



A Cause for Our Times: Oxfam: The First 50 Years

Maggie Black

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Oxfam is one of the best known and most successful charities in Britain. It is also one of the most controversial. This immensely readable history explores Oxfam's evolution from a small, local, wartime charity to Britain's largest overseas aid agency. From its initial mission to bring relief to Greece during the darkest days of the Second World War, to the recent Charity Commission investigation into its campaigning activities, Oxfam has rarely been out of the news. Widely respected and supported, but sometimes regarded with suspicion, its humanitarian mission has never been "safe," whether in Africa or Vietnam, Central America or the Middle East; whether in hard-hitting fund-raising or educational activity, in nagging governments into helping famine victims or flying mercy cargoes into the teeth of conflict. In keeping with that tradition, Maggie Black, an experienced author and journalist, explores those engagements with a critical eye. In so doing, she projects Oxfam's own development against a backdrop of changing ideas in international affairs and charitable giving of which its growth is both an inspiration and an expression.

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