



## Power Relations: Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Feast of the Goat*

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### Abstract

The notion of 'power' is one of the most debatable notions in sociological studies, and this is because of its inevitable presence in social relations and interactions. In all his relations within the society, man can feel the influence of power, either as the one in power or as the powerless one. Power does not exist in vacuum and it should be considered in relation with other social concepts such as class, race, gender, space, etc.. Along with these concepts, different embodiments of power in the society can be revealed and different models of exercising of power will be formed. One of the most directly related notions to power is the notion of 'politics'. What allows politicians to use different policies is power and what gives them power to fulfill their will and impose their own desire and interests on the other is politics. The other concept which serves these two notions is 'discourse'. It is obvious that without 'discourse' and 'language' the existence of 'power' and 'politics' is only a probability, because 'discourse' is the means of exercising the power and applying the politics. Thus, here is a triangle of 'power', 'politics', and 'discourse'. In this regard, a very brief historical overview of power is given. The base of discussion and analysis in this article is the different forms of power according to S. Westwood's *Power and the Social*. This article explores the relation between the three angles of the mentioned triangle in Llosa's *The Feast of The Goat*, a dictator-historical novel set in Dominican Republic. This study investigates various shapes of power exercised

by Dominican dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo through politics and discourse.

**Key words:** Power; Race; Class; Gender; Space; Vision; S. Westwood; Mario Vargas Llosa; *The Feast of the Goat*

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### INTRODUCTION

Jorge Mario Pedro Vargas Llosa (born March 28, 1936) is a Peruvian-Spanish writer, politician, journalist, essayist, and Nobel Prize laureate. Vargas Llosa is one of Latin America's most significant novelists and essayists, and one of the leading authors of his generation. Some critics consider him to have had a larger international impact and worldwide audience than any other writer of the Latin American Boom. He was awarded the 2010 Nobel Prize in Literature for his cartography of structures of power and his trenchant images of the individual's resistance, revolt, and defeat. Political aspect of Llosa's life also does worth consideration. As it is stated in Cevallos' (1991), like many Latin American authors, Vargas Llosa has been politically active throughout his career. Over the course of his life, he has gradually moved from the political left towards the right. While he initially supported the Cuban revolutionary government of Fidel Castro, Vargas Llosa later became disenchanted. He ran for the Peruvian presidency in 1990 with the center-right *Frente Democrático* (FREDEMO) coalition, advocating neoliberal reforms. He has subsequently supported moderate conservative candidates (pp.267–268). According to Parker (2007), Vargas Llosa's style encompasses historical material as well as his own personal experiences. Vargas Llosa frequently uses his

writing to challenge the inadequacies of society, such as demoralization and oppression by those in political power towards those who challenge this power. One of the main themes he has explored in his writings is the individual's struggle for freedom within an oppressive reality. In addition to themes such as corruption and oppression, Vargas Llosa deals with issues of abuse and exploitation of the workers in the brothel by corrupt military officers (para.5).

*The Feast of the Goat*, one of the most brilliant novels of Mario Vargas Llosa, was first published in Spanish in 2000 and the English version was published in 2001. The fiction is the history of Dominican Republic and its dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo. Though his regime was broadly nationalist, Daniel Chirot comments that he had "no particular ideology" and that his economic and social policies were basically progressive. In this novel like other Llosa's, politics, lust of power and sex, violence, and oppression are the major themes. *The Feast of the Goat* received largely positive reviews, with several reviewers commenting on the book's depiction of the relationship between sexuality and power, and on the graphic descriptions of violent events. Another common comment on the novel is the graphic nature of the many acts of torture and murder which are depicted in the novel. Vargas lets the reader see the realities of an oppressive regime with a degree of detail, as Michael Wood (2002, para.5) suggests in the *London Review of Books*: "Vargas Llosa ... tells us far more about the details of day-to-day intrigue, and the sordid, sadistic minutiae of torture and murder." Walter Kirn (2001, para.3) of the *New York Times* suggests that "grisly scenes of dungeon interrogations and torture sessions" cast other aspects of the novel in a pale light, draining them of their significance and impact. The plot line centered on Urania Cabral is described by Sturrock (2002) as being an emotional centre that focuses the novel, and Wood agrees that her confrontations with past demons hold the reader's attention. In contrast, Kirn's review states that Urania's segments are "talky and atmospheric ... [and] seem to be on loan from another sort of book" (para. 6). What makes this novel different from other historical novels is the professional application of flashbacks and flash forwards to interweave the three story lines together. Although each part has its own story teller, Llosa has used the third person narrator to guide the reader through the novel.

This is Urania Cabral whose story is the opening of the novel. Urania is a forty-nine year-old woman who has come back home after thirty-five years. She is one of the victims of Trujillo's sexual desire and his father's love to politics especially the dictator himself when she was only fourteen years old. Her aunt and cousins are her audience of her story after thirty years silence. Urania is the symbol of all country and its people and their lost identity under Trujillo's dictatorship. The second story is the story of

the last day of Trujillo's life. Mario Vargas Llosa used this last day very skillfully to depict all the life of the dictator and his regime. All his personal characteristics, weak points, family, dictatorship, cruelty and crime are illustrated in this story line. Llosa explains in this part how he got the power, how he kept it by force, and how he misused his power to humiliate his allies by sexual damages. The characters of the third story are Trujillo assassins. The story starts on Tuesday, 30 May 1961, when they are waiting for the dictator whom they called the 'Goat' on the way of San Cristobal. Interestingly, almost all of them have been or are among the most loyal officers of Trujillo's. They review their memories about how Trujillo has changed them into a Trujillista and what Trujillo has done to them to convince them to kill him. They succeeded and killed the Goat, but the following events were not according to their plan. Nearly all of them were arrested, tortured, and killed by Trujillo's sons and brothers. It took time the end of Trujillo dictatorship to be announced officially and President Balaguer took the power for a short time till the official election was held.

Power, the most dominant concept in history, seems to be the locus of social science up to now. As Zolfagharkhani (2011, p.1) sates, "Power, as a term surfaced in people's dialogues and speech or as a common word used here and there", or according to Foucault, "power" cannot be defined outside and beyond social relations. Power is a multidimensional concept and there are different conceptions derived from it. According to Hindess, two conceptions of power have dominated Western political thought in the modern period. The first is the idea of power as a simple quantitative phenomenon. Power in this sense is nothing more than a kind of generalized capacity to act. In *The Power Elite*, Mills (1959) uses institutional location as the primary indicator of the possession of power:

No one can be truly powerful unless he has access to the command of major institutions, for it is over these institutional means of power that the truly powerful are, in the first instance, powerful. Higher politicians and key officials of government command such institutional power; so do admirals and generals, and so do the major owners and executives of the larger corporations. Not all power, it is true, is anchored in and exercised by means of such institutions, but only within and through them can power be more or less continuous and important. (p.9)

The second, more complex, understanding is that of power as involving not only a capacity but also a right to act, with both capacity and right being seen to rest on the consent of those over whom the power is exercised. This second conception is central to much Western social and political thought (p.1). The place to start, as Lukes (1974) does, is with Arendt's and Parsons' treatments of power. While Arendt's and Parsons' analyses are by no means the same, they do share a view of power as fundamentally dependent on the consent of those over whom it is

exercised. Parsons (1969a, p.361), for instance, defines power as:

the generalized capacity to secure the performance of binding obligations by units in a system of collective action when the obligations are legitimized with reference to their bearing on collective goals and where in the case of recalcitrance there is a presumption of enforcement by negative situational sanctions. (as cited in Lukes, 1974, p. 27-8)

Following the history of power and its definition, one may refer to Plato (c. 428–347 BC) and Aristotle (384–322 BC). Both believed that it is power which brought together the ethics and politics. They believed in the hierarchy and notions of natural aptitudes that translated into social positions. According to Westwood (2002), Hobbes (1588–1679), Locke (1632–1704) and Machiavelli (1469–1527) are known as the precursors of debates on the nature of power in sociological discourses (p.7). Hobbes (1928, p.26) reveals, “because the power of one man resisteth and hindereth the effects of the power of another: power is simply no more, but the excess of the power of one above that of another” (as cited in Westwood, 2002, p.10). Locke’s *Second Treaties on Government* presents an influential account of political power in which the holder of that power is regarded as having very definite obligations towards its subjects. Locke (1988) sets out what he understands by political power at the beginning of his book. It is:

a Right of making Laws with Penalties of Death, and consequently all less Penalties, for the Regulating and Preserving of Property, and of employing the force of the Community, in the execution of such Laws, and in the defense of the Common – wealth from Foreign Injury, and all this only for the Public Good. (p.268)

In Westwood (2002, p.9), we read, “Writing in *The Prince* (1513), Machiavelli offers an ethnography of power as it is constituted and re-constituted in the network of relations in the palace.” Thus, Machiavelli believed that power is neither absolute nor allocated to the Prince or sovereign and defined power as a set of strategies to generate a wider scope of action within which other people must operate. Next crucial theorists on power is Marx who developed modern capitalism, imperialism and nationalisms and influenced political economic. Westwood (2002, p.12) notes, “Marx wrote much on power and its exercise through economics, but he also had a notion of the power of ideologies and of collective subjects to act on the world.” He also states that Marx understood the power of coercion and the state and the ways in which those in power use violence of military to hold this power (p.13). The two last but not the least theorists and writers in the field of social studies especially in regard to power, are Foucault and Nietzsche. According to Westwood (2002, p.19), “Following Nietzsche (1844-1900), Foucault (1926-84) regards power not as negative or positive but as omnipresent and productive.” Hindess (1996), in his recent book, provides an account of Foucault’s

conceptualizations of power organized around four major themes: power and domination, government, discipline and pastoral power. Foucault was the person who used the term “power” in its widest sense. He believes people, families and behaviors are governed by the power and government seeks to exercise authority over citizens. As Maleki and Navidi (2011) state about Foucault:

He believes that every society is unconsciously under the dominant and hidden control of one power, which runs through every aspects of society, causing all the economic, social and political forces to get shaped. Such power is sequential and every kind of organization is formed as one through this. Once one follows the power, his status turns higher, otherwise he would be left alone. (p.97)

According to Hindess (2004), in *Power: a radical view* (1974), Lukes contrasts his own ‘radical’ perspective with the ‘liberal’ account of power presented by Dahl and other American pluralists and also with the ‘reformist’ view presented by many of their critics. Both views regard power as enabling some individuals or groups to prevail over others in situations where there are clear differences between what they would identify as their respective interests. Lukes (1974) goes further to advance the ‘radical’ view that power can also operate to prevent such differences from emerging in the first place, and that it does so by ensuring that those subject to its influence have a false understanding of where their true interests lie. In such cases, power works by manipulating the thoughts of its victims:

Is it not the supreme exercise of power to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have – that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires? (p.23)

Hindess (2004) continues that Lukes’ ‘radical’ view is concerned with what he sees as those more sinister cases used against the interests of its victims. Brain-washing would be one example, but in this case power operates on single individuals or small groups and, at least in the early stages of the process, power is exercised over the victims. In fact, the ‘radical’ view of power presented in Lukes’ book and, in rather more complex form, in critical theory, depends on two fundamental components. Hindess (2004) counts them as the one which is bringing together the two potentially conflicting conceptions of the human individual as autonomous rational agent on the one hand and as malleable creature of social conditions on the other. The other component is the conception of civil society as an arena of contending social forces. As the last but not the least person who has defined power in his own way, we consider Marcuse. In *One Dimensional Man*, Marcuse claims that advanced industrial societies have made liberty ‘into a powerful instrument of domination’ (Marcuse 1972, p.21). Put simply, the ‘free’ choices made by individual members of those societies serve to bring about a set of power relations that promote the interests of those who dominate. What makes it possible for ‘free’ decisions



to have this effect is that the system of domination itself provides its victims with misleading understandings of their real interests. Consequently, Marcuse (1972, p.12) insists, "The fact that the vast majority of the population accepts, and is made to accept, this society does not render it less irrational and less reprehensible." Hindess (2004) elaborates on Marcuse's view in this way:

We act freely, in Marcuse's view, on the basis of thoughts and desires that have been imposed on us from without, most obviously perhaps through propaganda and manipulation carried by the media. (p.88)

Westwood (2002, p.1) defines 'power' as, "a capacity within which is contained the ability to intervene in the lives of others." Thus, there are two sides within the concept of 'power', on one side the person, group or something which applies 'power' and on the other side the person, group or something on which the 'power' is applied. Then he continues his discussion on power grammar and its categories. In this paper, the application of these categories in *The Feast of the Goat* is investigated.

## DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

**Race and Power:** It seems that race and racism are two unavoidable concepts in studying power. Taking a look to other studies, it can be said that racism must be involved in power definition. As Westwood (2002) states:

Whether we look to the histories of enslavement, the novels of Richard Wright and Toni Morrison or the turmoil of India, Africa or Europe at the end of the twentieth century, racialized power is everywhere and bound crucially to the rise of modernity and the fate of the post – modern world. It is pre – eminent as a site of powers. (p.29)

Having borrowed the proposition from Disraeli, "All is race. There is no other truth.", Malik (1996) continues, "... the discourse of race lies at the very heart of modern society" (p.55). Although most of theorists accepted the equal spirit of humanity, it was clear that within humanity there was a huge diversity and in this way anthropology started its work to understand this diversity. It should be mentioned here that the signifiers of difference were not necessarily skin color or facial features at this time. The suggestion Malik (1996) reveals is that racist discourses actually developed in opposition to Enlightenment universalism (p.60). As Westwood (2002, p.31) states, "Finally, it was from the degradation of the Enlightenment ideal of humanity and '...this conviction that inequality was natural that the modern concept of race rose'" (Malik, 1996, p.70).

Foucault is known as the most influential person to inspire elaborations of the West in relation to the Other. Westwood (2002) points out that, issues of race and racism and post – coloniality do not figure supposedly in Foucault's work, but this has been challenged by the

work of Stoler (1995) in a powerful re-engagement with Foucault (p.33). According to Stoler, the colonies should not be considered simply as "sites of exploitation" but as "laboratories of modernity" in which primitive forms of modernity like factory or the panopticon, were expanded or tried out. Westwood (2002) continues his debates on Foucault's work in this way:

To reconsider the work of Foucault in relation to 'race' confirms an account that is power – filled, and in which the importance of both power/knowledge and the body as a site for the deployment of powers are emphasized. The ways in which racisms are understood and the modalities for their expression, from the white supremacists of the internet to the patriot groups of the USA. (p.35)

Thus, the concept of race is raised at the heart of the concept of colonialism and is clearly detected in colonies. To investigate this concept in *The Feast of The Goat* (hereafter referred to as *FOG*), we should have a flashback to the history of Dominican Republic when it was a colony of America. This occupation lasted for eighteen years in Dominican and nineteen years in Haiti. The country had its first relatively free election after the U.S. forces withdrew in 1924; but Trujillo staged a military revolution in 1930, overthrowing president Horacio Vázquez, and proclaiming himself head of state. Trujillo always made it clear that he was a racist even though his mother was a mulatto woman with African slave ancestry and he considered Black Haitians inferior and a threat to Dominican integrity. According to Iliana Fuentes (2003), this feeling was echoed in most Dominican homes, in spite of the fact that about 70% of the population at the time were mulattoes and 11% Black. In 1937, he ordered his army to massacre all Haitians found illegally within Dominican territory, especially those near the border with Haiti. In Dajabón alone, some 15,000 Haitians were killed. In *FOG*, Llosa implies this event in different parts and shows that Trujillo remembers it as one of the greatest honors during his dictatorship.

For the sake of this country, I have stained these with blood," he stated, emphasizing each syllable. To keep the blacks from colonizing us again. There were tens of thousands of them, and they were everywhere. If I hadn't, the Dominican Republic would not exist today. The entire island would be Haiti, as it was in 1840. The handoff of white survivors would be serving the blacks. That was my most difficult decision in thirty years of government, Simon. (chap. 11, p.193)

Trujillo's mother is a mulatto and Trujillo has inherited his dark complexion of hers. He always contempt this and tries to cover it.

She had always been a very good woman, this illegitimate daughter of Haitian immigrants to San Cristóbal, whose features he and his siblings had inherited, something that never failed to mortify him despite his great love for her. (chap. 18, p.334)

In the novel, the main stand mill of race is the facial features such as skin tone, form of nose, and other features. We read that one of Urania's cousins rejected

a very rich man proposal because of his dark skin; or in another part we see when soldiers call Pedro Livio “nigger”, he gets furious because he believes that they are racists and want to contempt him, even he has a higher status than them. However, in different parts Llosa implies to Dominicans sexuality and the way in which two sexes are related as the other criteria to distinguish Dominican men from other Latin races.

As Westwood elaborates on the issues of space and time, “as ubiquitous as racism is”, racism is constructed within specific sites, so that bringing together spatiality with time, class, gender which are the place for struggle when racism and racialized power is grounded (p.36). It means that the notions of race and racism may be identified through ‘class’. Consequently, the next notion to study is ‘class’.

**Class and Power:** ‘Class’ is another concept present in different branches of social studies, politics, sociology, cultural studies, and literary criticism, while related to power. In each of these branches it has a different meaning. As a broad definition, we can define it as ‘divisions of a society’ and it seems that this term is used mostly in hierarchical societies. These divisions have changed along with the time and have taken different forms and names. For instance, once this division was based on religion, and another time based on blood and ethnicity. Gray Day in his book *Class* points out that there were two connotations for the word ‘class’ in ancient Roman, the first referred to an armed gathering, either on land or water while the second, and most important, referred to the divisions of the Roman people according to their estates and age. He continues that the term ‘class’ first was used to divide different types of flowers or animals and there was equality between different groups, but now the new connotation of ‘class’ is an expression of social conflict. Day (2007) explains that Marx located the source of this conflict in the fact that “one class owned the means of production, while the other class owned nothing but their labor power, which they were obliged to sell in order to survive” (p.6). Therefore, Marx defines ‘class’ in economic terms. It is obvious that for Marx, class is relational and classes are formed ultimately in struggle so that class cannot be separated from power. For Marx, the means of production were the land, factories, and machinery necessary to produce goods and money for more investment and labor power to complete the production procedure. As Day (2007) states, for Marx “the nature of the economy determines a society’s politics, laws, culture, and education” (p.7). Nicos Poulantzas (1973) used this account of class as power and wrote, “By power we shall designate the capacity of a social class to realize its specific objective interests” (p.104) and he continued:

The concept of power cannot be applied to ‘inter-individual’ relations or to relations whose constitution in given circumstances is presented as independent of their place in the

process of production i.e. in societies divided into classes, as independent of the class struggle. (as cited in Day, 2007, p.15)

It was Weber who introduced the term ‘status’ and ‘party’ in contrast to ‘class’ in social studies. John Scott (1996) suggests, ‘command’ might be a better interpretation. Westwood (2002) notes that this notion is central in Weber’s work. Weber introduced new authority and bureaucracy as equals for feudal and traditional social formations. As Westwood (2002) notes:

Class was not alone in defining positions within the social structure. Status was also important, and although it was inevitably tied to material wealth, status distinctions related to blood ties, to consumption patterns and notions of taste that could be reviewed as having some independence from economics. (p.48)

Following his discussion in this part, Westwood introduces the term ‘underclass’. He notes that the notion of ‘underclass’ suggests that “somehow a group of people is outside of, beyond, the class structure and, in so far as class is defining feature of capitalist societies, this has placed sections of the population outside society” (p.50). Simply put, he considers this ‘underclass’ as the powerless group in the society; a group of people who are victims of racialized power and racism. He also suggests that the term ‘social exclusion’ is used to refer to this group. Interestingly, he points to the term used by the Victorian, ‘dangerous classes’ and explains that the media presentations of this group are as “the young, dangerous and disaffected element for whom ‘the future has been cancelled’...” (p.52), but on the contrary, these people are presented as dangerous, out of control and empowered by their antisocial behavior.

Harvey (1996) and Castells (1997) introduce ‘nation’ as a relevant term. They explain that different classes in a society have different ‘nation’s in that society, and point out that these ‘nation’s are imaginary. Although they consider these ‘nation’s imaginary, there are also imaginary borders which determine the insiders and outsiders of the class or nation. Here, the attention is to the common features of the members not the differences. In his recent study, Castells (1997) notes:

Power still rules society, it shapes and dominates, us... . The new power lies in the codes of information and in the images of representation around which societies organize their institutions and people build their lives, and decide their behavior. The sites of this power are people’s minds. (p.359)

In *FOG*, different classes which are distinguished according to Urania are: best-educated Dominicans, the intellectuals of the country, the lawyers, doctors, engineers, sensitive, cultivated men of experience, wide reading, ideas, presumably possessing a highly developed sense of the ridiculous, men of feeling and scruples. Llosa distinguishes two major classes in Dominican Republic which are aristocrat and working classes. He points out that the aristocrats have their special school, Santo

Domingo, which is different from the others'.

The important point here is that Trujillo pays special attention to working class and tries not to allow economic boycotts put them under pressure; albeit, it is his politics to control this class and believes, "To establish that relationship, to be comrades with a campesino, a laborer, a craftsman, a merchant, was to guarantee the loyalty of the poor man and poor woman..." (chap.8, p.148)

Thus, two classes mentioned by Marx are detected in *FOG*, when the assassins are speaking about their slavery to the government economy. According to Llosa, almost thirty to forty percent of Dominicans work directly for the dictator.

Interestingly, Llosa points to Trujillo classification of the society and his attitude about them in chapter 14, when he is speaking with his nominal president:

I've always had a low opinion of intellectuals and writers," he repeated. "On the scale of merit, the military occupy first place. They do their duty, they don't get involved in intrigues, they don't waste time. Then the campesinos. In the bateys and huts, on the sugar plantations, that's where the healthy, hard-working, honorable people of this country are. Then the bureaucrats, entrepreneurs, businessmen. Writers and intellectuals come last. Even below the priests. (chap.14, p.268)

Thus, he does not have a positive attitude towards intellectuals and we know that in most of revolutions all over the world, they are intellectuals and young girls and boys who lead it and Republic Dominican is not exceptional. In *FOG*, we read that these two classes have caused the June 14<sup>th</sup> movement which is the bed of following protests. In terms of class, there is no difference between intellectuals, students, workers, and other people in Trujillo's dictatorship view; in this regard race and class were not important. In chapter nine, Llosa states that after June's movement, prisons were full of suspected persons despite of their status, titles, race and class, so what is important for Trujillo is the power not the social classes. Westwood (2002) concludes:

Class has been and remains a central concern of sociologies, and it is clear from the discussion that class is more than the sum of official categories that divide people by their occupation. This is just the beginning, as Bourdieu and Sennett and Cobb have elaborated, class relations are constituted through the internalities of class actors' lives in which cultures, emotions and the psychic processes of class are made and remade in the working and family lives of people on a daily basis. (p.60)

**Gender and Power:** Gender is one of the most debatable concepts in sociology studies and its presence is unavoidable. As Dunphy (2000) states:

We inhabit a culture which seems to revolve around fixed categories, opposites, and which seems much less comfortable with ambiguity, change, blurs...on the issue of gender and sexual binaries, a great deal of cultural, political, and emotional effort and energy has been vested in constructing, reproducing, and sustaining certain opposing categories. (p.3)

Differences between men and women have a great

effect on their social status, language, and power. Most of the studies done on gender and power are following discourse analysis and related language theories, but what is considered here is the effect of gender on power in terms of sociology and the different status of 'male' and 'female' in a society. It seems that during the history these are men who dominate the society and power and consequently, a world is constructed in which men are powerful and women are powerless. Westwood (2002) states, "...the relations between gender and power, and the ways in which this has translated into practical politics, invoking different forms of power and re-inserting the issue of violence" (p.63). He continues that power produced a politics from which women were separated and became the subordinate and oppressed group by 'patriarchal' power. According to Westwood, this patriarchal power was dominant not only in the state and law, but also in families and little by little changed into a culture within which women were considered just as the nurturers and the side of peace.

Philips (2003) points to The Women's Liberation Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s in the United States first and then other countries. This movement was the result of inequality between men and women in the United States. It was believed that women do not have as much control over their own life as men do and they are dominated by men in their family life, workplace, and other social domains as well, particularly religion and politics. She continues:

The American patriarchal ideology that received the greatest attention in the women's movement was the view that women are biologically inferior to men - less intelligent, physically weaker, less aggressive, and more emotional - in ways ultimately explained by differences in their biological make-up. (p.255)

"The physicality of men was debated and denounced in relation to a radical feminist politics, which forced the issue of male violence towards women", Westwood (2002, p.67) notes and suggests these radical feminists have considered all men violent because they believe men benefit from the male violence of a few because they pose a threat to women. Consequently, all women are considered powerless again in both home and society. In his famous book, *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault's analysis of power and the body is shown. This analysis had a great effect on the way that gender and gender relations are currently understood and debated. Westwood (2002) notes, "Like feminism more generally, Foucault was categorical about the importance of the body as the site for play and power, from the state to interpersonal relations" (p.72).

Thus, before The Women's Liberation Movement, there was a world in which women were considered powerless and men powerful. This world is the same as the world of *FOG* especially in dictatorship politics. Brilliantly, Llosa depicts this world throughout the novel



and illustrates the role of women in Dominican society in that period of time. In chapter six we read the features of a Dominican woman stated by Antonio:

Antonio remembered his surprise when he heard Aida rebuke him in front of his parents and Emesto. She was the model Dominican wife, quiet, obliging, long-suffering, who put up with his drunkenness, his affairs with women, his fighting, the nights he spent away from home, and always welcomed him with a smile, raising his spirits, willing to believe his excuses when he bothered to give her any... (chap.6, p.110)

Even Doña María, the dictator's wife, and Angelita, his daughter, have to tolerate their husbands' corruption without any protest. Urania Cabral is the first and most comprehensible example of male violence towards females. She is sacrificed for the sake of power and the dictator's sexual desires. But she is not the only victim. Rosalia Perdomo, a very beautiful girl from a very high status family, is another instance who is raped violently by Ramfis - the dictator's elder son—and his friends. This sexualized attitude towards women has not changed after thirty-five years when Urania got back home and felt the way that Dominican men look at her body.

Occasionally a man's head will look out of some vehicle and for an instant her eyes meet a pair of male eyes that look at her breasts, her legs, her behind. In New York nobody looks at a woman with that arrogance anymore. ... In New York not even Latins -Dominicans, Colombians, Guatemalans- give such looks. They've learned to repress them, realized they mustn't look at women the way male dogs look at female dogs, stallions look at mares, boars look at sows. (chap.1, p.10)

Now, what is related directly to our discussion, gender and power, is the status of women in Dominican government in that time. It does not seem to point that there is no woman in Trujillo's dictatorship in regard to politics. The only crucial female characters in FOG related to the government are Mirabal sisters. They are among June 14<sup>th</sup> movement activists whose husbands have been imprisoned by Trujillo. Minerva Mirabal is the main figure who leads other young people through the protest, but she and her sisters are killed in a fake car accident. Almost at the end of the novel, after Trujillo assassination and before Ramfis arrival, this is Doña María who makes some decisions. It should be noted that Balaguer uses Doña María's power here in favor of himself. So, again there is another kind of misusing of a woman by a politician.

Westwood (2002) concludes his discussion on engendered power in this way:

[Studying engendered power] sought ways in which to consider the modalities of power, from coercion, repression and constraint and the issue of violence, to strategies and seduction, in relation to the ways in which femininities and masculinities are constructed and analyzed within sociological discourses. (p.80)

He points out that feminists try to make the role of woman more visible by entering her into the realm of

the politics and power and simultaneously show that the forms of power are generic,

From state discourse which construct women and men in specific ways through the power/knowledge complex to the forms of coercive power in operation. ... The use of rape as a political tool within repressive regimes was countered by a collective voice. (p.80).

As a conclusion, it should be noted here that the combination of military force and sexuality is more visible in repressive regimes to control the subjects of the power.

Urania's words in chapter four are relevant. She suggests that at the beginning of Trujillo's dictatorship it was possible for a woman to refuse to receive the Chief while her husband was not home, later, it was not possible and rejection has serious consequences. The important point is that Trujillo selects his politicians' wives for two reasons, first because of their beauty or family status and second to use this relation to control the politicians and contempt them by this in appropriate situations in future. Don Froilán's wife is one of the women selected by Trujillo whose husband according to Urania, is "minister, senator, intendant, chancellor, and ambassador, everything one could be during those days. Even Minister of Foreign Affairs, in May 1961...." (chap.4, p.57). Trujillo retells his relation with Don Froilán's wife in a big party and Don Froilán tolerates it patiently and mentioned it as an honor for him to donate his wife to his Chief. Also, it can be concluded that the attitude towards gender and sex in different cultures and places is different, so it is appropriate to consider the conception of space in relation to power which can explain these different attitudes.

**Space and Power:** Studying power and its different forms and earlier discussed categories without considering a kind of border seems wasting of time. To consider power and its applications, embodiments, and forms, there must be a kind of realm or territory in which there are powerful and powerless people. This realm can be a family, an office, an ethnic group, a city, or a country. Thus, power and space are interrelated and must be considered simultaneously. Westwood in his *Power and the Social* considers the importance of nation, states and control of territory, which leads to the discussion of the politics of space. He tells us how people create and protect their locality and concludes that spatial power is not external to our lives. As Harvey (1996) suggests, space and time are certainly social constructs with different societies and communities living within different space/time frames which, for example, order the world of the convent or the farm. As Westwood (2002) points out:

In terms of the development of the modern world and the globalization of capital, there is one form that exemplifies the coincidence of the geographical imaginary with spatial power and that is the rise of nations and nation-states. (p.100)

Benedict Anderson is the influential person in our understanding of nation and nationalism. In his work

(1991), he imagines nations as a community of people with common bonds. Then, he revised his imagination by raising the issue of maps and mapping and the ways in which maps become potent symbols of nations. Westwood (2002) believes that the issue of nations and nationalism “bring together spatiality as territory with the complex class and power relations of nation–states because they are states rather than nations that mark out territory and seek to guard against incursions with the organized assistance of the military” (p.100).

Two other writers who have paid special attention to the matter of geographical borders are Giddens (1985) and Hepple (1992). Westwood (2002) points to Giddens’ suggestion that, “Borders are nothing other than lines drawn to demarcate states’ sovereignty” (p. 101). Westwood elaborates that what are considered as the borders are not natural but political and therefore “generated and sustained by power relations” (p.101). Hepple (1992) notes, “Geopolitical discourse, and the organic metaphor, have been very influential in the military academies and in military thought about the states” (p.136). Thus, Hepple’s concern is with the military and states of Latin America and their organization which create the nations in these territories. He (1992) also states, “Territorial issues, both of economic development and international tensions, are politically important in the South America states, as are legitimate questions of military security” (p.153).

Along with all these issues, colonialism and post-colonialism cannot be ignored in space discussions. Determined to change colonized people’s culture, language, ideology, and even religion is the main feature of the colonizers. It was mentioned in the first part of this discussion that Republic Dominican was a colony of Spain, America, and finally Haiti. As senator Agustín Cabral states:

The Chief found a small country barbarized by wars among the caudillos, a country without law and order, impoverished, losing its identity, invaded by its starving, ferocious neighbors. They waded across the Masacre River and came to steal goods, animals, houses, they took the jobs of our agricultural workers, perverted our Catholic religion with their diabolical witchcraft, violated our women, ruined our Western, Hispanic culture, language, and customs, imposed their African savagery on us. (chap.1, p. 12–13)

During post-colonial period, that is Trujillo’s dictatorship, he also tries to impose his own ideology and desires on people. These changes are not favorable for all people and revolutionists believe that their corruption is the result of Trujillo’s corruption.

Other discussed issues are also detected easily in *FOG*. First of all we have the organization of military forces by Trujillo in Dominican Republic in order to push Black Haitians back and defend the borders, either geographical or political. We read in the first chapter that Urania is surprised when she sees many Haitians in the street in

1996, thirty-five years after Trujillo’s assassination. Trujillo is sure that if someday there is a war, his soldiers are ready to fight to death with him.

If they had to die fighting the Marines, how many Dominicans would sacrifice themselves with him? The soldiers would, no doubt about that. They proved it during the invasion sent by Fidel on June 14, 1959. They fought well, they wiped out the invaders in just a few days, in the mountains of Costanza, on the beaches of Maimón and Estero Hondo. But the Marines... (chap.5, p.69)

He also states in different situations that he would not let other countries meddle with his country’s politics and he would not leave his country at all or flee like Argentina’s dictator, Peron. He also has dictated that nobody is allowed to save money in foreign banks during the sanctions, “Relatives, friends, enemies—they all stayed here,’ with everything they owned, to fight or leave their bones on the field of honor. Like the Marines...” (chap.8, p.139).

Another related issue discussed by Westwood is refugees and migrants with complex identifications and loyalties. He explains that this is one of the consequences of global phenomena like colonialism and political relations between countries and states. To sum up his discussion, it seems the geographical borders are only superficial lines on the maps, what should be considered to determine the nations-states are cultural, linguistic, ideological, and religious ties. He (2002) notes:

Land is constituted as territory historically within specific political moments, through plunder as with colonialism and empire and then through the liberation struggles that succeed through force in securing a counter-claim. This is the basis of many of the new states and the history earlier struggles, especially in Latin America. (p.103)

He continues his discussion on territory and states to the extent that concludes protection of this territory become very important for its members, then, to fulfill this, “the state powers attempt to discipline these spaces against” (p.106) the outsiders and subversion locals. They want to control their subjects, so they use all the facilities such as police force and different modes of surveillance. This debate leads to raising the notion of ‘visibility’ of power. This visibility deals with racism or the other forms of exclusion in the society. “It has, however, become part of the commonsense in which surveillance and the rise of security technologies is seen to stand in for the social/spatial relations that these forms represent” (p. 108). Related to this discussion, Westwood and Radcliffe (1996, p. 27–28) introduce two new terms, ‘geographies of identities’ defined as “the senses of belonging and subjectivities which are constituted in and which in turn act to constitute different spaces and social sites” and ‘correlative imaginaries’ which “generate and sustain an ideational horizontal integration with a shared space, through a form of interpellation which correlates subjectivities and social spaces” (as cited in Westwood,



2002, p.108). Simply put, Westwood explains, the first one emphasizes “the emotional links between self and place” and the second emphasizes “the imaginative ways in which individuals are able to place themselves in a frame, very often alongside people with whom they are sharing a common experience” (p.108).

In *FOG*, almost all Dominican exiles and migrants are among the revolutionist or help them in different ways, and of course Trujillo has kept a watchful eye on them by his intelligence service in different cities. They can be considered as the external enemies, but they support the movements in the country and internal enemies of the state. In this regard, Colonel Johnny Abbes, the head of Intelligence Service, notes:

... how important it was not to allow the enemy within to raise his head, to crush him every time he attempted to act. Because as long as the enemy within is weak and disunited, it doesn't matter what the foreign enemy does. (chap.3, p.45)

Thus, we can see the role of different ways of surveillance in power and governing the subjects of that power inside and outside of the state.

As Westwood declares, cultural, linguistic, ideological, and religion ties bring different people from different classes in a society together to create a new imaginary nation. One of the instances of this sort of nation is June 14<sup>th</sup> movement gathering. The members are unsatisfied with Trujillo's dictatorship. They have different reasons to protest, but they believe that the only solution of their problems is to end the dictatorship. As Llosa states, there is an “intense brotherhood created by shared ideals, illusions, and dangers” (p.163). The other imaginary nation in *FOG* is the gathering of Trujillo's assassins. They also have a kind of common experience, but in different frames. Trujillo has hurt their humanity and has corrupted them by giving different privileges and they want to take a harsh revenge.

Interestingly, Harvey (1996) points to the notion of ‘naming’ in the process of placing and spatial power in this manner, “The power to individuate within a given spatio-temporal frame is associated with the power to name; naming is a form of power over people and things” (p.264). This form of power, renaming the places, is very common in the colonial and post-colonial world, in the former indicating the entrance of new power and within the latter indicator of the end of colonial ties and the celebration of the national figures.

Thus, there is no doubt that there is a mutual relation between the place and people's identities who live there. As it was mentioned earlier, people have a kind of emotional belonging to their local, and protection of that place is important to them. Westwood points to Williams' work in which he used the term ‘structure of feeling’ as a way of addressing the emotional commitment that people have to ideas and places. Massey (1995) has written:

One of the most powerful ways in which social space can be conceptualized is as constituted out of social relations, social

interactions, and for that reason, always and everywhere an expression and a medium of power. (p.284)

The notion of naming in *FOG* can be considered in three eras, before Trujillo's dictatorship, during his government, and finally after his assassination. The first case in this regard is the name of the capital city. Before the dictatorship its name was “Santo Domingo”. Trujillo has changed it into “Ciudad Trujillo”, and after his assassination it is reversed to its first name again. Almost all the streets, squares, and cross roads in different parts of the country are named after Trujillo's near relatives, his mother, sons, and wife. During her walk around the city, Urania notices the new names and recalls all those names. In chapter eight Llosa explains that Trujillo had been good at making up nicknames.

Many of the savage labels he stamped on people became part of their very flesh and eventually replaced their real names. That's what had happened to Senator Henry Chirinos. No one in the Dominican Republic, except for the newspapers, called him by name; they used only his devastating epithet: the Constitutional Sot. (chap.8, p.131)

Of course Henry Chirinos has another nickname too, the “Walking Turd”. Senator Agustín Cabral has not been an exceptional and has been called “Egghead”.

As mentioned earlier, all these changes in names are because of people's feeling towards them. During the dictatorship, Trujillo has used this policy to impose this idea on people that he is the power of Dominican and after him, the president changes the names because people hate Trujillo and his government and of course to achieve his own political approval. Thus, this is visibility of some politics which is crucial in governing the people and progressing the power. Therefore, it does worth considering the relation between vision and power here.

**Vision and Power:** It is generally accepted that seeing something equals believing it. Generally, people first see something, then think about it, and finally accept or reject it. Thus, vision and belief or better to say ideology have been moving side by side during the history. The importance of vision has increased along with the development of the knowledge and sciences. Among the thinkers in this regard, one may remember Foucault as the first and most influential one who debates the relation between vision and power and vision and knowledge. As Zolfagharkhani (2010) reveals:

In the third part of his book *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault analyzes ‘Panopticon’ in detail. The original sketch of Panopticon was introduced by Jeremy Bentham who, in turn, took the idea from his brother. Bentham's design was not appreciated and supported by the British Government. Some hundred years later, Foucault gave a new spirit to the idea and revived it. He believes that Panopticon is a proper model for the modern formation of power from which nobody can escape. It is an architecture in which one observes and controls thousands of people, contrary to the ancient Greek amphitheatres where a great number of people used to watch a limited number of actors. The major achievement of Panopticon is to keep the

prisoners in a state of conscious and permanent visibility in such a way that visibility becomes a trap and becomes automatic and disindividualized; consequently, this machine- and also the power- can be operated by everybody who is located in the central tower. (p.60)

Flynn (1993, p. 281–282) states, “For modernity, vision has become supervision. The ‘hegemony’ of vision in Foucault’s modernity is the hegemony of power – a redundancy!... The vehicles of this disciplinary economy are surveillance, normalization, and the synthesis, the examination” (as cited in Westwood, 2002, p.129). In the previous part, we pointed to the visibility of power represented in different forms of coercive power or modes of surveillance. We use it here again to declare that there is a crucial link between visual power and science and technology. Westwood also believes that most of social movement politics are seeking to gain visibility for important issues related to the nation and locality.

This part is the repetition of the previous part in a new way. There we have stated, Trujillo named the streets, squares, towers, and many other places throughout the country after his family’s member and himself. In fact, he used the power of vision to remain in people’s mind and by seeing the names make them to remember that who is in power. It should be pointed out again that the new government changes the name of different places little by little to gain people’s loyalty in favor of itself. In her memories, Urania recalls clearly that in those days people had to place a bronze plaque that boasted: “In this house Trujillo is the Chief” next to an image of the Virgin of Altigracia to prove their loyalty to the government. She explains that after Trujillo’s era, how people “tried to wipe away the traces, ashamed of what it represented: their cowardice” (p.10). Another illustrative part in *FOG* related to vision discussion is the invented slogan for the Dominican Party in which the initials of Trujillo name is used, “Rectitude, Liberty, True Work, Morality.” He declares, “It ought to be in the minds and memories of Dominicans,...those words summarize everything I’ve given them” (p.146). In chapter five, another use of vision power is present when Trujillo wants to free a group of political prisoners. Speaking with SIM head, Johnny Abbes:

I’ll [Abbes] need a list of those who’ll be freed. So we can give them haircuts, shave them, dress them in decent clothes. I imagine they’ll be interviewed by the press.

I’ll [Trujillo] send you the list as soon as I look it over. Balaguer thinks these gestures are useful in diplomacy. We’ll see. In any case, he made a good presentation. (chap.5, p.84)

Another important representation of visual power is related to the spatial power, that is mapping and political bordering. It was noted earlier that nations are created based on common experiences and ideologies; therefore, geographical maps and signs like flags, national logos, and national events are used to enforce the visual power. As Westwood (2002) states:

...in the USA and Latin American countries, presidential ceremonies and the daily practice of saluting the flag in schools are visual reminders of the community of the nation. All these visual moments appear to ‘stand in’ for the nation and have the power to effect an identification and emotional bonds that Anderson (1991) has called ‘political love.’ (p.116)

All the issues discussed in racialized power in earlier part is relevant to this discussion. Racism is one of the main effects of visual power. It is something directly related to seeing and believing. Westwood has discussed this issue in this way that this visual image of the ‘other’ stared in Western society and spread through the world by biology development and create a new term of ‘scientific racism’. He notes that these visual images remained in the connotation of black/white within the hierarchical Latin American countries.

Another central aspect of the power of vision is the role of religion. Religion and power apparently have been two contrast notions during the history and within different forms of power in different countries and states. As Zolfagharkhani (2011) notes:

Generally, the echelons of both the king and the pastor have been in a volatile situation in power structures. There were occasions, however, when one arrived at a tendency to develop into the other. A king’s desire to own both his sovereignty and sacredness and the clergyman’s choice of ruling some provinces are the cases found in the history of man. (p.3)

Westwood (2002) points to the role of Roman Catholic church. Relating his discussion to visual power, he continues in this way, “The imagery of Catholicism has reinforced the aesthetics of whiteness with both Jesus and Mary images cast in whiteness, blonde hair, blue eyes, and the figure of the great father – the Pope” (p.119). Religious events and miracles and other visual signs are everywhere and in every religion from the cross to the sign of fire, or the signs designed to elaborate and describe religious notions and conceptions. As Westwood (2002) notes, “Religion, of course, is no less separated from politics and is deeply conscious of the play of powers in the visual imagery” (p.120).

The concept of religion is one of the major themes in *FOG*. In most part of this novel, one can trace religion for or against the government. Balaguer is the person who controls the relation between the Church and regime all the time. He always maintained:

the regime had to get along with the bishops, the priests, the Vatican, for pragmatic, political reasons, not religious ones: the approbation of the Catholic Church legitimized the actions of the regime to the Dominican people. What had happened to Peron must not happen to Trujillo: Peron’s government began to crumble when the Church turned against him. (chap.14, p. 264–265)

However, January 24<sup>th</sup> of 1960 is the start of Catholic Church campaign against Trujillo’s regime. Trujillo is known as a religious person among his people because they see him in different religious ceremonies, so they

cannot believe the Bishops' Pastoral Letter very easily. Trujillo uses this power against Church. Trujillo feeling about the near end of his regime after the mentioned Letter is real because this is the church which allows "tyrannicide" as Salvador said. He has been determined to kill Trujillo after his appointment with Monsignor Lino Zanini, the papal nuncio.

Those in power know it well that not all the people have ability to understand all these signs and use language as a system of signs to convey their meaning to the power subjects. Westwood uses the notion of language in a more general sense referred to all means and forms of the representation of power through speaking and communication. Here, it does not seem irrelevant to point to the role of media in visual power. Most of power scholars and discourse analysts believe that we gain almost our all ideology and knowledge through media. As Van Dijk (2007) points out:

Control of knowledge crucially shapes our interpretation of the world, as well as our discourse and other actions. Hence, the relevance of a critical analysis of those forms of text and talk, for example, in the media and education, that essentially aims to construct such knowledge. (p.258)

Although television as a media seems the most visual means to depict the power, other sources of news such as newspapers, magazines, and radio can also be considered regarding to the notion of language as a system of signs.

A very descriptive instance of language use in relation to power and religion in *FOG* is the orator of Balaguer in which he declares, "in 1930, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina had relieved God of this arduous mission" (p. 266),

A bold, energetic will that supports, in the march of the Republic toward the fulfillment of its destiny, the protective benevolence of supernatural forces, Trujillo retired with half-dosed eyes. God and Trujillo: here, in synthesis, is the explanation, first, of the survival of the nation, and second, of the present-day flourishing of Dominican life. (chap.14, p.267)

After this oration, many people place a large luminous sign on the door of their house: "God and Trujillo". Llosa adds that Balaguer's speech was reissued and required reading in schools, and the central text in the Civics Handbook, used to educate high school and university students.

Like most of the dictators in the history, Trujillo uses language to compile his favorable history books and uses different kinds of propaganda in his government. *El Caribe*, for instance is one of the most widely read newspapers in Dominican, especially "The Public Forum" which is "the most widely read and widely feared, section because it is fed from the National Palace and served as a political barometer for the entire country." It is used to denounce politicians and to show that they are not loyal persons to the government anymore. In Trujillo's regime, there is also plenty of censorship. Foreign newspapers are not issued in Dominican and reading them is forbidden.

It is the same about radio, only Dominican voices are available. It should not be forgotten that foreign mass medias like newspapers, orations, political interviews, and other sources of news are used against Trujillo.

To sum up the discussion, visibility is a key element in our understanding of power. According to Alexander and Jacobs, "... civil society must be conceived not only as a world of voluntary associations, elections, or even legal rights, but also, and very significantly, as a realm of symbolic communication" (as cited in Westwood, 2002, p.131). Westwood (2002) elaborates, "They suggest a narrative structure to civil society which is represented through the media coverage of political events which consists of a plot and characters" (p.131). Thus, the society is the location of a nation-state movie with heroes and villains and power of vision is in hands of who is/are the director(s) of this movie as a political tool. At the end of his discussion on power and vision, Westwood (2002) writes:

In this way, the visual, as I have suggested, is implicated in the construction of the power relations of the social; it can no longer be thought as a reflection of the social. Rather, media forms, most especially television, are also makers of the social, practices that construct imagination, stories that are part of the commonsense, traversing hegemonic and counter-hegemonic resistances, designed to coerce and to seduce as forms of power. (p.132)

## CONCLUSION

In *The Feast of the Goat*, Trujillo's power includes both meanings and conceptions of power. After being selected as the commander of the military during the American's occupation, he gained necessary ability to get the power and by using different kinds of political covers he achieved the required legitimacy. Llosa in his novel depicts a society and a kind of regime in which almost all power theories discussed in first part can be applied. Different power grammars in this novel were discussed, one noticed that according to Mills statement, Trujillo has the accesses to all official and institutional parts of the government and is the major owner of Dominican economical pole. Parson's view that states power is based on its subjects consent is also detected in *FOG*. Albeit, this consent is not general and over years it is replaced by dissatisfaction. Next important view is Locke's, which is about the power of law making and penalties. As one reads *FOG*, one can see Trujillo has persons like Cabral, Balaguer, and Chirinois whose responsibility is compiling of the Constitution and also approving necessary laws in favor of Trujillo. During his sovereignty, economy, education, culture, and religion had great progress and he pushed back previous colonizers the very first years of his domination. Marx's view of power related to economy and ideology is also detectable in *FOG*. More than thirty percent of Dominicans work directly for Trujillo's institutions and one sees that his beliefs, ideas, habits,



and ideology are imposed on people during these thirty-one years. Trujillo uses his power to show that what is his desire and interest is the desire and interest of people and make them believe they are working to achieve their own desires and goals. According to Hindess, this is possible through propaganda and different sorts of media. As it was discussed, almost all power grammar categories studied by Westwood in his *Power and the Social* have been detected and discussed in this article very briefly and for each one we present different examples and references to the novel. Thus, in a society like Republic Dominican, during Trujillo's dictatorship, different power theories and power grammars can be applied and studied, and one realized that Trujillo's regime was a dictator one. So, it is appropriate to conclude that a dictatorial regime is an illustrative picture of power theories and power grammar.

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