Literary Onomastics Typology in Manuel Rueda's Dramas

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We have already established that there are twelve families of names, six techniques in nominology and three possible concepts or typologies in Literary Onomastics (1).

This study concentrates on the typology of relevance to onotology and cosmology of names in two dramas of Manuel Rueda, national prize winner of literature in 1957. The literature of the Dominican Republic (known as Hispanola) begins during the Neoclassic Period, when Spain possessed and ruled this Caribbean island. Known as the 'cradle of the Americas,' Hispanola boasts of having the first convents, first schools, first implantation of European culture, first universities, first Holy See, and the first royal Audiencia in North America (2).

Dominican literature commences with the diary entries of Columbus on December 7, 1492 (3). Its historicity can be divided into four dictatorships (Santana, Baez, Lillis, and Trujillo) after its second declaration of independence in 1844. Notwithstanding the political oppression, its literature has recently developed into a Golden Age of its own (4).

One of Rueda's plays, Vacations in Heaven, a comedy in three acts, premiered the 20th of October, 1960. The protagonist, Don Justiniano, is a religious fanatic bordering on insanity and void of all reality. His hatred of evil is so great that he sets up a schedule for his entire household and all his farm workers to follow. When the two invited priests arrive to spend their vaca-
tion at his estate he makes the following pronouncement while kneeling before them:

Justiniano: Servants, farmers, peons, harvesters, all my employees have come to pay homage to you.... At five a.m., family mass in the chapel, Father Hobson in charge. At six, general mass for the entire neighborhood and a sermon in charge of the reverend Father Inurria.... At seven, general confession in charge of both Fathers.... At four p.m., rehearsal of hymns.... At five p.m. catechism practice and instruction, etc., up to ten p.m. (5)

Great is Justiniano's shock when Father Inurria arrives singing folksongs, playing a guitar and intends to collect butterflies with Teresa, the young lady of the house. To make matters worse the younger Father Hobson, a missionary returned from Paraguay, is an athlete, jujitsu expert and horseman. Don Justiniano orders his wife, whom he now addresses very formally so as not to be considered romantic, to expel her vacationing engineer nephew from the house for speaking to Teresa and reading worldly books which include his engineering texts. Actually his only sin is being a very simpatico college graduate who is in love with Teresa. A child falls prostate at the feet of Father Inurria and confesses six small sins and one big one, one sin for each of his seven years of life. He explains that Justiniano had informed him that in order to continue growing normally he must have one big sin.
Act two starts with a day of fasting which undermines everybody's morale, but all his employees must conform in order to keep their jobs. His fanaticism reaches such heights that audiences during the presentation of this play have laughed hysterically:

Justiniano: MILK! Have you not thought about the impurities of so many of our foods compared to it! Such whiteness in only one glass of milk! I love white foods: custards, white cheeses, fresh cream and...the white of bread. Don't you think that we should suspend the use of meats because they are sinful? The yellow of the egg (yolk)--is it not the color of envy? Whiteness is the glory, the privative in and out of our stomachs.

The name Don Justiniano from the Latin _justus_ means "he who makes justice." So great was his religious indignation towards evil that from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., on the hour, every hour, there was some religious activity for the entire household and the working community he employed. His sense of justice demanded sacrifice to the living God who did not have mercy. For him every activity such as playing tennis, golf, exercise, catching butterflies, reading text books, watching T.V. or listening to the radio became a sinful act. He repudiates his wife for siding with people against him and wants to expel her from their home because he believes it is God's will.

_ELVIRA_, from the germanic _gaila_ and _versa_ meaning "an amiable sword," is a very appropriate name for she is the only link and sword and push to reality that Justiniano maintains out of respect for the fact that she is his wife, but he looks at her with sus-
pcion. He thinks that it was an honor that she married him in order to gain the salvation of her soul. She fights back and defends the religiousness of her family explaining that they didn't turn their house into a chapel or monastery.

**TERESA**, from a teutonic word meaning "huntress," represents the young ladies who obey the impulse of nature and their hearts. Even though she feared Justiniano's wrath she eloped with Ricardo.

**RICARDO**, also of teutonic origin and meaning "strong like a ruler," manages to override Justiniano's directives against him and overrules all the odds against himself. He is the worldly man who questions all religious norms and follows the existentialist philosophy of life, coming out victorious with his plans to marry Teresa.

**HOBSON** is a patronymic made up of HOB meaning "to take liberties or make free." This young priest took many liberties in his ministry, for aside from doing his religious duties he taught jujitsu, calisthenics and horseback riding, thus consuming much of his time in mundane activities instead of concentrating on religious matters. "Son of him who takes liberties" is the true denotation.

**TEOLINDA** is a combination of two words, Teo "God" and Linda "beauty" giving "the beauty of God" as a name to this trusted servant who is directed to instruct the other servant Michaela on all religious duties of the household of Justiniano. She teaches
the latter that 9:00 a.m. is the hour of praying for gratitude and conformity, etc. She treats all the servants under her jurisdiction with mercy and kindness.

Justiniano: They were warned that they also must pray and give thanks at home.

Teolinda: However, they want to change the part of "he who gives us daily bread" and "he who provides us clothing." They feel that this is not prudent because many times they do not have enough to eat and so many of them do not have a shirt to put on their backs. They do not want to fool God.

Justiniano: Well, they should not think, for their duty is to obey.

MICHAELA is a substitute servant in place of someone else for a few days who wants to win favors from Justiniano and walks around the house saying prayers out loud. Her descriptive name means "she who is like God." She prays more Hail Mary's than any other person in the house.

INNOCENCIO or innocence is the male servant who believes all he hears and sides with whomever speaks to him, not wishing to displease anyone, and tries to be as helpful as he can.

The child and all the farmworkers have no names, for being nameless they are more powerful in concept. The characters are caught in a maze within two polarizations. One is the religious world of humanity and compassion that Fathers Inurria and Hobson represent and the world of religious fanaticism and legalism that Justiniano imposes upon his entire workforce and household.
INURRIA is a word deriving from the privative prefix IN and the Hebrew UR-YAH, "light of God." He is an elderly, experienced priest full of the joy of living and perplexed by the intransigent, nonsensical lack of religious freedom. He extricates Justiniano out of his fanaticism and leads him to follow the teaching of Jesus to love, forgive and forget all those who do not follow his dictates and lunatic schedules of worship.

At night Ricardo and Teresa elope. Ricardo falls from his horse which Father Hobson manages to find and, catching up with both who are on one horse, brings them back. Padre Inurria speaks to Justiniano about them:

Last night they committed a grave error. They eloped. Father Hobson was riding on the horse you heard in your dreams, thinking it was Saint Jorge. In view of the gravity of the action I did what is customary to do in these cases, in order to punish them: marry them right away in your home chapel. First, I received the permission of the parish priest. Your permission wasn't possible for you were asleep and not even in this miserable world.

Now comes the crucial test of Justiniano's religious sanity:

Priest Inurria: Do these angelic voices you hear speaking to you tell you that you have to love, forgive and forget?

At first he denies it and resists, but finally he gives in and screams:

Justiano: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, I pardon them. What's the matter? Where am I, Father Inurria?

Father Inurria: In the best of possible worlds.
Then turning around to Father Hobson he blurs out in relief:

Inurria: It's over....We have finished. Heaven! Did I tell you when we arrived that we would have a vacation in Heaven? I was mistaken. It was in Purgatory.

The pull toward Justiniano is so strong that his employees have subjected themselves to a meticulous religious life of monastics, taking more time to pray and confess their sins than to do their work or chores. On the opposite pole of the labyrinth are the priests who represent the humane approach to religion, a religion of compassion, understanding, temperance, forgiveness and love.

The names in the play have been carefully chosen in order to portray the forces that govern the lives of humans in a cosmic sense.

The protagonist is the symbol of fanaticism in religion which Jesus came to overcome, as evidenced in contemporary Ireland. Legalism, cynicism devoid of humanity and isolation is one of the evils in the Dominican Republican and of the World. Justiniano is the typical self-righteous pharisee whom Jesus labeled hypocrite.

In the play Within the Wire Fence we see a dramatization of the time when the Dominican Republic was invaded by the U.S. Army. Two neighbors start the play, complaining of the high cost of food and the fact that the Chinaman in the corner grocery is already using English words. The black soldiers of the U.S. Army are so
ugly and terrifying, as if there were not enough blacks on the
Island, and to see them become conquistadores is unbearable. At
least the blacks of the island smell as they should but these
others have the pestiferous odor of deodorants. The invaders act
as if they were on vacation, smoking and drinking excessively,
having sex, chewing gum constantly and examining the anus of boys
and the breasts of young girls as they pass through the wire fence
of the compounds with the excuse of looking for armaments and
weapons. What the neighbors despise the most is the prostitute
Canela, who lives in the apartment between them. All the impor-
tant acting of the play takes place in the patio onto which all
the apartments open. Dani, Canela's pimp with whom she lives,
tries to befriend the neighbors, infuriating them more, for they
see how they are exploiting and befriending the enemy for the sake
of easy money.

Jimmy, a timid and hesitant sergeant in the U.S. Army, ar-
rives to have a rendezvous with Canela but instead of using her
body he converses with her and invites her to take trips with him
through the island for he's writing a book on the beautiful
typography and people of the island. The neighbors are disgusted
at seeing the sergeant at the entrance of Canela's apartment. She
should at least carry on her business in the vicinity of bars and
bedrooms. They determine to get her evicted by the landlord.
Jimmy proceeds to interview Canela about the local customs, cul-
ture and her Dominican family. When he leaves, Canela refuses to take money for no service given; nevertheless, he places the $10.00 bill on the table, which Dani quickly snatches. Obviously Jimmy is on the island against his wishes and has fallen in love with Canela, who admits that what she feels for him is genuine love. Her neighbors continue to insult her, saying:

- You're not only a whore, you're a germ.
- Why didn't you put your big toe in his dirty anus?

Canela truly loves Jimmy in an honorable way, something she has never experienced before. However, afraid of receiving beatings, she lies to Dani saying that she must always love him. Dani convinces the landlord not to evict Canela by bribing him with money and a promise to have Canela sleep with him. Jimmy returns, drawn by Canela's beautiful big black eyes and awesome beauty. Canela feels insulted to have someone repudiate her body but this time he makes advances and she leads Jimmy through the bedroom doors and deflowers his virginity. They make love passionately. The evil Dani informs the neighbors that he has become a revolutionary, an enemy of the invaders, and Canela has thrown him out, so that he has to sleep alone in the patio. Dani, who expects to charge Jimmy more money for the second visit, knocks on Canela's door and when she appears her visage is filled with horror and pain. She shows Dani a yellow flower, given to her by Jimmy, who had loved her at first sight because her eyes reminded
him of his Mexican mother. Canela sides with her nation, her people. Then she narrates that after Jimmy was wasted and satisfied, she sang him to sleep. In a moment of great patriotism—for she is truly a revolutionist—she stabs him to death with his army knife. She then yells at Dani her loyal devotion:

Then I thought about you! You were my man; I wasn't going to let him take advantage of me. That? Never! Never! I had to do it, for the sake of my country...and for you...because I also feel for what is mine. And that would have really been treason. It would have been the worse of the treasons and you have to help me.

Dani turns against her and flees for his life. The neighbors listen to Canela who shows them the naked body of the "yanqui" bathed in his own blood.

She explains:

I did it once and I'll do it a thousand times. None of them are going to obtain my true sincere love and remain in peace. Poor Dani, what a coward he turned out to be. The fault is mine and I'll confess to the U.S. Army Police.

The neighbors, realizing that the traitor to the island is really Dani and not Canela, remain at her side to await the jailors. The play ends as Canela reads from Jimmy's diary:

God grant me to come in peace time to this brave land that produces such beautiful creatures. I ask God to give the Dominican people the liberty they so deserve.

CANELA is the name of one of the most ancient condiments originating in Ceylon, propagated in Saigon and China. It means
"cinnamon," which when used with fruits, vegetables and starchy foods enhances the flavor. This name reminds us of the most ancient profession of women—prostitution. When soldiers of old traveled there were always women of ill repute with them to satisfy their basic animal needs. The soldiers in this play on the island of Santo Domingo take their turns with Canela and she certainly is spicy to all, not only with her body but with her singing, acting and dramatics. Canela is the diminutive of the Latin CANNA which means "reed (bark)." How straight and slender as a reed is this beautiful, patriotic whore.

DANI, a hypocoristic of Daniel, from the Hebrew means "God is my judge." Dani also represents one of the oldest professions of men—the financial exploitation of a woman’s body—using her body as a business machine yet controlling the emotions and psyche of the woman. Dani beats Canela into submission even though he professes to love her. Once Canela commits the crime of killing one of the customers with whom she falls in love, he abandons her even though she tells him the motive was loyalty to him and to her country. His selfishness leads him to eternal perdition and thus to the judgment of God.

JIMMY, the hypocoristic of James, from the Hebrew, means "may God protect." Jimmy is murdered by Canela even though they both fell in love with each other. As a journalist and writer he had
written time after time that he prayed to God to protect the
Dominican Republic against the invaders and her enemy.

The two neighbors are not given names for they are more
forceful in representing the revolution in the Dominican Republic
and the repudiation of and hatred towards the U.S. In the year
1917 the U.S. sent to the Dominican Republic soldiers to take over
the capital city. Canela represents citizens in any country
pulled by two forces, patriotism on one pole, or the force of
siding with the enemy or foreigner in order to survive. The
revolutionary spirit of independence, self-domination, individual
rights, pride in one's own culture and heritage cost whatever it
costs, giving your life for your convictions and religion, pro-
tecting what is yours even if murder is necessary, is represented
by the neighbors. The neighbors cannot have names because they
are a cosmic force in the World. Good examples of this are the
situations in Iran, Israel, Lebanon, the United Palestinians,
Ireland, etc. Even if chaos and poverty be the end result they
will defend their independence, culture, and heritage from all
foreigners. Dani, on the other pole, represents the most popular
worldly element--turncoat, treason, traitor, unscrupulousness,
egocentrivity, duplicity, the exploitation of others, and the use
of humans as stepping stones to achieve selfish needs.

Jimmy represents the very personal emotional subconscious
desire within one's heart in which one is blinded by romantic
love, love towards a mother or family love. The force that wins determines how we live. Canela chose to live in jail rather than compromise her patriotism and love for her people.

In both plays we have nameless characters who are included in the plays only for the sake of action, just as only a legitimate use of color in painting is used to support the finished likeness. It brings to mind the onomastic concept of Buddhism—Apoha—the doctrine of radical negativism propounding the concept that things cannot be named, for they cannot be perceived. According to the influential Buddhist philosopher, Dignaga, we can actively cognize or determine a thing only by opposing it to what it is not. What we know of a concrete form of individual is, in fact, an imaginative construction of our mind. There are no identical real things or beings, since all are radically unique, for every variation in time and space makes the being another being (7). George W. Fredrich Hegel concurs with this concept by explaining that beings are similar only insofar as our minds do not discern their "otherness." The nameless characters—the child, the farmers in *Vacations in Heaven* and Neighbor One and Neighbor Two in *Within the Wire Fence*—are cosmological forces. The child is a symbol of universal Childhood, their oppression, abuse, and intimidation. Religiously the children are subjected to concepts where no logic or reality enters. The farmers are symbols of the modern liberal
trend in religion or with the catholic church which has introduced folklore music in the masses, and hear mass in the vernacular language. Being forced to participate in a reformation of religious practice is contrary to their spiritual fiber. The Neighbors in *Within the Wire Fence* are a symbol of the rancor, hate and absolute abhorrence of foreign invaders whether it is spiritual, intellectual, emotional, or psychological. The soldier in the play, whose comprehensive and sensible spirit had placed him in the tragic and terrible position, had to die. He dies precisely in order that the miracle of the spiritual redemption of a supposedly enemy prostitute would be verified. The philosophy of the symbiotic elements in the plays conveys a clear revelation of the two polarizations in religion, home and state. In the plays the three fundamental institutions of modern society crumble and then rebuild themselves. Perhaps literary onomastics, through the interpretation of the names of the characters, may very well give lucidity to universal and cosmic enigmas.

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NOTES


2 Pedro Henríquez Ureña, La cultura Las letras coloniales en Santo Domingo (Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de La Universidad de Buenos Aires Instituto de Filología, 1936), p. 10.


5 Manuel Rueda, Teatro (Santo Domingo: Ediciones de la Sociedad de Autores y Compositores Dramáticos de la República Dominicana, 1968), pp. 187-322.

   All translations into English from Rueda's plays are my own.

