

# Osura Diseideza

## Literary Analysis through the Kristang Interdisciplinary Hexadecimal Framework

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### 1. Introduction

This paper presents the Kristang creole/indigenous meta-methodology known as the Osura Diseideza ('Bone-Structure of Base-Sixteen / Hexadecimal Bone-Structure'), and considers how its presence in Kristang grammar and psychology allows it to also be used for and/or extended to literary analysis and critique. Codified creole and/or indigenous epistemological frameworks that have also been rendered generalisable for more universal use still remain relatively few and far between in academia, especially from Sundaland and/or island Southeast Asia, and as such, the Diseideza offers a fairly unique methodological framework and philosophy that is simultaneously grounded in Kristang tradition, and in contemporary interests and questions related to how we understand, make sense of and ultimately rationalise and organise reality.

The Kristang language and culture themselves are also fairly unusual, in that they today also represent and signal the immense potential of psychoemotionally healthy and consistent cultural and linguistic revitalisation to reinvigorate global society and the thinking and structures that underpin it. Also known as the Portuguese-Eurasians or Serani, both the Kristang and our creole language are descended from coercive intermarriages between invading Portuguese and local Malay residents and residents of other ethnicities in the city of Melaka starting from 1511. A subsequent storied but generally suppressed history of counter-institutional non-violent grassroots movements, including major efforts in 1805-1808 in Melaka and 1877-1923 in Singapore against the British, and in 1983-1987 and 2016-present against the illiberal Singapore state, mean that the Kristang have also developed a unique creole culture that is positioned not just at the crossroads of Southeast Asian identity, but that is generally progressive, irreverent, cross-culturally receptive, and highly and subversively metacognitive. Many critical elements of our culture, again previously occluded or withered into non-codification and transmissibility, have been excavated, consolidated and provided with a taxonomy and nomenclature especially since 2022 by myself as the Kabesa or leader of the community in Singapore, alongside public renegotiations of our

history and rebuttals of efforts to portray the community and language as fake, invented and/or insignificant by academics, again especially in Singapore since 1989.

The Diseideza is one of the most critical of such excavated elements, which are together known as Krismatra, or Progenitor Kristang; at its most reductive and essentialised, the Diseideza basically postulates that a significant number of intangible aspects of reality are more easily understood when considered as being underwritten by a hexadecimal or base-16 mathematics, as opposed to a decimal or base-10 one that remains dominant almost universally across the globe thanks to the hegemony of Western culture and thought. The Kristang language itself has sixteen personal Pronomi or pronoun points of view (see below) as opposed to English's mere three (I, you and he/she/it), as well as a separate set of base-16 numbers, the Diseides, alongside two other counting systems in base-10 (Nanamba or Nangamba) and base-12 (Lusembra); these together allow for a more holistic and multifaceted appreciation of our existence not available to approaches that only make use of a decimal-based organising conception of our environment and incoming stimuli and phenomena.

Apart from their obvious relevance in programming and STEM work, therefore, the Diseides counting system and the Diseideza meta-epistemological approach that the Diseides support are also foundational to the Ajundra, the Kristang understanding of spacetime and its component dimensions, and the Osura Pesuasang, the Kristang creole/indigenous theory of the human psyche that has seen large and systemically superlative use and success in Singapore since its excavation and consolidation by the author in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wong, 2023). The parallel narrative form of the Osura Pesuasang, the Via Hierosa or hexadecimal Kristang Hero's Journey, has also been of significant interest to both the general public and academia (Wong, 2022), again supporting psychoemotional well-being and mental health in a time where in 2022 the suicide rate in Singapore was at its highest in over 20 years, and with suicide the main cause of death for Singaporeans aged 10 to 29 for the fourth year in a row since 2018 (Channel NewsAsia, 2023).

The extension of the Diseideza and its effectiveness to other domains of thought is hence not simply a thought experiment; one of the main features of Kristang-related research that the community has sought since revitalisation began in 2016 is that it must have clear, applied and immediate or in-time real-world interdisciplinary effects and benefits for both ourselves and for other indigenous communities around us who are also interested in revitalisation and who we acknowledge appear to look to our own hero's journey as an example. Why a focus on literary analysis as the hub of that interdisciplinarity? Both Singapore and the species in general appear to be at a critical juncture with regard to narratives and the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves – or which we are told we are telling ourselves about ourselves (Kwa, 2015; The Online Citizen, 2023). More than ever, we appear to seek tools that do not just allow us to live vicariously, but which allow us to critically examine our own lived experience and the stories we tell ourselves about it (Ackerman, 2022; Pinsker, 2022), as Fischer (2023) argues while writing about the revitalisation effort, Kristang is ideally sited at the crossroads of

cultures for that extremely demanding enterprise of unpacking the stories and narratives we live in as

a reminder of diasporic minorities that continue to contribute to the textures of contemporary society and keep the pores of state membranes receptive and flexible ... Kristang itself is both East and West, nonexistent without their mixture (pp. 241-242).

## 2. The Osura Diseideza as an Interdisciplinary Frame for Literary Analysis

As mentioned above, the Diseideza suggests that reality is best viewed in hexdectets, or clusters of sixteen discrete items; integer sub-groupings of the hexadecimal approach based on the factors of sixteen, such as octets and quartets, are also appropriate, so long as they are subordinated with a view of the overall hexadecimal approach in mind. The Ajundra, Osura Pesuasang, the Via Hierosa and Pronomi Kristang are thus organised into repeating fractal patterns of duets, quartets, octets and hexdectets, and Table 1 below thus presents these aspects of the Diseideza as they can be used for literary analysis, with the Pronomi as the central framing device of this paper. The symbols ê, í, ç, ú, ã, õ and ô represent the hexadecimal numbers 10 to 15 / A to F and 16 in Kristang in consecutive ascending order; except for the pronouns, only English translations of the Kristang concepts are provided.

S/N	Pronomi / Pronoun		Ajundra / Dimension	Osura		Focal Question for Literary Analysis
	Ungguanza / Singular (SG)	Dosdosu / Plural (PL)		Pesuasang Karnansa / Archetype	Via Hierosa / Hero's Journey	
<b>1 to 4: Features of the Text</b>						
1 <sub>16</sub>	yo (I)	nus (we)	Line	Leader	The Call to Adventure	What is the text about?
2 <sub>16</sub>	bos (you)	bolotu (you all)	Plane	Trader	The Bargain of Goodwill	What kind of text is this?
3 <sub>16</sub>	eli (he/she/it/they (SG))	olotu (they (PL))	Space	Creator	The Flame of the Forest	Where was this text published?
4 <sub>16</sub>	ela (no equivalent in English)	eletu (no equivalent in English)	Time	Animator	The Heart of the World	When was this text published?
<b>5 to 8: The Reality of the Text</b>						
5 <sub>16</sub>	ea	nutu	Probability	Practitioner	The Soul of the Deep	How do I as a character in the text feel?

S/N	Pronomi / Pronoun		Ajundra / Dimension	Osura Pesuasang Karnansa / Archetype	Via Hierosa / Hero's Journey	Focal Question for Literary Analysis
	Ungguanza / Singular (SG)	Dosdosu / Plural (PL)				
6 <sub>16</sub>	benes	bensutu	Reality	Scholar	The Dauntless Road	How do I as a character in the text feel about other characters or entities in the text?
7 <sub>16</sub>	ili	osutu	Willpower	Moderator	The Shape of the Numinous	How do I as a character in the text feel about the (tangible) world in this text?
8 <sub>16</sub>	vala	valatu	Symmetry	Worker	The Dreaming Sun	How do I as a character in the text feel about (intangible) existence / the audience in this text?
<b>9 to 12: The Author's Text</b>						
9 <sub>16</sub>	egu	nosos	Replicatio n	Initiator	The Shimmering Moon	How do I as the author feel about the text?

S/N	Pronomi / Pronoun		Ajundra / Dimension	Osura Pesuasang Karnansa / Archetype	Via Hierosa / Hero's Journey	Focal Question for Literary Analysis
	Ungguanza / Singular (SG)	Dosdosu / Plural (PL)				
ê <sub>16</sub>	bochi	bosos	Entropy	Trainer	The Road of Winds	How do I as the author feel you will feel about the text? = What literary techniques are in the text?
í <sub>16</sub>	veli	olosos	Resilience	Navigator	The Song of the Valiant	How do I as the author feel the tangible world will feel about the text? = How are literary techniques used in this text and to what effect?
ç <sub>16</sub>	vela	veletu	Paradox	Invigorato r	Dragonsheart	How do I as the author feel intangible existence will feel about this text? = What is the existential significance of the text to the author?
<b>13 to 16: Textual Critique</b>						

S/N	Pronomi / Pronoun		Ajundra / Dimension	Osura		Focal Question for Literary Analysis
	Ungguanza / Singular (SG)	Dosdosu / Plural (PL)		Pesuasang Karnansa / Archetype	Via Hierosa / Hero's Journey	
ú <sub>16</sub>	nekru	nonos	Suspension	Interpreter	The Fabric of the Universe	How do I feel about the text?
ã <sub>16</sub>	baja	bonos	Transference	Protector	The Hands of the Earth	How do you feel about the text? = How should this text be taught?
õ <sub>16</sub>	zeli	olonos	Reciprocity	Motivator	The Embrace of Destiny	How does the audience feel about the text? = How can and should this text be changed? = How can I critique this text?
ô <sub>16</sub>	vaha	vahatu	Nonlocality	Negotiator	The Gate of Worlds	How does the collective feel about the text? = Should this text be allowed to exist (or be promoted)?

Table 1: Components of the Osura Diseideza matched for literary analysis

Three immediate uses of the Osura Diseideza as a literary analysis framework can immediately be discerned at a broad level from Table 1.

- as a hexdectet, it mirrors and therefore supports the general developmental sequence of teaching that K-12 schools and educators in Singapore adopt for the teaching of literature, which also moves from basic features of the text (lower secondary), to the world of the text and one's response to the text (upper secondary), to the author's intentionality and devices used within the text to support that intention (pre-tertiary).

- as two octets, it mirrors the relationship between text (first to eighth rows) and textual analysis (ninth to sixteenth rows).
- as four quartets, it mirrors the sequence of pronoun usage in Kristang, with the first pronoun in each quartet positioned as I / the ego, the second as you / the opposite or contrast, the third as he/she/it/they(SG) / the third or observer, and the fourth as the collective personified as an individual or singularity. It therefore supports the metacognitive application, integration and decompartmentalisation of literature, and highlights its relation to daily life.

A short discussion of each of the sixteen framework components is further provided below.

#### **1<sub>16</sub> / Line / What is the text about?**

This treats the text and its narrative as a single line, asking us to focus simply on and describe the bare, superficial characteristics of the narrative as we can observe them without deeper, more elaborate treatment. The observer therefore uses the first-person (1SG/1PL) to simply discuss how the agentic individual observer is observing a phenomenon (the text / narrative).

#### **2<sub>16</sub> / Plane / What kind of text is this?**

This sees the text or narrative in terms of genre, medium or other typologies, comparing the single line of the narratives to other lines or narratives that may be similar or parallel to it in two dimensions, or which may be vastly different or disparate narratives that bear little resemblance to the text. The observer therefore uses the second-person (2SG/2PL) to index the second object apparent in contrast to or in ontological opposition to the agentic one-dimensional line.

#### **3<sub>16</sub> / Space / Where was this text published?**

This sees the text or narrative in three dimensions, comparing planes of genres and/or mediums across cultures and contexts that may have different approaches to the same genre or medium, and considering basic facets of the text that are emergent as a result of its synchronic position in a particular culture and context. The observer therefore uses the third-person (3SG/3PL) to index a point of comparison that lies outside of two-dimensional flat planar space.

#### **4<sub>16</sub> / Time / When was this text published?**

This sees the text or narrative in four dimensions, comparing the three-dimensional cubic space of a culture or context or literature as it evolves and changes across the scalar axis of time, and considering basic facets of the text that are relative to its diachronic place in time. The observer therefore uses the fourth-person (4SG/4PL) to index a hypercubic point of comparison that lies outside of three-dimensional cubic space, again treating time itself as a scalar vector (in other words, considering time as a timeline).

**5<sub>16</sub> / Probability / How do I as a character in the text feel?**

This sees the text or narrative in five dimensions, comparing the four-dimensional hypercubic space of the observer's universe with that of the four-dimensional hypercubic space of the universe of the text or narrative, which is necessarily treated as a possible alternate universe when we read or perform or invest in a text. The observer therefore uses the fifth-person (5SG/5PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and a character (or any single entity or object) in the text as much as possible, much as a metaphor (more than a simile) collapses the distinction between the two entities it indexes.

**6<sub>16</sub> / Reality / How do I as a character in the text feel about other characters and entities in the text?**

This sees the text or narrative in six dimensions, comparing the fifth-dimensional probabilistic space of the observer's *anumfra* (portal or wormhole or tunnel or point of entry) with that of other possible *anumfra* into the same universe of the text or narrative created at the same time. The observer therefore uses the sixth-person (6SG/6PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and a character in the text, and an object or entity in contrast to or in ontological opposition to the character.

**7<sub>16</sub> / Willpower / How do I as a character in the text feel about the (tangible) world in this text?**

This sees the text or narrative in seven dimensions, comparing the sixth-dimensional phase space or anumfrac space with that of other possible phase spaces or anumfrac spaces created in the same universe of the text or narrative. The observer therefore uses the seventh-person (7SG/7PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and a character in the text, and the (tangible) world that they inhabit, which includes cultures, contexts and environments particular to the universe of the text.

**8<sub>16</sub> / Symmetry / How do I as a character in the text feel about (intangible) existence / the audience in this text?**

This sees the text or narrative in eight dimensions, comparing the seventh-dimensional brane space (a particular character, entity or object's approach to the tangible reality of the universe they inhabit) with that of other possible brane spaces created in the same universe of the text or narrative. The observer therefore uses the eighth-person (8SG/8PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and a character in the text, and the (intangible) existence that they inhabit, seeking symmetry, as we do in our real-world realities, between the tangible and intangible aspects of the reality of the text, including as they are broken (e.g. via the fourth wall, metatextual commentary, etc.).



**9<sub>16</sub> / Replication / How do I as the author feel about the text?**

This sees the text or narrative in nine dimensions, comparing the eighth-dimensional relationship between the observer and the text with the relationships between other observers and other texts, and therefore taking the point of view of the author. The observer therefore uses the ninth-person (9SG/9PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the author, and to understand the author's own approach to the text.

**ê<sub>16</sub> / Entropy / How do I as the author feel you will feel about the text? = What literary techniques are in the text?**

This sees the text or narrative in ten dimensions, comparing the nine-dimensional observer's replicated observations of the author with other observers' replicated observations of other authors. The observer therefore uses the tenth-person (10SG/10PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the author of the text, and an object or entity in contrast or ontological opposition to the author, in order to understand how the text was constructed in relation to a reader or audience by deconstructing it.

**í<sub>16</sub> / Resilience / How do I as the author feel the tangible world will feel about the text? = How are the literary techniques used in the text and to wh/at effect?**

This sees the text or narrative in eleven dimensions, comparing ten-dimensional deconstructions and lists of features of a text. The observer therefore uses the eleventh-person (11SG/11PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the author of the text, and the author's wider intended contemporary audience or scholarship that becomes evident by considering how literary techniques are used in the text and to what effect.

**ç<sub>16</sub> / Paradox / How do I as the author feel intangible existence will feel about this text? = What is the existential significance of the text to the author?**

This sees the text or narrative in twelve dimensions, comparing eleven-dimensional analyses of the effects of the author's work on the observer and different observers. The observer therefore uses the twelfth-person (12SG/12PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the space of the multiverse established by both the observer and the author of the text, and the author's own understanding of time (either their own timeline, or their place in the timeline or their place in history).

**ú<sub>16</sub> / Suspension / How do I feel about the text?**

This sees the text in thirteen dimensions, comparing twelve-dimensional assessments of a text's existential value and significance. The observer therefore uses the thirteenth-person (13SG/13PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the space outside of the relations between observer and text and between observer and author, and to therefore replicate the observer outside the observer and observe the observer.

**$\tilde{\alpha}_{16}$  / Transference / How do you feel about the text? = How should this text be taught or performed?**

This sees the text in fourteen dimensions, comparing thirteen-dimensional understandings of the observer observing the observer interacting with text and author. The observer therefore uses the fourteenth-person (14SG/14PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the space outside of the relations between observer and text and between observer and author, and an object or entity in contrast or ontological opposition to that space (e.g. a student, or an actor performing the same text).

 **$\tilde{\omega}_{16}$  / Reciprocity / How does the (tangible) world feel about the text? = How can and should this text be changed? = How can I critique this text?**

This sees the text in fifteen dimensions, comparing fourteen-dimensional understandings of the observer observing others (or 'other versions of the observer') interacting with the text and author. The observer therefore uses the fifteenth-person (15SG/15PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the space outside of the relations between observer and text and between observer and author, and a third party observing the observer observing others interacting with the text (like the general public, or an intended readership).

 **$\hat{\omega}_{16}$  / Nonlocality / How does (intangible) existence feel about the text? = Should this text be allowed to exist (or be promoted)?**

This sees the text in sixteen dimensions, comparing fifteen-dimensional understandings of the observer observing everything (or 'the observer projected onto all of reality') interacting with the text and author. The observer therefore uses the sixteenth-person (16SG/16PL) to collapse the distinction between the observer and the space outside of the relations between observer and text and between observer and author, and all of humanity observing the observer observing others interacting with the text.

**3. Conclusion**

All together, the Diseideza offers one superlative, critical and unique conclusion: it suggests that human psychoemotional development is the major operant factor for determining the ability of an individual to not simply conduct literary analysis, but to develop and enhance their empathetic capacity, and to critique and examine the work of others in fair, nuanced and meaningful ways. It is your friendly neighbourhood Merlionsman's hope that the Diseideza, and other frameworks like it, can continue to expand the beautiful, equalising and decolonising power of indigenous and creole literatures, and ultimately encourage everyone to find new ways forward.

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