Nationalism in Selected Literary Works of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce

By

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts (English Literature and Criticism) at Yarmouk University.

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Abstract

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This thesis intends to examine Irish nationalism as represented in some selected literary works of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce. The texts under study are eighteen of Yeats's poems and Joyce's novel A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. This study utilizes strategies of close textual analysis in the context of the historical-biographical approach. Yeats's and Joyce's letters, articles, lectures and speeches are used as supportive and introductory remarks that serve the development of the study. The findings of this research indicate that Yeats was an enthusiastic nationalist writer. His biography and poetry are full of incidents that prove his closeness to Irish nationalism. He calls, in his letters, articles, lectures, speeches, and poetry for Ireland's political and cultural independence. He is viewed as a spokesman for the rights of his people and as a representative of Irish values. Also, the findings of the study indicate that Joyce was a nationalist writer despite the critics' view of him as a writer who had no national concerns. Joyce's nationalism is viewed with regard to his consideration of England as a colonial power, his praise of the Irish national leaders and writers, his writing about the Irish national history and Irish native land, and his support of the Irish nationalist policies and principles.