Review of Eleonora Esposito. 2021. Politics, Ethnicity and the Postcolonial Nation: A Critical Analysis of Political Discourse in the Caribbean. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins

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In the 2010 General Election of Trinidad and Tobago, Persad-Bissessar successfully became the first East Indian female prime minister of the country. As two of the most influential strategies, discursive construction and multimodal resources in the election campaign come into researchers' eyes. In *Politics, Ethnicity and the Postcolonial Nation: A Critical Analysis of Political Discourse in the Caribbean,* Esposito critically examines how Persad-Bissessar adopts linguistic and visual strategies to construe the image and identity of a new leader, a new party and a new nation, resorting to critical discourse studies (CDS), discourse-historical approach (DHA), and multimodal approach. Methodologically, she combines social and historical aspects, linguistic aspects and multimodal aspects, to conduct a critical multimodal political discourse analysis. Aside from these, considering the research objectives, she sheds some light on the studies of the Caribbean, featuring as a postcolonial and multi-ethnic nation.

The book comprises seven chapters, beginning with an introduction. After briefly stating Persad-Bissessar's political success, Chapter 1 points out that there is a gap in the systematic critical studies of how discourses shape complex Caribbean postcolonial society. Therefore, Esposito discusses possibilities, necessities, and also challenges in combining CDS with postcolonial studies. Five key notions: discourse, critique, ideology, agency and power are reviewed in light of both CDS and postcolonial critique. Finally, the structure of the book is given, followed by a short explanation of terminologies.

Chapter 2 outlines Trinidad and Tobago's complex and diverse socio-political environment shaped by colonialism. It overviews Afro-Indian relations during the British colonial and post-independence period; Trinidad and Tobago's political history to become independent; and more information on Persad-Bissessar's political success and the People's Partnership coalition she advocates. In addition, it defines the postcolonial Caribbean in view of pivotal social theories of ethnicity, identity and nationalism, emphasizing their possible connection with DHA to CDS (Reisigl & Wodak 2015). This background knowledge can facilitate the readers' better understanding of the main issues of the study.

Before moving to detailed analysis, Chapter 3 illustrates the theoretical bases, data collection and methodology of the study. It first overviews previous political discourse studies and indicates that since the media greatly influences the forms and functions of contemporary political discourses, it is necessary to analyze them from both critical and multimodal perspectives. Therefore, the theoretical bases of this study, DHA to CDS and Visual Grammar (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006), are addressed. Finally, the collection of textual and visual data and the critical multimodal discursive approach to analyzing them, combined with DHA and Visual Grammar are depicted.

The following three chapters switch the perspectives from theoretical frameworks to results and discussions. Chapter 4 separately illustrates two discursive strategies used by Persad-Bissessar to present herself as a new leader of the country during the 2010 Election Campaign. The first one is the construction of Persad-Bissessar's positive self-presentation as a winning image of a mother and angel leader of Trinidad and Tobago. For the second strategy, Persad-Bissessar constructs a negative other-presentation and discredits her opponent, Patrick Manning, as an emperor.

Chapter 5 investigates the image and identity construction of the brand-new party, People's Partnership coalition, through political speeches and advertising. In Trinidad and Tobago's history, any coalition was short-lived. In this case, People's Partnership coalition employs various discursive strategies to gain people's trust to defeat the longstanding People's National Movement and to occupy a definite identity space. Nomination and predication strategies construe this new party as a stable and united social actor in Trinidad. Meanwhile, the inclusive aspect of the deixis "we", the "coalition as a river" metaphor and visual strategies delineate the coalition as inclusive and multi-ethnic.

Chapter 6 explores the national identity construed by Persad-Bissessar in her speech in Chaguanas and other multimodal resources. Based on Wodak et al.'s (2009) and de Cillia et al.'s (1999) frameworks, Esposito analyzes four main discursive constructions, finding that Persad-Bissessar stresses Trinidadian diversity to highlight its multi-ethnic nature and correspondence to her party's appeals. Besides, through political rhetoric, Persad-Bissessar reproduces the common memory of colonialism and rebuilds a narration against slavery to become independent. Moreover, Persad-Bissessar establishes emotional ties by mentioning

national icons of different ethnic backgrounds and builds a common national body through interdiscursivity and intertextuality.

Chapter 7 summarizes the most important findings of the study; contributions to the postcolonial Caribbean political studies, to CDS, especially DHA, and the multimodal critical approach; and also, limitations of the study. This book ends with an epilogue on Persad-Bissessar and political events in her country from 2010 to 2015.

In a nutshell, this book contributes to a critical and multimodal discursive investigation of the postcolonial Caribbean political discourse. Implementing a case study of Persad-Bissessar's political discourses in the 2010 election, Esposito not only sheds light on the discursive strategies of winning the political election but also on how a female leader portrays her political image and identity to gain a firm foothold in the male power dominant country. In parallel, Esposito also provides insights into how political issues are negotiated in complex power, multi-ethnic and postcolonial settings. What's more, the book enriches the studies of critical political discourse analysis beyond Euro-America. Therefore, this monograph on Caribbean political discourse is comprehensive. Apart from these special research objectives, the methodologies are also notable. For one thing, except for the traditional critical discourse analysis of linguistic features, the study integrates social and historical dimensions through DHA to CDA. For another, the study fuels visual dimensions to see how political advertising delivers political thoughts. Moreover, the book gives analytical frameworks in diagram form (Figure 7 in p.75), showing clearly the dimensions of analysis to this case study, so it's more convenient for researchers to follow step by step in the later analysis and much clearer for readers to understand. Thus, the book appeals to researchers interested in Caribbean politics and ethnicity, postcolonial studies, political discourse analysis, CDS, DHA and multimodal analysis.

However, there are still some points that can be further improved. Due to the word restriction, this book doesn't provide ample background information on the Caribbean social and historical situation and detailed descriptions of each theoretical base, making it difficult to comprehend for novice readers or researchers in this field. Maybe some suggested books for further reading can be listed at the end of each chapter. Furthermore, some abbreviations may confuse readers. For instance, UDeCOTT (Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago) first appears in abbreviated form on page 2 instead of its full name later appearing on page 35. To solve this problem, all abbreviations in this book can be summarized at the beginning for the convenience of reading.

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Bionote:

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