



The Poet, the Man, and the Revolutionary: A Study of Multiple Perspectives in William Butler Yeats' "Easter 1916"

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ABSTRACT: *No individual living in the public eye never be held a solitary entity. That's because the person has to do different roles in society. An individual can cause an assortment of perspectives on one subject. Different perspectives of an individual on issue make a contention among viewpoints and ideas. This paper analyzes a wide assortment of viewpoints of William Butler Yeats upon the episodes in the Irish political arena which drove him to compose the enormous lyric "Easter 1916." This research indented to scrutinize multiple perspectives of Yeats as the poet, the man, and the revolutionary and how these perspectives contrast each other.*

KEYWORDS: *Easter 1916, Yeats, Rebellion, Perspectives, Viewpoints, Revolutionaries, Freedom*

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Easter 1916" has been distinguished for the best political poem in English Literature as a result of its style, tone, subject, and verifiable importance. Albeit numerous lyrics have been released with regards to the Easter rebellion in 1916, which is viewed as the best occasion in the political history of Ireland, William Butler Yeats' poem is viewed as the best of them. At the point when Britain was occupied with World War I, Irish progressives understood that it is the opportune time to defy the British government for the freedom of Ireland.

In any case, the British government overpowered the dissidents and stifled the mob. A significant number of the revolutionaries including Patrick Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh and Major John MacBride were executed, and leaders like Eva Gore-Booth were rebuffed for Penal servitude. Easter resistance cleared off the joy of Irish individuals and solidified their heart. Aftermaths of the rebellion saw for the ascent of energy and patriotism among the Irish community. Easter uprising likewise profoundly contacted the core of William Butler Yeats who composed a great deal about Ireland and its way of life and chose to make a poem which recognizes the occasions happen. Like his companion and writer Lady Gregory, Yeats' response additionally thoughtful towards the revolutionaries. In his prominent text, Tim Kendall proposes a letter composed by William Butler Yeats to Lady Gregory with respect to the synthesis of the sonnet dependent on Easter rebellion that changed the essence of Ireland. Yeats' Says:

If the English conservative party had made a declaration that they did not intend to rescind the Home Rule bill there would have been no rebellion. I had no idea that any public event could so deeply move me—and I am very despondent about the future. At this moment I feel that all the work of years has been overturned, all the bringing together of classes, all the freeing of Irish literature & criticism from politics. I do not yet know what [Maud Gonne] feels about her husband's death. Her letter was written before she heard of it. Her main thought seems to be 'tragic dignity has returned to Ireland'. She had been told by two members of the Irish Party that Home Rule was betrayed'. She thinks now that the sacrifice has made it safe. (Kendall.230)

Yeats believed that a 'terrible beauty' is born throughout the country and he has to write a poem about that terrible beauty which is born after the rebellion.

This vital letter set apart for the presence of the celebrated refrain showed up all through the lyric "Easter 1916" ' a terrible beauty is born'. It is believed that the poem was written in the middle of May and September 1916 and first published in the collection of Michael Robartes and the Dancer in 1921. Despite the fact that the lyric is considered as a typical political poem It can be dissected as a self-portraying lyric and the poem is an amalgamation of nationalism, love, patriotism, fellowship, etc.

The poem "Easter 1916" reflects not just a gathering of warriors who battled for the freedom of motherland, yet in addition on how the uprising influenced the conventional existence of the Irish community. Yeats believed that the Irish rebellion influenced the ordinary life of the Irishmen who were extremely upbeat and tranquil. The episode of the uprising made an incredible impact on him beyond that of an ordinary citizen.

A poet ought to dependably remain at the focal point of the society and the poet should possess a socially mindful identity. As a poet, Yeats was always in conversation with Ireland and its culture. Yeats was especially associated with the political exercises. We can see the spirit of Ireland in his lines. In his poem "Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven" Yeats remarks Ireland as:

But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams. (6-8)

Yeats was very dynamic in the Irish political arena and he was exceptionally amicable with the revolutionaries who were in the dynamic exchanges in regards to the Irish freedom struggle. Despite the fact that Yeats was a dedicated patriot, he was against bloody revolutions and as he had stressed relations with a portion of the figures who in the end drove the uprising. In any case, the occasion awed Yeats without question; not for its fittingness but rather for its quickness and chivalry appeared by the revolutionaries. In contrast to numerous other Irish writers, he was not a revolutionary but rather a true patriot. The passing of these progressive figures on account of the British, nonetheless, was as much a stun to Yeats and these common subjects turned into not any more ordinary leaders, and this thought has been communicated in the poem through the refrain "a terrible beauty is born". He wrote about his disagreement with the Easter Rebellion:

What is it but nightfall?
No, no, not night but death;
Was it needless death after all?
For England may keep faith
For all that is done and said. (65-69)

Yeats believes that Britain will stay faithful to their obligation to give freedom for Ireland after the end of World War I and there is no need for a warlike battle for freedom of Ireland. Despite the fact that he was in a close friendship with the revolutionaries who were anxious, there was a dispute between points of view of Yeats as a writer and as a common man with a ton of individual emotions. In his points of view of the poet, he rejects the thoughts of dissidents and yet as a normal man, he underpins his progressive companions. Yeats expounds on their relationship and typical life before the rebellion:

I have met them at close of day
Coming with vivid faces
From counter or desk among grey
Eighteenth-century houses.
I have passed with a nod of the head
Or polite meaningless words,
Or have lingered awhile and said
Polite meaningless words (1-8)

In the beginning stanza, Yeats expounds on his association with the progressives in viewpoints of a typical man. As a man, he cries in the loss of Ireland, and he feels thoughtful towards the progressives. Yeats reviews his gathering with a portion of those individuals who later associated with the resistance. He has frequently met them at night; he frequently traded respectful well for nothing words with them, in some cases, he had a lot of fun of them. They appeared to be so common. They worked throughout the day at 'counter or desk' rising up out of the 'eighteenth-century houses' the place they lived. Their countenances are 'vivid', as opposed to the old dark structures which were built amid the British rule, and Yeats might look at the tranquil

polish and restriction of the privileged universe of the Anglo-Irish and the British to the vainglorious, bombastic universe of these new nationalists whom he loathed. He trusts that they were just playing at being progressive and could never do anything important in their battle for an Irish republic. Yeats had a poor opinion of these individuals, not thinking of them as deserving of his time. He regularly chuckled at them when at his club, trusting them to be tricked. The reference to 'motley' signifies blended colors, such as wearing by medieval jokesters. Indeed, even while addressing the rebels, he would put away a 'mocking tale or gibe' to tell his companions at the club. Directly, he supposes Ireland itself, and a 'terrible beauty' is conceived around through these lines: All changed, changed utterly/ A terrible beauty is born (15-16)

Yeats used the oxymoronic expression to portray the condition of Ireland after the outbreak of the Easter rebellion. The term terrible beauty is used to describe two different feelings at the same time. It expresses the pain in the condition of Ireland at the same time the optimistic attitude towards the Irish community for their enthusiasm and patriotism after the Easter Rising. As an ordinary man of Ireland, his feeling was also the same as the other people. Yeats' viewpoints are clear in the second stanza, he says:

That woman's days were spent
In ignorant good-will,
Her nights in argument
Until her voice grew shrill.
What voice more sweet than hers
When, young and beautiful,
She rode to harriers? (17-23)

In these lines, Yeats describing the commitment of first of these democratic spirits was a lady, Countess Markievicz. His underlying portrayal of her is not bootlicking. He trusts that she was benevolent however misguided and her voice is 'shrill' from evenings spent 'in argument', and Yeats appears to feel that her political perspectives dropped into a kind of insane zeal. In any case, he additionally recollects how she had a sweet voice when she was young and beautiful and she rode to harriers. It gives the idea that Yeats would have preferred her to remain at her home in Lissadel, remaining an image of excellence and polish as opposed to getting to be engaged with extreme patriotism.

This man had kept a school
And rode our winged horse;
This other his helper and friend
Was coming into his force;
He might have won fame in the end,
So sensitive his nature seemed,
So daring and sweet his thought (24-30)

The second revolutionary Yeats depicts is Patrick Pearse, an educator, and the poet. The 'winged horse' he rode is a reference to Pegasus, a figure in Greek mythology which represents poetry. Next, Yeats discusses Pearse's partner Thomas MacDonagh, who was a writer, English teacher, and playwright. Yeats feels that MacDonagh was a man who could have gone on to incredible things in the scholarly world: 'he might have won fame in the end'. The portrayal of MacDonagh as touchy and with musing so brave and sweet, it influences him to appear to be less suited to fighting than to literary interests.

We can see how he recalls the service of the revolutionaries in a perspective of a poet who is more responsible. The poet commemorates the revolutionaries without considering any home emotions towards them. Here Yeats celebrates the revolutionaries in a democratic way. But he couldn't escape from his perspective as the man who possesses a ton of feelings and suddenly he changes the gear of his perspectives in his account of Major John MacBride. He says:

This other man I had dreamed
A drunken, vainglorious lout.
He had done most bitter wrong
To some who are near my heart,
Yet I number him in the song; (31-35)

In these lines, Yeats responds like an ordinary man who expresses his annoyance towards his personal enemy. Yeats was exceptionally enthusiastic towards a young actress named Maud Gonne, who largely inspired for Yeats' literary career. Unfortunately, she rejected his adoration and married to John MacBride who was a drunken soldier. MacBride treated his wife very cruelly and abandoned her two years later. Yeats despised MacBride by calling him drunken, vainglorious lout and implying his violence towards his better half and her little girl. Here Yeats behaves like an ordinary human who considers his individual emotion more than any ethics or values.

But suddenly he transforms the perspective from the man to the poet and he observed John MacBride as a national hero of Ireland for his participation and martyrdom for his motherland in the Easter rebellion in 1916. He says:

He, too, has resigned his part
In the casual comedy;
He, too, has been changed in his turn,
Transformed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born (36-40)

Here Yeats indirectly proclaims that an ordinary man cannot forgive to his foe very easily, yet a socially responsible writer cannot consider personal emotions more than values. As a common man, Yeats was a silent witness during the time of the Easter rebellion. He was not the part of rebellion with or without the pen, and he was not a revolutionary till he composed the poem "Easter 1916". But in his perspective of a common subject of Ireland Yeats supported the rebellion and celebrating them as national heroes. He concludes:

I write it out in a verse—
MacDonagh and MacBride
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be,—
Wherever green is worn (74-78)

When "Easter 1916" is subjected to a detailed analysis it shows that the poem is exceptionally perplexing in nature. In conclusion, the right reading of the poem "Easter 1916" is possible when it evaluated from such numerous point of view.

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