

W.B. Yeats as a modern poet (1)

P.G. Semester III

CC -10

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William Butler Yeats was one of the modern poets, who influenced his contemporaries as well as successors. By nature he was a dreamer, a thinker, who fell under the spell of the folk-lore and the superstitions of the Irish peasantry. He felt himself a stranger in the world of technology and rationalism. He is a prominent poet in modern times for his sense of moral wholeness of humanity and history.

He was an Irish poet and playwright, and one of the foremost figures of 20th century literature. A pillar of both the Irish and

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British literary establishments, in his later years he served as an Irish Senator for two terms. Yeats was a driving force behind the Irish Literary Revival and, along with Lady Gregory, Edward Martyn, and others, founded the Abbey Theatre, where he served as its chief during its early years. In 1923 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature as the first Irishman so honoured for what the Nobel Committee described as "inspired poetry, which in a highly artistic form gives expression to the spirit of a whole nation." Yeats is generally considered one of the few writers who completed their greatest works after being awarded the Nobel Prize; such works include *The Tower* (1928) and *The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1929). Yeats was a very good friend of Indian Bengali poet Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Yeats was born and educated in Dublin, but spent his childhood in

County Sligo. He studied poetry in his youth and from an early age was fascinated by both Irish legends and the occult.

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