

A portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist.

The struggle to identify one's personal identity is an event that defines the lives of most young people. Stephen Dedalus of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Changez of The Reluctant Fundamentalist offer two distinct examples of people undergoing such a dilemma. Though both Stephen and Changez rebel against their ~~o~~ respective societies after undergoing crises of identity, only Stephen's rebellion is ^{smart} founded in deep seated moral objection. Through these identity crises, Joyce and Hamid reveal ^{beliefs} their own moral beliefs. _{→ not →}

Though they appear to be parallel ^{Characters} ~~stories~~, Stephen and Changez handle their dilemmas quite differently. Because America is an adopted culture for Changez, the basis of his identity crisis can best be described as culture shock. He has no real moral objection to the culture that he ~~partakes~~ partakes in; rather, his ultimate rebellion against America is the result of a sort of paradigm shift or realization, as described on page 145, "...my blinders were coming off, and I was dazzled and rendered immobile by the sudden broadening of my arc of vision." In this quote, Changez has just realized that the American fast paced business life is not for him. But this is more of a visceral reaction to the

recent events of his life than a moral upheaval; His first love has gone insane, the events of September 11th has affected the way others treat him, and tumultuous events are occurring at home. Essentially, when faced with adversity, Changez gives up. Through Changez, Hamid suggests that an intrinsic or reactionary objection to something is grounds for a change of lifestyle or a rebellion against one's culture.

Stephen Dedalus, conversely, objects to every facet of his society on moral grounds. Stephen is conflicted throughout the book, particularly about his loss of faith. Rather than forfeiting his life and family based on a whim, Stephen questions time and time again whether or not he fits into a societal role. His concern is displayed on page 111, ~~At his first~~ "At his first violent sin he had felt a wave of vitality pass out of him and had feared to find his body or soul maimed by the excess." After feeling such guilt for his sins, it is clear that only a real, deep objection to his society could cause him to rebel. Though Stephen's life as an artist begins with a realization similar to that of Changez, this realization is no fickle response to a changing environment. In Stephen's sacrifice of family, friends, and lifestyle, Joyce suggests that only a complete moral and ethical objection to one's surroundings

is grounds for rebellion.

Though both Changez and Stephen embark on new lives because an objection to their surroundings, only Stephen's rebellion is grounded in a true ethical struggle. ~~Stephen~~ The message presented by Joyce reflects the time period in which the novel was written; a time of more strict moral obligation. Similarly, the more ~~flexible~~ fickle of the two characters, Changez, is representative of the changing moral standards of today. Together, the two ~~characters~~ act as prime examples of the struggle to find one's personal identity; a struggle that is becoming more and more relevant to me each day.