

Famine in European History

This is the first systematic study of famines in all parts of Europe from the Middle Ages until the present. In case studies ranging from Scandinavia and Italy to Ireland and Russia, leading scholars compare the characteristics, consequences and causes of famine. The famines they describe differ greatly in size, duration and context; in many cases the damage wrought by poor harvests was compounded by war. The roles of human action, malfunctioning markets and poor relief are a recurring theme. The chapters also take full account of demographic, institutional, economic, social and cultural aspects, providing a wealth of new information that is organised and analysed within a comparative framework. *Famine in European History* represents a significant new contribution to demographic history and will be of interest to all those who want to discover more about famines – truly horrific events that, for centuries, have been a recurring curse for the Europeans.

Guido Alfani is Associate Professor of Economic History at Bocconi University, Milan (Italy). An economic and social historian and a historical demographer, he has published extensively on early modern Italy and Europe, specialising in the history of famines and epidemics, in economic inequality, and in social alliance systems. He is the author of *Calamities and the Economy in Renaissance Italy: The Grand Tour of the Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (2013) and is currently the Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded project SMITE, ‘Social Mobility and Inequality across Italy and Europe, 1300–1700’.

Cormac Ó Gráda is Professor Emeritus of Economics at University College Dublin. He was awarded the Royal Irish Academy’s gold medal for the humanities in 2009 and is currently (2017–18) President of the Economic History Association. He has published on topics ranging from the European Little Ice Age and London’s last plague epidemics to the origins of the Industrial Revolution. Recent works include *Jewish Ireland in the Age of Joyce* (2006), *Famine: A Short History* (2009) and *Eating People Is Wrong and Other Essays on the History and Future of Famine* (2015).

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Edited by

Guido Alfani

Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi, Milan

Cormac Ó Gráda

University College Dublin



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Contributors

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GÉRARD BÉAUR CNRS/EHESS, Paris, France
DOMINIK COLLET Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, Germany
JEAN-MICHEL CHEVET INRA, Paris, France
DANIEL CURTIS Leiden University, Leiden, Netherlands
JESSICA DIJKMAN Utrecht University, Utrecht, Netherlands
MARTIN DRIBE Lund University, Lund, Sweden
RICHARD HOYLE University of Reading, Reading, United Kingdom
DANIEL KRÄMER Oeschger Centre for Climate Change Research, Bern,
Switzerland
THIJS LAMBRECHT Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium
LUCA MOCARELLI Bicocca University, Milan, Italy
VICENTE PÉREZ MOREDA Complutense University, Madrid, Spain
CORMAC Ó GRÁDA University College, Dublin, Ireland
MATS OLSSON Lund University, Lund, Sweden
DONATELLA STRANGIO Sapienza University, Rome, Italy
PATRICK SVENSSON Lund University, Lund, Sweden
ERIC VANHAUTE Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium
STEPHEN WHEATCROFT Melbourne University, Melbourne, Australia