

Faculti Summary

<https://staging.faculti.net/aiding-ireland-the-great-famine-and-the-rise-of-transnational-philanthropy/>

This video discusses a project exploring the history of Irish famine philanthropy, focusing particularly on how various groups, often with no direct connection to Ireland, raised funds during the Irish Great Famine (1845-1852). The author highlights a notable instance where the Cherokee and Choctaw nations sent money to Ireland in 1847, shortly after being forcibly removed from their own lands by the US government.

As the author digs deeper into this historical phenomenon, they aim to understand the motivations behind such humanitarian efforts, considering the context of news dissemination from Ireland to the American West and the broader implications for philanthropy. They share that many donors, including impoverished tenant farmers from upstate New York and enslaved individuals from a Baptist church in Richmond, sent money to Ireland despite their difficult circumstances, which illustrates a unique engagement with humanitarianism.

The author outlines their research methods, which include analyzing records from relief committees and donor lists, newspapers, and firsthand accounts to uncover patterns and motivations in philanthropy beyond just notable charities. They argue that the Irish famine served as a reflection of various societal struggles, allowing people to draw parallels to their own experiences, thus prompting them to contribute to Irish relief efforts.

Specific case studies, such as donations from enslavers in the US South and their attempts to parallel their struggles to those of the Irish, reveal complex dynamics of power and identity. A key point made is that philanthropy is inherently political, affected by issues of power and representation.

Ultimately, the author seeks to deepen the understanding of the Irish famine not just as a demographic crisis but as a complex event intertwined with ideas of humanitarianism, cultural connections, and political implications, encouraging a reevaluation of how we think about historic and contemporary acts of charity.