“Is Islam Part of Germany?”

The Role of the State in Processes of Exclusion: The Case of German Ministry of the Interior’s Policy towards Islam

The ministry of the interior is in charge of guarding and maintaining order, security and social cohesion of German society. This task rests on setting apart an inside (for which the ministry is responsible) from an outside (which is the domain of foreign policy) both domains being characterized by different logics of action. Islam in Germany is broadly conceived as blurring this clear boundary. The way the ministry of the interior takes up this challenge is good to reflect on how boundaries are drawn, maintained and managed by a state apparatus. It also allows to reflect on the specific role state produced knowledge plays for the societal construction of outsiders.

Werner Schiffauer is Professor of Comparative Social and Cultural Anthropology at the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder). His research interests include anthropology of migration, the organization of societal heterogeneity, Islam in Europe and anthropology of the state. He is currently working on knowledge procession and strategy development within the German Ministry of the Interior. He has published several books, among them Parallelgesellschaften. Wieviel Wertekonsens braucht unsere Gesellschaft? Ethno graphische Überlegungen (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2008); Nach dem Islamismus. Die Islamische Gemeinde Milli Görüş. Eine Ethnographie (Suhrkamp: Frankfurt am Main, 2010); Schule, Moschee, Elternhaus. Eine ethnologische Intervention (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2015); (Together with Anne Eilert and Marlene Rudloff) eds. So schaffen wir das. Eine Zivilgesellschaft im Aufbruch (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2017).