

This essay is dealing with the identity transformation of the Iranian converts to Pentecostal Christianity I was working with since September 2007 to July 2008 in London. Having chosen Bergers's and Luckmanns' sociology of knowledge as the main theoretical paradigm, I pursue two questions. The first one deals with socially relevant mechanisms of the transformation of 'knowledge' which defines social roles and identities. I try to demonstrate that the identity politics of the Islamic Republic has created a deep identity crisis. Conversion to Pentecostalism appears to be an answer to that identity crisis as it seems to provide a compatible 'knowledge' and a resolution of deep existential confusion. I analyze the ritual of 'Pentecostal worship' and the role of Christian community in the process of development of the Christian type of identity. The second question asks what determines the successful internalisation of the new identity. I try to demonstrate that it is the experience of the world. If the 'knowledge' of the community seems to correspond with the life experience and if the community is able to provide a sufficiently strong experience which would seem to verify the 'knowledge', one can expect a profound internalisation of the identity. In this essay, the experience of the world in the ritual and the experience of the life in the community appear as playing a crucial role in that process of socialization into the new life world.