A doubly reflexive ethnographic methodology for the study of religious diversity in education

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The fruitful and intensive political, academic, and pedagogical debate on religious education in contexts of diversity seems to suffer from an ostensible imbalance. On one hand, models, proposals, and programmes destined to face 'challenges' and 'problems' generated by religious diversity in the classroom proliferate. On the other, in many countries and school systems there is a scarcity of empirical studies about intercultural and interreligious processes and relations as they occur in the school and extra-school educational spheres. This striking gap between the normative-prescriptive and the descriptive-empirical area is a feature of educational systems, which we are trying to close with comparative projects such as the REDCo project (*Religion in Education: A Contribution to Dialogue or a Factor of Conflict Transforming Societies of European Countries*, a European FP6 STRP project). In order for the distinctively anthropological attitude not to be limited to a criticism of the often essentialising and reifying conceptual and ideological uses of the concepts of 'religion', 'culture' and/or 'identity' in this domain, I hold that ethnography can contribute to overcoming this gap by empirically analysing the interwoven and often dialectic relationship between the discourses of the pedagogical-intellectual sphere and daily educational praxis. In the following pages, summarising experience gained particularly in the Spanish REDCo project contribution, I analyse, from a methodological point of view, ethnography's possible contribution to the study of interreligious relations in school contexts. In order to do this, I present and discuss the elements required to develop a conceptual-methodological model that can integrate 'syntactic', 'semantic', and 'pragmatic' dimensions that will articulate this dialectic relationship between ethnic discourses and cultural practices.

Keywords: ethnographic methodology; reflexivity; religious diversity; interreligious relations

Ongoing debates on religious education (RE) in contexts of diversity suffer from an ostensible imbalance. On the one hand, models, proposals, and

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programmes destined to face the 'challenges' and 'problems' generated by religious diversity in the classroom proliferate (cf. Heimbrock 2004; Afdal 2008; Jackson 2007, 2008; Wright 2006, 2008). On the other, in many countries and school systems there is a surprising scarcity of empirical studies about intercultural and interreligious processes and relations as they actually occur in the school and extra-school educational spheres. This striking gap between the prescriptive and the descriptive area is a feature of educational systems, which we are step by step trying to close with comparative projects such as the REDCo project (*Religion in Education: A Contribution to Dialogue or a Factor of Conflict Transforming Societies of European Countries, a European FP6 STRP project*). I hold that ethnography can contribute to overcoming this gap by empirically analysing the interwoven and often dialectic relationship between the discourses of the pedagogical-intellectual sphere and daily educational praxis. In the following pages, summarising experience gained in the course particularly of the Spanish REDCo project contribution (Dietz 2007; Dietz, Rosón Lorente and Ruiz Garzón 2008; Álvarez Veinguer and Rosón 2009), I will therefore analyse, from a methodological point of view, ethnography's possible contribution to the study of interreligious relations in school contexts. In order to do this, I will proceed to present and discuss the elements required to develop a conceptual-methodological model that can integrate 'syntactic', 'semantic', and 'pragmatic' dimensions that will articulate this dialectic relationship between ethnic discourses and cultural practices (a previous, larger version of this text has been published as part of the REDCo methodological discussion as Dietz 2009b).

Towards a doubly reflexive ethnography

Reflexivity is one of the main contributions of ethnography to the field of intercultural and interreligious education (Jackson 1997, 2003). Along with Giddens (1991, 20), I understand reflexivity to be 'the regularised use of knowledge about the circumstances of social life as a constituent element of its organisation and transformation'. The explicit positioning vis-à-vis the subject to be studied that I propose starts out with the identification of two different reflexive processes. The social actor, on the one hand, who constantly reflects on his daily tasks, and the meta-daily activity of the social researcher, on the other hand, interact in a 'double hermeneutics' (Giddens 1984).

The growing penetration of scientific knowledge in contemporary life worlds disseminates anthropological knowledge not only in the western societies that have generated this discipline, but also in the nascent national societies of the south and among the groups traditionally studied by anthropology. In this context, the 'identity politics' of the present-day social and religious movements discovers a source for strengthening group identity in

the appropriation or re-appropriation of scientific knowledge (cf. Dietz 2009a). In the case of the study of religious diversity and its link to educational policies, this self-reflexivity of the social and educational actor must be taken seriously and faced by a committed, engaged anthropology. Nevertheless, as this commitment with the actor studied does not imply full identification with his/her objectives, the task of a 'double hermeneutics' broadens the study of the actor to include the uses that this actor makes of academic knowledge.

The resulting ethnographic praxis that is proposed here is not limited to either aesthetic introspection, as suggested by postmodern tendencies, or mobilising externalisation, as practiced by activist approaches. Through the reciprocal negotiation of academic and political interests, it is possible to generate a 'novel mixture of theory and practice' (Escobar 1993, 386) that translates into a 'triadic methodology' (Álvarez Veinguer, and Rosón 2009), which consists of phases of empirical research, of academic theorisation, and of transference to political and/or educational praxis. This transference is not reduced to an act of 'consciousness raising', as conceived by Freirian pedagogics, but constitutes an exchange between the two kinds of knowledge mentioned: between the knowledge generated in the 'first order' by the 'experts' of their own life world, on the one hand, and the anthropological knowledge generated in the 'second order' by the academic 'expert', on the other. The possible contradiction that arises from the exchange of both perspectives has to be integrated by the ethnographer in the research process itself, which will oscillate dialectically between identification and disengagement, between phases of full commitment and phases of analytic reflection (Dietz 2009a).

The inter-subjective, dialectic relationship that thus arises between the researching subject and the actor-subject that is being researched (Kleining 1982) generates a continuous and reciprocal process of criticism and self-criticism between both parties.[1] Understood in this way, research on social reality is, simultaneously, its own critic (Kleining 1988), so that the ethnographic relationship itself becomes political praxis.

A comparative ethnographic methodology?

One of the main contributions and sources of success of the REDCo project has been its comparative research perspective. In order to analyse and visibilise these complex interrelations between habitualised religious practices, hegemonic as well as counter-hegemonic identity discourses and the role of the state and pedagogical institutions in the structuring of religious and inter-religious educational responses, such a comparative approach is necessary (Bertram-Troost et al. 2008a). The comparative dimension resulting from primary and secondary data collection is essential to ground the international and national debates on RE, debates in which all too often

prescriptive and abstract proposals, taken from different national and regional contexts, proliferate, that lack any previous empirical and critical assessment of the transferability of educational models from one country or region to another. Therefore, I propose a methodological model of how to analyse from a social sciences perspective, in general, and from an ethnographic approach, in particular, religious and interreligious phenomena in educational domains (Jackson 1997). For this purpose, ethnography, in its characteristic oscillating between *emic* – inward looking, actor-centred – and *etic* – externally comparative and structure-oriented – visions of educational, socio-cultural and religious realities, is conceived as a reflexive endeavour which retrieves from within the social actors' own discourses while contrasting it externally with their respective habitualised religious and cultural praxis. In the case of RE, this concatenation of discourse and praxis evolves in highly institutionalised and hierarchical contexts. Thus, an ethnography of education in diversity constellations will necessarily have to widen the analytic scope of these discursive and praxis dimensions towards a third axis of analysis: the particular institutional structurations (Giddens 1984), i.e. the institutional frames which result from the role played by underlying models of RE and in general by the 'pedagogies of otherness' in the corresponding nation-state's identity politics.

The syntactic dimension: structures of religious diversity

In order to avoid the usual instrumentalisation of ethnography as a technique for specific applications which are anecdotally used for a certain kind of 'school evaluation', the proposed analysis should transcend the strict school context and include the political and meta-pedagogical dimensions from which the educational 'problem' is detected, formulated, and institutionalised. The ethnographic study of RE should start out not from the school or classroom in particular, but from the nation-state that generates and articulates these educational institutions and programmes.

This 'syntactic' dimension, which works in an underlying way to structure – by broadening or restricting – both the meanings expressed discursively by the actors themselves and the actors' religious praxis (cf. below), requires an ethnographic-institutional approach that is explicitly focused on the public powers and their capacity to generate 'educational problems' (Gogolin, Krüger-Potratz, and Meyer 1998).

A critical analysis of the pedagogical uses of intra-religious and interreligious phenomena must, therefore, cover – again – a critical analysis of the school institution itself and its dependence on powers located outside of the school (Radtke 1995). A relational, not substantial definition of power allows us to study the political and/or educational institutions empirically, not as individualised 'objects', but as sets of hegemonically inter-related networks that articulate the 'political technology' of governance (Shore and

Wright 1997). In contrast to traditional political anthropology, the emerging 'anthropology of policy' analyses institutions not as exogenous entities that meddle in the sphere of 'what is local', but as localities in themselves, from which hegemonic discourses and practices are generated and implemented (Shore and Wright 1997).

By definition, and as a result of their own policies of 'nationalising nationalism' (Brubaker 1996), all nation-states perceive cultural and religious diversity as a challenge to their sovereignty, legitimacy, and persistence. In each particular case, the institutional responses to this challenge depend on the specific combination of supra-national, sub-national, and trans-national processes that have already been analysed, and of their particular intra-institutional perception. The institutional responses to these intercultural 'problems' or 'challenges' offer a privileged field for the empirical study of *la pensée d'État* (Sayad 2004) – of the 'otherness' projected from the nation-state towards 'its' citizenry. Because of this, in order to analyse and compare the specific 'pedagogies of otherness' developed by the respective national educational institutions, the starting point will not be the 'objective' religious–ethnic–cultural composition of the societies in question, but the collective *imaginaries* of 'otherness', as they are politically institutionalised and instrumentalised by the state (Favell 2001; Sayad 2004). The comparative study of educational policies illustrates first of all the constructed, relative, and contextual character of the underlying nationalising identity discourses (Glenn and de Jong 1996; Bakker and Griffioen 2001; Schiffauer et al. 2004).

From the infinite number of possible criteria of institutional 'discrimination' for categorising and 'problematising' the pupils – such as, for example, 'religion', 'culture', 'ethnic' identification, citizenship and/or nationality, age, gender, geographic origin, current residence, mother tongue, behaviour patterns, school performance, parents' socio-economic level, etc. (Jones 1997; Gomolla and Radtke 2002) – institutions define particular 'educational knowledge codes' (Bernstein 1975, 90) and generate a specific combination of criteria for detecting or denying the existence of 'diversity in the classroom' (Dietz 2009a). It is often the 'religious question' and preferentially the mere existence of religious diversity that is used to identify a supposed school problem. This problem is not formulated on the basis of an empirical analysis of the coexistence and confluence of different religious and/or confessional practices in the school sphere, but on the simple presence of pupils with nominally different creeds (Verlot 1996; Dietz and El-Shohoumi 2005). Therefore, this 'religious question' tends to be mixed up with socioeconomic or legal factors regarding the status of, e.g. Muslim migrants, which are hardly even related to religious diversity in institutional discourse.

In their process of institutionalisation, the different proposals for coping with religious diversity at school materialise according to the different possibilities of defining, delimiting, and combining the 'private' and 'public'

spheres (Modood 1997). The resulting typology of these possible combinations of the public and private spheres cannot be subsumed under the conventional concepts of 'assimilation' vs. 'segregation' (Verlot 2001). In the majority of educational systems, the national and regional contexts allow a broad range of intermediate solutions. In his contrastive analysis of the institutional and political 'reactions' to immigration that have unfolded in countries such as France, Germany, the UK, and the USA, Todd (1994) postulates that these national policies reflect the existence of structural constants, located at the heart of the majority society. Building on the emphasis Todd places on the societal structures and on their relationship with the institutional policies with respect to religious, cultural and linguistic diversity, Verlot (2001) overcomes the excessive dichotomisation between universalist attitudes and assimilationist policies, on the one hand, and differentialist attitudes and particularist policies, on the other, claimed by Todd. In his contrastive study of the educational integration policies developed with regard to the immigrant population by the Walloon and Flemish communities in Belgium. Verlot proposes to analyse the 'basic intuitions' that rule over both the public opinion that dominates the national and/or regional level and the decision-making practiced within the educational system. These would be the result of three different, but inter-related, parameters (Verlot 2001):

- the 'postulates' that dominate the actual configuration of the nationalist project under discussion and that oscillate between an 'civil-egalitarian' position and an 'ethnic-cultural' position;
- the 'perspectives' of self-perception by the host society, which in some cases considers itself to be the 'majority', whereas in others it tends to identify as a 'minority' population;
- and finally, the 'orientation' that the public opinion that predominates in each of the societies shows in its external cultural exchanges, i.e. the 'openness' vs. 'closeness' of society towards exogenous influences.

The combination of postulates, perspectives, and specific orientations that make up the 'basic intuitions' of a certain institutional actor generates a certain 'syntax', a habitual framework of 'structuring structures' (Bourdieu 1990) that pre-shapes the behaviour and widens or narrows the 'room to manoeuvre' of the institutions and actors of the nation-state and/or the community in question (Soenen, Verlot, and Suijs 1999). The value of these first comparative studies resides in their heuristic potential. In order to carry out an ethnography of religious diversity that transcends the level of mere discourse, it is necessary to inquire into the collective frames and structures that, as 'syntax of otherness', underlie the institutional reactions that the nation-states lead when faced with the heterogeneous challenges of religious diversity. With this syntactic level as a point of departure, it will be possible

to elucidate the range and structuring impact that the discourses of diversity achieve.

The semantic dimension

The analysis of the discursive strategies used by the different pedagogical–institutional actors requires a combination of three levels: in the first place, the level of approaches and models of RE, as developed and promoted by the academic, political, and school discourses, which contribute to the semantisation of 'the other' and which end up conforming the underlying syntax of pedagogical 'otherness'; secondly, the level of teaching and curricular designs specifically created to respond to the 'school problem' of religious diversity, which endow these models with semantic concreteness; and, finally, the level of individual discourses generated by the social and institutional actors that converge in school practice.

As analysed in the course of the REDCo project (cf. Weisse 2007; Avest et al. 2009; Want et al. 2009), in RE classes the teaching staff often suffers an ostensible overload of didactical–pedagogical and ideological–political function. The tendency to overload the teaching staff with functions and competences that are complementary to their often canonised monocultural and mono-confessional training, once again generates 'cognitivist' solutions: reified information about 'the' religion of the pupils with whom they will be working daily is transferred through an endless list of courses. This generates openly defensive attitudes with respect to religious and cultural 'otherness' that, instead of questioning the teacher's monolithic hegemonic identity as representative of the 'national culture' or 'the minority belief', reinforces it even more. The result is a reciprocal, mutually invigorating ethnocentrism.

As happens in all externally induced processes of ethnogenesis, of processes of generating new ethnic identities in contexts of power asymmetry, I hold that, in school practice, frequently the officialised reduction of religious diversity to 'items' that indicate 'otherness' as well as the reifying thematisation of interreligious phenomena end up ethnifying the discourses of the different actors who interact within school and outside of it. Due to the mentioned power asymmetry, in practice these ethnified discourses may easily evolve towards an 'institutional racism' (Verlot 2002) directed against stigmatised and 'minoritised' others.

The pragmatic dimension

An ethnography of religious diversity in education, therefore, will have to broaden the narrow margin of the traditional 'school ethnography' in order to include the impact that both the underlying structuring syntax and the institutional discourses that semanticise religious diversity praxis *ab initio*

have on 'school culture'. Only an ethnographic approach that will need to oscillate permanently between the *emic* perspective, centred on the discourses of the different actors who interact in the school context, and the *etic* perspective, that observes and registers the praxis of the interaction established among these actors (Díaz de Rada 2010), will be able to adequately reflect the reciprocally articulated relations among the structuring structures and the processes of religious communities' inter-relations and hybridisations.

The 'pragmatic' dimension (Verlot and Sierens 1997) and its study in school diversity have been introduced and conceptualised, above all, from the point of view of an 'intercultural' (cf. Dietz 2009a) and/or 'conceptual hermeneutics' (cf. Skeie 2009). The resulting hermeneutic approach, as the one proposed by Abdallah-Pretceille and Porcher (1996), distinguishes between a specifically 'hermeneutic' dimension – here called 'semantic' – and a 'pragmatic' dimension (70) of the analysis of both intra- and interreligious phenomena. However, classic hermeneutic anthropology tends to focus on the 'meanings' and 'significance' that are habitualised and transmitted in a situation of diversity (Abdallah-Pretceille and Porcher 1996). Similarly inspired in the praxis approach developed by Bourdieu, Gogolin (1994) analyses school praxis as a place of interaction and confrontation among diverse rutinised and habitualised 'life worlds' and 'lifestyles'. School conflicts and misunderstandings are analysed as results of the growing gap that separates the pluralisation and multilingualisation of the pupils' 'life worlds', on the one hand, and the persistence of a monocultural and 'monolingual habitus' on the part of the teaching staff and the school institution as a whole, on the other hand (Gogolin 1994). This 'monolingual habitus' transcends the merely linguistic sphere in order to become the sign and refuge of the teaching staff's identity under conditions of increasing professional complexity (Gogolin 1997, 2002). This approach is attractive because of its capacity to 'naturalise' and 'normalise' the exceptionality of – nationalising and nationalised – monolingualism, monoculturalism and monoconfessionalism (Gogolin 1997).

In her longitudinal ethnographic study of a primary school in an urban-migratory context, Gogolin (1997) shows how this monolingual habitus practiced by the teaching staff and institutionally backed by the educational system coexists with the obvious cultural and religious diversification of the school, family, and residential environments. Above all in immigration and/or transmigration contexts of urban agglomerations, daily life worlds are increasingly diverse, a process which affects both native and migrant populations and which has been termed by Vertovec (2007) as 'super-diversity'. Institutional monoculturalism and life world super-diversity thus end up coexisting. This contradictory coexistence is, in the majority of cases, accepted by the affected pupils, their families and neighbourhoods. This acceptance would be, then, a 'common sense' matter that is hegemonically

imposed by the institutions of majority society and that is internalised as a kind of compromise or *arrangement* by the minority groups (Gogolin 1997).

In this context, an ethnographic focus on the pupils' own perspectives (Jackson 1997) sheds new light on both the actors' identity and their interaction patterns inside the classroom.[2] As opposed to this zeal to invigorate boundaries between 'ours' and 'theirs', the experiments with complex learning modalities show that the patterns of interaction articulated by pupils from different religions, cultures, subcultures etc., reflect forms of relationship that are not interreligious or intercultural, but rather 'transcultural' (Cowie et al. 1994). The proclaimed 'tolerance' and 'empathy' with respect to the 'different' child is surpassed and dissolved throughout an interaction that is characterised by a constant oscillation between different verbal and non-verbal codes that can come from one religious or cultural context or the other, but that are hybridised in the joint dramatisation and interaction (Verstraete 1999). Consequently, a decidedly pragmatic focus surpasses the essentialism inherent in the conventional pedagogical uses of the concept of religion and/ or of culture (Soenen, Verlot, and Suijs 1999). In the educational context, in particular, Soenen (1998) identifies a minimum of three 'modes of interaction', defined by specific logics that constantly overlap in school praxis and that do not stem from a specific religion or culture, but are the result of the dynamic hierarchisation that is part of the school institution:

- In the first place, the 'child mode of interaction' (*kind-interactiewijze*) articulates the patterns of behaviour transmitted and acquired in the family framework of reference and as such differs according to the extra-school socialisation processes, both in the case of pupils from indigenous minorities or immigrants and in the case of those belonging to majority society.
- Secondly, the 'pupil mode of interaction' (*leerling-interactiewijze*) is imposed by the explicit and implicit patterns of authority, discipline, and sanction that rule the school institution; therefore, independently of their origin, all the children find themselves subjected to this pedagogical canon.
- Finally, the 'youngster mode of interaction' (*jongeren-interactiewijze*) is generated by the shared interests of the adolescents as members of a specific 'peer group'; this peer group can emerge reproducing or surpassing ethnic and/or cultural delimitations.

As analysed in several REDCo project case studies,[3] in school praxis both conflict and cooperation are the product of the situational and strategic concatenation of these modes of interaction by the actors involved. When faced with an authoritarian teacher, perceived as an antagonist by a large part of the student body, the 'peer group' generates links of intracultural solidarity – as

part of a single group of youngsters in opposition to the exogenous school world – that are, at the same time, intercultural, since they agglutinate culturally diverse students around a common, shared interest.

The corresponding ethnographic study of these modes of interaction could not be limited either to the school sphere or to the family and community sphere (Wulf 2002). The 'youth cultures – those cultural practices by which young people articulate their passage through biological and social time' (Hewitt 1998, 13) offer the chance to study *in situ* the processes of ethnic, religious and/or cultural hybridisation that are reflected afterwards in conflictive and/or cooperative behaviours within the school institution (Bertram-Troost et al. 2008b; Knauth and Körs 2008). The 'creolised uses' (Hewitt 1986) that frequently characterise these youth cultures and beliefs that emerge from close, although not always harmonic, intercultural coexistence out of school, show that religious and cultural hybridisation in asymmetric contexts of ethnogenesis can generate 'cultural modalities' (Hewitt 1998) which may be exclusive or inclusive. If, apart from the omnipresent 'modalities of what is ethnocentric' (product of intragroup ethnogenesis) and the 'modalities of syncretism' and 'religious' or 'cultural hybridity' (generated by intercultural hybridisation) new 'modalities of what is supra-cultural' (Hewitt 1998, 14) arise, youth cultures may emerge as new 'imagined communities', which are different from the conventional, enclosed identity ghettos (Hewitt 1998).

Conclusions

In order to illustrate the empirical operationality of this conceptual approach of an ethnography of religious diversity at school, the aim of this contribution has been the development and discussion of a conceptual-methodological grid. The main contribution that anthropology can and should offer to the contemporary debate on religious diversity and interreligious relations resides in its ethnographic potential. Nevertheless, in order to take advantage of this potential, it is indispensable, in the first place, to rethink and reiterate the close relationship that must exist between theoretical conceptualisation and empirical realisation.

Therefore, as detailed above, I hold that ethnography cannot be reduced either to a merely additional and interchangeable instrument in the range of social science methods and techniques or to a simple weapon to 'liberate' the 'oppressed'. Going beyond the alternative between academicism – whether of a positivist or postmodern origin – and – conservative, integrational, or 'empowering' – tranformationism, my proposal is to conceive ethnography and its systematic oscillation between an *emic* – internal, actor-oriented – and an *etic* – external, interaction-oriented – vision of social reality as a reflexive task that recovers, from within, the discourse of the social actor being studied, while simultaneously contrasting this discourse, from

outside, with the actor's respective habitualised praxis. This oscillation and contrast between an *emic*, semantic and discursive axis and an *etic*, praxis and interaction driven axis has to be finally integrated into an ethnographic study of the institutional structurations in which RE develops.

As developed above, in linking these different research perspectives, a three-dimensional ethnographic model emerges, which combines (Dietz 2009a; cf. Figure 1):

- a 'semantic' dimension, centred on the actor, whose religious identity discourse is studied – basically through ethnographic interviews – from an *emic* perspective and is analysed in relation to his/her strategies of religious and/or ethnic identity;
- a 'pragmatic' dimension, focused on the religious praxis as particular modes of interaction, which are studied – above all through participant observations- from an *etic* perspective and are analysed in relation to their functions both as 'intracultural' habitus and as 'intercultural' competences;
- and a 'syntactic' dimension, centred on the institutions inside of which these religious identity discourses and interaction practices are developed; these institutional settings are analysed and 'condensed' starting from the classical 'epistemological windows' (Werner and Schoepfle 1987) of fieldwork, i.e. the systematic contradictions that emerge when contrasting *emic* versus *etic* types of ethnographic data and that have

Semantic Dimension	Pragmatic Dimension	Syntactic Dimension
actor-centred	interaction-centred	institution-centred
religious identity and/or ethnicity	religious praxis, culture (intra-culture / inter-culture)	institutional entities (territorialised)
= discourse	= practice	= societal structure
ethnographic interviews	participant observations	intercultural workshops
= *emic*	= *etic*	= *emic* / *etic* ('epistemological windows')

Figure 1. Dimensions of a comparative ethnographic methodology.

to be interpreted not as mere data incongruities, but as those 'coherent inconsistencies' (Verlot 2001) which reveal the underlying particular logic of the analysed institutions and its respective nation-state in question.

Far from establishing new empirical fields and/or new academic sub-disciplines in a context that is already excessively specialised and compartmentalised, the distinctively anthropological contribution to the study of RE lies in its particular, theoretical-empirical binomial. This dual emphasis on a theorisation about religious diversity and an ethnography of the interreligious and intra-religious phenomena at school generates an integral vision, both *emic* and *etic*, of the object-subject of study. This allows us, on the one hand, to de-construct and de-cipher the discursive and practical fluctuations of a broad range of religious essentialisms, ethnicisms nationalisms. On the other hand, its semantic and pragmatic analyses complement each other and complete an ethnographic vision of the institutions that, like an omnipresent but underlying syntax, structure the identity discourses of each of the actors studied as well as their respective religious life-world practices. By doing this, turning our eyes from the problem to the problemiser, from the individual – the believer, the community member – to the sedentary institutions, from the subordinate minority or the 'beneficiary' client to the hegemonic 'benefactor' nation-state, the anthropological endeavour at least turns disturbing.

Acknowledgement

Notes
1. Cf. for details on this process the chapters by Álvarez Veinguer and Rosón (2009) on the triadic methodology and by O'Grady (2009) on communities of practice.
2. Exploratory empirical research in this field is presented in Knauth, Leutner-Ramme, and Weisse (2000) and, as a result of the REDCo project, in Avest et al. (2009) and Want et al. (2009).
3. Cf. Bertram-Troost et al. (2008a) as well as Knauth's (2009) and von der Lippe's (2009) case studies as well as Skeie's (2009) comprehensive conceptual contribution.

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