

Besides the language, obviously, the religious component is also missing in the Armenian identity of Islamized Armenians. Hajji Ibrahim, for example, describes his identity:

My mother tongue is Kurdish, I feel myself as a Kurd. I am Armenian by origin. My parents are true Armenians. I grew up in a Kurdish village. I don't know a word of Armenian.... And when the Germans ask my identity and my nationality, I answer, I am from Turkey. My mother tongue is Kurdish. My identity is Armenian. My religion is Islam. (Yalçın, p. 347)

One way or another, we are faced with a large number of Armenians who, for different reasons and in different time frames, have converted to Islam. They may or may not be true to their adopted religion, but they are for the most part aware of their Armenian origin. They may answer differently if they are asked about their identity, and their answers, the components of their identity – Turkish, Kurdish, or Arab – and the intensity of these components would dot a spectrum unfamiliar, even paradoxical to our understanding of Armenian identity today. It may not sound logical at first glance, but a line of comparison can be established between these “Armenians” and the Armenians in European or American societies who, with a shadowy consciousness of their origin, have lost their language, are totally submerged in the mainstream culture, and have severed their ties with their ancestral heritage. The only difference, of course, is religion, Islam versus Christianity. The fact is that the Armenian Diasporan communities readily accept them as members of Armenian society although the opposite relationship may not hold true, that is, these so-called marginal Armenians may not