The transition, which presents its own challenges, has many resonances for the history of famine and the NGOs. This lecture will explore the links between Ireland’s history of famine and the evolution of our NGOs from amateurish agencies to sophisticated bureaucracies.

Biography

Cormac Ó Gráda is Professor of Economics at University College Dublin. His research interests span the comparative history of famines, Irish historical demography, the economic history of migration, and the economic and demographic history of Irish Jewry. He has authored, co-authored, and edited several books and over a hundred journal articles and book chapters, with his most recent book being Famine: A Short History (Princeton, 2009). In 2010 Cormac was awarded the Royal Irish Academy’s Gold Medal in the Humanities.