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Social Morphodynamics: Mapping Identity Transformations, Cultural Encounters, and the Evolution of Core Values

Albert Doja, University of Lille & University of Harvard

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In this paper given to Harvard CES community in the framework of my appointment as a Visiting Research Scholar, I outline a personal account of a theoretical path toward a specific research project and scientific method, which I believe may figure out what anthropology is or may be heading today. European societies are facing new challenges stemming from cultural encounters and identity transformations. These have revealed the vulnerability of the EU project and cosmopolitan European identity.

To address these challenges I propose a new theoretical and methodological approach. My research in progress on European identity transformations draws on structural socio-anthropology and aims to develop some of Lévi-Strauss's and Pierre Bourdieu's conceptual and theoretical tools. I outline a complex research strategy including the use of Bayesian inference and computer formalism, while comparison of the findings with policy choices and practices will make it possible to assess the effects of European integration policies.

## Introduction

This September 2017, I took up an appointment at Harvard University where I am offered a visiting position at the Center for European Studies. Today September 20, 2017, I have the honor to be the first to open the Visiting Scholars Lecture Series with this talk to Harvard community, which makes me feel very much honored and be very grateful to be part of Harvard intellectual community. Two weeks earlier, at the end of the induction day of Harvard CES Visiting Scholars, we went to look, among other things, what it means to a freshman to touch John Harvard's feet.

Before that, however, I came at Harvard through the Massachusetts Avenue and I first stopped at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where so many things are being done on quantum theory, on artificial intelligence, and on "anthropological futures", to mention but the title of a book by Michael Fischer, a MIT professor of anthropology. Moving from one quarter to another, the mind is constantly up a storm that could push the limits of human performance and understanding. As a French educated and French minded anthropologist, a memorable question came immediately to my mind from Marvin Minsky and his *Society of Mind*: "What magical trick makes us intelligent?"

Quite naturally, I found myself asking – What is a magical trick that makes the research I am doing? What magical trick makes identity politics so powerful? Paraphrasing Marvin Minsky, the trick is that there is no trick. The research I am doing as the power of identity politics or the importance of populism that is taking much of our debates nowadays, as we have seen last week at CES, stem from the vast diversity of people's minds, not from any single, perfect principle, value, idea, or motivation. People's actions and decisions, like the research any of us is doing, "emerge from conflicts and negotiations among societies of processes that constantly challenge one another" (Minsky 1986, 308).

Among many things, the cognitive revolution is now a contemporary interdisciplinary effort to provide scientific answers to long-standing epistemological questions. It was born here, in this intellectually stimulating environment, as an important intellectual movement among

some celebrated forefathers, the computer scientists Herbert Simon and Marvin Minsky, the psychologists George Miller and Jerome Bruner, the linguist Noam Chomsky and the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss.

### **The Influence of Lévi-Strauss**

For Lévi-Strauss, since human brains are themselves natural objects and since they are substantially the same throughout the species *Homo sapiens*, we must suppose that when cultural products are generated the process must impart to them certain universal (natural) characteristics of the brain itself. Thus, in investigating the elementary structures of cultural phenomena, we are also making discoveries about the nature of humankind.

Verbal categories provide the mechanism through which universal structural characteristics of human brains are transformed into universal structural characteristics of human culture. In this way, category formation in human beings follow universal natural paths. It is not that it *must* always happen the same way everywhere but that the human brain is so constructed that it is predisposed to develop categories of a particular kind in a particular way.

The epistemological issues of anthropological knowledge and the ethical conception of the anthropologist's work are consistently present throughout Lévi-Strauss's work, in its ontological, aetiological and salvational dimensions, as he dealt with both the nature and the denaturation of humankind and society, trying to return to the means, or showing the absence of means, to alleviate the evils. Clearly, it is his own adroitness and talent to have been able to establish the theoretical foundations of a revolutionary contribution, both scientific and humanistic, to general anthropology.

Contrary to the received ideas of his critics, little of recent topical, ethical, methodological or epistemological interest escaped Lévi-Strauss's notice, understanding and engagement. His corpus of work is far-reaching and comprehensive in scope, encompassing methodology, philosophy, history, humanism, mythology, linguistics, aesthetics, cognition and reasoning. Indeed, Claude Lévi-Strauss anticipated and called for the advent of what I believe must be the future of a theoretical anthropology. He is hailed as a "Hero of our time", by Susan Sontag and many others since the early 1960s (Sontag 1963), and his vision and ambition was to provide a new epistemology and a new ethics, a new approach to methodology and a new global awareness (Doja 2008, 2010a).

While revisiting the old debate between Derrida and Lévi-Strauss on the place of writing (Doja 2006a, 2006b, 2007), I came to the conclusion as many others (cf. Wiseman 2009) that we must legitimately ask to what extent, at least in popular imagination, a version of structuralism invented retrospectively by "poststructuralists" has become substituted for the real thing.

Anthropology today concerns itself with questions of identity politics, migration, diseases, famine, poverty, feminism, reflexivity, corruption, illiberalism, globalism, ethnic conflicts, civil wars, human rights, cultural activism, fundamentalism, terrorism, and many other related themes. An attempt to restore Lévi-Strauss to a central position can hardly prove immediately relevant to all of these social and political issues. Yet it is possible to show that

structural anthropology may innovatively account for much more than the dynamics of social systems and the praxis of competitive and strategic practices.

Some of Lévi-Strauss's achievements could lay strong claim to having mapped, within anthropology, the philosophical parameters of an increasing preoccupation with issues of contextualization and reflexivity in the face of the declining coherence of meta-narrative and grand theory, as well as with issues of political concern and engagement in the post-colonial era. We may be correct in asserting that Lévi-Strauss used structural arguments coherently and correctly to analyze the cultural order, its transient character by means of entropy and irreversibility, and not surprisingly, deconstruction, or rather “dissolution”, to use its own term, and self-reflexivity.

I have been fortunate enough to meet Lévi-Strauss in person. As I also said on occasion elsewhere (Doja 2013, 42), when I met him for the first time during a party in the impressive Library of the Social Anthropology Laboratory where I was doing my Ph.D., I presented him some Albanian ethnographic data in a typical way, that is, thinking I had something to tell that could interest him. I remember there was something about the motives of Albanian medieval ballads, warrior songs, customary laws, social organizations and the like. Surely, he paid particular attention to my matter, seemingly out of courtesy, but I remain grateful for his critical encouragement of my rather untypical theorizing attitude, which I will have to develop later.

I was talking about the possibility of linking my stuff to incest prohibition theory and structural analysis of myths with the aim of revealing the hidden ideological dimension and instrumental character of social values like honor morality. My purpose was to point at the silencing of human agency, in particular women agency, under the appearance of structural coherence. Was he still listening just out of courtesy, especially to my critical, yet insufficiently developed ideas of the interactive relationship between structure and agency? No doubt! Yet, guess what? When I met him again ten years after, not only he had nothing forgotten of what I told him ten years earlier, but he also infallibly remembered my own theoretical position almost with the same terms, a discussion that we followed in the years to come through a number of letters exchanged.

Nevertheless, I remained an “inconstant” disciple. There was a time in my anthropological training when, educated in France in the early 1990s, I found Lévi-Strauss simultaneously inspiring and terrifying, which ultimately convinced me of the superiority of what I had learned. In the next phase, after moving to Britain in 2000 to take up a Lectureship at the University of Hull and then a Senior Fellowship at the University of Limerick in Ireland, all my anthropological knowledge gained in the French tradition of anthropology was so challenged by various British-American postmodern approaches of the time as I reached to the point that I had everything to learn from the beginning.

But with maturity, I came to see that with Lévi-Strauss there is perhaps more truth in the next than in the previous side of my anthropological education. Arguably, some aspects of

Lévi-Strauss's theory may be advanced as a workable methodology helping us to build innovative anthropological approaches to agency and politics in history, culture and society.

### The Morphodynamic Approach

One of the more powerful of Lévi-Strauss's ideas is his description of the generative engine of myths on the basis of the set of their own transformations. In mythical thinking, the basic transformations that Lévi-Strauss distinguished between a number of characters or terms of myths and their large number of possible roles or functions are controlled by means of a special relationship that he formulated in a canonical way, which demonstrates how the transformations of the myths can be captured. Lévi-Strauss's concept of canonical formulation that articulates the transformational dynamics of mythical networks transcends a simple analogical relation to a quadratic equation,  $Fx(a):Fy(b)::Fx(b):Fa^{-1}(y)$ , which articulates a dynamic homology between meaningful elements and their propositional functions. This formulation made it possible for Lévi-Strauss to detect a sort of genuine logical machine generative of open-ended meaning within specified mythical networks.

In a quadratic equation of this kind, the generative virtues of the so-called "double twist" of the canonical transformation in the structural study of myth imply two conditions *internal* to canonical formalization. According to Lévi-Strauss, a formulation of this type reflects a group of transformations in which it is assumed that a relation of equivalence exists between two situations defined respectively by an inversion of terms and relations, provided that one of the terms is replaced by its opposite and that a correlative inversion is made between the function value and the term value of two elements (Lévi-Strauss 1955, 252–253 [Eng. 228]).

After the method for the structural study of myth was introduced (Lévi-Strauss 1955), the generative virtues of the so-called "double twist" of canonical transformation have remained for a long time not understood, until the knowledge progress in qualitative mathematics became sufficiently advanced to understand them, especially after they were made comprehensible as an anticipated formalization of catastrophe models in new mathematics and morphodynamics (Petitot 1988; Scubla 1998; Maranda 2001; Desveaux 2001).

What is more important, for a catastrophist operation of this kind to take place, the very idea of canonical relation requires a third operating condition, which is *external* to canonical formalization. In all cases, it is expressed as the necessity of the crossing of a spatiotemporal boundary, defined in territorial, ecological, linguistic, cultural, social, or other terms, but which is always a boundary condition in mathematical sense, required to be satisfied at the boundary of a topological domain in which a set of differential equations is to be solved.

The catastrophist operation that requires a boundary condition of this kind is claimed by Lévi-Strauss to be important in determining the mathematical solutions to various mythical problems. Namely, a series of variations inherent in the myths of a given people cannot be fully understood without going through myths belonging to another people, which are in a relation of inverse transformation with the formers.

The great discovery of Lévi-Strauss made it possible for structural anthropology to overcome the logic of binary oppositions – to which it is too often and obstinately reduced –

in order to become a morphogenetic dynamics. In a broad sense, while the key categories that Lévi-Strauss developed are embodied in the anthropological objects he studied (myths and mythical networks), they have the potential to be usefully and critically applied to other domains if radically tweaked.

Many studies show that the structural analysis initiated by Lévi-Strauss may innovatively account for the ways in which social relations are ever more mediated by and implicated in broader political processes (Asch 2005; Marchart 2008; Constable 2009). In this wake, my original idea is to argue that the requirement of a boundary condition in canonical formalization can anticipate the discursive activation of a particular cultural ideology acting as a hidden agency of instrumental politics. Let me illustrate briefly with some cases of sometimes accomplished and sometimes still ongoing research projects.

### **Cultural Activism**

A common topical issue of Balkan ethnography, especially Albanian ethnography, is the view that associates patriarchal cultural traits with high fertility rates, extended family structures, marriage patterns, and the cultural myths and ideologies of honor and blood. Without disputing the notion of the Albanian family system being patriarchal, it seems that the cultural myths and ideologies associated with patrilineality are conflated with the actual practices of patriarchy. Many commentators have too easily assumed that the patriarchal language and discourses that symbolically support patrilineality result uniformly in outcomes and practices that they simply reify as patriarchal (e.g. Kaser 2008).

Almost ten years ago, I took up a more careful reading and systematic critical analysis of demographic data, historical sources and ethnographic evidence to show that the Albanian family is confronted since a long time with particularly low fertility rates and with a relatively high average age at marriage for women, which cannot support the assumption of a patriarchal extended family (Doja 2010b). Arguably, a more analytical approach to the alleged segmentary organizational pattern of parallel agnatic groups of men in Southeast European societies, including Albania, would also reveal that the segmentary structure of social organization appeared inadequate.

A morphodynamic approach and transformational analysis can show that the ideological construction of these myths can be invalidated if we take what is put forward as empirical evidence is nothing more than a strong cultural activism, acting as a kind of what I call a cultural Viagra for social survival. In this situation, cultural pressure subjugates both women and men to the reproduction of social norms and values, aiming at limiting Albanian women to their childbearing function and Albanian men to their protecting function. In this way, the cultural activism commonly obscures an important fact of a purely ideological dimension, which could be only uncovered after mapping the overall data within a canonical formalization of morphodynamic approach and transformational analysis.

## War Politics of Mass Rapes

Last year, at a conference on war and sexual violence held in CUNY Graduate Center in New York, resulting in a forthcoming edited volume, I presented another highly topical case that is even more explicit (Doja 2016). Feminist and other accounts of war rapes during the ethnic conflicts in former Yugoslavia and elsewhere have exposed extensively the importance of misogynistic masculinity, preparing the ground for an ahistorical approach, which has also reified a conceptualization of so-called backward Balkan social structures, norms, and values.

A common way of approaching the dimensions of mass rape and sexual violence during the sinisterly notorious ethnic conflicts in former Yugoslavia has been to explain them specifically against a cultural background supported by the existence of a tribal society, complex joint family structures known as *zadruga* in South Slavic areas, customary laws known as *Kanun* in North Albanian area, patriarchal practices, and other savage customs. This is not only obscure but also unscrupulous.

If we look closely to social and family structures, both marriage and vengeance rest on the symbol of blood and both are institutions that give shape to alliances. If marriage created a network of alliances and divided society in exogamous groups, vengeance also created a continuously moving scenario in which memberships and strategic alliances constantly coagulated the consistency of agnatic groups. In general, a relation of matrimonial affinity and hospitality was experienced as a relationship of friendship and solidarity just as a relation of feud vengeance was lived as a relationship of hostility. Yet, if matrimonial affinity and feud vengeance were opposed to one another as much as many other structural modalities of association or dissociation between different agnatic groups, friendship and hostility were part of the same opposition.

Matrimonial affinity and feud vengeance, friendship and hostility were only different expressions of a single and unique structural relationship. Definitely, the whole of social relations and values remained placed under the sign of ambivalence. In this sense, at a more empirical level, emotional sentiments as well as social relations and values of affinity, friendship, and hospitality, must have something in common with the relationship of love and solidarity to hatred and disintegration. Precisely this kind of structural ambivalence may allow a new theoretical and methodological approach to explain the effectiveness of mass rapes as a military strategy of ethnic cleansing in former Yugoslavia.

Marriage is a transaction of women exchanged between agnatic groups of men, a customary transaction intended to seal political alliances and conceal debts of blood, honor or money. In this sense, marriage is not only a social institution of sexual relations, but also a sexual regulation of social violence and a sexual institution of social stability. Also rape as a forced sexual intercourse is not a simple aggressive expression of sexuality, but rather a sexual expression of social violence. From the position of structural logic, marriage becomes possible by the means of matrimonial *alliance* that is supposed to bring love, friendship, and solidarity. In the same way, rape can be defined as a confrontational *misalliance* that becomes possible by the means of war, and which would necessarily induce hatred, hostility, and disintegration.

This is not, however, to understand women’s experiences of rape and marriage in a binary and rigid structuralist relation, because there is necessarily a problem with this argument that is inspired from Aristotle’s logic of analogy, which cannot be valid. The permutational relation between indexical terms and function values of both rape and marriage may be productively mapped onto a catastrophist model following Lévi-Strauss’s morphodynamic theory. Indeed, not only war is a catastrophe, but also rape in war is a catastrophe on its own. Accordingly, we may offer a catastrophist model to conceptualize rape by means of a canonical formalization in which the solidarity role of marriage will stand to the hostility of rape as the ambivalence of marriage stands to the rape politics of an unspeakable and unthinkable *solidarity*<sup>1</sup>, which is a solidarity upside down or anti-solidarity:

$$\text{marriage}_{(\text{solidarity})} : \text{rape}_{(\text{hostility})} :: \text{marriage}_{(\text{hostility})} : \text{solidarity}^1_{(\text{rape})}$$

Here rape is replaced forcibly by marriage, its opposite, and a correlative inversion is made between the functional ambivalence of marriage and the unknown, unspeakable ontology of an enforced rape function. Yet, for a catastrophic operation of this kind to take place, the logical operation of a boundary condition is required. In a context in which mass rape was deliberately used as a possible instrument of ethnic cleansing, everything happened as if the activation of a specific political and instrumental agency was necessary for the notorious effectiveness of mass rape to take place.

This kind of ideological agency, which is mathematically identified by the requirement of a boundary condition in canonical formalization, can be shown to promote and put forward the cultural assumptions specific to a given group. During the Bosnian war and the Kosovo war in former Yugoslavia this specific agency was provided by the increasing role of traditionalist and nationalist discourses, which burst moral order and social morphology in the first place, precisely by bringing to the fore the destructive workings of family honor and blood ideology. Indeed, the mass rapes of women were intended to forcefully instill a kind of shame and disgrace as a social pollution that should bring necessarily the disorder and break-up of the social system of any group in its totality. Typically, at war, such a social pollution and catastrophic disorder is termed in Albanian with a generic term for “total killing”, *shfarosje*, which means literally “kinship uprooting”.

Returning to a paraphrased Lévi-Strauss’s terminology from *The Raw and The Cooked* (Lévi-Strauss 1964), the unspeakable political effectiveness of mass rapes is forwarded to account not just for a “raw” madness of cultural norms and values. It is mainly the twist of a “cooked” evil of ideological agency acting as an instrumental politics of ethnic cleansing during ethnic conflicts in former Yugoslavia. The cultural activism of family honor and blood ideology makes it possible afterwards for family norms and values to be converted into ethnic-religious ideology, for ethnicity to be converted into nationalist consciousness, for this consciousness to become organized into conflict, and for organized nationalism to become militarist, masculinist, misogynist, racist, and violent.

## Identity Politics

The requirement of an operating condition that in the study of myth is expressed as a boundary condition in mathematical sense may be of particular interest for the study of identity transformations, in the comparative analysis of transformations resulting from intercultural dynamics, especially in processes of identity construction and identity politics. This brings to my last case, that is, my research proposal on the morphodynamics of European identity transformations that I intend to develop during my stay at Harvard as a CES visiting scholar, and which aims at reinvigorating neo-structural constructivism to turn the focus towards profoundly political implications.

Social relations are often weird and counterintuitive. Especially in the identity field, discursive practices do not always have definite ontological properties. They often appear to be entangled in strange combinations of seemingly incompatible states of either societal, ethnic-religious and national-populist, or civic and normative characteristics. In this sense, identity ontologies can be compared to the seemingly mysterious state of particles that in quantum mechanics is called superposition.

Both M.I.T. and French physicists are conducting real-life tests of whether quantum particles truly exist in superposition states. I assume that a comparable quantum connection to be tested may also exist in the identity field between seemingly opposed and incompatible identity ideas, values and motivations. The main assumption is that identity transformations are affected by seemingly opposite cultural ideologies that are in inverse relationship to one another and act as political instruments of power and hegemony.

*On empirical level*, I assume that European integration is never complete and unstable relations subsist between civic ideas and societal motivations. In term of research design, logical processes and political tensions must be explored in relation to identity shifting at societal, ethnic-religious, regional-national and supranational levels. In many situations, discursive practices are not necessarily positioned to provide a particular identity meaning, as the observer in social research, just as in quantum mechanics, influence what they observe. This only becomes clear once we look what they mean. Incompatible identities may become deeply connected as their properties match in opposition to one another when they are observed and mapped.

Here it is important that the distinction between indexical terms and functional values of the identity field is conceptualized topologically as relational, not substantial. This means that relative positions of identity indexes, kinds, agents, units, and ontologies are determined by a structured set of power relations and group identities that achieve their own transformations through identity politics. Actually, whatever its properties, any identity is only applicable in reference to an otherness and can only be realized on the boundary of one in contact or confrontation with, or in contrast to the other.

In this sense, civic ideas and ethnic motivations appear to exist in a quantum superposition state and possess multiple conflicting meanings at once. If they are entangled in this way, like in quantum mechanics, I predict that when the cultural position of ethnic motivations is revealed, both civic and ethnic identities will fall into exact opposed positions of

instrumental ideologies. Here I assume that the identity field is again comparable with the Heisenberg uncertainty principle in quantum mechanics, given that the more exactly the cultural position of identity values and aims is determined, the less exactly the identity momentum of policy outcomes can be known. Indeed, the wave-particle duality in quantum physics might be thought as the multiplex interaction in the identity field between civic ideas and ethnic motivations.

*On conceptual level*, I assume that this instability reveals an apparent risk of discursive activation of hidden instrumental politics and ideological agency that could promote Ethnicization of European values and unsuspected outcomes of public policies. A neo-structural model of the identity field is expected to capture it, based on the evolution rules of canonical transformations defined by Lévi-Strauss and the concept of political field borrowed from Pierre Bourdieu. In Bourdieu's field theory, power relations are reframed as lines of forces in an electromagnetic field and social space as a multiplicity of relatively autonomous fields. In the European identity field, the dynamics of interactions shows that discursive practices support or reject modalities of belonging that conform to public logics, which are instrumentally used to affect identity building and transformation.

While potential political tensions in the reproduction of identity field restrict or encourage boundary crossing, I assume that any transgression generates a hysteresis effect, which is mathematically calculable in electromagnetic and other fields, and which can explain identity politics as a system of identities depending on the history of their own transformations. Further logical-mathematical reformulations of Lévi-Strauss's methodology can provide logical formalization of transformational regularities in concrete situations of identity field, which may allow taking hold of a "generative engine" of identities based on their own transformations.

This would mean, for example, that the double sequence of doing good to your natives and doing harm to foreigners is complemented by another double sequence of doing harm to natives as if you were doing good to strangers already ignored and inexistent  $[F(g)n:F(h)e::F(h)n:F(g)e^{-1}]$ . This may seem to be weird but it's what happens more often than not, especially with public policies twisted by populist arguments.

Mapping the interaction between identity terms and functions onto permutational relations between identity indexes, functions, kinds, agents, units, ontologies and ideologies also reflect their positions in the identity field, while reformulating their topological relationship in canonical way will demonstrate how identity transformations can be captured and instrumental agency behind identity politics can be revealed. For example, computer simulations of the normative function  $[F(n)]$  of civic identity ( $C_i$ ) will be confronted to the societal, ethnic-religious, nationalist/populist/fundamentalist function  $[F(e)]$  of cultural identities ( $C_u$ ).

Ideally, this confrontation is supposed to bring the transformation of cultural identity into normative functional identity  $[F(n)C_u]$ . Yet, canonical formulation  $F(n)C_i:F(e)C_u::F(n)C_u:F(C_i)e^{-1}$  also demonstrates whether normative function of civic

identity [F(Ci)] is transformed into ambivalent agency, as political factions or societal groups could characterize a hidden unsuspected European identity ( $e^{-1}$ ), or the “ethnicity” of an upside down Europe. Remember that in the structural study of myth an additional operating condition is required as a boundary condition in both empirical and mathematical sense. In the identity field, this validation requirement must lead us to search for hidden instrumental agencies of identity politics and ideology that could constrain identity transformation in one or another direction.

Finally, narrative references of indexical terms and functional values in coded categories of identity discursive practices and modelling validations of their sub-literal meanings provide precise indications to hidden realities that characterize empirical situations of either Ethnicization of sociocultural relations or Europeanization of societal, ethnic-religious, regional-national values. The target is to deliver a computational model to conceptualize and recursively map the determinants of civic solidarity and intercultural attitudes, which allow developing a policy instrument to assess how core values and identity transformations evolve as boundary conditions of European integration, social cohesion and intercultural dynamics.

*On methodological level*, which remains still the most underdeveloped part and beside collaboration with colleagues from Europe, I hope to develop this research project in collaboration with potentially interested Harvard faculty, anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, computer scientists, and mathematicians. We need a heavy infrastructure design of computational models and protocols based on Bayesian inference, DEVS formalism, and construction of systemic numeric references to identity discursive practices. In practical terms, we explore the role of metaphoric and dichotomous aspects of discursive practices and the functional relationships they suggest in identity categorization. Functional shifts are assumed depending on whether the same metaphors of gender/kinship and building/construction are used as indexical terms of identity expression or as instrumental functions of identity politics.

The differential discontinuity between indexical terms and functional values in the identity field is a logic of dichotomization and permutation in metaphorical and metonymic series. Open series of antithetical pairs of identity indexes, kinds, agents, units, and ontologies, and the permutation of their indexical and functional values, are available to any agent across identity field to be pinned conspicuously on identity kinds of various reference units, be they individuals, societal groups, nation states, institutions, organizations. We identify non-exhaustive series of ontological assumptions of identity objectified in terms of indexical evidence referring to supposed origin, common cultural heritage, collective memory, language, religion, social/legal norms, institutional/political system, media, citizenship, sovereignty, or federation of the identity unit under consideration.

They allow configuring metaphorical/metonymic permutations of discursive practices that force instrumental functions of identity building to compel identity transformations. We assume that such functional values as recognition, socialization, distribution, diffusion, participation, persuasion, emulation, manipulation, imposition, discrimination, claim or contestation relate to actors’ ontological assumptions and motivations, thus identifying the subjective agency of underlying identity politics.

Computer-assisted textual analysis and agentic algorithms of discursive surveys will disaggregate literal meanings of narrative texts into multiple descriptors that make up and objectify indexical terms of identity expression and their functional values in identity politics. Their coding in sub-literal numeric references to indexical terms of characteristics, performances and affiliations, will create multiple datasets to map: 1) the distribution of identity situations and relations into constructed categories according to their function values of either common refuges of close belonging or separate clusters of open inclusiveness; 2) the presence or absence of indexical terms of behavioral components, convictions and attitudes related to corresponding function values of identity politics; 3) the permutation of indexical terms into functional values and vice-versa; 4) the identification of factors affecting such distributions and permutations with respect to sociocultural and political order.

**Contact details: [adoja@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:adoja@fas.harvard.edu)**

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