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The Irish novel has had a distinguished history. It spans such diverse authors as James Joyce, George Moore, Maria Edgeworth, Bram Stoker, Flann O'Brien, Samuel Beckett, Lady Morgan, John Banville, and others. Yet it has until now received less critical attention than Irish poetry and drama. This volume covers three hundred years of Irish achievement in fiction, with essays on key genres, themes, and authors. It provides critiques of individual works, accounts of important novelists, and histories of sub-genres and allied narrative forms, establishing significant social and political contexts for dozens of novels. The varied perspectives and emphases by more than a dozen critics and literary historians ensure that the Irish novel receives due tribute for its colour, variety and linguistic verve. Each chapter features recommended further reading. This is the perfect overview for students of the Irish novel from the romances of the seventeenth century to the present day.