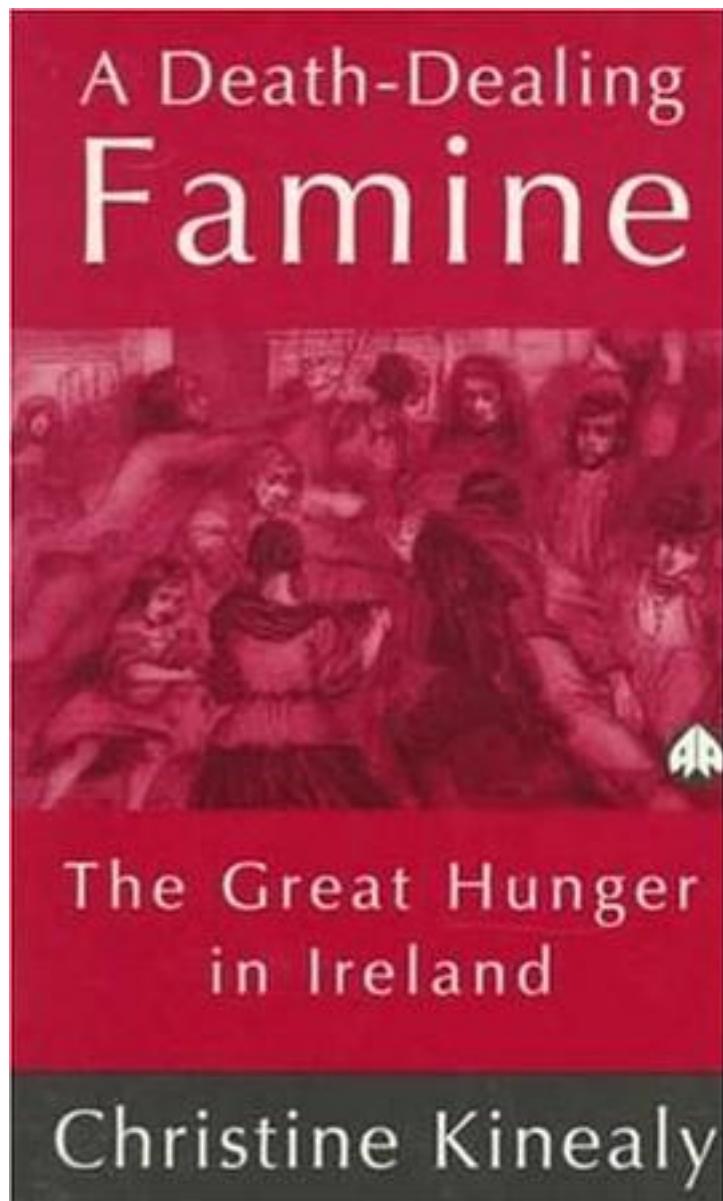


History and Ideology of the Great Irish Famine



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The great Irish Famine of 1845-52 was the last major famine in Europe, yet it occurred at a time when Ireland was still joined by Act of Union to Britain, then the wealthiest country in the world. The Famine traumatized the Irish nation for many decades: the population declined from eight million in 1841 to only four million in 1901. Ireland is now a modern European republic, but what role does the Famine have in the Irish consciousness, and the theories of non-Irish historians? This book provides an overview of the differing images of the Famine, from the popular nationalist viewpoint, to the sanitized interpretations of revisionist historians who refuse to regard the Famine as a pivotal event in Irish history. In addition to received views, the author questions the accepted idea that the course of the Famine was inevitable, arguing that more could have been done to mitigate the effects and the suffering and also looks at the attitudes of other governments and their policies regarding food shortages.

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