This study of contemporary Irish expatriate fiction offers a boldly original world-facing rather than nation-focused overview of the contemporary Irish novel. The chapters examine how Irish narrative deals with the United States in a time of declining global hegemony, a rising China and Asia, a thwarted and turbulent Global South, and a European Union that has decisively reshaped Ireland in the last half century. The author argues that in a conjuncture defined by volatile economic and cultural globalizations, the Irish novel is struggling to imagine new ways to narrate the country’s relationship to the world capitalist system and to find a new place for Irish writing in the world literary system. Looking at a rapidly changing Ireland in a rapidly changing international order, Joe Cleary offers new readings of novels by Colm Tóibín, Anne Enright, Joseph O’Neill, Deirdre Madden, Mary Costello, Naoise Dolan, Aidan Higgins, Colum McCann, Ronan Sheehan and Ronan Bennett. The study establishes the importance of expatriation to the development of modern Irish fiction and opens new critical conversations about how the Irish novel might best engage with the wider world in the second quarter of the twenty-first century.

Joe Cleary is Professor of English at Yale University. He is the author of Modernism, Empire, World Literature (2021), Outrageous Fortune: Capital and Culture in Modern Ireland (2007) and Literature, Partition and the Nation-State: Culture and Conflict in Ireland, Israel and Palestine (2002). He is also the volume editor of The Cambridge Companion to Irish Modernism (2014) and has co-edited The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture (2005).
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THE IRISH EXPATRIATE NOVEL IN LATE CAPITALIST GLOBALIZATION

JOE CLEARY

Yale University
In memory of Edward Said and Siobhán Kilfeather and for David Lloyd, expatriate intellectuals, writers and activists.

Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.  
Without her you wouldn’t have set out.  
She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka won’t have fooled you.  
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,  
you’ll have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

from C. P. Cavafy, ‘Ithaka’, translated by Edmund Keeley
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