

Divine Pathways: Exploring the Impact of Religion on the Identity Construction of Younes in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (2008) and Stephen in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916).

Hana Aissaoui*

Mouloud Mammeri University
of Tizi Ouzou
Algeria
hana.aissaoui15@gmail.com

Arezki Khelifa

Mouloud Mammeri University
of Tizi Ouzou
Algeria
arezki.khelifa@ummto.dz

استلام ٢٠٢٤/٠٢/١١ القبول ٢٠٢٤/١٠/٢٦ النشر ٢٠٢٥/١٢/١١

Abstract :

This article explores how religion shapes identity formation by using a postcolonial lens to examine the experiences of Stephen in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and Younes in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (2008). Younes struggles with his hybrid identity, trying to balance Algerian and French cultures while adjusting to their different religious beliefs, while Stephen tries to break free from Catholicism. These contrasts illustrate the different ways that religion shapes identity in postcolonial contexts. The study analyzes the ways that religious influences shape the identity journeys of these two protagonists.

Key Words: Religion, Postcolonial Settings, Identity Construction, Traditional Beliefs, Nationalism

* Hana Aissa

Introduction :

The central theme in Yasmina Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (2008) and James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) is the development and assertion of the protagonists' identities. Since many factors can influence identity formation, our primary concern in this paper will be the influence of religious beliefs on the protagonists' identity construction.

One would certainly question why we have chosen to work on these two authors issued from as distinctive countries as Algeria and Ireland. Our argument is that though the two authors come from distinct origins, there are many similarities between their writings and their two socio-historical environments. They were raised in two nations that had seen distinct invasions and had been colonized for a very long time.

Yasmina Khadra published *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* in 2008, revisiting Algeria's colonial past and the struggle for independence. He tells the story of Younes/ Jonas, an Algerian boy who struggles to choose a side during the Algerian independence war. The tragic conflict between two communities who love and fight for the same country. The novel addresses the issue of identity both during and after the colonial period. *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* reflects the condition of Algerian people during colonialism. It emphasizes the Arab population's plight, the presence of Algerian nationalism, the European community, and colonialist ideology.

The second novel under study, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) is more than just a fictional story; it can be considered a part of Irish history depiction and representation because it reproduces Ireland's religious and political mood during Joyce's time. Joyce draws his subject matter from the conditions in his own country during his own time and uses the environment in which Stephen Dedalus grows up to record the prevailing Irish history in the 1890s. Joyce describes the pressures exerted on him by Catholicism, British rule, and the rise of nationalism through the eyes of his fictional character, Stephen Dedalus. He referred to them as the "Nets" (Joyce, 1991, pp.220) of Irish society. According to him, these "Nets" prevent people from freely expressing themselves; thus, Stephen has a strong desire to escape and run away from the constraints of these Nets. (Guedouari, 2012)

In postcolonial spaces, questioning identity construction is one of the most tackled themes in many fields such as sociology, psychology and literature. Within this context, the impact of religion emerges as an influencing element in the process of identity formation. This paper delves into the narratives of Younes and Stephen, as case study to analyze the complex relationship between religion and the process of identity construction in the aftermath of colonialism.

Religion plays an important role in the process of identity construction, particularly in postcolonial spaces, where individuals often encounter multiple religious influences and traditions, resulting in the development of hybrid religious identities. Thus, according to Ozyurt, multiple religious influences can be combined in this negotiation to create unique and fluid identities. (Ozyurt, 2013). However, religion can also be a source of resistance, particularly for marginalized groups. By challenging dominant power structures, asserting cultural and religious rights, and

creating a sense of empowerment against social injustices, it can be a powerful tool for challenging dominant power structures.

The central problem this study addresses is understanding how religion influences and shapes the identity of individuals. Examining the interconnection between identity construction and religious influence, particularly in postcolonial contexts, our objective is to dissect how religion shapes their self-perception and sense of belonging during and after colonialism.

Taking our theoretical bearings from the postcolonial theory, we examine the religious identity amidst the processes of decolonization, cultural hybridity, and resistance. This theoretical framework enables us to explore identity amidst the colonial rule. Through the application of this theoretical perspective, we aim to uncover the religious impact on identity construction, focusing on the experiences of Younes and Stephen as representative case study.

The outline of this analysis involves a comparative study of the two protagonists, examining the role of religion in their respective journeys of self-discovery. We will examine the complexities of postcolonial identity formation by considering the influences of cultural hybridity, resistance, and decolonization within the religious context.

I. Historical Context: Colonialism and Religious Suppression

To understand the impact of religion on identity construction in postcolonial spaces, it is essential to recognize the historical context of religious suppression during the colonial era. European colonial powers often sought to undermine and marginalize indigenous religious practices, considering them inferior or savage compared to their own beliefs. Missionaries were sent to convert indigenous populations to Christianity, leading to the displacement and marginalization of local religious traditions.

During the era of colonialism, the dominant European powers sought to exert control over their colonies by imposing their own religious beliefs and practices on the indigenous populations. This process often involved the suppression, marginalization, and even eradication of local religious traditions (Morrock, 1973).

Fidelis Nkomazana and Senzokuhle Doreen Setune in their article *Missionary colonial mentality and the expansion of Christianity in Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1800 to 1900* state that one of the primary motivations behind the religious suppression during colonialism was the belief in the superiority of Western civilization and Christianity. European colonizers considered their religion and culture as more advanced and civilized than the beliefs and practices of the indigenous people. As a result, missionaries were sent to convert the native populations to Christianity and dismantle their indigenous religious systems (Nkomazana et al, 2016).

The suppression of indigenous religions took various forms. Missionaries actively discouraged and prohibited the practice of indigenous rituals and ceremonies, labeling them as pagan, idolatrous, or even demonic (Nkomazana et al,

2016). Native religious sites, artifacts, and practices were often destroyed or desecrated. In some cases, indigenous spiritual leaders were marginalized or even persecuted, further weakening the native religious traditions.

Colonial governments also implemented policies that favored Christianity and Christian institutions. Missionaries were provided with financial and logistical support, and churches were established as centers of power and influence. Indigenous religions, on the other hand, were pushed to the margins of society, often viewed as backward and incompatible with progress.

Kaoma believes that the aim of religious suppression during colonialism was twofold: to undermine the cultural and spiritual foundations of indigenous societies and to establish Christianity as the dominant religion (Kaoma, 2016). By eradicating or marginalizing indigenous religions, the colonizers sought to dismantle the existing social structures and impose their own systems of belief and values. This process was not only a means of exerting control but also a way of asserting cultural superiority and legitimizing the colonial enterprise.

However, as Saliha Belmessous points out in her book entitled *Assimilation and Empire*; it is important to note that religious suppression during colonialism was not always successful in eradicating indigenous beliefs and practices. Despite the efforts of colonizers, many indigenous communities managed to preserve their religious traditions in secret or adapted them to survive under the new religious and cultural circumstances (Belmessous, 2013). It is worth mentioning that efforts to suppress indigenous beliefs and practices during the colonial era did not consistently achieve the complete eradication desired.

Despite the colonizers' initiatives, many indigenous communities adeptly preserved their religious traditions in secret or adapted them to persist within the transformed religious and cultural context. The resilience and resistance displayed by these communities demonstrate the enduring power and significance of religion in shaping identity and fostering cultural continuity (Ghahramani et al, 2020).

The religious suppression during colonialism continues to shape postcolonial spaces today. Das in his article entitled (Re)visiting postcolonial ethno-spirituality in Mamang Dai's *The Black Hill* and Easterine Kire's *Sky is My Father: A Naga Village Remembered*. *Asian Ethnicity* claims that the revival of indigenous religions, the reclamation of cultural heritage, and the ongoing struggles for religious autonomy and recognition are all responses to the historical injustices inflicted upon native religious traditions (Das, 2023). The recognition of this history is essential for understanding the complex dynamics of identity construction in postcolonial spaces and for promoting cultural diversity, religious freedom, and social justice.

However, the postcolonial period witnessed a resurgence of indigenous religious practices as a means of reclaiming cultural heritage and challenging the colonial rule. Many individuals and communities turned to their ancestral religions, embracing them as a source of strength and identity. These religious practices became avenues for reconnecting with traditional values, customs, and rituals, fostering a sense of belonging and solidarity among the people. (Santiago, 2023, pp.13-22)

In both the Algerian and Irish contexts, the postcolonial period witnessed a remarkable resurgence of indigenous religious practices as a means of reclaiming cultural heritage and challenging the colonial legacy. The Algerian struggle for independence from French colonial rule and the Irish quest for liberation from British colonial domination gave birth to powerful movements that drew heavily on their ancestral religions as sources of strength and identity.

In Algeria, Islam played an important role in the nationalist movement during the fight for independence. As Algerians resisted the cultural and political subjugation imposed by the French colonial administration, Islam became a unifying force that bound together diverse communities (Zack, 2002, pp.55-97). Elizabeth Zack, in her article *Who Fought the Algerian War? Political Identity and Conflict in French Ruled Algeria*, underscores the role of Islam in Algeria's nationalist movement for independence. She suggests that Islam served as a unifying force among diverse communities as they opposed the cultural and political dominance enforced by the French colonial administration. In this context, Islam emerged not only as a spiritual and cultural anchor but also as a rallying point for collective resistance against external subjugation. This underscores the interplay between religion, identity, and political struggle in the historical narrative of Algeria's fight for independence.

Zack also points out that the mosque, which had been marginalized during colonial rule, once again emerged as a focal point for collective mobilization and a symbol of defiance against the colonial oppressors. Islamic teachings and principles provided a moral and ethical framework that guided the resistance, emphasizing the values of justice, freedom, and self-determination (Zack, 2002, pp.55-97).

Similarly, in the Irish context, the revival of indigenous religious practices, particularly Catholicism, became intertwined with the pursuit of national identity and cultural heritage (White, 2010, pp.21-37). During British colonial rule, the Irish people faced attempts at erasing their language, culture, and religion. However, as the Irish sought to reclaim their identity and challenge the colonial legacy, Catholicism served as a potent marker of their distinctiveness and shared heritage. The Catholic Church played an important role in preserving Irish cultural traditions, and religious ceremonies and rituals became avenues for expressing national pride and asserting cultural resilience (White, 2010, pp.21-37).

In both cases, the resurgence of indigenous religious practices was not solely about reclaiming the past but also about forging a sense of belonging and solidarity in the present. Embracing their ancestral religions provided a means for individuals and communities to reconnect with their roots, affirming their unique cultural identities and contributing to a shared collective memory (Bangura, 2005). The revival of traditional values, customs, and rituals fostered a sense of continuity with their historical legacies, empowering individuals to draw strength from their cultural heritage in the face of ongoing challenges.

Moreover, the resurgence of indigenous religious practices served as a counter-narrative to the dominant colonial discourse that denigrated and undermined native cultures (Brower, 2011). By embracing their ancestral religions, Algerian and

Irish people challenged the colonial imposition of Western values and religions, asserting the validity and richness of their own cultural expressions. This cultural reawakening became a means of resisting cultural imperialism and reclaiming agency in the process of identity formation (Brower, 2011).

II. Religion as a Political Tool

According to Moaz and Henderson in their work entitled *Religion and Word Politics: An Integrated Theoretical Perspective* religion has been employed as a potent political tool during the postcolonial period, shaping identity and influencing power dynamics within these societies (Moaz, Henderson, 2020, pp.62-114).

Moaz and Henderson's work sheds light on how religion plays an important role in shaping identity and influencing the power dynamics within society. This highlights the dynamic nature of religion, not just as a spiritual or cultural influence but as a dynamic factor interwoven with political processes (William, 1996, pp.883-900). Recognizing religion as a powerful tool in postcolonial political landscapes adds depth to our understanding of the interplay between identity and power in postcolonial settings.

In Algeria, after gaining independence from French colonial rule, the newly formed government strategically used Islam to foster a sense of national unity. The state embraced Islam as the state religion and incorporated elements of Islamic law into the legal system. By positioning Islam as a unifying force (Driessen, 2014, pp.135-179), the government sought to bridge the diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds of its population, reinforcing a collective Algerian identity that transcended regional differences. However, this instrumentalization of religion also led to tensions, as some groups felt excluded or marginalized due to the emphasis on a particular religious identity. The Algerian Civil War, which occurred in the 1990s, involved violent conflicts between the government and Islamist movements, highlighting the complex interplay between religion and politics in the postcolonial Algerian society (Silverstein, 2002, pp.643-674).

Similarly, in the Irish context, Catholicism has been instrumentalized as a marker of national identity and resistance against British colonial rule. During the struggle for independence, Catholic religious imagery and symbols became powerful tools in mobilizing the Irish population against the British colonial authorities. Catholic religious institutions played an active role in preserving Irish language and culture, and the Catholic Church acted as a symbol of national pride and cultural heritage. However, this politicization of Catholicism also led to divisions within the society, particularly between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, fueling sectarian tensions and conflicts (White, 2010, pp.25-37).

In both cases, the instrumentalization of religion for political purposes has had a profound impact on identity construction and power dynamics. While it may initially serve to foster a sense of unity, it can also lead to the marginalization of religious minorities and the intensification of inter-religious tensions. The alignment of religion with political agendas can create a sense of exclusion or "otherness" for

those who do not share the dominant religious identity. Consequently, this can hinder the development of a more inclusive and diverse understanding of national identity and citizenship (Alhussein, 2020).

Moreover, the involvement of religious leaders and organizations in political movements can amplify the influence of particular religious ideologies, potentially leading to the dominance of conservative or fundamentalist interpretations. This can further polarize society, stifling critical dialogue and open debate about issues of social justice, human rights, and equality (Ravazi, Jenichen, 2010, pp. 833-850).

It is crucial to recognize that the instrumentalization of religion for political purposes is not limited to the postcolonial period but has been observed in various historical and geopolitical contexts. The case studies of Algeria and Ireland provide valuable insights into the complexities of religious politics in postcolonial spaces, reminding us of the delicate balance required between religion, politics, and identity construction in fostering inclusive and democratic societies. As postcolonial societies continue to navigate the legacies of colonialism and political challenges, understanding the interplay between religion and politics becomes essential for promoting social cohesion, diversity, and the protection of individual rights (Ravazi, Jenichen, 2010, pp. 833-850).

Nationalism often employs religion as a potent means of resistance against colonialism and external domination. The fusion of nationalism and religion can foster a collective sense of identity, purpose, and unity, motivating communities to challenge colonial rule and assert their autonomy (Cavanaugh, 2009, pp.57-122). It draws upon religious symbols, narratives, and historical events to construct a distinct cultural identity. By highlighting shared religious heritage and historical ties, nationalists forge a sense of continuity with their past, emphasizing the resilience and achievements of their religious communities. (Cavanaugh, 2009, pp.57-122)

Religion can serve as a rallying point for nationalist movements, galvanizing people around a common cause (Gnamo, 2002, pp.90-120). Religious institutions and leaders often play a crucial role in mobilizing support, providing a platform for political activism, and advocating for nationalist aspirations. This way religion offers a moral and ethical framework that underpins nationalist movements. Religious teachings may inspire values such as justice, freedom, and self-determination, which become central to the nationalist cause and its struggle against colonial oppression.

In fact religious narratives can be reinterpreted to portray nationalist struggles as part of a divine or sacred mission. This imbues the resistance movement with a sense of destiny and divine support, bolstering the resolve of its adherents (Twiss et al, 2015). This is why nationalism often seeks to safeguard cultural autonomy and resist cultural assimilation by external powers, so, religion becomes a vehicle for asserting cultural distinctiveness and resisting attempts to erase indigenous traditions and practices.

It is worth to mention that nationalist movements frequently challenge the imposition of foreign religions and value systems by colonial powers. Emphasizing their indigenous religious practices becomes an act of defiance against cultural imperialism and an assertion of sovereignty over their spiritual beliefs, and using

religious rituals, symbols, and sites can become powerful tools for expressing resistance. Acts of protest, such as prayer gatherings, processions, or religious ceremonies, can take on a symbolic significance in the context of nationalist struggles (Friedland, 2001, pp.125-152).

It is important to note that while nationalism may utilize religion as a means of resistance; this fusion can also lead to complex dynamics. Religious-based nationalism may marginalize or exclude religious and ethnic minorities, potentially intensifying inter-communal tensions. Additionally, the instrumentalization of religion for political purposes can shape religious doctrines to suit the nationalist agenda, leading to the distortion or politicization of spiritual beliefs (Omer, Springs, 2013).

Nonetheless, the intertwining of nationalism and religion remains a significant aspect of many historical and contemporary struggles against colonialism and external oppression. It showcases how religious narratives, practices, and institutions can galvanize collective action and inspire movements aimed at reclaiming cultural heritage, asserting national identity, and resisting colonial hegemony (Triandafyllidou, 2023).

III. Younes' Hybrid Identity and Religious Negotiation

In *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, Younes finds himself torn between the Algerian and French cultures. His position demands a balance between his Westernized education and his Algerian roots. This balance creates « cultural dissonance » that shapes how he perceives and engages with his religious beliefs and practices.

As a hybrid character with dual cultural identities, Younes faces the task of managing his religious beliefs in the context of a complex colonial and postcolonial reality. His upbringing as a French-educated Algerian Muslim leaves him torn between two cultural worlds, each with its own set of values, expectations, and traditions. This inner conflict shapes his experience of religious belief and influences his process of identity construction.

Nevertheless, Younes' hybridity places him in a special position, being between the cultural worlds of Algeria and France. He must negotiate between the Westernized education and lifestyle he experienced among the European community and the Algerian heritage of his family and community. This dynamic tension creates a sense of “cultural dissonance” that impacts his understanding of religious beliefs and practices. This way, Bhabha emphasizes the mixing and blending of different cultural elements, resulting in the formation of new identities. Younes' hybrid identity as an Algerian Muslim educated under French colonial influence exemplifies this process. His negotiation of religious beliefs reflects the intermingling of diverse cultural influences, shaping a unique and evolving sense of self.

The Algerian heritage and Islamic faith are two important elements constituting Younes' identity. Despite the influence of Western modernity and French culture, he remains attached to the traditions and religious values of his

biological father. However, his cultural roots, and Islamic teachings, become a source of discomfort and instability amidst the European community and the complexities of his hybrid identity.

In fact Younes' hybrid identity results in an internal struggle as he grapples with conflicting beliefs and expectations. He faces challenges in reconciling his French education and with the religious teachings and cultural values of his Algerian background. This internal conflict becomes a defining aspect of his journey, shaping his decisions and the paths he chooses to follow.

Over time, Younes tries to accept his hybrid identity, recognizing that it offers a new perspective and the potential for synthesis between cultural worlds. Rather than viewing his dual identities as opposing forces, he seeks ways to harmonize and integrate them, allowing for an understanding of religious belief that transcends strict dichotomies (McIntire, 2006, pp. 80-92). In his book *The Location of Culture* (2004) highlights the emergence of new cultural forms in the contact zone between colonizer and colonized. Younes' hybrid identity can be seen as a product of this third space, where cultural translation occurs, resulting in a synthesis of various influences. His religious beliefs and practices become a unique amalgamation of indigenous Algerian traditions and the encounter with French colonialism.

As a Consequence, when he engages in a personal negotiation of his religious beliefs, seeking ways to incorporate both cultural identities into his understanding of religion, he finds meaning in the flexibility and inclusiveness of his hybrid perspective, recognizing that his ability to bridge cultural gaps (Peters, 2016, pp. 12-22) allows him to handle his different social influences.

As the postcolonial context evolves and the struggle for Algerian independence intensifies, Younes' identity remains in flux. He grapples with the shifting political landscape and the implications of his religious beliefs on the broader nationalist movement. His hybridity serves as a lens through which he analyzes and critiques the complexities of postcolonial society.

When Younes became conscious of the differences between the two communities, it became challenging for him to understand. His internal conflict reflects the broader socio-political tensions of the time, where the exposure of colonial and indigenous identities often led to a crisis of belonging. As Younes navigates these complexities, he grapples with questions of allegiance, heritage, and self-identity, ultimately seeking a path towards reconciliation in colonial Algeria. In this passage, the author sheds light on the complexities of cultural negotiation and religious adaptation in the face of colonial domination.

Je n'étais pas tout à fait un des leurs et ils ne manquaient aucune occasion de me le rappeler. Curieusement, il me suffisait de sortir mon goûter de mon cartable pour les assagir ; ils devenaient d'un coup mes amis et me témoignaient un respect désarmant. Une fois le goûter partagé et la dernière miette avalée, ils me reniaient si vite que leurs volte-face me donnaient le tournis.

Un soir, j'étais rentré à la maison fou de rage. Il me fallait des explications, et sur-le-champ. J'étais en colère contre Maurice, contre l'instituteur et contre l'ensemble de ma classe. J'avais été blessé dans mon amour-propre et, pour la première fois, je comprenais que ma douleur ne se limitait pas à celle de ma famille et qu'elle pouvait

s'étendre à des gens que je ne connaissais ni d'Ève ni d'Adam mais qui devenaient, l'espace d'un affront, aussi proches de moi que mon père et ma mère. (Khadra, 2008, pp. 47)

Asad's critique of essentialism in religious studies reminds us that religious beliefs and practices are not static or uniform across different contexts (Asad, 2009). Younes' hybrid identity illustrates the fluid and changing nature of religious identity in postcolonial spaces. His negotiation of religious beliefs reflects the contingent and evolving nature of religious practices that adapt to the complexities of the postcolonial context. Talal Asad's work critiques essentialist notions of religion and challenges the idea of a fixed, unchanging religious identity. Instead, he emphasizes the dynamic and contingent nature of religious practices and beliefs, acknowledging that they are shaped by historical, political, and social factors (Asad, 2009).

His emphasis on the idea of religious hybridity aligns with Younes' experience of straddling two cultural worlds. As a hybrid character, Younes embodies the blending of multiple influences, where his religious beliefs are shaped by both his Algerian heritage and the French colonial education he received. This hybridity allows Younes to develop a more nuanced understanding of his religious beliefs, drawing from diverse cultural experiences to construct a personalized religious identity.

Asad highlights the political implications of religious practices and their intersection with nationalism and identity construction. Younes' journey reflects how religion becomes entangled with nationalist movements in the postcolonial context. His religious beliefs serve as a source of empowerment, contributing to his commitment to the Algerian nationalist cause, while also raising questions about the instrumentalization of religion for political purposes. His approach to understanding religious beliefs within specific historical and social contexts helps illuminate Younes' internal struggle and personal negotiation of faith. Younes' journey shows how his religious beliefs are shaped not only by individual experiences but also by broader historical and political forces, making his identity formation a product of the postcolonial milieu. Asad says:

The construction of civilizational difference is not exclusive in any simple sense. The de-essentialization of Islam is paradigmatic for all thinking about the assimilation of non-European peoples to European civilization. The idea that people's historical experience is inessential to them, that it can be shed at will, makes it possible to argue more strongly for the Enlightenment's claim to universality: Muslims, as members of the abstract category "humans," can be assimilated or (as some recent theorist have put it) "translated" into a global ("European") civilization once they have divested themselves of what many of them regard (mistakenly) as essential to themselves. The belief that human beings can be separated from their histories and traditions makes it possible to urge a Europeanization of the Islamic world. And by the same logic, it underlies the belief that the assimilation to Europe's civilization of Muslim immigrants who are--for good or for ill--already in European states is necessary and desirable. (Asad, 2009)

Younes' religious beliefs and their implications in the nationalist movement underscores how religious identity intersects with broader political struggles for independence and self-determination. Younes' journey represents a negotiation of religious beliefs within a hybrid identity, illustrating how the legacies of colonialism, religious pluralism, and political struggles shape the construction and experience of religious faith in the postcolonial world. Asad asserts that "Tradition is an aspiration to connect the Self with the Other. One "internalizes" the Other as one acquires a sense of what one's own tradition is, what one belongs to and what gives valid shape to one's life." (Asad, 2009).

Bhabha's work emphasizes the agency of subaltern subjects in navigating the complexities of colonial power structures. Younes' negotiation of his religious beliefs reflects his agency in asserting his cultural identity and resisting the erasure of indigenous traditions, despite the influence of colonial education and values. Talal Assad claims that the emphasis on individual agency, may lead to an oversight of the broader socio-cultural and structural forces that shape individuals, he says:

Agency has become a catch word. In a way, this intoxication with 'agency' is the product of liberal individualism. The ability of individuals to fashion themselves, to change their live, is given ideological priority over the relation within which they themselves are actually formed, situated, and sustained." (Asad, 2009).

Bhabha's recognizes that ambiguity and in-betweenness constitute the complexities of postcolonial identities. Therefore, Younes' religious beliefs and identity construction are characterized by a sense of ambiguity and in-betweenness, reflecting the multiplicity of influences shaping his sense of self.

In conclusion, Younes' identity construction in *Ce que le jour doit a la nuit* is woven by the diverse influences that shape him. Raised by two Muslim fathers, his upbringing is rooted in Islamic traditions. However, the narrative complexity deepens as Younes undergoes a Western education within the European community.

The dual influence of being raised by Muslim fathers sets the stage for a multifaceted understanding of faith. The teachings, rituals, and cultural nuances associated with Islam become integral to Younes' early experiences, contributing to the formation of his religious identity. The familial environment, steeped in Islamic traditions, lays the groundwork for the moral compass that guides Younes through his life.

Yet, the narrative takes a compelling turn as Younes encounters a Western education within the European community. This exposure introduces him to diverse perspectives, contrasting cultural norms, and different belief systems. The juxtaposition of Islamic teachings and Western education initiates a dialogue within Younes, forcing him to navigate the intersections and conflicts between these two worlds.

The duality of his upbringing positions Younes on a unique cultural and religious crossroad. The coexistence of Islamic values and Western education adds layers of complexity to his identity. The tension between these influences becomes a crucible for self-discovery, prompting Younes to reconcile of his heritage with the evolving realities of the world around him.

The European community provides not only an educational environment but also a cultural immersion that challenges and contradicts the foundations laid by his Muslim upbringing. Younes, torn between these contrasting worlds, becomes a reflection of the interplay between religion, culture, and education in the construction of his identity.

In essence, Younes' identity is a product of discordant influences – from the Islamic teachings of his Algerian heritage to the Western education within the European community. His journey epitomizes the complexity of identity formation in colonial and postcolonial spaces, where individuals deal with the intersections of diverse cultural and religious landscapes, shaping an evolving sense of self.

IV. Religious Influences and Artistic Aspirations: Stephen Dedalus' Identity Construction

In James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the protagonist Stephen Dedalus depicts his journey of self-discovery, shaped by the impact of religion on his identity construction. Born into a Catholic family in Ireland, Stephen's early life revolves around the teachings and traditions of his faith. However, as he grows up and encounters new intellectual and artistic pursuits, he becomes increasingly aware of the tensions between his religious upbringing and his desire for artistic expression and individuality.

Throughout his journey, Stephen oscillates between the desire to uphold the traditions of his Catholic faith and the impulse to forge a unique artistic path that reflects his reality. The clash between his religious beliefs and his artistic yearnings leads him to question the boundaries of societal norms and confront the confines of conformity. Stephen's journey of self-discovery is an exploration of the artist's struggle for freedom and self-expression, making his experience a timeless exploration of the complex relationship between religion, identity, and the passionate pursuit of artistic vision (Pothe, 2023)

Greenblatt emphasizes the role of cultural and religious paradigms in shaping individual identity (Greenblatt, 1980). In the case of Stephen Dedalus, his early life is immersed in the Catholic faith, with its rituals, doctrines, and societal expectations. The religious paradigm forms the initial contours of Stephen's identity, dictating his worldview and moral compass.

In fact his concept of self-fashioning involves the individual's active role in shaping their identity within societal frameworks. Stephen's journey is marked by a profound struggle for self-fashioning as he grapples with the influence of Catholicism (Sutterfield, 1992). The religious paradigm imposes certain norms and expectations on him, prompting a dynamic negotiation between the prescribed identity and his desire for individual expression.

In the context of Stephen's religious upbringing, the Catholic faith acts as both a source of guidance and a set of constraints. The rituals, doctrines, and moral codes provide a framework within which Stephen is expected to conform, creating a tension between his innate desire for autonomy and the religiously defined

boundaries. In this perspective, Stephen says : “When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets” (Joyce, 1991, pp.220). In this passage, Stephen expresses his desire to transcend these limitations and pursue his own path of self-discovery and artistic expression. The metaphor of nets symbolizes the societal norms and expectations that seek to restrict individuals from breaking free and realizing their true potential. Stephen's determination to "fly by those nets" (Joyce, 1991, pp.220) signifies his defiance against societal norms and his quest for personal freedom and autonomy.

As Stephen encounters intellectual and artistic pursuits, his education becomes a transformative force. The clash between Catholicism and the intellectual freedom offered by education becomes a battleground for Stephen's self-fashioning (Cuevas, 2015). Greenblatt's ideas on the transformative power of education align with Stephen's evolving identity as he seeks to reconcile religious teachings with intellectual exploration. His emphasis on considering cultural and historical contexts aligns with Stephen's experience. Ireland, marked by a deeply entrenched Catholic tradition, serves as a significant cultural context that shapes Stephen's identity. The historical backdrop of British colonialism further complicates the dynamics, as Stephen navigates not only religious expectations but also the impact of colonial influences on his identity (White, 2015, pp.21-37).

Therefore, as Stephen questions religious doctrines and societal norms, he engages in an act of resistance against the religious paradigm that initially defined him. The artist's vocation, which emerges as a central theme, becomes an avenue for Stephen to subvert the constraints of his religious upbringing and assert his individuality (Jenkins, 2008).

Stephen Dedalus embodies a hybrid identity that emerges from his Irish Catholic background and his exposure to British colonial education. Bhabha's concept of hybridity helps us understand how Stephen's identity is shaped by the blending of these two cultural influences. As a young man constructing his religious beliefs, he grapples with the tensions between his Catholic upbringing and his education that exposes him to intellectual and artistic ideas beyond his traditional religious framework.

However, as he grows older and encounters intellectual pursuits, he experiences ambivalence toward his religious beliefs. Ambivalence (Bhabha, 2004) is evident in Stephen's attempts to reconcile his inherited Catholic beliefs with his intellectual and artistic inclinations. This ambivalence fosters an internal struggle within Stephen as he navigates the tension between his religious upbringing and his desire for intellectual and artistic freedom.

As Stephen enters the university and begins to question his religious beliefs, he finds himself in the "third space" where cultural translation occurs (Bhabha, 2004). This third space emphasizes the emergence of new cultural forms in the encounter between colonizer and colonized. For Stephen, this space represents a transformative period where he critically examines and reinterprets his religious beliefs. The third space allows him to explore alternative perspectives on religion

and spirituality, leading to a shift in his understanding of faith and the formation of his artistic identity.

Bhabha's focus on cultural difference highlights how Stephen's exposure to different cultural influences impacts his identity construction. Stephen's encounters with British education and artistic ideas challenge the norms of his Catholic upbringing, prompting him to question the cultural and religious traditions to which he was previously bound. The experience of cultural difference contributes to Stephen's reevaluation of his religious beliefs and becomes an important aspect of his identity formation.

Throughout the novel, Stephen experiences ambiguity and in-betweenness as he transitions between his Catholic upbringing and his artistic pursuits. Bhabha's emphasis on these states of uncertainty and liminality (Bhabha, 2004) captures the complexities of Stephen's identity construction. His religious beliefs are continuously negotiated and reinterpreted in the context of his evolving artistic and intellectual endeavors, creating a sense of in-betweenness as he navigates the spaces between tradition and innovation.

In conclusion, as Stephen grapples with his Catholic upbringing amidst a changing Ireland marked by British colonial influences, he finds himself in a transformative space. This "third space" represents a dynamic realm where cultural translation occurs. It is within this space that Stephen critically examines and reinterprets his religious beliefs. Bhabha's framework allows us to highlight Stephen's understanding of faith, moving beyond the traditional boundaries and exploring alternative perspectives that contribute to his evolving identity.

Greenblatt's theories of self-fashioning and ambivalence shed light on the intricacies of Stephen's negotiation with religious influences. Stephen's identity is not merely shaped by the external forces of Catholicism but is an active process of self-fashioning. Greenblatt's concept underscores the agency that Stephen exercises in constructing his identity within the societal constraints of his Catholic upbringing. Ambivalence becomes a central theme as Stephen navigates the tension between his inherited religious beliefs and his intellectual and artistic inclinations.

Conclusion:

Younes' hybrid identity molded by Algerian and French cultural influences illustrates the complexities of reconciling religious beliefs with the influences of French colonial education, showcasing the interplay of colonial and indigenous histories. Nevertheless, Younes' agency in asserting his cultural identity aligns with Bhabha's focus on the agency of subaltern subjects. Homi Bhabha's lens emphasizes the ambiguity and in-betweenness of Younes' identity, exposing the complexity of postcolonial identities shaped by colonial legacies.

In this perspective, Asad urges a complex comprehension that goes beyond simple classifications, recognizing the varied formation of religious identities as well as he highlights the political significance of religious practices and their connection to nationalism and identity formation. The exploration of Younes' religious beliefs

exposes the connections between colonial and indigenous histories, impacting his personal and national identity.

The postcolonial lens has revealed the intricate challenges of managing religious beliefs in the context of hybrid identities and postcolonial Algeria. His experience as a French-educated Algerian Muslim exemplifies the fluid and dynamic nature of religious identities in postcolonial spaces, where influences of colonialism, cultural syncretism, and political resistance intersect to make religion both a source of empowerment and a tool for resistance against colonial oppression.

Conversely, Stephen's negotiation of religious beliefs as a product of diverse cultural influences. His identity emerges within the third space, where the blending of Irish Catholicism and exposure to alternative intellectual ideas occurs. Stephen's agency in asserting his cultural identity aligns with Bhabha's emphasis on the subaltern's ability to shape their narrative amidst complex colonial legacies. The ambiguity and in-betweenness of Stephen's identity mirror the complexities of postcolonial identities shaped by the intersection of tradition and innovation.

Greenblatt's theoretical insights provide a lens to understand how Stephen actively engages in self-fashioning within the constraints of his religious upbringing. Stephen's journey, influenced by his Catholic faith, is a dynamic process of asserting individual agency. Greenblatt's concept of ambivalence becomes evident as Stephen navigates the tension between religious norms and his desire for intellectual freedom. The clash between tradition and autonomy is emblematic of the power dynamics inherent in self-fashioning, where religious beliefs become both a form of control and a catalyst for personal liberation.

Therefore, the impact of religion on Stephen Dedalus' identity construction is characterized by a duality of influence. On one hand, Bhabha's lens exposes the fluidity and complexity of managing religious beliefs within a hybrid identity, emphasizing the agency and negotiation inherent in postcolonial contexts. On the other hand, Greenblatt's lens sheds light on the power dynamics at play in the process of self-fashioning, where religious beliefs act as both constraining forces and instruments for personal liberation.

In both cases, religion plays a pivotal role in shaping their identities, yet the impact varies significantly due to the unique historical, cultural, and social contexts they inhabit. Younes' struggle for national identity and cultural heritage in postcolonial Algeria underscores the intersection of religion and nationalism. In contrast, Stephen's artistic vision challenges religious norms in early 20th-century Ireland, showcasing the multifaceted roles religion can play in identity construction across diverse landscapes.

In conclusion, the analysis of Younes and Stephen Dedalus' identity construction underscores the dynamic and multidimensional nature of religion's influence. It highlights how religious beliefs interact with colonial legacies, social class, cultural hybridity, and ideological control, impacting their choices, beliefs, and sense of self.

Bibliographic References:

Alhussein, E. (2020, December 30). An existential crisis. In *Routledge Handbook of Political Islam*. Routledge. Retrieved from <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780429425165-17>

ASAD, T. (2009). The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam. *Qui Parle*, 17(2), 1–30. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20685738>

Bangura, A. K. (2005). UBUNTUGOGY: AN AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM THAT TRANSCENDS PEDAGOGY, ANDRAGOGY, ERGONAGY AND HEUTAGOGY. *Journal of Third World Studies*, 22(2), 13–53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45198556>

Belmessous, Saliha, 'Part III Assimilation against Colonialism: The Struggle of the Muslim Natives in French Algeria', *Assimilation and Empire: Uniformity in French and British Colonies, 1541-1954* (Oxford, 2013; online edn, Oxford Academic, 23 May 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199579167.003.0004>, accessed 6 Dec. 2023.

Benjamin Claude Brower, « Rethinking Abolition in Algeria. Slavery and the "Indigenous Question" », *Cahiers d'études africaines* [En ligne], 195 | 2009, mis en ligne le 01 janvier 2011, consulté le 07 décembre 2023. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesafriaines/15654> ; DOI :<https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesafriaines.15654>

Cavanaugh, William T., 'The Invention of Religion', *The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict* (New York, 2009; online edn, Oxford Academic, 1 Sept. 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195385045.003.0003>, accessed 7 Dec. 2023.

Chakrabarty, D. (2009). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference - New Edition*. Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History. Princeton University Press. ISBN 1400828651, 9781400828654

Cooke, M. (2000). Women, Religion, and the Postcolonial Arab World. *Cultural Critique*, 45, 150–184. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1354370>

Cuevas, C. L. (2015). *Stephen Dedalus' Search for Identity in Catholic Ireland*. (Doctoral dissertation, Florida International University). Retrieved from DOI: 10.25148/etd.FIDC000149

Das, J. (2023). (Re)visiting postcolonial ethno-spirituality in Mamang Dai's *The Black Hill* and Easterine Kire's *Sky is My Father: A Naga Village Remembered*. *Asian Ethnicity*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2023.2261384>

Driessen, M. D. (2014). Religion and Democratization in Algeria. In *Religion and Democratization: Framing Religious and Political Identities in Muslim and Catholic Societies* (pp. 73-94). Oxford Academic. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199329700.003.0006>

Friedland, R. (2001). Religious Nationalism and the Problem of Collective Representation. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 125–152. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2678617>

Ghahramani, L., McArdle, K., & Fatorić, S. (2020). Minority Community Resilience and Cultural Heritage Preservation: A Case Study of the Gullah Geechee Community. *Sustainability*, 12, 2266. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12062266>

Greenblatt, S. (1980). *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Hoffman, M. T., & Nugent, E. R. (2017). Communal Religious Practice and Support for Armed Parties: Evidence from Lebanon. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 61(4), 869–902. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26363878>

Jenkins, E. S. (2008). *"Faithful Departed": Tracing the Themes of Exile and Betrayal through James Joyce's Dubliners, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, and Exiles*. (Master's thesis). North Carolina State University.

Kaoma, K. J. (2016). African Religion and Colonial Rebellion: The Contestation of Power in Colonial Zimbabwe's Chimurenga of 1896-1897. *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 29(1), 57–84. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24805707>

Karpov, V., Lisovskaya, E., & Barry, D. (2012). Ethnodoxy: How Popular Ideologies Fuse Religious and Ethnic Identities. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 51(4), 638–655. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23353824>

Kraidy, M. M. (2005). *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*. Temple University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bw1k8m>

Lenovský, L., & Slobodová Nováková, K. (2021). Culture–Religion–Ethnicity (Alliance of Identities in the Environment of Foreign Slovak Communities). *Religions*, 12(10), 883. MDPI AG. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/rel12100883>

Maoz, Z., & Henderson, E. A. (2020). Religion and World Politics: An Integrated Theoretical Perspective. In *Scriptures, Shrines, Scapegoats, and World Politics*:

Religious Sources of Conflict and Cooperation in the Modern Era (pp. 62–114). University of Michigan Press.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3998/mpub.11353856.6>

McIntire, C. T. (2006). Transcending Dichotomies in History and Religion. *History and Theory*, 45(4), 80–92. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3874098>

Morrock, R. (1973). Heritage of Strife: The Effects of Colonialist “Divide and Rule” Strategy upon the Colonized Peoples. *Science & Society*, 37(2), 129–151. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40401707>

Nkomazana, Fidelis, & Setume, Senzokuhle Doreen. (2016). Missionary colonial mentality and the expansion of Christianity in Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1800 to 1900. *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 29(2), 29-55. Retrieved December 06, 2023, from http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1011-76012016000200003&lng=en&tlng=en.

Omer, A., & Springs, J. A. (2013). *Religious Nationalism: A Reference Handbook*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Ozyurt, S. (2013). Negotiating Multiple Identities, Constructing Western-Muslim Selves in the Netherlands and the United States. *Political Psychology*, 34(2), 239–263. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23481744>

Peters, G. (2016). How we can bridge the culture gap. *Journal of Staff Development*, 37(5), 12-22.

Pothi, A. (2023, August). Navigating the Labyrinth of Self-Discovery: Insights from 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' by James Joyce - Part 1. *Title of Blog*. <https://abirpothi.com/navigating-the-labyrinth-of-self-discovery-insights-from-a-portrait-of-the-artist-as-a-young-man-by-james-joyce-part-1/>

RAZAVI, S., & JENICHEN, A. (2010). The Unhappy Marriage of Religion and Politics: problems and pitfalls for gender equality. *Third World Quarterly*, 31(6), 833–850. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27896584>

Saleem, R. (2019, August 28). Religious Values and Worldviews. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Retrieved 27 Nov. 2023, from <https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-1158>.

Santiago, J. (2023). Title of the article. *International Journal of Culture and Religious Studies*, 4(2), 13-22. <https://carijournals.org/journals/index.php/IJCRS/article/download/1346/1561>

Silverstein, P. A. (2002). An Excess of Truth: Violence, Conspiracy Theorizing and the Algerian Civil War. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 75(4), 643–674. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3318165>

Sutterfield, M. A. (1992). *Courtier, soldier, scholar": Self-fashioning in Castiglione's "Courtier" and Shakespeare's "Hamlet"*. The George Washington University.

Triandafyllidou, A. (2023). Religion and nationalism revisited: Insights from southeastern and central eastern Europe. *Ethnicities*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687968231207980>

Twiss, S., Simion, M., & Petersen, R. (2015). Functional Prospects: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict. In *Religion and Public Policy: Human Rights, Conflict, and Ethics* (pp. 167-336). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Usó-Doménech, J.L., Nescolarde-Selva, J. What are Belief Systems?. *Found Sci* **21**, 147–152 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10699-015-9409-z>

White, T. J. (2010). *The Impact of British Colonialism on Irish Catholicism and National Identity: Repression, Reemergence, and Divergence*. *Title of the Journal*, Volume(Issue), Page Range. <https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesirlandaises.1743>

White, T. J. (2015). The Impact of British Colonialism on Irish Catholicism and National Identity: Repression, Reemergence, and Divergence. *Title of the Journal*, Volume(35-1), 21-37. DOI: [10.4000/etudesirlandaises.1743](https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesirlandaises.1743)

Williams, R. H. (1996). Politics, Religion, and the Analysis of Culture [Review of *The Myth of American Individualism; The Greening of Protestant Thought; Religion and the Racist Right*, by B. A. Shain, R. B. Fowler, & M. Barkun]. *Theory and Society*, 25(6), 883–900. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/657831>

Zack, L. (2002). Who Fought the Algerian War? Political Identity and Conflict in French-Ruled Algeria. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 16(1), 55–97. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20020148>