

Abstract

Michel Foucault's identification of the body as the principal target of power and feminist concerns with the political implications of sexual pleasure and eroticism have helped illuminate the complex relationship between political power and sexuality. Following Achille Mbembe's submission that power can be eroticised, this article explores what I term Trujillo's eroticisation of tyrannical power over Dominicans in Llosa's *The Feast of the Goat*. Trujillo deploys his sexuality to emasculate subordinates and occupy a privileged subject position. The article delineates how the sexualised political control over women's bodies inspires the construction of Trujillo's subjectivity and how in the final moments of his reign his dysfunctional phallus destabilises that subjectivity. The discussion also unravels how both the planned tyrannicide by disenchanted Trujillistas and Uranita's remembering of Trujillo's totalitarian regime are to some extent inspired by sexualised concerns. The paper critiques the implications of Trujillo's eroticised rule for nationalism and gender. Drawing on parallels from Sembene's *Xa/o*, the article argues that the sexual dysfunctions suffered by Trujillo and El Hadji are a direct outcome of their excesses. I conclude that far from confirming the political power derived from sexual domination, Trujillo's and El Hadji's embarrassing sexual experiences complicate and subvert that power.