

her circle of friends, who have, of course, always been supportive of. This realization leads her to acknowledge how she has changed. No longer does she question her parents' values; instead, she discovers she "had begun to defend and protect the things in [her] life that she once scorned" (211). This discovery seemingly causes her to be "kind" to Amrit the last time she sees him, as her parents had always been respectful and thoughtful to guests in their home.

Although engagingly written, *Looking for Maya*, Srivastava's second novel, does seem rather romanticized with its essentially happy ending and its reliance on narrative coincidences (i.e., Frank's affair with the girl and the cell phone conveniently left on—a plot device which answers Mira's lingering doubts about Amrit's character). It implies that values and family can survive in the West, although Amrit had always feared "buri saubut," the "bad ways" of the West (143), as his ex-wife's education had been basically grounded in multiculturalism and his friends seek to understand India and its cultures, has learned to emulate her parents' ethics. Even though her parents, RaviKavi, as Westernized and have worked to insure that their daughter grows up in Indian literature and culture. As Mira attempts to fathom her relationship with Amrit and her yearnings for a more intense existence, she collects Indian mythology and literature. She remembers Krishna's injunction to Arjun; the Hindu injunction that the guest is god; the poet's narrative of the deer searching for the scent of musk, which he finds within; and Kabir's verse about maya, "illusion," which serves as the novel's epigraph:

The body dies
again and again
The mind does not
Nor does Maya
Illusion lives on
mind lives on
Kabir says, hopes and desires don't die.

Although the affair with Amrit has not gone as she wished, Mira is in control at the end of the novel and is in control during their last conversation. It is Amrit who does not understand her as she explains the need for faith and belief, "even when we know beyond a shadow of doubt that we do not believe in is an illusion" (218). While Srivastava implies an alternative to Amrit can be "lost" in the West, it is possible to possess one's Indian values, to be at "home" there and retain one's Indian values if one does not cut "the umbilical cord of the past."

Phyllis Surrency Dallas
Georgia Southern University

Literature, Partition and the Nation State: Culture and Conflict in Ireland, Israel and Palestine, by Joe Cleary. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2001. 259 pp.

Although the traumatic history and experience of partition constitute the foundational event of many postcolonial states, the topic of partition as it relates to issues of state formation and nation-building has been generally neglected in theories of nationalism and in colonial and postcolonial studies. Much of the literature on partition, however, considers this issue within a largely South Asian context. Thus it is timely to see the publication of Joe Cleary's *Literature, Partition and the Nation State: Culture and Conflict in Ireland, Israel and Palestine*, since it remaps the contours of partition literature and extends its parameters beyond its traditional South Asian confines. In this book, Cleary explores the various modes in which Irish, Israeli and Palestinian literary and cultural production commemorates, gives form to, and makes sense of the traumatic legacy of partition to the communities involved. His main concern here is with showing how literature and film produced since the end of the 1960s contest or consolidate the original partition settlements in these geopolitical regions. Cleary's intervention can therefore be considered a significant contribution to the field, for two main reasons. First, Cleary revisits a constellation of problematic issues such as the majority-minority dynamics in colonial and postcolonial societies and the connections between state and culture that have been overlooked in theoretical interventions on nationalism and postcolonial discourse. Second, his focus on the history of colonial partition and its representation in cultural and literary production in Ireland, Israel and Palestine clears a space for rethinking other sites of colonial partition where memories of violence, genocide and suffering still continue to shape the political agenda and the future of these geopolitical regions. In all this, Cleary cautions against treating partition literature as an independent genre, but as "a wider body of works that deals with the multiple collateral consequences of state division" (94).

While he occasionally makes claims about other partitions elsewhere, Cleary focuses on the eventful phenomenon of colonial partition in Ireland and Palestine. He lists an intriguing range of cross-cultural and structural similarities between the two situations. He notes three principal cross-cultural correspondences: One, both Ireland and Palestine are considered colonies of settlements, which have been characterized by a particular dynamics between majority and minority constituencies that is altogether different from that of exploitation colonies like India. Cleary contends that whereas the Muslim League in India

s willing to share a state with the Hindu majority (later though he's that the Muslim League demanded their own separate national Ireland), neither Zionists nor Irish Unionists were willing to follow it with the Irish Catholic or the Palestinian Arab majorities (5). Second, mutual perceptions of these places have been increasingly invoking them either for their common experiences of diaspora, memories of historic trauma and catastrophe, and for the abysmal representation of the two nations (the Irish and the Palestinians, in this case) through the discourse of errorism. And three, Northern Irish royalists and Zionists consider themselves, despite the obvious power asymmetry that favors them over the national Others, to be victimized, beleaguered and outnumbered by an external as well as internal demographic threat. Furthermore, Cleary identifies two structural analogies in the Irish and Palestinian cases: First, both regions can be contextualized in a long history of British imperial hegemony. Second, the original partition settlements in both regions have disintegrated after the 1960's which made the conflict in these areas more complicated and intractable.

Such uncanny similarities between the Irish, the Zionists and the Palestinians may elucidate the popular deployment of the Irish as an emblem of legitimate anti-colonial struggle in the national imaginaries of Zionists and Palestinians. Cleary points out, for example, that a 1997 Israeli film shows the Israeli fascination with Irish anti-imperialism and their appropriation of Irish struggle as a metaphor for their own late-colonial struggle for a homeland. This displacement of the Irish in Zionist circles was not that simple though; the fact is that the Zionist leadership was ambivalent about the metaphoric deployment of Ireland in the Zionist colonialist imaginary. Tom Segev, for one, makes it clear that while David Ben-Gurion equated Ireland with terrorism and failure, seeing nothing to do with it in order not to discourage foreign investment, Yitzhak Lechi operations chief and later prime minister Yitzhak Shamir saw Michael, after Michael Collins of course, as a *nom de guerre*. On the Palestinian side, Segev observes, Khalil al-Sakakini, the Palestinian writer and educator, declared that the Arab national movement had one of two options: either declare a holy war all over Palestine or fight like the rebels in isolated terrorist cells.¹ The Palestinians and their struggle for liberation, on the other hand, have been used in Ireland to give a legacy to the struggle there. Cleary mentions wall murals in Northern Ireland that represent Irish and Palestinian national struggles as legitimate anti-imperialist struggles, showing the Palestinian and Irish militias as comrades in arms. Cleary, nonetheless, does not fall into the trap of romanticizing these metaphoric transvaluations, for he is fully aware of the deployment of any national group as a metaphor for progressive politics; it can be manipulated to deny others their rights for legitimate struggle for national self-determination.

Cleary's emphasis on the similarities in the Irish, Zionist and Palestinian conditions, however, risks obliterating significant differences be-

tween the specific situations of these communities and crucial theoretical concerns that may develop out of the singular history of each region. First of all, hoping to place the issue of partition on the agenda of nationalism and postcolonial studies, Cleary takes for granted the location of both Palestine and Ireland as *postcolonial* sites of cultural and literary production. Cleary never questions the anomalous postcoloniality of Ireland and Israel/Palestine, or how the postcolonial positionalities of these spaces differ from one another, even though the field is fraught with debates about the applicability of the term to these geopolitical regions.² His tendency to draw parallels freely between these sites and other contentious terrains of postcoloniality such as the United States without problematizing his references flattens out and homogenizes it his conceptualization of postcoloniality.³

Part of the problem is Cleary's analogy between the partition of Ireland and Palestine. While Ireland was partitioned in 1922, as Cleary shows in his overview early on in the book, Palestine was never partitioned *de facto* the way Ireland or India were. What happened in Palestine was not partition, although the British were hoping that their abrupt withdrawal from Mandate Palestine would force Palestinians and Israelis to accept the partition, the way Indians and Pakistanis did. However, as Cleary states, the British just left before the partition was accomplished and the fate of Palestine was passed to the United Nations, whose Partition Plan (UN Resolution 181) was thwarted by the 1948 war. "Israel," as Avi Shlaim writes, "was thus born in the midst of war."⁴ What remains perplexing is Cleary's application of Stanley Waterman's definition of partition to Palestine, because for Waterman a partition is likely to occur "when two or more new states are created out of what had previously been a single [administrative] entity and when at least one of the new unites claims a direct link with the prior state" (qtd. in Cleary 19). Immediately after quoting Waterman, nonetheless, Cleary makes it apparent that the Palestinians had no counterpart state to Israel in historic Palestine, although "their national charter claimed title to the whole territorial stretch of pre-partitioned British Palestine" (19). In the context of this study, such an argument may sound anachronistic, for the Palestinian text under discussion namely, Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* (1958), pre-dates the Palestinian National Charter (1964) by six years. The fact remains, as Cleary states, that the Palestinians are still fighting for a state of their own on those parts of historic Palestine that have been demarcated by various UN resolutions and peace negotiations.

The issue I'm raising about partition here is not merely a squabble about semantics and historic facts but about another theoretical quandry that I see manifest in Cleary's discussion of the majority-minority relations between Zionists and Palestinian Arabs in Mandate Palestine. His analysis of majority-minority dynamics in the colonial state develops out of a critique of Benedict Anderson's model of nationalism in *Imagined Communities*, where Anderson foregrounds only the roles of the native

elites and the majority nationalist movement in the anti-colonial struggle for liberation. Anderson, Cleary thus claims, obscures the position of loyalist nationalisms within settler colonies (Irish Unionists in Northern Ireland) and the status of sub-nationalist, or minority, movements in both settler colonies (the Zionist movement) and exploitation colonies (the Muslim League). Consequently, his discussion of the dynamics between Zionists and Palestinians in Mandate Palestine eviscerates the whole context of its unequivocal colonial structure. The struggle was not simply between a native majority and an immigrant minority, but between colonizers and colonized. Cleary, nonetheless, contextualizes the history of Zionism and Jewish immigration to Palestine within its connections and complicities with British imperialism and the colonial state. He correctly identifies the colonial nature of the Zionist movement, pointing out similarities between the Zionist representation of Palestine and its indigenous inhabitants and the diverse colonial tropes used in Western colonial discourses in their representation of distant lands and peoples. In fact, the whole tradition-modernity dialectic underpinning the partition rhetoric, by which the Zionists denied, and continue to deny, any national rights for the Palestinians on the grounds that they are backward, is by all means rooted in the manichean economy of colonial discourse (93-94). Opting for the alternative majority-minority framework in his analysis, however, Cleary refrains from calling the Zionists colonizers and thus ends up not only muting his critique of the colonialist project of Zionism but also dismantling the distinctions and power imbalances between colonizers and colonized.

Cleary, however, is not interested only in the originary moment of partition and its literary and cultural representation as an event of the past, but as a major event with significant social consequences for many generations to come. All literature and cultural production created under the specter of partition will always carry within it the echoes and memories of that traumatic event. As such, Cleary argues that the Irish, Israeli and Palestinian literary and cultural texts that comprise the second part of his book ought not be focusing exclusively on partitions and state borders but on the whole social reality as it is formed and shaped by the "multiple and collateral consequences of state division" (94). It may sound strange that after spending the first two chapters that comprise the first part of the book examining the tragic moment of partition and devising ways for theorizing its specific histories and dynamics, Cleary suddenly decides, following an argument by Korean critic Paik Nackchung, that it is totally unproductive to examine literary and cultural texts that deal exclusively with state borders. Such texts, he fears, can misrepresent social reality, as if any writer or text is capable of isolating the partition and writing about it as a single issue that is completely divorced from social reality. Since no such text exists in reality (Cleary offers no example of this kind of text), it becomes possible for him to select any text from Ireland and Palestine, simply because partition is believed

to have happened there. Hence, the singular event of partition itself never forms the center of the Irish, Israeli or Palestinian texts under discussion, the way it does for example in most South Asian literary treatments of the partition. Many South Asian texts show that it is possible to focus on that moment of partition and still engage its traumatic history thoroughly without losing sight of the social reality. Ironically, therefore, the deeper you delve into the literary analysis in the book, the farther you get from the partition divide.

In the Irish section (Chapter Three), therefore, the partition line of 1922 is relegated to the margins of the selected texts, where it merely haunts them in subliminal forms (124). The partition never appears in Joan Lingard's children's novel, *Across the Barricades*, where it is actually replaced with the barbed-wire barricades that divide Belfast, only to make a cameo appearance in Mac Levery's *Cal* in what Cleary calls "an innocuous and narratively unmotivated act" (123). In the same fashion, the inter-state partition continues to haunt Neil Jordan's film, *The Crying Game*, wherein it quickly transforms into those metaphorical borders of race, religion and sexuality. As such, these texts' attempts to offer some resolution to the partition through the romance-across-the-divide form fail, because they construe the conflict in the North as an internal problem.

Similarly, in the work of the Israeli author Amos Oz (Chapter Four), the *de jure* partition divide of 1948 is rendered invisible and is supplanted with the Jordanian and Syrian borders. One still wonders here about Cleary's rationale for selecting Oz's *Elsewhere, Perhaps* and *A Perfect Peace*, both of which anticipate the Green Line but do not talk about it, instead of his *My Michael*, for example, whose narrative unfolds in the divided city of Jerusalem. Reading Oz's fiction as an example of John McClure's "late imperial romance," in which a writer criticizes imperialist ideology (Zionism in this case) but remains complicit with its assumption and value system, Cleary shows that Oz and his generation of writers, commonly known as the state generation, have reproduced the manichean economy of colonialist Zionism by positing an impermeable border between modern Israel and its vaguely defined national Other, the Arabs in general. Like Jabotinsky's "iron wall" and Sharon's high-tech wall, Oz finds the total separation of Arabs and Jews as the only viable solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict.⁵ In a recent plan to end the conflict, for instance, Oz suggests that "Israel will end the occupation of the Palestinian population, and will set up a closed fortified line in accordance with demographic reality (not the same as the Green Line, but adjacent to it) that will include no occupied Palestinian population."⁶ For Oz, borders are necessary, for the act of crossing borders for a Sabra, an Israeli (Ashkenazi) Jew, is a death wish, leading to the dissolution of his subjectivity. Only inside the hermetic borders of Israel can the Sabra's life be fulfilling.

By the time we get to the work of the Palestinian writer Ghassan Kanafani (Chapter Five), however, that partition line has receded into thin air, moving in *Men In the Sun* hundreds of miles away and mutating into the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border. This border becomes for Cleary thus a metaphor for Palestine itself and as such "permits no real forgetting of the bitter human anguish and trauma that attends the stateless condition" (224). Again, the whole site of the primal scene of statelessness and Palestinian dispossession could have been captured in Kanafani's *Return to Haifa*, for example, in ways that offer a more sustained engagement with the Israelis and the Palestinians (second-class) citizens of Israel, providing thus a more adequate representation of the complexities of Arab-Israeli conflict and its psychological drama. This would have also enabled Cleary to address the tradition-modernity dialectic and majority-minority dynamics more specifically for the Palestinians and Arabs, in general. Cleary's choice of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti borders, however, aims at accentuating what he considers to be not only the stateless condition of the Palestinians (his earlier claim that Palestinian literature resembles *gastarbeiter*, or guest worker, literature is dropped now) but also the major problematic confronting Palestinians everywhere at this historical juncture namely, their uneasy relationship with the state system in the Middle East and the subliminal desire for a non-nationalist Arab unity. It is rather contradictory for Cleary to argue that the crux of the Palestinian aporia can be located in their antagonistic attitude to the state system at a time when Palestinians on the West Bank and in Gaza have been struggling to establish their own independent state. After all, critiquing the oppressive state systems in the Middle East does not necessarily mean or automatically translate into a desire to transcend national borders. Such an analysis requires interrogating the place of modernity in Arabic culture and Palestinian society, in particular, and offering a specific conceptualization of Arab modernity as a counternarrative to the masternarratives of Western modernity.⁷

Despite its limitations, this is an important contribution to the field. Placing partition literature on the agenda of postcolonial studies, Joe Cleary offers us diverse texts and contexts to consider beyond the familiar terrains of partition as well as alternative ways to talk about the future of partition writing. More importantly, at a time when the academy seems to celebrate a borderless world and every other person is hailed as a border crosser of one type or another, Cleary's study reminds us of the importance of these borders to the experiences of people who live under various conditions of emergency and of the prematurity of those post-national dreams that have rendered the state redundant under contemporary conditions of globalization.

Jamil Khader
Stetson University

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Rosalía Baena is a Lecturer of English Language and Literature at the University of Navarre, where her research specialty is postcolonial literatures in English. She is the author of a book on Nadine Gordimer (1998), and is currently working a manuscript on postcolonial autobiographies of childhood.

Cara Cilano teaches postcolonial literatures and theory, and women's and ethnic literatures at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Rocio G. Davis is currently Professor of American and postcolonial literature at the University of Navarre. She has co-authored two volumes on ethnic writing in Canada and the United States, and has recently completed a full-length study on Asian American short story cycles.

Keya Ganguly is an Associate Professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Minnesota. The author *States of Exception: Everyday Life and Postcolonial Identity* (2001), she is currently writing a book on the Indian filmmaker Satyajit Ray, which focuses on his representations of femininity, cultural conflict and crises, and modernity in Bengal.

Tom Henthorne teaches English and Women's and Gender Studies at Pace University. His interests include literature, cultural studies, and information technology.

Rebecca Weaver-Hightower is Visiting Assistant Professor in American Thought and Language at Michigan State University, where she teaches postcolonial literatures and theory, and nineteenth and twentieth British literature. She has recently completed a book on colonial and postcolonial island narrative entitled *Island Empires*.

Patrick Hogan is a Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Connecticut. His most recent books are *Colonialism and Cultural Identity* (2000), *Philosophical Approaches to the Study of Literature* (2000), and *The Culture of Conformism* (2001).