

*Approaches to a Semiotics of Visual Language:  
Reconstructing Images of the Filipino Superheroines*

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**Abstract**

The approaches to a semiotics of visual language were presented to provide background on semiotic analysis and interpretation of Filipino Superheroines. Saussure's Structuralism; Dyadic Model [Signifier-Signified], Peircian Triadic Model, and Morris' Semiotic Model. Three superheroines, Darna, Volta, and Krystala were used as subjects for semiotic interpretation of its images. It is Morris' semiotic model {syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic} that was used as an approach in reconstructing the images of the three Filipino superheroines. In the introduction, a brief background on women's status was mentioned (years, years back) on how they struggled to have a place in society. This paper in a way complemented such evaluation on women's status; thus, a semiotic interpretation on these images helped in establishing concepts on the changing role and status of women in the society.

Keywords: Semiotics, Images of Filipino Women, Superheroines

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## 1. Background of the Study

*“There was no renaissance woman, only renaissance man.”*

*-RJR*

As I was writing my paper in English Literature, I realized how women that time struggled to have “a place” in the society. In the early 1600’s, critics described this period to be “radical” because of the “great economic shift,” that is from Feudalism to Capitalism. However, what made this period radical was not because people were using “money” as a means of acquiring goods; but the **changing status of women** in England made it even more radical.

Looking back to that period where oppression of women was so prevalent, it is a relief for 21<sup>st</sup> century women to have finally found their **place** in the society. They are now playing a role that is more overwhelming than they have ever imagined. Women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as the term described, are empowered to educate themselves and to learn immeasurably and to perform unimaginable tasks.

It was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when such empowerment was fully achieved. Although fiction yet it has shown the capabilities of a woman in helping, protecting, and fighting for what was just and right. Thus, a **superheroine** was born and a paper about it was conceptualized.

With this, the study aimed to determine theories and approaches in reconstructing images of Filipino superheroines. This further aimed to utilize the theories and approaches to semiotics of visual language. This is also to provide the underpinnings of Filipino superheroines such as **Darna, Volta, and Krystala**.

## 2. The Images of Filipino Superheroines

### Mars Ravelo's Darna: The Superheroine

Darna was created by the genius of Mars Ravelo and was illustrated by Nestor Redondo in Bulaklak comics/magazine. She was an epitome of woman’s compassion to the weak and avenge them by fighting the forces of evil.



Figure 1: Darna

**DARNA** is a cultural icon born at a time when the Philippines was struggling to come out of the devastation of World War II. "She served as a salve to a country looking for champion." ("Darna", "Darna - Mars Ravelo comics - Philippines - Character profile", Larry V. Sipin, The Manila Times).

### **VOLTA: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Pinay Superhero**

Volta is a 21<sup>st</sup> century Pinay superhero. Her alter ego is Perla, the dressmaker, who was hit by lightning thrice after which she discovers and develops her superpowers: "she can generate heat and electricity with her hands and lightning flashes come out of her hands" (Wikipedia, 2024).



Figure 2: Volta

Source: <https://www.google.com/url>

### **KRYSTALA: The New Superhero of the Next Generation**

Krystala is the new generation's superhero who was anointed by the diwatas of the mountains of Banahaw. She was prophesized to be the savior of their tribe from the evils of the "engkantos." She was raised by Aleta who was guided by the Ima who is the village "diwata" and called her Tala.



Figure 3: Krystala

Source: <https://www.filmaffinity.com/us/movieimage.php>

### 3. Approaches to a Semiotics of Visual Language

This study on visual language aims to determine the semiotic approaches and theories in reconstructing images of Filipino superheroines. The whole meaning-finding or signification on the images is the goal of this paper. This study involves interpretations of signs, symbols, and symbolic elements of the images (pictures) of Filipino superheroines.

#### SEMIOTICS: Defined

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist (1857-1913) and American Philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) are the key figures in semiotics. Theories or models of other semioticians like Charles William Morris (1901-1979) and Umberto Eco (1932) were also used as the basis in this study of semiotics of a visual language.

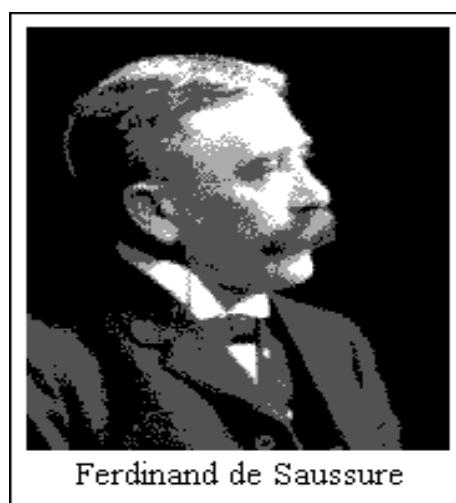


Figure 4: Ferdinand de Saussure

Saussure's 'semiology' was 'a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. ("Role of Semiotics in Linguistics - IJSER") Citing from Saussure's lecture on General Linguistics, he posited that "It is... possible to conceive a science *which studies the role of signs as part of social life*, we shall call it *semiology* (from the Greek *semeion*, 'sign'). " Saussure views the discipline of semiology that which aimed to investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them (Saussure 1983, 15-16; Saussure 1974, 16). [http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel/Documents/S4B/sem13.html#Saussure\\_1983](http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel/Documents/S4B/sem13.html#Saussure_1983)

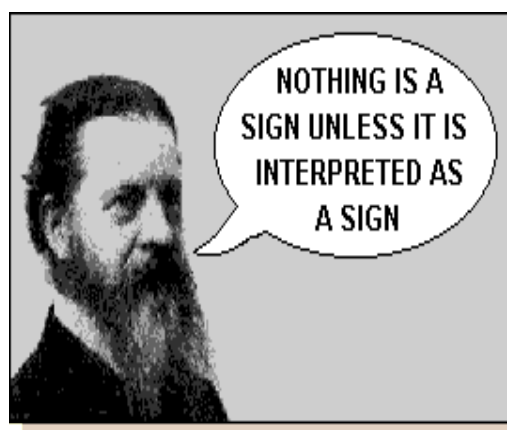


Figure 5: Charles Sanders Peirce

Peirce, on the other hand, defines sign as something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. (Peirce 1931-58, 2.228). He declared that 'every thought is a sign' (Peirce 1931-58, 1.538; cf. 5.250ff, 5.283ff).

For Charles W. Morris (deriving this threefold classification from Peirce), semiotics embraced semantics, along with the other traditional branches of linguistics (“untitled [web.pdx.edu]”):

**Semantics:** the relationship of signs to what they stand for, (“Semiotics for Beginners: Introduction - visual-memory.co.uk”).

**Syntactics** (or *syntax*): the formal or structural relations between signs, (“*Semiotics: A Primer for Designers - Boxes and Arrows*”).

**Pragmatics:** the relation of signs to interpreters (Morris 1938, 6-7).

Meanwhile, Umberto Eco believes that 'semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign' (Eco 1976, 7). Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else. In a semiotic sense, **signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects** (Semiotics for Beginners: Introduction - visual-memory.co.uk).

## Theories of Signs

Men are *homo significans*, that is, **meaning-makers** where meanings are created through creation and interpretation of signs (Chandler, 2004). Signs take the form of words, images, sounds, odors, flavors, acts, or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning (“symbols and signs”; “What Do Images Mean in Visual Semiotics? - DergiPark”).

## Two Dominant Models of Theories of Signs (Chandler, 2004)

### B.1 Saussure’s Dyadic Model

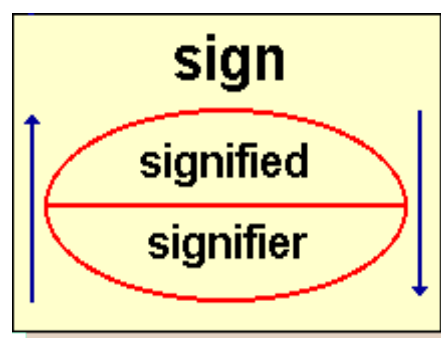


Figure 6: Saussure’s Dyadic Model

Saussure offered a '**dyadic**' or **two-part model** of the sign. He defined a sign as being composed of: (“Term of art for ontological evasion - Philosophy Stack Exchange”):

- \* A 'signifier' (*signifiant*) - the *form* which the sign takes; and (“Semiotics for Beginners: Signs - Princeton University”).
- \* The 'signified' (*signifié*) - the *concept* it represents.

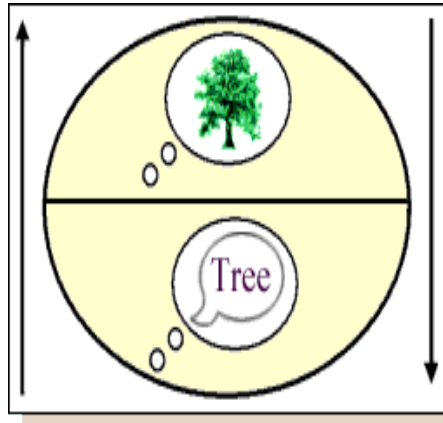


Figure 7: An Example of Saussure's Dyadic Model

The *sign* is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified (Saussure 1983, 67; Saussure 1974, 67). ("Semiotics for Beginners: Signs - Princeton University") The relationship between the signifier and the signified is referred to as 'signification', and this is represented in the Saussurean diagram by the arrows. The horizontal line marking the two elements of the sign is referred to as 'the bar' (Models of the sign | Meryem AB - Academia.edu").

## B.2 Peirce's Triadic Model

At around the same time as Saussure was formulating his model of the sign, of 'semiology' and of a structuralist methodology, across the Atlantic independent work was also in progress as the pragmatist philosopher and logician Charles Sanders Peirce formulated his own model of the sign, of 'semiotic' and of the taxonomies of signs. "In contrast to Saussure's model of the sign in the form of a 'self-contained dyad', Peirce offered a triadic model" ("Significance of Teaching Semiotic Pedagogy - CORE").

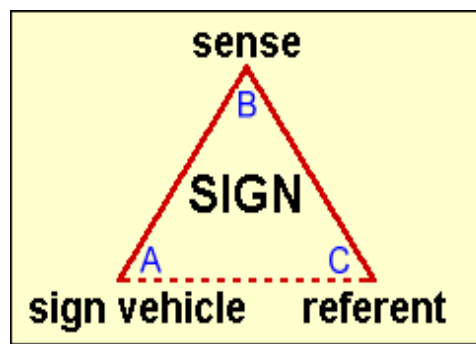


Figure 8: Peirce's Triadic Model

The **Representamen**: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material),  
 An **Interpretant**: *not* an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign, and  
 An **Object**: to which the sign refers.

Peircian Semiosis is an interaction of the sign [representamen] that stands to somebody, the equivalent sign [interpretant] that creates in the mind of a person, and the sign that stands for something [object] is in reference to a sort of idea which is also called the *ground* of the representamen. (Peirce 1931-58, 2.228). Within Peirce's model of the sign, the traffic light sign for 'stop' would consist of a red-light facing traffic at an intersection (the

representamen); vehicles halting (the object) and the idea that a red light indicates that vehicles must stop (the interpretant).

### Theory of Symbol

Signs are of three types—icons, indexes, and symbols according to Peirce. Symbols are arbitrary but icons and indexes are “motivated” that is they are likely to resemble their object in some way.

A symbol is ‘a sign’ which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object. The symbol relates to its object by virtue of the idea of the symbol-using animal, without which no such connection would exist (Chandler, 2004). The philosopher Susanne Langer quoted by Chandler argues that the “picture is essentially a symbol, not a duplicate, of what it represents: “we tend to recognize in an image are analogous relations of parts to a whole.”

### Semiotics of Signification

The Peircian idea of semiosis is the idea of an infinite process of interpretation. The principle of interpretation says that “a sign is something by knowing which we know something more.” The signal is not merely a stimulus but arouses an interpretive response in the addressee. A code is a system of signification when something is presented to the perception of the addressee, and it stands for something else. A signification system is an autonomous semiotic construct that has an abstract mode of existence independent of any possible communicative act it makes possible.

The theories presented clarify the goal of this paper for they will serve as a framework or a model to the proponent in reconstructing the image of a Filipino superheroine. While it is important to review theories of the key figures in semiotics, the proponent chose to work on the framework proposed by Charles William Morris.

### Charles W. Morris’ Semiotic Model of Interpretation

Charles Morris divided semiotics into three branches: syntactics, semantics and pragmatics.

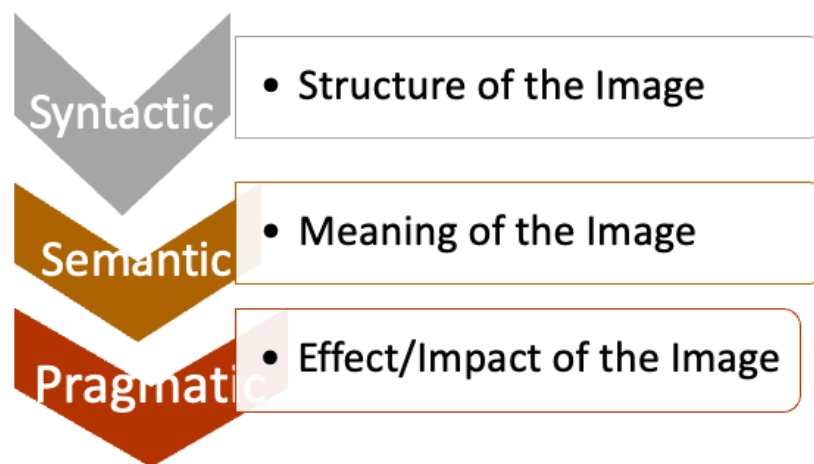


Figure 9: Charles W. Morris’ Semiotic Model

#### 4. Reconstructing Images of the Filipino Superheroine

##### A.1 Darna (Rosa Del Rosario) 1950s

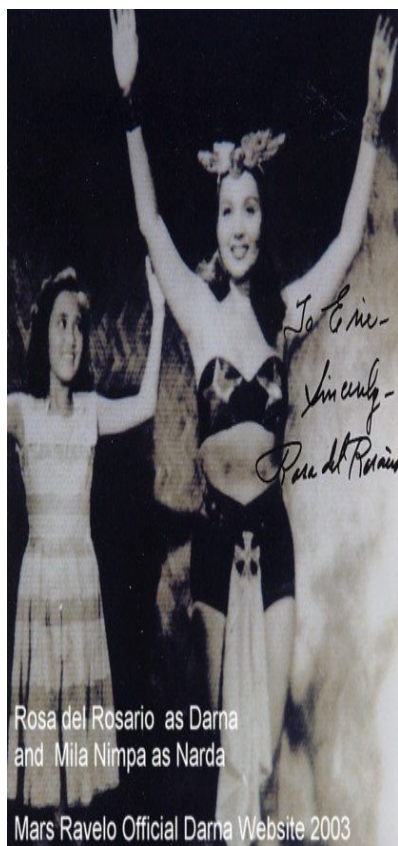


Figure 10: Darna (Rosa Del Rosario) 1950s

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
Structure of the Image	Meaning of the Image	Effect/Impact of the image
A wing designed head cap	Flight; swiftness; fastness	To dream high; aim high; To reach for the sky
Wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield	To protect oneself To achieve power
Boots	Independence, Strength	To be strong To be confident
Upper Garment (Tube) with two stars in the middle	Womanliness, fame, popularity	Empowered Woman
White cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (Underwear)	Chastity Belt, Purity Inconsumable character	Upholding one's dignity through purity

Table 1: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Darna

The image of Darna on its first release emphasized the characteristics of an empowered woman; invincible, independent, and unconsumable. The image projected a strong, confident, and dignified woman as structured in the symbols of head cap, wrist cuffs, boots, upper garment with two stars, and a white cloth hanging in the lower garment.

As shown in the table, the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic framework, adapting the triadic model of analysis of Peirce, provided the detailed interpretation of the image of Darna.

Syntactic or the structure of the image; head cap, wrist cuffs, boots, upper garment (tube) with two stars in the middle, and white cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (underwear) revealed the fully restored woman from the aftermath of war. Her participation in the society posited greater improvement on her position as a woman specifically shown in the semantics of the image; swiftness or fastness (cap), invincibility, protection, and shield (cuffs), independence and strength (boots), womanliness and fame (tube), and finally, purity and unconsumable character (white cloth). As regards the pragmatics or the impact of the image, Darna is a source of inspiration to the audience. She projects an image that prompts everyone to dream high or aim high, or to reach for the sky. She also sends the message of the importance of protecting oneself and achieving power. A woman has to be empowered, strong, confident, and most of all dignified.



The semiotics of Darna in the 1950s repositioned the women by showing great strength despite the discrimination they were suffering from due to colonization. “Although women’s social standing was improved, it was not until the late 1950s that the majority of women achieved equal rights.” As the country transitioned from commonwealth to a republic, women also transitioned into mere housewives to women of status in the society, enjoying their rights to education, suffrage, and government.

Apparently, the Philippines responded to the call of the United Nations for the full development women by Presidential Decree in 1975. Also, the government ratified the United Nations Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

### A.2 Darna (Wilma Santos) 1970s

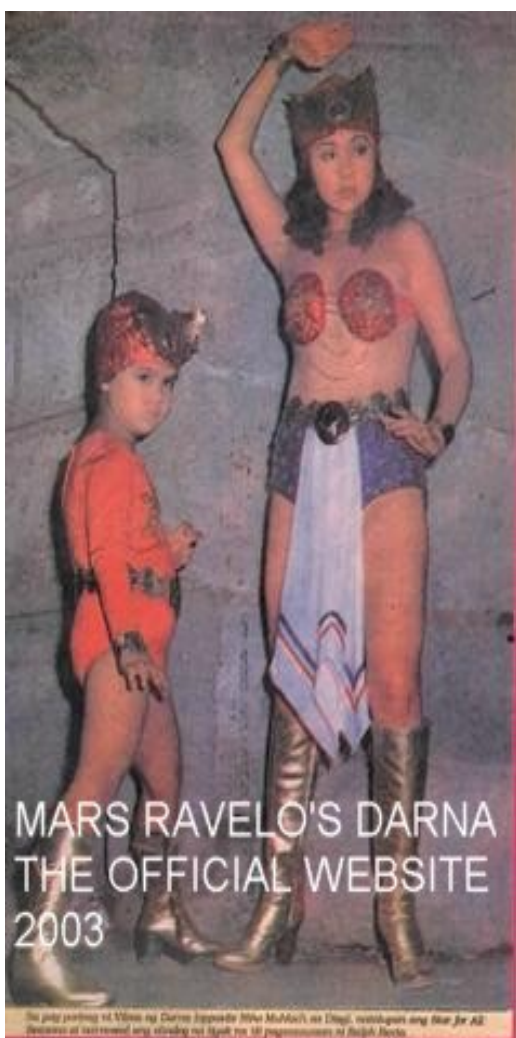


Figure 11: Darna (Wilma Santos) 1970s

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
A wing designed head cap	Flight; swiftness; fastness	To dream high; aim high; reach for the sky
Wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield	To protect oneself To achieve power
Upper Garment, A modified brassiere with strings	Womanliness, fame, popularity, daring	Empowered Women To recognize boldness among women
Boots	Independence, Strength	To be strong To be confident
White cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (Underwear)	Chastity Belt, Purity Inconsumable character	Upholding one’s dignity through purity
A blue-colored underwear	Serenity, Tranquility, Peace	To be advocate of peace

Table 2: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Darna

The image of Darna has greatly changed twenty years later from its color to the style of her undergarment. The 1970s Darna has truly brought women to a much advantageous position. As shown in the table, the semantics of the 70s Darna projects serenity, tranquility, and peace. The strings in her upper garment asserted boldness and recognition of an empowered

woman. Her image further affirmed the upholding of purity, dignity, strength, and power in a peaceful way.

While this image of Darna in 1970s revealed a more daring woman having the upper garment modified with strings that symbolized boldness or a more empowered woman, her power is complemented with peace and tranquility as shown in her blue-colored undergarment. To wit “women are potent force in the community. When it comes to civic work and community services, they are always in the forefront.”

The increasing desire for women to earn societal recognition as projected in the image of Darna creates an overwhelming response from the audience. In fact, her image has invited women to continue to strive to earn that favorable position in the society. Her earnestness, humility, and calm spirit brought every woman to a much enjoyable societal position at present.

To wit: “The 21st Filipina is the best of both worlds. She is old world because she keeps her traditional values like respect for parents, importance of family, and fear of God. She is a new world because she is innovative, brave, and ambitious. She is not afraid of change and would in fact welcome it. We see Filipinas all over the world, leading strong organizations and nurturing strong families” (Benitez, 2021).

The impact of Darna to women is undeniably present in the various roles that they play in the society, and this proves to show that women in this age and time are capable and unstoppable. Thus, there is no limit to what women can achieve and contribute to the country and to her fellow women.

### A.3 DARNA: Ang Pagbabalik (Anjanette Abayari & Nanette Medved) 1990s

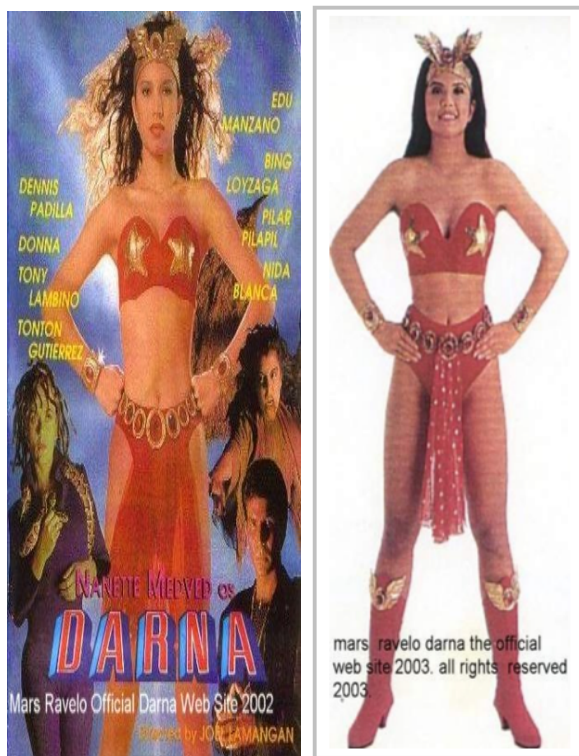


Figure 12 & 13: DARNA- Ang Pagbabalik (Anjanette Abayari & Nanette Medved) 1990

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
A wing designed head band (no longer a cap)	Flight; swiftness; fastness	To soar high; aim high; to reach for the sky
Wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield	To protect oneself To achieve power
Upper Garment (a tube) with two stars in the middle	Womanliness fame, popularity, daring	Empowered Women To recognize boldness among women
Boots (with wings as a design)	Independence, Strength Speed	To be strong To be confident
Red cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (Underwear)	Chastity Belt, “A more radical view on sexuality” Inconsumable character	Upholding one’s dignity through chastity...
Color Red	Power, warrior, boldness	To be fighter, protector of justice

Table 3: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Darna

As shown in the image, the color red and the two stars in the upper garment have been restored twenty years later. Red, the color of braveness and strength, was used again in this 1990s image of Darna to highlight the plight of women. This 20<sup>th</sup> century image of Darna posited a more compelling claim of her position as the center of the universe. The rings in her belt explicitly showed her assertion for power, and to exercise this power with conviction, confidence, independence, and dignity.

The evolving semiotics of Darna as shown in the symbols used in its image affirmed the claim on the changing status of women. Red symbolizes power and boldness emphasized her being a warrior, a fighter, and a protector of justice. Rings in her belt symbolized her being at the center of the universe establishing the fact that her importance or value equates that of man as she continues to soar high or to aim high projected by her wing-designed headband or headdress.

Women in position of power or decision-making structures remain crucial in advancing women's empowerment. The dominant patriarchal framework of politics and governance has made it hard for women to assert themselves in traditional center of power like states, courts of law, congresses, and even local governments. However, for a developing, Catholic, and patriarchal society, the Philippines exceeded expectations when it ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the Global Gender Gap Index (World Economic Forum, 2016) which measure factors like gender equality, health, economic and political opportunities, and political empowerment (Hega, Alporha & Evangelista, 2017).

The plight of Filipino women in gaining the status of equality and equity in the society has a long history of struggles and challenges. Apparently, as shown in each period, the role and/or the status of women also changes. They have small victories each time but with courage, persistence, and diligence, they have gained a much more important position in society. Their participation in nation building and transformation is monumental and nowhere in the world where women have been cited to have greater participation in government, legislation, and decision-making than the Philippines.

## B. VOLTA: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Filipino Superheroine (2004)

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
Spiky headdress (with edges)	Electricity, swiftness; speed of light, power	To achieve goals through strength in character
Gloves extending to arms (silver & red color)	Invincibility, protection, shield, source of power & strength	To protect oneself To live in powerful spirit
One piece clothing with a tube cut extending up to the torso to thigh (underwear cut)	Femininity, fame, popularity, daring	Empowered Woman To recognize boldness among women
Boots	Independence, Strength Speed	To be strong To be confident
White Belt with letter V	Chastity Belt, Letter V- for volt, victory Inconsumable character	To uphold purity & to be in constant service to people
Color Red	Power, warrior, boldness,	To be fighter, protector of justice
A mask	A protection to the alter ego	To be discreet To have reservations



Table 4: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Volta      Figure 14: VOLTA The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Filipino Superheroine (2004)

The table provided the detailed analysis of the image of Volta using Morris's framework, Triadic Semiotic Analysis; syntactic (image) semantic (meaning) and pragmatic (impact).

The syntactic (image of Volta) showed spiky headdress (with edges), gloves (extending to the arms), one-piece red clothing with a tube cut extending up to the torso to thigh, white belt with letter V, boots, and mask. These signs in the image of Volta revealed that she carries the same characteristics of an empowered woman drawing her power from electricity as shown in her spiky headdress. The semantics of this image revealed her invincibility, power, strength, femininity, boldness, and swiftness are shown in her gloves, one-piece red clothing, belt, and boots. Interestingly, Volta uses a mask to cover her alter-ego, Perla. This image projects discreetness, reservation, as well as preservation of her inconsumable character.

The creation of images of Filipino superheroines has inspired artists both in film and television. The 2004 film Volta echoed the transformation of an ordinary woman into a powerful woman who aims to uphold justice and peace and protect those who are oppressed and are suffering. Volta was the image of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Filipina; a woman of character who has powerful spirit, a fighter, and protector of justice and in constant service to the people.

The semiotics of Volta provides salient information to the evolving role of women in the Philippine society. Volta's power which is electricity, alluded to the power of the lightning god, Zeus, amplifies the claim for the rightful position of women in the society. Her invincibility, strength, and boldness exemplify the character of a modern Filipina; however, captivating due to her femininity, chastity, and purity in serving the people who cannot

protect themselves. Her victories as captured in the symbol “V” sends a clear message that women have won many of her battles in the past. Accordingly, each battle fought, no matter whether won or lost, is a victory, nonetheless. And for the Filipino women's movement, every day is taking a step toward the envisioned equality, empowerment, and social justice (Hega, Alporha, & Evangelista, 2017). Thus, Volta’s inconsumable character gives hope to the weak and justice to the oppressed.

### C. KRYSTALA: The New Superhero of the Next Generation (2004)

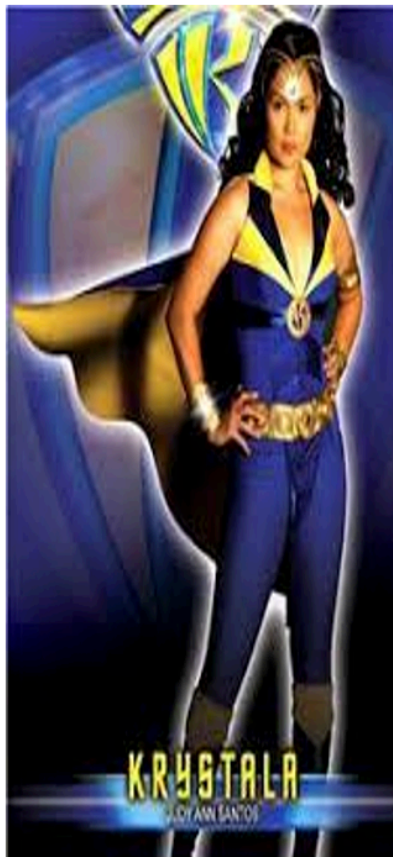


Figure 15: KRYSTALA  
The New Superhero of  
the Next Generation (2004)

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
A golden headband with crystal stone right in the forehead	Power, nobility for being chosen, mystic character	To establish character in highest regard for a noble cause
A cape (golden yellow and blue color)	Plight Swiftness fastness	To soar high, To aim high To reach for the sky
Bright yellow wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield, source of power & strength	To protect oneself To live in powerful spirit
An over-all clothing tightly fitted from upper part of the body to feet (tight pants)	Femininity, bravery, heroic	Empowered Women To recognize boldness among women
Boots	Independence, Strength Speed	To be strong To be confident
Belt with circles as design	Chastity Belt, Inconsumable character, center of the universe	To uphold purity, to be in constant service to the people
Color Blue and bright yellow	Peace, Tranquility, Serenity, Glory & Fame	To be keeper of peace and ever protector of justice

Table 5: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Volta

The above table shows the detailed description of the syntactic, semantics, and pragmatic analysis of the image of the 21<sup>st</sup> century superheroine, Krystala. The syntactic or the structure of the image; a golden headband with crystal stone right in the forehead, bright yellow wrist cuffs, an over-all blue clothing tightly fitted from upper part of the body to feet (tight pants), boots, and belt with circles as design, revealed the nobility and mystic character of Krystala. Furthermore, her power, swiftness, strength, femininity, braveness, heroism, independence, and invincibility are revealed in these signs or images. Similarly, the colors, gold and blue, in

their pragmatic sense project the character of Krystala as peacekeeper and protector of justice. Her nobility as shown in the medallion and stone in her forehead signifies her being powerful, dignified, and in constant service to the people.

Based on the narrative of this 21<sup>st</sup> century superheroine, Krystala's name was coined from the word "star" or tala in Filipino symbolizes a promise of hope to people who have lost their way. Her image of bravery and heroism was showcased in her unique "overall clothing" that emphasized boldness among women. Her belt with circles manifested her trait of being at the center of the universe carries nobility for being chosen. Her colors, blue and bright yellow characterizes her being lover of peace and justice and that she is the protector of the oppressed abused, and marginalized people. She is the embodiment of justice, peace, and strength among her people.

Benitez (2021) in her article, "Filipina Empowerment: Onwards, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Filipina" mentioned that Filipino women are more fortunate than other female counterparts around the globe. She wrote:

"Belonging to a country which ranks 7<sup>th</sup> among 145 in gender equality according to the most recent World Economic Forum Report, and 2<sup>nd</sup> among all nations with the most female senior business leaders according to Grant Thornton's Women in Business Report of 2016, we are surrounded by females who not only take care of the family and home, but also keep the wheels of business and government turning. We have Filipinas in virtually all fields of endeavor, and we have heroines in our history, as well as everyday heroes who toil in faraway lands to provide for their loved ones."

The increasing awareness of the role of women in transforming society and contributing to nation building made them important figures in various fields that in the recent past, only men were given the opportunity to perform. The possibility of involvement in other important functions (that were used to be played by men) are now open to women who have demonstrated excellence in these fields. As Benitez puts it, "women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have become strong, intelligent, capable modern, whose resolve and ability to accomplish and prevail is undeniable."

## **5. Conclusion**

Reconstructing the images of Filipino superheroines through semiotic analysis was not only the goal of this study, but also to showcase the changing role and participation of Filipino women in the society.

The approaches to semiotics of visual language were presented to provide background on semiotic analysis and interpretation. While it is significant to note Ferdinand de Saussure's *signifier-signified* theory of signs as well as Charles Peirce's *representamen, interpretant, and object*, Charles Morris' approach in reading images is the most appropriate strategy in reconstructing images of Filipino superheroines. *Syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic* concepts were used to interpret the images of the superheroines.

At this point, the author would like to explain certain intentions made in this study. It was the intention of the author to make the whole paper to be highly visual so to emphasize the power of visual language- that is the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a visual age. Thus, skills in interpreting visual

communications are necessary. Other than this, the questions why semiotics and why on women need to be answered.

In this paper, three superheroines were used for semiotic interpretation of its images. It is semiotics, the study of signs, which was used as an approach in putting meaning to those images. Why women? It has been 70 years since this character of superheroine was introduced to the Filipinos and in the year (2004) two new breeds of Filipino superheroines were born. In the introduction, a brief background on women's status was mentioned (years, years back) on how they struggled to have a place in society. This paper in a way complemented such evaluation on women's status, thus semiotics interpretation on these images helped in establishing concepts on the status of women.

The semiotics of Darna, Volta, and Krystala paved a way for a linguistic interpretation of the images through *visemics* (visual semiotics). Images such as the wearing of headdress, head cap or headband, wrist cuff, upper garment, lower garment, boots, as well as the colors carry meaning that established the status of women in the society. The evolving image of Darna, for instance, translates the changing roles of women as they continue to assert their rightful position in the society. As manifested in the images of Volta and Krystala where both carry the message of nobility or of being the "chosen one" strengthen their claim for equality, justice, and peace. These images as captured among these superheroines inspired Filipino women to be courageous in upholding justice and to be bold in fighting for their rights because women are invincible!

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