



# The Modernisation of Irish Society 1848 - 1918: From the Great Famine to Independent Ireland

*Joseph John Lee*

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'The Modernisation of Irish Society' surveys the period from the end of the Famine to the triumph of Sinn Fein in the 1918 election and argues that during that time Ireland became one of the most modern and advanced political cultures in the world. Professor Lee contends that the Famine death-rate, however terrible, was not unprecedented. What was different was the post-Famine response to the catastrophe. The sharply increased rate of emigration left behind a population of tenant farmers engaged in market orientated agriculture and determined to protect and improve their position. It was this group that used the British political system so skillfully, a process elaborated and refined in the Land League and Home Rule movements under Parnell. The Parnell era left a lasting legacy of modern political engagement and organisation which was carried on in essentials by the later Home Rule party and by Sinn Fein, and - beyond the terminal date of the book - would make its mark on the politics of independent Ireland. 'The Modernisation of Irish Society' was first published as volume 10 of the original Gill History of Ireland.



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