# Review of: "Decoding Patriarchal Ideological Biases at Work in the Popular Vernacular Comics of Nonte Fonte and Handa Bhonda: A Study of the Codification of Femininity through the Image-Text Combine"

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The article is valuable for its approach to an analysis of the relationship between image and verb in the construction of comic strips. The work seeks to reinforce a critical sense in the face of social inequalities and cultural roots related to sociocultural discrimination for reasons of sex and gender. However, the document has some elements that can be improved to give greater consistency to the result, given that the central problem is not new in scientific research and deals with the issue of the past, with strong resonances in the present, but without a detailed and necessary presentation of the history and use of the objects analyzed in the framework of popular culture.

Among the recommendations that can be suggested is the consideration that semiotics has changed in recent decades and is not defined simply as the science of signs. Today, it is understood as a science of meaning that is built within the framework of significant practices; this is much more complex than the analysis of isolated signs or semiotic systems without interaction. For this reason, semiotics does not perform monolithic analyses of signs, as the article states, because today it addresses practices during action. This has redefined theories, methods, and paths of multidimensional research into signifying. Semiotics, too, since the last century, has preferred to analyze value systems embodied in signifying practices rather than ideologies, which results in quite productive analytical paths. The works of Jacques Fontanille, Maria Giulia Dondero, and Anne Beyaert-Geslin are examples of the semiotics of the image, of the interactions between languages, and of their socio-political articulations.

The article states that communication facilitates the conveyance of the message from the sender to the receiver in any form, but it depends on the influence and strength of cultural codes that regulate certain uses and limit others, according to the degree of resistance, openness, or flexibility of each culture and its belief systems. The valuable thing about the article is that, throughout the analysis, it mentions these issues and establishes that decisions with a strong patriarchal or matriarchal imprint, even of domination, are not the sole responsibility of the creators of the images but rather a cultural parameter that must be critically analyzed. Although in other parts of the same document it seems that the creators of the images and texts are being charged with an issue that, in the sixties of the twentieth century, was the result of the persuasive power of culture. That is to say, the creators of these images did not necessarily act in bad faith but rather were protected and moved by a cultural force that overcame them and from which it is difficult to distance oneself if one is immersed in it.

The article also shows that at present the production criteria have not changed in the axiological background, with the objectification of women, but it is from today that this critical position can be held and expressed more forcefully in the face of the nuances of apparent changes. Perhaps the reader of this article would expect more depth in this aspect, which deals not only with how the meaning and parameters of interpretation of the entertainment cartoon series were established from the statement but also how and why these persistent values have such a presence in popular culture. It would be very valuable if, in the introductory part of the article (where the criticisms of what would be expected to be the results of the analysis are set out in advance), the theoretical sources of power, domination, the politics involved in the representations, the definition of representation, ideology, patriarchy, etc., were referenced."

After two consecutive quotes from Roland Barthes, the article states that the comic strips serve as a means to display their ideology, albeit disguised in accordance with the dominant power structure. However, for Barthes and his many readers, ideology is not merely concealed within semiotic objects; rather, it is actively manifested through them. Nevertheless, discerning these underlying relationships—present in the textual materiality with which the reader interacts —requires keen modes of analysis. The paradox lies in the article's detailed examination, which employs the Saussurean principle of commutation to reveal things that are believed to be hidden. For instance, the article effectively outlines the opposition between the absence, anonymity, and the presence of certain characters. While this finding contributes to the analysis, it confirms that the texts do not merely conceal a system of beliefs and cultural patterns related to women; instead, they await a thorough examination.

Other significant achievements of the article include considerations of homogenization, the importance of globalization phenomena in constructing heroines, and the demonstration of conceptual and formal cultural stereotypes about men and women. Throughout the text, there is a discussion of the male gaze and domination in general. However, can we specify this male gaze not as a universal, abstract, or ideological concept, but rather as a precise social actor or performer? For instance, editorial institutions that collect cultural values from linguistic institutions and agencies like religion, schools, and government bodies.

In summary, the article provides a valuable perspective by exploring how images and text intersect in comic strips. Its clear intention is to promote critical analysis of social and cultural inequalities related to sex and gender exclusion. While the document addresses a topic with deep historical roots and contemporary relevance, I recommend strengthening overall cohesion by reviewing statements made prior to the analysis and constructing a conclusion that, seemingly, is anticipated in the introductory part but lacks necessary documentary references.