

A Study of Irish Identity through the Work of Sean O'Faolean

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ABSTRACT

Irish identity in the years following independence was hotly contested. Even within the movement for independence itself, different traditions vied for prominence in the process of defining Irishness for the new state. This conflict cannot be absent in the world of Irish letters, where figures like Sean O'Faolean struggle against the “peasant Catholic” vision of Ireland embodied by de Valera. Whether secular cosmopolitan or neocolonial mystic-man, O'Faolean's contribution particularly on the matter of religion is key to understanding how Irish identity was negotiated in the early XXth century and may shed light on how it is being negotiated today. The present study undertakes an analysis of the works of Sean O'Faolean and its influence in the construction of the Irish identity during the XXth century.

Keywords: culture, de Valera, Ireland, literature