



**Universität
Zürich^{UZH}**



**Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland**



“All changed” Easter 1916 in Irish Poetry Then and Now

Guest lecture by
Prof. Hugh Haughton
(University of York)

November 30, 2016 at 18:00
Room KOL-E-18,
University of Zurich, Rämistrasse 71

**“All changed”
Easter 1916 in Irish Poetry
Then and Now**

Hugh Haughton (University of York)

Rarely has any historical event been commemorated in poetry as immediately as the Easter Rising in Dublin was in 1916. It was not only converted into street songs and ballads as so many earlier Irish uprisings but addressed in poems such as Yeats’s great elegy ‘Easter 1916’, written later that year. Yeats’s poem announced that ‘All is changed, changed utterly’, and poetry was at least a minor agent of that change. Several of the leaders of the revolution, including Padraig Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett were poets, and nationalist Irish poetry was both a shaping force behind the rebellion and subsequently helped shape public memory of it.

If this was true at the time, it is equally true in later years, particularly in this centenary year, which saw a number of important new poems, including Paul Muldoon’s *A Hundred Years a Nation*, commissioned by RTE, with music by Shaun Davey, broadcast live on Easter Sunday from Collins Barracks Dublin, with the RTE Symphony Orchestra, massed choirs of adults and children, and the Poet himself reading the part of the Narrator.

This talk looks at the poetics and politics of commemoration then and now through readings of poems by Yeats, Seamus Heaney, Paul Muldoon, Eilean ni Chuilleanain, among others.