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THE FAMINE

By Patrick Brantlinger

"MOST HISTORIANS are unwitting positivists," writes Terry Eagleton, "wary of what Hegel called the power of the negative, reluctant to grasp what happened in the light of what did not" (22). He cites Mary Daly, who in *The Famine in Ireland* writes that "it does not appear appropriate to pronounce in an unduly critical fashion on the limitations of previous generations" (113; qtd. in Eagleton 22). "Why not?" Eagleton asks; is it not the responsibility of the historian to judge the past, rather than merely to provide a supposedly value-neutral account of it? Further, is it really objective or value-neutral to treat the economic and social class relations leading up to the Irish Famine of 1845–51 as inevitable? Eagleton thinks that those relations were not inevitable; at the very least, more could have been done to avert mass mortality.

Eagleton rightly calls Daly's *The Famine in Ireland* "judicious" and "informative," but adds that she "half-excuses the *laissez faire* dogmatism of the Whig government" of Lord John Russell (23). Her account is, however, not so neutral or nonjudgmental as either Eagleton or she herself suggests. It is virtually impossible to examine the reasons and actions of the British government, especially under the Russell administration, without recognizing that the official approach to alleviating the Famine was inadequate. In "Revisionism and Irish History," Daly offers a judicious, informative critique of the same trend in Irish historiography that Eagleton attacks.[1] Though she is more revisionist than not, she is unwilling to accept the view that, because the Famine was a complicated and in some ways unprecedented emergency, British officials "deserve our sympathy for failing to see the light" and believing that there was little or nothing government could or should do ("Revisionism" 76).

The "unwitting positivism" of some revisionist historians of the Famine is hard to distinguish from a bland amorality. For example, E. R. R. Green writes: "the historian, if he is conscientious, will have an uneasy conscience about labeling any class or individuals as villains of the piece" (273). So, too, in *Modern Ireland*, R. F. Foster rejects the "retrospective condemnation [that] has been heaped on [Charles] Trevelyan's shoulders as permanent Head of the Treasury and final arbiter of Famine relief policy." Foster thinks Trevelyan should be let off the hook, because he "epitomizes the Whig view of economic theory" shared by many others, including Prime Minister Russell (326). Here Foster is targeting Cecil Woodham-Smith's bestseller, *The Great Hunger* (1962). By the revisionists, Woodham-Smith is seen as less than professional – more journalist than historian – whose "chief contribution," according to Daly, "has been to focus the question of English guilt around the person of Sir Charles Trevelyan" ("Revisionism" 72). Daly adds, perhaps enviously, that in "the widely

read historiography of the Famine professional historians have been on the sideline" (72). But although it subordinates economics to politics, castigates Trevelyan and other officials for their ideological blindspots and lack of sympathy for the starving, and may be erroneous on a few minor points, *The Great Hunger* is still, as Graham Davis puts it, "the best narrative history of the Famine" (17).

Revisionism has entailed trying *not* to blame the Famine on capitalism, on imperialism, on landlords, on the English, or on particular politicians. Obviously the Famine was caused partly by an infestation of the potato crop that nobody could have predicted and that no one knew how to prevent, so to that extent blame makes no sense. Nature or, for many nineteenth-century observers, providence was the ultimate cause of the potato blight – and providence, of course, could only be praised. But nineteenth-century interpretations of the Famine varied from the providential to the political, including the Irish nationalist charge of deliberate "murder" or "extermination" – what would now be called genocide – on the part of the mainly English government. In 2003, both the providential and the more extreme political claims about the Famine have disappeared from the historiographic picture.

Revisionism has also interpreted the Famine as something less than *the* major crisis or "watershed" of nineteenth-century Irish history. But revisionism itself, under critical fire, has almost disappeared, partly because of the achievements of both political and economic historians. The current consensus, Theodore Hoppen notes, is that even though earlier crises and developments in nineteenth-century Irish history were important, "the Great Famine . . . concentrated their fully armed emergence into a few troubled years and saw to it that . . . Irish society experienced change . . . as . . . something akin to a Big Bang" (65).

The turn to economic history in work on the Famine is hardly recent, but it has helped overcome both revisionism and earlier nationalist charges of mass murder by focusing partly on long-term, structural issues of agricultural productivity, population growth, and emigration. Issues of land-tenancy, subdivision, rent, and taxation fall under the heading of economic history as well. While this second set of issues might have led economic historians back to an easy blaming of often absentee landlords, something more complicated and interesting has emerged. Joel Mokyr's *Why Ireland Starved* laid the foundation for more recent treatments by Cormac Ó Gráda and other economic historians. Mokyr, writes Ó Gráda, "has cast a cold cliometric eye on Malthusian orthodoxy, and found it wanting" (*Great Irish Famine* 34). Mokyr's examination of all the available economic and demographic statistics and government reports contravened several old beliefs about Irish poverty, population, and starvation, including the Malthusian belief that the Famine was partly the result of overpopulation, which was in turn partly caused by early marriages: "there is no evidence that prefamine Ireland was overpopulated in any useful sense of that word" (64). Mokyr also questioned old assumptions about the evils of Irish landlordism and anti-landlord violence, as well as of British rule after the Act of Union. His judgment that "the only area in which British rule in Ireland failed was . . . poor relief" (290) may be too uncritical. But Mokyr insists that the "real problem" underlying endemic Irish poverty and the catastrophe of the Famine "was that Ireland was considered by Britain an alien and even hostile country" (291). That sense that the Irish were "alien" and "hostile" contributed both to Ireland's economic underdevelopment before the Famine, and then to the fact that, "when the chips were down in the frightful summer of 1847, the British simply abandoned the Irish and let them perish" (291). Government spent only about £9.5 million on Famine relief, whereas a decade later it spent almost £70 million "on an utterly futile adventure in the Crimea" (292).[2]

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Of course the Famine was a "watershed" in Irish history, but was it also the nineteenth-century equivalent of the Holocaust? Not in any planned, deliberate way; as Eagleton says, "There was no question of calculated genocide" (24). But then, the law recognizes many different degrees of criminality from child neglect and abuse through manslaughter to first-degree murder (on the question of genocide see, among others, Rawson). Genocides are usually some combination of haphazard conflict along borders or over scarce resources, followed by governmental attempts either to prevent them or to carry them to termination. Christine Kinealy notes that once mass starvation began, British officials started to view the Famine as "an opportunity to facilitate various long-desired changes within Ireland" (*Calamity* 353) – in short, an opportunity to modernize Ireland both economically and politically. Treating the Irish peasantry as a drag on modernization, the officials often expressed genocidal thoughts about them, wishing them either dead or out of Britain. During the Famine, the officials grudgingly tried to mitigate mass starvation. In most accounts, Sir Robert Peel gets some credit for his relief efforts in the first year of the Famine; Lord John Russell and the Whigs tend to be the culprits, although Trevelyan served under both administrations. The importation of food during the Famine greatly exceeded exports; the distribution of the imported food, however, was very uneven and often did not reach the most remote and worst ravaged areas. Peel's "brimstone" – imported maize – helped; so did the soup kitchens; so did the public works, even if roads that were begun to avert starvation and bring the road-builders into the modern money economy remained unfinished. By "Black '47," a variety of diseases, thriving on malnutrition, increased the death-toll in ways nineteenth-century health care was totally inadequate to cope with. Once it had started, there were aspects of the Famine that officials, doctors, and philanthropists, even with the best of intentions, were helpless either to prevent or to mitigate. But not all aspects of the Famine were unpredictable or out of the reach of government.

Historians have at least one way to gauge the fairness of "retrospective condemnation," and that is to examine how nineteenth-century observers assessed responsibility for what was happening. Eagleton's chief complaint about "positivists" such as Daly, Foster, and Green is that they are unwilling to think outside the boundaries of "the Whig view of economic theory" – that is, of capitalism – and to imagine a reshaping of Irish property relations that might have prevented the Famine. After all, throughout the decades prior to the Famine, those property relations were the subject of much investigation and intense debate, though very little was done to alter them. Maria Edgeworth's novels *Castle Rackrent* (1801) and *The Absentee* (1812) spelled out some of the inequities of the system of land distribution and ownership in Ireland, ones that went back to the Cromwellian invasion and expropriation of Irish territory.

The plight of the "rackrented" Irish peasantry was a key theme of radicals from William Cobbett in the 1830s through Bronterre O'Brien, Feargus O'Connor, and the Chartists in the 1840s. Drawing on his 1834 tour of Ireland, Cobbett declared: "Of all the wonders of the world, Ireland is the greatest, for here we see a country teeming with food; we see that food sent . . . to other nations . . . and we see at home the people starving and in rags" (67). Cobbett blamed Ireland's misery partly on the economics of "the Scotch *feelosofer* vagabonds," the "monsters of the school of . . . Parson MALTHUS," who he believed were scheming, through the New Poor Law of 1834, to reduce England's peasantry to the level of Irish rags and starvation (60, 64). And in his 1839 essay "Chartism," Thomas Carlyle, who also detested Malthusian economics, spoke of the "perennial starvation" and "squalid

apehood" that misgovernment had produced in Ireland, and sarcastically declared that the time had come "when the Irish population must either be improved a little, or else exterminated." From an official standpoint, moreover, the Devon Commission of 1843–45 was only the latest in a long series of investigations into the causes of Irish misery prior to the Famine. As Donal Kerr notes, "the first half of the century saw over a hundred official inquiries into the state of Ireland" (3). According to the Devon Commissioners, the main cause of Irish poverty was "the bad relations between landlord and tenant. Ireland was a conquered country, the Irish peasant a dispossessed man, his landlord an alien conqueror" (Woodham-Smith 21). Yet little good came from the Devon Commission or from earlier inquiries into Irish poverty, violence, and occasional smaller famines (Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics* 68–94). "The great official inquiries of the 1830–43 period," Ó Gráda declares, "failed to generate dramatic structural change" (*Great Irish Famine* 30–31).

Both before and during the Famine, in official British discourse as well as in the press, in literature, and elsewhere, the main line of explanation for Irish poverty and starvation emphasized how land in Ireland had been subdivided and rackrented into ever smaller units, leaving the poor at the mercy both of the potato and of the farmers and middlemen above them, with the landlords often absent, as in Edgeworth's novels. During the Famine, this critique was shared by Chartist leaders, by Young Irelanders such as John Mitchel and Gavin Duffy, by Marx and Engels, and by John Stuart Mill. In his letters to the *Examiner* and the *Morning Chronicle* through the late 1840s, Mill did not advocate dismantling large estates, which he saw as key to Irish economic recovery. He did, however, vehemently argue for state intervention to reclaim "waste lands" to be owned and farmed by a "peasant proprietary," a socialist solution of sorts. And, unlike modern revisionist historians, Mill did not hesitate to condemn both the landlords of Ireland and English politicians for doing their best – or worst – to exterminate the Irish peasantry (see Kinzer, and also Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics* 156–58).

Despite Mill's work for and support of the East India Company, when it came to Ireland he was prepared to place a sizable amount of blame for the Famine on imperialism: "An independent nation is, in all essentials, what it has made itself by its own efforts; but a nation conquered and held in subjection ever since it had a history, is what its conquerors have made it, or have caused it to become" (Mill 880). For the most part, Mill argues, English officials have been only too happy to cede responsibility for governing Ireland to the Anglo-Irish landlords who have made a hash of it. Mill also says that the government's relief efforts could not have been "more imbecile; more devoid of plan, of purpose, of ideas, of practical resource" (1098). The Famine was a tragic occasion, Mill adds, which might have allowed "English politicians to show what they had in them. Here was a field to exercise [their] divine gift of bringing chaos into order. Whatever ideas they had, they must have then displayed; and it proved that they had none. They spent ten millions in effecting what seemed impossible – in making Ireland worse than before" (1098). One need hardly turn to Marx or Woodham-Smith to find a more devastating critique of British politicians' failure to prevent the starvation of over one million Irish and the emigration of a million and a half more by the mid-1850s.

For his part, Marx argued that the pressure to modernize agriculture caused Irish landlords, "most [of them] deep in debt, [to] try to get rid of the people and clear their estates," and that this pressure increased during the Famine, especially after passage of the 1847 New Poor Law Extension Act, which forced landowners and subletters either to "support

their own paupers" or to evict them, leaving them to starve (Marx, *Ireland* 134). This again points to the issue of "landlordism" and "rackrenting," which has been carefully analyzed in several recent works, including W. E. Vaughan's *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*.[3] As Joel Mokyr also makes clear, the forms of landownership, absenteeism, leasing, subleasing, and subdivision were extremely complex – there was no simple division between aristocratic, absentee landlord and starving, landless peasant (Mokyr 81–111). Perhaps that very complexity, with its many shades of legal ambiguity and vexation, exacerbated agrarian violence and, at least indirectly, the Famine. At any rate, the responses of landlords to the Famine ranged from charitable and self-sacrificing to evicting thousands of hapless laborers and tenant farmers, who owned nothing and had nothing to eat.

Marx rightly identifies the 1847 Poor Law with the doctrine or dogma of free trade, which resisted state intervention in any aspect of the economy. Though that Law was itself an instance of state intervention, its framers – as in the case of the New Poor Law of 1834 – sought to make its provisions so punitive that only paupers in the direst straits would avail themselves of the relief that it offered. "At the height of the Famine," writes Kinealy, "almost 50 per cent of the population required poor relief. Partly due to the inflexible way in which it had been conceived, the workhouse system proved totally inadequate" (*Calamity* 25). The Irish workhouses turned into crammed charnel houses, where the diseased, the elderly, and hapless women with their children came to die. Also, Marx was correct that the 1847 Law, with its so-called Gregory or Quarter-Acre Clause, increased evictions: under that clause, peasants who rented more than a quarter-acre were not entitled to relief; to receive it, they had to leave their holdings – except through taxes, the landlords had no legal responsibility for them (Mokyr 124; Kinealy, *Calamity* 218–23).

Perhaps the most thorough of recent studies of the failings of both Tory and Whig officials in dealing with the Famine is Peter Gray's *Famine, Land and Politics*.[4] Gray analyzes the complex interplay of political positions and economic doctrines especially in relation to Irish land distribution, poverty, and the Famine. Other important recent studies include those by Ó Gráda, Kerr, Kinealy, and Donnelly. Like Woodham-Smith's *The Great Hunger*, these works all emphasize the influence that orthodox economics, especially the doctrines or dogmas of free trade and Malthusianism, had on British officials, though with qualifications; Gray for one points out that "pure *laissez-faire* was never the classical prescription for Ireland" (*Famine, Land and Politics* 10). Both the Peel and the Russell administrations, after all, recognized that some sort of governmental intervention, however inadequate, was necessary to try to mitigate the catastrophe. Donal Kerr, whose "*A Nation of Beggars*" examines the interplay between politicians and clergy during the Famine, argues as well that Russell, who aimed at genuine reform and "justice" for Ireland, failed to cope with the emergency largely because of his belief that "private enterprise would cope with little or no government assistance in 1846–7" (31). Yet Russell was "more sympathetic" toward famine victims "than his cabinet or [most] civil servants" (Kerr 328).

While stressing the influence of classical economics on relief policy, Gray, Kinealy, O Gráda and most other historians have less to say about two other ideological factors, anti-Catholicism and anti-Irish racism, perhaps because these were seldom expressed – for obvious reasons – in public, official discourse. But the politicians, with Trevelyan prominent among them, were and remain open to such criticism as Mill's in part because of these less-than-official ideological factors. Trevelyan and many others found it easy to blame the Irish poor themselves for their poverty and, hence, for starving. In *The Irish Crisis* (1848), his

attempt to rationalize his policies and to claim that the Famine was over (it wasn't), Trevelyan wrote: "The great evil with which we have to contend" is "not the physical evil of famine, but the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the [Irish] people" (qtd. in Woodham-Smith 156). That this is partly a judgment based on race is evident from Trevelyan's likening the Irish to "South Seas" savages, which in the 1840s was tantamount to likening them to cannibals.[5] For Trevelyan and other English observers, the feckless Irish were even worse than "savages," because they should have been civilized, but weren't. Trevelyan added that the "domestic habits" of the Irish were "of the lowest and most degrading kind" (7), and yet they were "perfectly content" with this "lowest grade" of poverty and ignorance (4–5).[6]

Trevelyan's evangelicalism caused him to view the Famine as "an act of God," and of course God acted only for the best, wisest of reasons: "posterity will trace . . . to [the] famine . . . a salutary revolution in the habits of a nation long . . . unfortunate, and will acknowledge that . . . Supreme Wisdom has educed permanent good out of transient evil" (1). Malthus had also believed that God in His wisdom mandated that mass die-outs, caused by overpopulation, would and should be visited on the Irish and other feckless peoples, and that the most effective, overwhelming tool at God's disposal was famine. That population increased more rapidly than subsistence, Malthus wrote in his *Essay on Population*, tends "rather to promote than impede the general purpose of Providence." Among a civilized people like the English, the "law of population" spurred both industry and rational self-restraint, two qualities that neither Malthus nor Trevelyan attributed to the Irish "race." As Peter Quinn notes, for Trevelyan and the other Malthusian managers and defenders of the government's relief policies, "Providence and economics [were] mashed together in the mortar of politics" (14). An excellent analysis of this "mashing together" of religion and politics, partly in relation to the Famine, is provided by Boyd Hilton in *The Age of Atonement*. Among much else, Hilton cites Trevelyan, "a moderate evangelical . . . who regarded 'dependence on others' as 'a moral disease,'" interpreting the Famine as "the judgment of God on an indolent and unself-reliant people" (113). If in the crisis of the Famine, *laissez-faire* economics, combined with Malthusian population theory, helped not at all, evangelical providentialism, especially when spiced by anti-Catholicism, also helped not at all.

According to the full-blown racial explanation, the Irish were inherently lazy, ignorant, and brutishly contented with their poverty and potatoes. The London *Times* often compared the slothful, "potatophagous" Irish with the energetic, bread and meat-eating English. It claimed that "the potato blight [is] a blessing" which will teach the Irish the virtues of sexual restraint, hard work, and being carnivorous. And it looked forward to when, "In a few more years, a Celtic Irishman will be as rare in Connemara as the Red Indian on the shores of the Manhattan" (qtd. in Donnelly, "Construction" 45). Nor was the *Times* alone in stereotyping the Irish as a vanishing primitive race. Especially after the abortive Young Ireland rebellion of 1848, racist stereotyping, as in innumerable *Punch* cartoons, made the Irishman out to be not only brutish and apelike, but also dangerously violent, "the Irish Frankenstein" (Curtis, *Apes*; Donnelly, "Construction" 52; Gray, "*Punch*" 29; Foster, *Paddy and Mr. Punch*). Such stereotyping was common even in the discourse of liberal English intellectuals; the Rev. Charles Kingsley, recounting his 1860 trip to Ireland, wrote: "I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw . . . to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins . . . are as white as ours" (qtd. in Curtis, *Apes* 84). This view of the Irish as a separate, apelike or "Africanoid" race was

given quasi-scientific status in Victorian ethnology by, among others, John Beddoe with his "index of [mainly Irish] nigrescence" (Curtis, *Anglo-Saxons and Celts* 66–73). In *The Races of Men* (1850), Dr. Robert Knox declared that those who blamed Roman Catholicism for the Famine were mistaken; the real cause was race, with the usual list of negative attributes attached.

Racist and religious stereotyping made it easier either to ignore the Act of Union altogether or to believe that, within the terms of the Union, England was doing everything possible to help her retrograde neighbor.[7] In Famine discourse, Ireland is usually referred to as a "nation" or even "state" quite separate from the rest of Britain, though the rest has to pay for the separate, bankrupt "nation" of Ireland. In an 1844 leader, the *Times* asserted: "It is by industry, toil, perseverence, economy, prudence, . . . self-denial, and self-dependence that a state becomes mighty and its people happy. . . . It is because the people of Ireland *generally* do not *labour* either physically or mentally, in anything like the proportion that the people of England do, that they are not generally near so wealthy" (qtd. in Lebow 65). The *Times* apparently did not recognize that, after the Act of Union of 1801, Ireland was not a separate "state," but rather along with England and Scotland part of the single "state" called Britain. Yet most English officials were dead set against the repeal of the Union. In any event, the *Times* "repeatedly drew a comparison between the ungrateful and feckless poor of Ireland and the 'respectable' poor of England" (Kinealy, *Calamity* 103). "What is given to the Irish," it declared, "is so much filched from English distress. . . . The English labourer pays taxes from which the Irish one is free – nay, he pays taxes by which the Irishman is enriched" (qtd. in Kinealy, *Calamity* 104). Trevelyan and other officials of course understood that the starving Irish were not being "enriched" by taxes "filched" from the poor of England, but they were convinced that Irish landlords were not doing their duty; that those landlords, even small farmers who often themselves were "tumbled" into the starving masses, should pay for relief; and therefore they shaped a policy or, perhaps, nonpolicy that increasingly made famine relief a local responsibility.

Depictions of starving Irish families in the press (see Figures 10 to 15), in novels, and even in paintings, were frequent. Many entailed images of starving madonnas with starving babes in their arms in still another version of blaming the victim. Irish mothers were convicted of marrying too early, of being too fecund, and of being unable to feed their children adequately even in prosperous times. This was the Victorian version of the moral panic about "welfare mothers" in recent American culture.[8] More sympathetic observers often portrayed Irish women in very different terms. When Harriet Martineau visited Ireland as the Famine was winding down, she wrote in one of her 1852 letters to the *Daily News*: "Considering that women's labour is universally underpaid, in comparison with that of men, there is something very impressive to the traveller in Ireland . . . that it is the industry of the women which is in great part sustaining the country" (65). This is also one of Maria Luddy's findings in *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*. Luddy demonstrates the many ways that the Famine spurred both middle and working-class women into "benevolent action":

> A tremendous amount of activity was carried out by women of all denominations during these dark years. Food kitchens were set up, committees organised to distribute relief and collect money. Nuns nursed in fever hospitals and fed the starving at their convents. . . . As one writer noted in 1862, in those years "ladies burst the bonds of conventionalities, and went regularly into business to procure remunerative employment for the destitute of their own sex." (188)

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Figure 10. "Bridget O'Donnel and children." Engraving from a drawing by John Mahoney, from *Illustrated London News* 15 (22 December 1849): 404.

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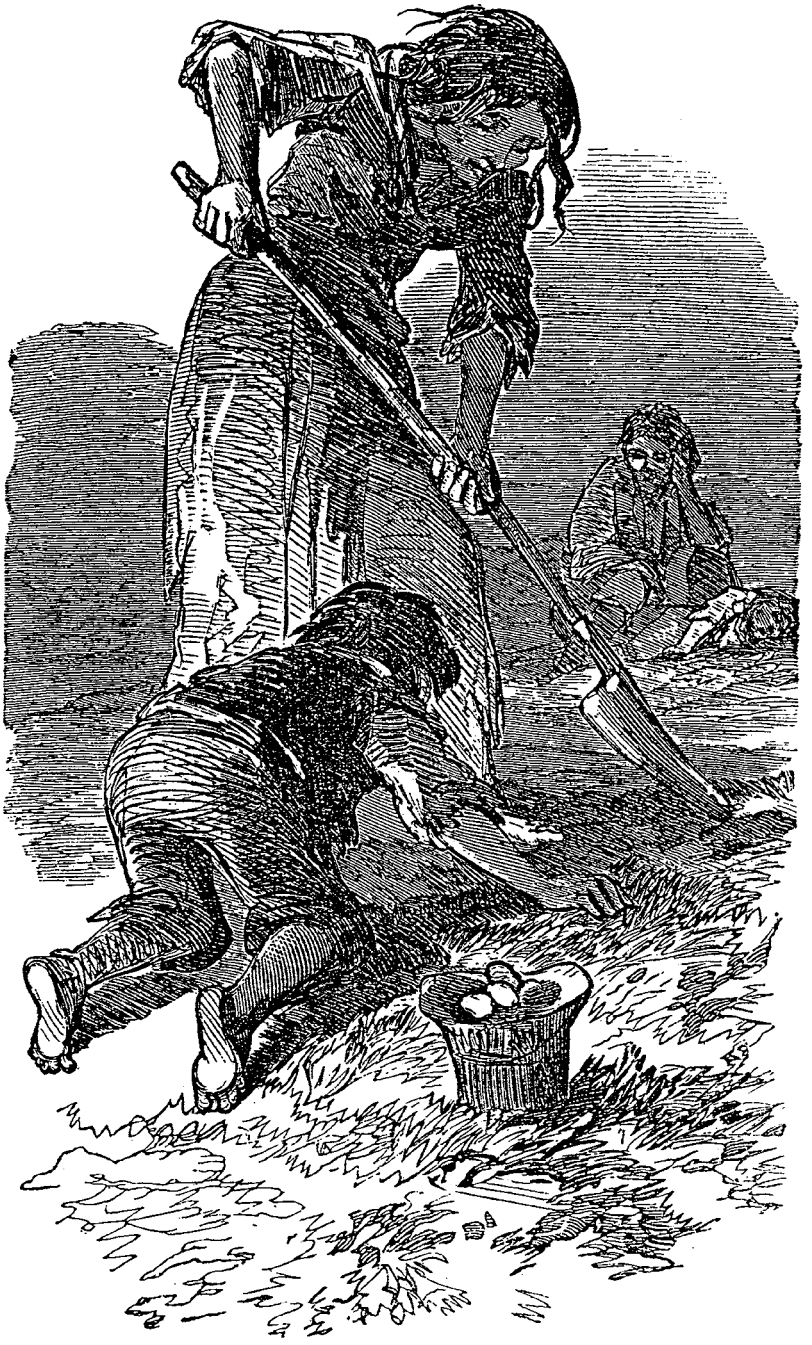

SEARCHING FOR POTATOES IN A STUBBLE FIELD.

Figure 11. "Searching for potatoes in a stubble field." Engraving from a drawing by John Mahoney, from *Illustrated London News* 15 (22 December 1849): 405.

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Figure 12. "Miss Kennedy distributing clothing at Kilrush." Engraving from a drawing by John Mahoney, from *Illustrated London News* 15 (22 December 1849): 404.

Malthusianism coupled with *laissez-faire* economism, evangelicalism, racism, and sexism: these ideological factors contributed to a disaster that in economic and political terms had been developing for centuries, but that was touched off, like setting a match to a stick of dynamite, by the potato blight. The blight was unpreventable, but that it should turn into the Famine was not inevitable. Christine Kinealy is probably expressing the consensus among historians today when she writes that official intervention should have compensated for the "ecological disaster," but that it was met only by the "failure" of "Irish merchants, landlords, and the policy makers within the British government. . . ." It was their inadequate response which "transformed the blight" into the Famine (*Calamity* 345).[9]

Cormac Ó Gráda also concludes that "the pre-Famine economy, for all its problems and injustices, did not contain the seeds of its own inevitable destruction by famine" (*Ireland Before and After the Famine* 40). But the scale of the emergency and the ideological myopia of Trevelyan, Russell, and other officials turned crop failure into demographic catastrophe. Concerning the plight of agricultural laborers in the aftermath of the Famine, Marx writes:

> according to the unanimous testimony of the [Poor Law] inspectors, a sombre discontent runs through the ranks of this class . . . they long for the return of the past, loathe the present, despair of the future,

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Figure 13. "Scalpeen of Tim Downs, at Dunmore." Engraving from a drawing by John Mahoney, from *Illustrated London News* 15 (22 December 1849): 404.

> give themselves up "to the evil influence of agitators", and have only one fixed idea, to emigrate to America. This is the land of Cockaigne, into which depopulation, the great Malthusian panacea, has transformed green Erin! (*Capital* 1: 866–67)

As the essays in David Valone and Christine Kinealy's recent anthology, *Ireland's Great Hunger*, demonstrate, the Famine is inscribed in the national – and, indeed – international memory of the Irish *and* the British in many indelible ways. Today there are two very separate, often cooperative but also suspicious, often mutually beneficial but also vexed and vexing nations on the western fringe of Europe, and future relations between them are likely to remain vexed for a long time to come.

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ENTRANCE TO DUNMANWAY, FROM THE BRIDGE ON THE CORK ROAD.

Figure 14. "Entrance to Dunmanway, from the bridge on the Cork Road." Engraving from a drawing by John Mahoney, from *Illustrated London News* 10 (20 February 1847): 116.

OLD CHAPEL-LANE, SKIBBEREEN.

Figure 15. "Old Chapel-Lane, Skibbereen." Engraving from a drawing by John Mahoney, from *Illustrated London News* 10 (13 February 1847): 100.

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NOTES

1. Besides Daly's essay, see the rest of Boyce and O'Day, eds., *The Making of Modern Irish History: Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy*, as well as the articles by Connolly and Davis.
2. O Gráda's *Ireland before and after the Famine* and *Ireland: A New Economic History* offer comprehensive summations of all the new research up to 1994. A recent update on economic issues, with special attention to agriculture and to the impact of the Famine on Ireland's subsequent development is *After the Famine: Irish Agriculture, 1850–1914*, by Turner. "If in 1841 [Ireland's] real GNP per capita placed her in the bottom third of twenty-three European countries when ranked against a UK base," writes Turner, "then by 1913 she was in the top half and not far short of France, Austria and Sweden . . ." (3). But of course that gain in prosperity came about only through the loss of approximately half of Ireland's pre-Famine population. Also important in regard to how Irish history unfolded after the Famine is Keneally's *The Great Shame*, which pursues the story through emigration to North America and Australia, as well as into the emergence of Fenianism, the Land League, and Irish republicanism. On emigration to England and Scotland, a major contribution is Neal's *Black '47: Britain and the Famine Irish*. Interesting, too, in terms of post-Famine political and cultural developments is King's anthology, *Famine, Land and Culture in Ireland*, which includes several essays on Michael Davitt's Land League and also on Irish art and literature.
3. See also O'Neill's "Famine Evictions" in King, *Famine, Land and Culture in Ireland.*
4. Gray's well-illustrated *The Irish Famine* offers an excellent introduction and teaching text; good for teaching purposes as well, besides Woodham-Smith, are Hoppen; Kennedy, et al.; Killen; Kinealy, *Great Irish Famine*; and McCaffery.
5. There is a cruel irony in the comparison: stories of Irish parents eating their dead children, and vice-versa, circulated during the Famine. See, e.g., Kinealy, *Great Irish Famine* 29.
6. *In Famine, Land and Politics*, Gray quotes Trevelyan's denial that his interpretation of the Famine had any racial (or racist) component, as well as his claim of being himself "of Celtic origin," even though this claim is coupled with an assertion of the superiority of "the German race . . . in some points" (254–55 n. 159). The denial does not exonerate Trevelyan from the charge of racism, partly also because it smacks of the "some of my best friends are X" variety. Besides, "Celtic" also meant French (sometimes, selectively), and the French, according to all nineteenth-century racial hierarchies that I'm aware of, are always viewed as far superior to their miserable, atavistic, Irish kinfolk. But in British accounts, of course, the French themselves are usually viewed as lower on the totem pole of race and civilization than the English, sometimes because of their Celtic connectedness to *les miserables* of Ireland. See also my chapter on the Famine in *Dark Vanishings*.
7. For an important recent study of the so-called union in both English and Irish discourse, see Corbett. See also Kinealy, *Great Irish Famine* 217–21.
8. On literary representations of the Famine, Morash's *Writing the Famine* and his anthology of Famine poetry, *The Hungry Voice*, are essential. Also important is Kelleher's *The Feminization of Famine*; among much else, Kelleher shows how Ireland and the Irish were "feminized" in English journalism and literature. And see Fegan, *Literature and the Irish Famine*.
9. Of Kinealy's several books on the Famine, her most recent, *The Great Irish Famine: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion*, offers updated research and commentary on, among other aspects, the politics surrounding revisionism and commemoration.

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