Naming Practices in Dominican Bateyes: Toponymy from Below

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1. Toponymy, Multinymity, and Place-Identities

Toponymy has a longstanding interdisciplinary research tradition. Linguists, historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and geographers maintain fruitful discussions about place names, focusing on how places are called; how their names change in time; and how toponyms gain social meaning in discourses about place identity (e.g. Fuchs 2013, Cumbe 2016, Hough 2016b, Levkovych 2020, Dräger et al. 2021, Dohardt 2022, Perono Cacciafoco/Cavallaro 2023). This study, too, concerns how place identity is construed through naming practices.

The naming of places is often politicised (e.g. Berg/Kearns 2009: 19), with a wide echo in journalistic and even belletrist media (e.g. Dohardt 2022). These are usually popular, rather than academic debates assuming a place should have only one name, the meaning of which is intrinsically connected to the respective spatial entity, describing its characteristics on etymological and sociohistorical grounds.[1] If society deems a toponym problematic for historical reasons, it may be changed (e.g. *Àomén* 澳門 substituting *Macau*, in a postcolonial context, see Dohardt 2022, Hassa 2016). If one looks beyond official naming discourse and practice, however, naming has many more facets. This is illustrated by the fact that one spatial entity may be referred to by a multitude of linguistic means (e.g. Fuchs 2015: 133, see also Cumbe 2016). Specifically, ***multinymity*** is an empirical fact, i.e. the same referent can have multiple names, next to the official one(s) (e.g. Lampinen 1999), which is especially well-known and well-studied when it comes to anthroponyms (e.g. given names, surnames, monikers, nicknames, and pseudonyms). Similarly, multinymity should be taken seriously in toponomastic discussions (e.g. Cumbe 2016, Kuhn 2016, Siegfried-Schupp 2017, 2021; Dohardt 2022). Given that a "variety of practitioners and scales" (Fuchs 2013: 2) is involved in naming practices, one must take into account that "toponym[s do] not have a simple or fixed meaning but [represent] a complex and dynamic entity. [They are] created by historical and social processes and [represent] an accumulation of experiences and events" (p. 2, our adaptions). The plethora of toponyms and interpretations thereof show that, even at the same locations, people construe congru-

1 This reflects the widespread popular belief that a name reveals the nature of its bearer. Consider the Latin saying *nomen est omen* 'a name is a prophecy', or the Chinese equivalent 顧名思義 (Mnd. *gù míng sī yì)* 'as the name states'.

ent but also divergent "physical and imaginative surroundings" (p. 4, see also Tuan 1977, de Stefani 2016).

This contribution focuses on topo-multinymity, demonstrating that it offers insights into the dynamics of place-making and specifically into the negotiation of place identity as a spatio-linguistic practice. In addition, this topic has the potential to broaden the empirical base of toponomastics, by focusing on naming practices in localised contexts, rather than superregional discourses. This approach requires oral, interactional data because most naming practice occurs in unofficial face-to-face communication, between members of little communities (see Taylor 2016, Siegfried-Schupp 2017). As a suitable database, we discuss naming practices in the so-called *bateyes*, i. e. settlements in the Dominican Republic that have a historical connection to sugar cane cultivation and transnational migration. Many *bateyes* used to be company-dependent housing structures, rather than naturally grown settlements that are recognised as social and political entities (Section 3). *Bateyes* witnessed significant transformations in the last decades (Kieslinger et al. 2024, Kieslinger accepted). Because of their migratory history, multilingualism is common in these places (Newton 1980: 124, Jansen 2013, Govain 2015). Taken together, structural transformations, often dubious legal status, multilingualism, and a controversial discourse about these places favour topo-multinymity.

Instances of this multinymity can be gathered by documenting materialised language use (e. g. road and town signs, e. g. Fuchs 2013: 1L, see also Scollon/Scollon 2003) and oral toponymic data (see also Taylor 2016). Whilst materialised and orally uttered names are congruent in one *batey*, they may be disparate in others. We argue that this fact carries sociolinguistic relevance, insofar as it shows how diverse actors attribute meaning heterogeneously to the same (kind of) location. Also, the data show that people strive to maintain toponyms semantically transparent, e. g. by using classificatory elements to clarify settlement types (e. g. *Newburry **Castle,** Newburry **Park,** Newburry **City***)(see also Hough 2016a). Therefore, we regard the distinction between names and class nouns as gradual, rather than categorical (e. g. Nyström 2016: 40).

In the next section, we define the theoretical grounding of our approach concerning place-making and the negotiation of place identity, as well as the semantics and pragmatics of naming. We also elaborate on the interrelation between language use and the material world (Section 2). Then, we proceed with an empirical study of toponyms of *bateyes* (Section 3). Lastly, we discuss the implications of our study from an onomastic and geographical standpoint (Section 4).

2. Materialised Toponymy and Place Identity

Since the humanistic turn in geography, places have been regarded as more than merely matter (see also Relph 1976), namely as something made and achieved by human activity and practice (Werlen/Reutlinger 2017). Accordingly, naming as a process is more complicated than simply attaching one linguistic label to one spatial entity. Here, we understand a ***place*** as "a particular location that has acquired a set of meanings and attachments" for people (Creswell 2009: 1L). Cresswell continues: "Place is a meaningful site that combines location, locale, and sense of place." In this model, "[l]ocation refers to an absolute point in space with a specific set of coordinates and measurable distances from other locations. Location refers to the 'where' of place."

Next to this 'where', there is a 'how' of place, defining its properties or: locale. "Locale refers to the material setting for social relations – the way a place looks. Locale includes the buildings, streets, parks, and other visible and tangible aspects of place" (Creswell 2009: 1L). This material setting again, is experienced by people and therefore associated with affect, which Cresswell (2009: 1L) defines as sense of place: "refer[ring] to the more nebulous meanings associated with a place: the feelings and emotions a place evokes. These meanings can be individual and based on personal biography or they can be shared. Shared senses of place are based on mediation and representation" (Cresswell 2009: 1L, our adaption).

Representation and mediation occur through a broad spectrum of semiotic means, especially language. Semiosis and linguistic communication are interindividual and, hence, of sociological interest, which also concerns the emergence of shared senses of place. As Barbara Johnstone (2011: 211) summarises, it is "through talk" that "physical *spaces* become relevant and meaningful as human *places*." Thus, "[i]n any given place we encounter a combination of materiality, meaning, and practice" (Cresswell 2009: 1R), with meaning and deriving practices being "the result of a historical and social process, built up over time by large and small happenings" (Tuan 1991: 692).

It is this intersection of the material, meaning, and practice that we consider relevant for naming as a concrete example of place-making and, as we elaborate on below, of negotiating place identities. As Fuchs (2013: 1L) says: "The linguistic process of naming converts undifferentiated space into place and includes the creative power to call something into being. Naming understood as a performative practice helps assessing [sic] broader sociospatial processes of the intersection of space, place, and textuality" (on textuality, see Section 3).

In the following, we elaborate on identity and textuality, as understood in our approach to place, which considers a broad basis of empirical data, namely written and oral as well as official and unofficial toponyms, meta-toponymic reflections, and visual material (e. g. town signs).

2.1 Identity and Place Identity

Naming is intimately connected to the negotiation of identity, which can be described pragmatically, *viz.* as performative speech acts (e. g. Austin 1962, Searle 1969). In that sense, naming is the *act of identity par excellence*, through which "speakers [construe] both their personal identity and their search for social roles" (LePage/Tabouret-Keller 1985: 14, our adaption).[2]

On the societal level, naming is highly regulated and requires approval by authorities (e. g. priests or officials in baptism, for anthroponyms, or political authorities for toponyms, Berg/Kearns 2009: 19). On the local, informal level, however, the choice of a name is discussed according to taste, emotional factors, and social bonds. Often, informal names, such as monikers, are never made official and they are used exclusively in the private sphere (see Siegfried-Schupp 2017, 2021; for toponyms, see also Kuhn 2016: 136). Therefore, different names for the same referent may even imply conflictive views about the referent, which can provoke debates and discussions about the appropriateness of either name (e. g. Fuchs 2015: 133).

Values, norms, and personal as well as collective decisions may also incite actors to change names. Such changes are often linked to major biographic or historical events (e. g. marriage for anthroponyms). For toponyms, consider the repeated renaming of the Eastern German city *Chemnitz* to *Karl-Marx-Stadt* and back to *Chemnitz*. The first renaming was to pay homage to socialism during the German Democratic Republic, and the second served to mark the end of communism after Reunification with the Federal Republic (see also Hassa 2016). Rather than a mere index of such changes in one's identity, renaming is a constitutive element in these processes. Thus, linguistic means play a crucial role in construing identities. Because of its emergent character, identity is "rather the [...] product than the pre-existing source of linguistic and other semiotic practices" (Bucholtz/Hall 2005: 558, our adaption).

Moreover, naming illustrates like hardly any other linguistic practice that negotiating identity involves the "positioning of self and other" (Bucholtz/Hall

2 The original speaks of "revelation" instead of "construal". However, we argue, that identity is a collective achievement (see below).

2005: 568). This is especially visible in two processes of meaning-making on which we would like to focus: first, the negotiation of identities in relation to places, i. e.: which role does a place play in human identity construal; and second, the differentiation of (types of) places from each other, i. e.: what characterises a place in comparison to others. Both processes occur at the intersection of personal experiences of place (in the sense of Tuan 1997: 118-135) and "larger layers of discourse" (Fuchs 2013: 2), *viz.* politics, economy, etc. Bound to personal and collective experience, toponyms are tightly connected to affect and memory. They may evoke "a sense of home, nostalgia, and pride [...] [but t]hey may simultaneously incur negative images, such as feelings of inequity, loss, or intrusion by outside forces, groups or individuals, appropriating and renaming familiar sites and structures" (Fuchs 2013: 1R–2L, our adaption). Therefore, *identities with* and *of place* (see Relph 1976: 141) are accessible through naming practices and the debates that they incite.

On the interindividual level, the making of place through naming is thus tightly connected to the construal of group identities, especially in-groups and out-groups struggling for the legitimacy of shaping a given place. According to Relph (1976: 141), places are therefore "significant centres of our immediate experiences of the world". As experiences, intentions, and perceptions of places differ amongst groups, places and the identities construed in relation to them are intrinsically dynamic. However, routinisation and the formation of social hierarchies often lead to the reproduction of structures and power dynamics, so that shared senses of identity in in-groups and shared perceptions of out-groups can emerge (Pred 1984, Simmons 1980, Cresswell 2009), which goes hand in hand with the conventionalisation of the respective naming practices. Consider, for instance, the terms for residents of certain places which typically carry evaluative, contrastive meanings (e. g. *town folk* vs. *country folk,* germ. *Hinterwäldler* vs. *Städter*, etc.).

2.2 Materialised Toponyms

Onomastic meaning-making is tightly connected to material culture. Concerning anthroponyms, this can be illustrated by printing a person's name on a passport, which is a prime example of how important the materialisation of naming is for a person to be able to participate in society. Such an onomastic materialisation is typically supported by visual means, e. g. biometric photographs. Toponyms parallel this anchoring of names in material culture, manifested, for instance, in road or town signs. These signs display the (current form of) official place names. Additionally, they may be embellished visually, using calligraphy or blazons (e. g.

Fuchs 2015: 23). This "material placement of signs and discourse" (Scollon/Scollon 2003: 2) constitutes a pillar in place-making and the negotiation of place identity in relation to places because materialised toponyms become perpetuated speech acts (see also Massey 1999a: 22, 35–37, 2005: 5–7, Fuchs 2013: 6, Taylor 2016). With the material toponym becoming part of the locale, the "positioning of self and other" obtains a stable dimension, next to the momentary uses of a toponym in verbal language use. Town signs and the like mark boundaries, through their positioning, create places with an inside and an outside – an opposition charged with social relevance in communication about, and with local actors (e.g. Cresswell 2009: 5R, Fuchs 2013: 1L).

2.3 Analytical Approach: Data, Structure, and Position

This study combines an analysis of verbal and material data to do justice to the complexity of place-making *qua* naming practices. We aim at a qualitative, multimodal analysis of toponyms and terms for settlements. To this end, we collected a list of toponyms from the *bateyes*, documenting oral and materialised forms.

Here, we regard materialised instances of toponymy as complex texts, constituted by scriptural and pictorial elements. These texts are akin to comics, graphic novels, or internet memes and can be interpreted hermeneutically, by adducing sociohistorical background information (e.g. Kress/van Leeuwen 2001, Adam 2016). We explore how the placement of these texts contributes to their message and, in turn, how these texts contribute (e.g. Scollon/Scollon 2003) to place-making and the negotiation of place identities.

To analyse linguistic data (scriptural or verbal) – mostly spatial designations, slogans, and formulas – we draw from Cognitive Grammar, according to which "language is described as a **structured inventory of conventional linguistic units**" (Langacker 2000: 8, emphasis in the original). This definition of Grammar comprises every linguistic category, including names, which can thus be analysed semantically and structurally in relation to language use in interaction (e.g. Jäkel 1999, van Langendonck/van der Velde 2016, Arnaud 2022, Reszegi 2022). On the grounds of this analysis, we argue that people strive to maintain semantic transparency in toponyms and spatial designations. If toponyms become opaque or are judged inadequate, speakers add classificatory elements to toponyms to re-establish transparency. Also, choosing a name is a means to influence the construal of place identity, drawing from positive or negative connotations of, and associations with respective toponyms. To name a place, a relatively closed set of lexemes is used to classify places in relation to similar instances. Through routinisation,

bound onomastic elements develop gradually from these classificatory nouns (see also Nyström 2016).[3] Whether a given linguistic element is rather noun-like or name-like is, as we show, often disambiguated through the interplay of semantic and (morpho)syntactic factors.

The lexical material chosen as classificatory elements derives from designations of salient settlements or spatial structures in speakers' ***life-worlds***, which Kraus (2013: 153, 2015: 4) defines as "a person's subjective construction of reality which he or she forms under the conditions of his or her life circumstances." Live circumstances comprise both material and immaterial aspects.

We gathered data during fieldwork to understand life-worlds' impact on naming practices. During three field trips to the Dominican Republic (June 2022 and March 2023), we visited 96 *bateyes* (94 of which had one name or more)[4] in 12 provinces.[5] We listed all available toponymic information of *bateyes* we have visited: (1) gathered in interaction with the inhabitants in field notes and interviews (see interviews), (2) entries on GoogleMaps,[6] (3) reading town signs, road signs, or visual material with a similar function (see Section 3.2). This sample of names is the data set analysed here. Next to the toponyms as linguistic elements, we discuss four examples of materialised toponyms on road and town signs.

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3 To provide another analogy to personal names, consider suffixes that originally derived patronyms from given names, e. g. Spanish *-ez*, in *Álvarez* 'sun of Álvaro', (Lower) German *-sen* < *Sohn* 'son' in *Jansen* 'Son of Jan'. For toponyms, consider, *-bury*, a cognate of German *Burg* 'castle', as in *Glastonbury*, *Salisbury*, see also German *Würzburg*, *Schäßburg*; or German *-dorf* 'village', as in *Düsseldorf*. Due to historical developments, some names have become (partially) opaque or inadequate, if interpreted anachronistically. *Álvarez*, for instance, is now a family name and no longer a patronym; *Düsseldorf* has grown from a village into a city. Originally, however, the pattern behind these names was semantically motivated and transparent.

4 At some sites, no contact could be established with inhabitants. Road or town signs, as well as entries on GoogleMaps were lacking. Furthermore, two bateyes consisted only of two large huts and their inhabitants did not have any names for them.

5 Higüey (La Altagracia), La Romana, San Pedro de Macorís, Santo Domingo (city and province), Monte Plata, Sánchez Ramírez, Monte Cristi, Valverde, El Seibo, Barahona, and Azua. Rodríguez's (2012: 5) survey counts 425 bateyes in sum, considering only places where sugar cane is still cultivated. Contrarily to Rodríguez, our definition of a *batey* is based on inhabitants' perspectives, who may also consider a place a *batey* even if sugar cane is no longer produced (Kieslinger et al. 2024, Kieslinger accepted).

6 From a perspective of critical mapping, we are well aware that the use of a sole mapping service like GoogleMaps can only be a starting point. As we do not aim at an exhaustive analysis here, however, we argue that the data yielded by this service was enough to illustrate the relevant points discussed in this contribution.

To contextualise our sociolinguistic and sociogeographical interpretations of the *batey*-toponymy, we draw from our previous studies (Kieslinger et al. 2024, Kieslinger accepted), the anthropological and sociological research literature on *bateyes* (especially focusing on participatory approaches, e. g. Martínez 1995, 2016; Zecca Castel 2015), historical research, linguistic research, and consultations with our co-researchers. The latter were (former) *bateyes* residents, who continue to work in *batey*-contexts.

3. How to Name a *Batey*?

In this section, we first discuss the toponymy of *bateyes* etymologically in the light of social history. In the second step, we use visual and interactional data to complement our discussion. To contextualise the data, we first provide a sociohistorical overview of *bateyes* as settlements.

Bateyes in the Dominican Republic, as known today, rose in the 20th century, when the local sugar production expanded to cater to the global market. In this context, industrial sugar refineries were built to replace former animal-driven or water-driven mills (Betances 1983, Chardon 1984, Baud 1987). Dependent on these centres, housing for seasonal workers, mostly temporary migrants from neighbouring Haiti, was established at the refineries. For an even larger workforce, housing was built close to the cane fields where sugar cane was grown. Therefore, many *bateyes* became bilingual places where Haitian Creole and Dominican Spanish are spoken. The degree to which Creole is maintained, however, varies according to the location and development of the respective *batey*, as well as sociodemographic criteria (e. g. Govain 2015, Jansen 2010, 2013, 2021). Originally meant as a temporary accommodation, rather than permanent residence, these concrete barracks and wooden or tin shacks were construed to harbour large amounts of male workers, whose rhythm of life was organised by the sugar cane producer (Martínez 1995, 2016; Zecca Castel 2015: chap. 2, Kieslinger accepted). Only over time did workers cease to leave the *bateyes* after the harvest season (Sp. *zafra,* HC *zafra, lasaf*), due to socioeconomic, political, and natural disasters in Haiti. Furthermore, people of Dominican ancestry moved to the *bateyes,* too, searching for affordable real estate or apartments (Kieslinger et al. 2024). Consequently, a frequently bilingual population of mixed-ancestry, often without a clear legal status in terms of nationality and residence permits has risen in the *bateyes*. These residents can seldom participate fully in the Dominican nation-state, e. g. in the schooling or healthcare system. Due to this situation, working on the sugar cane

plantations in an informal or only partially formal manner is the only way to maintain their existence, being threatened with deportation because of their lack of documentation if trying to leave the *batey* (Simmons 2009: 14–33, Mayes 2018, Kieslinger et al. 2024).[7] During the last decades, however, many *bateyes* have seen significant transformations after the end of the sugar boom. Some shifted to other agricultural products and catering to international markets, which brought about better working conditions. Others saw a growth in the people with Dominican nationality, which led to better political organisation, infrastructure, and social care. Again others were integrated into expanding cities or became cities themselves. Yet, other *bateyes* were abandoned due to a lack of rentability for the company, leaving behind only a handful of elderly people, often from the first generation of Haitian migrants (Kieslinger et al. 2024).

In the mainstream Dominican discourse, which is often imbued by nationalist undertones, *bateyes* are frequently portrayed as marginalised, un-Dominican places, where a primarily Black population lives in poverty, causing criminality. Furthermore, *batey*-residents are typically reproached for spreading heathen religious practices (especially Vodouist magic), next to health issues, in this kind of discourse. Because of the tight association of phenotype, language use, and geographic origin, this ideological stance is not only defined in terms of racism but explicitly as ***anti-Haitianism*** (Derby 1994, Martínez/Wooding 2007, Martínez 2016: chap. 4, 8; Simmons 2009: 14–33, Jansen 2021, Kieslinger et al. 2024: 76). In the words of our co-researcher, this is why many residents of (former) *bateyes* opt for changing the toponym of their place of residence, as soon as it develops away from a classical sugar cane *batey*.

> Eso se ha quedado, entonces, nadie quiere que lo liguen con eso, porque en República Dominicana, el ser haitiano o descendente de migrante haitiano es algo que lo ligan con todo; lo relacionan con todo lo feo, con todo lo malo, entonces, nadie quiere que lo liguen; que lo relacionen con esto, ¿verdad? Entonces, por eso, es que la gente trata de escapar o desligarse lo más posible de esa realidad [...] Tratan de buscar sus fijos, otro tipo de nombre para poder decir lo mismo, pero que suena [sic] más bonito. (Teresa, 30–40, resident; cited in Kieslinger et al. 2024: 76).

7 One of Zecca Castel's (2015: 49–50) interviewees therefore says: "[...] io sempre dico che il batey è como un carcere senza sbarre, dove tu non vuoi stare, ma se ti guardi attorno, vedi che non puoi stare nemmeno in un altro luogo [...]" ('I always say that the batey is like a prison without bars, where you don't want to be but, if you look around, you see that you cannot be in another place').

> 'This has remained. So, nobody wants to be connected to that, 'cause in the Dominican Republic, being Haitian or of Haitian descent is something that they connect to, that they relate to everything which is ugly, which is bad, so, no one wants to be connected to that, to be related to that, right? So, folks are trying to escape or to disconnect themselves as far as possible from this reality. They're trying to find a way or another name to say the same but so, that it sounds nicer' (our translation).

In the following, we look into the details of these naming and renaming processes.

3.1. Toponyms and their Elements

The *bateyes* display a wide range of toponyms that reflect the life-world of their inhabitants. Yet sometimes, historical depth renders this connection between toponym and life-world opaque to present-day inhabitants or visitors. Like other places on Hispaniola, for example, the toponyms of some *bateyes* are (at least in part) derived from the island's indigenous language(s), which ceased to be spoken in the 16th century. On phonological grounds, the indigenous origin of Antillean copies can be uncovered (e.g. Jansen 2015). *Bateyes* with Indigenous names or parts are, for instance, *Yabacao* and *Boca de Mao* 'Bight of *Mao*' (a rivulet). Although Indigenous toponyms are reminiscent of Hispaniola's historical life-world, they do not indicate a specific settlement type. Indigenous toponyms are used for places of different scales (e.g. the provincial name *Higüey* also referred to as *La Altagracia*;[8] or the island's name *Quisqueya*, as an alternative to *Haiti* or *La Española/Hispaniola*).

Similarly, the toponyms of many *bateyes* only index the general rural Dominican life-world, rather than the peculiarities of *bateyes* as a distinct settlement type. Examples thereof are *Las Pajas* (literally 'hay', alluding to meadows),[9] *Piñita* (literally: 'little pineapple', alluding to horticulture), or *(El) Puente de San Rafael* ('(The) bridge of St. Raphael',[10] alluding to a specific landmark).

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8 *La Altagracia* 'the high grace'. This toponym is an abbreviation of *La Virgen de la Altagracia* 'Our Lady of High Grace', who is Virgin Mary, having appeared in Higüey, which is why she is regarded as the patron saint of this province and the Dominican Republic. Hence, the toponym is metonymically derived from her name.

9 Spanish mass nouns usually appear in the singular. The plural of abundance signals non-canonical usages, e.g., *los cielos* 'heaven.pl' vs. *el cielo* 'sky.sg')(Mihatsch 2016, Lasersohn 2019, Rijkoff 2023). Here, the plural alludes to the fact that the noun is used as a toponym. See also *Las Arenas* 'sand.pl'.

10 The place may also be referred to, shortly, as *San Rafael*.

In the following, we discuss only toponyms that, upon closer scrutiny, reveal specificities of *bateyes* (Section 3.1.1.). Then, we will discuss common classificatory elements that are used to index *bateyes* as such, including their most relevant categories (Section 3.1.2). Lastly, we will discuss alternative classificatory elements and renaming strategies, used to cover the (former) '*batey*-hood' of a settlement (Section 3.1.2).

3.1.1 The Impact of the Sugar Industry

As mentioned above, *bateyes* are historically linked to sugar cane production and processing. Therefore, one finds toponyms that are indices of this reality. For example, one *batey* in the northern Dominican Republic is called *Doña María* 'Mrs. Mary'. This is likely the name of the (former) plantation owner. Nowadays, this *batey* has shifted away from sugar cane production to other crops. Another *batey* close to Quisqueya, in the province of San Pedro de Macorís, is called *Canutillo*. This name derives from the Spanish lexeme *canuto* 'tube' and the diminutive suffix *-illo*, literally meaning 'little tube'. Thus, this *batey* appears to be named after the partially visible water pipe that connects a series of *bateyes* situated along the same road (H_KONT_11, H_KONT_12). Yet another (former) *batey, Bajos de Haina* – shortened to *Haina* ['hajna] – is called 'lowlands of *Haina*' because *Haina* is also the name of the river, in the marches of which the *batey* was built. Specifically, many houses now stand on the former waste depository of the closed sugar refinery, frequently causing little, yet dangerous landslides that destroy houses (H_KONT_15, H_KONT_16). Generally, one can see that the names of *bateyes* reflect the fact that most arose as planned settlements. Therefore, they were named according to salient features in the locale, such as pre-existing landmarks or functional equipment installed for sugar production.

Regarding their role in the sugar industry, *bateyes* were *grosso modo* divided into two kinds: *bateyes centrales* 'central *bateyes*' (see Section 3.1.2) and *bateyes agrícolas* 'agricultural *bateyes*'. Whilst the former were the places to process sugar cane, the latter were where sugar cane was planted and harvested. Therefore, *bateyes agrícolas* outnumber *centrales*, upon which they depend, by far (Betances 1983, Chardon 1984, Baud 1987, Moya Pons 1986: 269, Riveros 2014: 19–20, Kieslinger et al. 2024, Kieslinger accepted). This is why many *bateyes agrícolas* were simply numbered, e.g. *Batey 5* (read: "*batey cinco*"), *Batey 6*, and *Batey 412*. Residents often refer to *bateyes* with high numbers in their name in a shortened form. *Batey 412* was the name we encountered on Google Maps, taking GPS coordinates. The inhabitants just referred to it as *Batey 12*. Note that there are two common ways to refer to numbered *bateyes*. One is to say "el cinco" (literally: 'the five'), which is

an abbreviation of *el batey cinco* or *el número cinco*. Alternatively, one may say "batey cinco" without an article.

In Spanish, this absence of articles is only grammatical in toponyms when talking about location and direction. Thus, one cannot say: **Vivo en casa* (*'I live in house'), nor: **Voy a iglesia* ('I go to church', which is grammatical in English). Bare nouns may appear to indicate a manner of movement, as in *Voy a caballo*, which does not mean *'I go to the/a horse', but 'I go (there) on horseback'. Thus, the noun phrase in a sentence like *Vivo en Batey Cinco* 'I live in Batey Five' is paradigmatically interchangeable with conventional toponyms. In turn, this shows that the element *batey* and the numeral function as one toponomastic unit.[11]

Whilst the examples discussed thus far were named most likely by the sugar companies, there are also *bateyes* to which inhabitants refer by names that must have emerged in informal settings. These toponyms, too, are connected to sugar cane cultivation, but they reflect social rather than functional aspects of this lifeworld. Next to the dependence on a sugar company, *bateyes* are marked by transnational migration. Migrant workers from neighbouring Haiti contribute significantly to the local workforce, especially in agriculture (e.g. Martínez 1995: s.p.–x, 2016: 21–32; Zecca Castel 2015: 47–66, Mayes 2018, Kieslinger et al. 2024). Therefore, Haitian Creole is the second most widely spoken language in the Dominican Republic, even though this fact is almost absent from public discourse (Jansen 2010, 2015, 2021; Govain 2015). This demographic fact and the bilingualism it entails have two consequences on the toponymy.

11 Topoynms that derive from other nouns than *batey* function analogously, for example, *El Kilómetro Once* 'the kilometre (no.) eleven', which may also be referred to as *El Once or Kilómetro Once*.

First, many toponyms of *bateyes* are phonologically adapted to Haitian Creole from Spanish, rather than being translated. Therefore, the etymological motivation for a toponym is lost in Creole. For instance, *(Batey) Esperanza* (literally: 'hope') in Spanish, is commonly called *Epelans* in Haitian Creole (and not: **Espwa*); *Monte Coca* (literally: 'Coca Moutain') is called *Monnte-Kòk* in Creole (instead of: **Mòn-Koka*).[12] This kind of phonological adaptation of various units treated as one, too, reflects the univerbated status of these elements.

The second toponymic consequence of the Haitian presence in *bateyes* is that some are directly named to reflect Haitian, rather than Dominican life-worlds. Our clearest example is *Cabo Haitiano* – actually the Spanish form of *Cap Haïtien*, a coastal city in northern Haiti.[13] Although the *batey* context suggests that there could be some irony in coining such toponyms (see Section 3.2.4), these cases could also be simple dedications to cities of origin, as common in the Latin American Mainland, too (e. g. Brink 2016). This naming strategy is common beyond the *batey*-context. For example, a quarter of the city *Consuelo* is called *Puerto Príncipe*, i. e. *Port-au-Prince* (Haitian Creole: *Pòtoprens*), named after the Haitian capital.[14]

Whilst the sugar companies were the primary actors in naming *bateyes* officially, according to functional criteria, one observes that people do not necessarily continue using the original toponyms in everyday life. Instead, they may refer to the same localities with newly coined names, expressing their sense of place. These, in turn, may vary from informal settings to rather formal occasions, and reflect dif-

12 In Creole, the syllable-final vowel of Spanish toponyms is subject to apocope and Spanish /r/ becomes /l/. Note, furthermore, that there are also semantic reinterpretations of certain toponyms, explained by semantic ambiguities that arise during second language learning and a specific sense of place. In a discussion with a former resident of the *batey Mata Mosquitos,* whose L1 is Haitian Creole and whose L2 is Spanish, we were told that the place should better be renamed *Mata Gente*, due to the extreme violence there. *Mata*, in Dominican Spanish, is used instead of *árbol* and means 'tree'. The lexeme is commonly combined with other terms to form toponyms (see also *Mata Mamón*, another *batey*). *Mata Mosquitos*, thus, literally means 'Mosquito-Tree', referring to two common features in the locale. *Mata* is, however, also the imperative of the verb *matar* 'to kill'. The discussant, hence, thought the toponym referred to the frequent killing of mosquitos and, in the wordplay, said the *batey* should rather refer to the common cases of murder, as *mata gente* means '(it) kill(s) people'.

13 In Haiti, the city is also colloquially called *Le Cap*, in French, and hence, *Okap* in Creole. The Creole form derives from the French prepositional phrase *au Cap* (*à* + *le Cap*) 'at the Cap'. *Cap Haïtien*, formerly called *Cap Français*, was renamed after the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), marking the end of colonial rule.

14 A *batey* in the vicinity is called *Consuelito*, which derives from the original toponym and a diminutive suffix.

ferent aspects of place-making and place identity. Whilst the toponym may originally reflect an identity of place expressed exonymically, inhabitants try to construe identities with place expressed endonymically.

3.1.2 A Closer Look at Classificatory Elements in the Sugar Context

The previous section has demonstrated that the life-world of sugar cane production is the major semantic field motivating the coinages of names for *bateyes*. Two onomastic strategies were identified, with regard to structural aspects. First, one may use a toponym without any classificatory element. In this case, reference to the *batey* context is established on semantic grounds of a toponym alone. This leaves the connection to the life-world implicit, requiring shared knowledge to be grasped.

Besides *batey*,[15] which directly marks a given settlement as pertaining to the life-world of sugar cane production, three further classificatory elements do so frequently. From a semantic standpoint, their transparency of reference to the *batey* life-world is heterogeneous.

The most transparent one is *central* 'central'. It marks a place as a *batey central* (e.g. *Central Baguay*)[16]. Originally, *bateyes centrales* are the places in sugar refineries where the temporary workers were housed (Chardon 1984: 449–450, Moya Pons 1986: 269, Riveros 2014: 19–20, Kieslinger accepted). By shortening expressions like *Batey Central Baguay* to *Central Baguay*, the adjective *central* 'central' was reanalysed as a noun denoting a 'centre of sugar cane production' (e.g. Betances 1983: 65, Baud 1987: 141), i.e. an *ingenio*,[17] as opposed to the noun *centro* 'centre', used in a general spatial sense. Therefore, *central* can now function as a classifi-

15 Concerning the classificatory element *batey*, one should mention that there is even a quarter in Sosúa which is called *El Batey* (Wells 2009: 349, Roorda 2016: 276, Kieslinger et al. 2024: 75). The place was originally built as a refuge for Jews having fled the Nazis' regime. Nowadays, the place is rather associated with North American tourists. Neither settlement type has anything to do with sugar production. Thus, the label *batey* seems to be used ironically. Originally, *batey* referred to a ball, a ball game, and the ball court where the game was practised (Alegría 1951). In the course of colonisation, this practice fell into oblivion, so, that only the spatial interpretation remained. With the establishment of plantations and, finally, the sugar cane industry, the meaning of *batey* shifted from 'ball court' to 'open field in a village' to 'sugar cane field', including the adjacent housing. See Kieslinger et al. (2024) for a detailed etymology.

16 This is the verbally documented designation. On GoogleMaps, this locality appears as *Palo Bonito-Baiguá*. The residents said Palo Bonito is a *batey agrícola*, whilst *Baguay* is the central production unit. The toponym *Baguay* derives from a metathesis of /j/ from *Baiguá*, seemingly in analogy to other Indigenous toponyms (e.g. *Higüey*, *Camagüey*).

17 This is a Lusitanism which originally referred to a water-powered sugar mill, in contrast to animal-driven or slave-driven mills, called *trapiche*. By metonymy, *ingenio* came to mean the entire production unit and company (e.g. Chardon 1984: 449).

catory element for toponyms, just as *batey* does. In contrast to the latter, this term evokes places that are larger as well as more advanced in terms of infrastructure and traffic connections. Moreover, it may also be used to mark the name of *ingenios* as companies, rather than their locations, e. g. *Central Romana*.

Two other classificatory elements that allude subtly to sugar cane production or – at least – agriculture are the noun *campo* 'field' and the adjective *nuevo* 'new'. This reference is clearest in the co-occurrence of these terms, as in *Pueblo Nuevo* 'new village' and *Campo Nuevo* 'new field'. In Antillean Spanish, *campo* is used as a term for rural settlements, e. g. *es un campo* 'it is a village' (see *DDA*). Hence, *Campo Nuevo* and *Pueblo Nuevo* could be toponyms of any recently established village. Yet, newly established *bateyes* are frequently called *pueblo*, perhaps as a euphemism for *batey* (see also Section 3.1.3). Indeed, many *bateyes* are called *Batey Nuevo.* With this fact in mind, a coinage like *Pueblo Nuevo* is reminiscent of the many *Bateyes Nuevos*. Also, names like *Campo Nuevo* 'new field' are mostly motivated by opening up a new sugar cane field. To avoid confusion amongst the many settlements with the same name, their official name is disambiguated by reference to a larger place, introduced by a prepositional phrase with *de* 'of', for instance, *Batey Nuevo de Majagual*.

3.1.3 Renaming a *Batey*

As mentioned above, the *batey* life-world is marginalised in the Dominican hegemonic national discourse. This is a reason for many communities to rename their place of residence, once they reach independence from a sugar producer, thanks to structural or demographic changes. Depending on the respective toponyms, there are different approaches to this renaming.

First, classificatory elements of the *batey* life-world are dropped. As a locality having witnessed urbanisation and a growth in infrastructure since the end sugar cane production four decades ago, *Esperanza* is now commonly referred to without the element *batey* by many of its residents. Depending on their sense of the place, others still use this element, however. The same holds for people who visit *Esperanza* regularly but do not reside there.

Second, another classificatory element that does explicitly not refer to *bateyes* may be added to the toponym. For example, *Esperanza* is commonly called *Villa Esperanza.* However, this usage may reflect irony or even sarcasm in face-to-face interactions (H_KONT_6, Kieslinger et al. 2024: 76). This becomes apparent, considering that *villa* typically refers to a "[p]oblación que tiene algunos privilegios con que se distingue de las aldeas y lugares" ('settlement that has some privi-

leges which set it apart from small villages and localities', *RAE*, our translation). In addition, these marginalised villages are commonly referred to as *villa miseria* 'misery village' in the Dominican Republic (Ricón Gonzales 2013: 669). Lagging behind in such privileges, the use of *villa* for (former) *bateyes*, thus, occasionally alludes precisely to what has not been reached yet. In other instances, the term is nonetheless used neutrally (see Section 3.2).

In contexts where a (former) *batey* is integrated into a larger settlement or urbanised structure, *barrio* 'quarter' is used instead of *villa*, such as *Barrio Lindo* (literally: 'beautiful quarter') or *Barrio del Farfo* (or: *Falfo*)[18]. Especially in the former case, the adjective *lindo* clearly reflects an effort to stress the nice aspects of the quarter.

Third, a toponym may be changed entirely to do away with the *batey* past. In this spirit, a former *Batey 5* is now (officially) called *San José* ('St. Joseph'), after the local administration (or *junta de vecinos*) had decided to change the name, for a motive unknown to the authors (Kieslinger et al. 2024: 76).

Seldom did people acknowledge proudly that they lived in a *batey*, appropriating this term in an empowered manner.[19]

3.2 Materialised Toponyms

This section discusses four examples of materialised toponymy in (former) *bateyes*. The aim is to show how the materialisation of a spatial designation can be a window into the social dynamics involved in the negotiation of place-identities. Furthermore, we demonstrate that the interpretation of materialised toponymy depends on recipients' shared or disparate senses of place, as well as on practices associated with these places. Our examples demonstrate this relative nature of toponomastic meaning and illustrate how differently toponyms are materialised and interpreted with respect to place-identities.

18 In the dialect of Santo Domingo and its vicinity, syllable-final /r/ becomes /l/. In the region of Barahona, in the Southern Dominican Republic, syllable-final /l/ becomes /r/ (Alba 2016: chap. IV). As this designation was documented only orally, we did not get to know any official spelling.

19 One of our field assistants recommends this strategy to undo the stigma surrounding *bateyes* and their inhabitants.

3.2.1 Batey Cachena

Batey Cachena[20] lies in the province of San Pedro de Macorís. *Cachena* is a community of only a handful of shacks but with a comparatively good infrastructure for its size, comprising: asphalted roads; a state-run medical unit (commonly called UNAP); a parish; a baseball field; and a school. The school is also state-run and located further outside the settlement, at a crossroads uniting ways to other *bateyes* in the area. On the walls around the schoolyard, there is an inscription that not only marks the school as such but also the settlement *Cachena* as a *batey* (Figure 1).

As a typical, small sugar cane *batey*, *Cachena* does not have any proper road or town signs on its own. The local rhythm of life largely depends on sugar cane companies. In many *bateyes* like *Cachena*, this involves, *inter alia*, a prohibition to raise animals, cultivate crops, or modify houses according to one's personal wishes or needs. Residency is often bound to an obligation to work in the cane fields (e.g. Martínez 2016: 21–32, Zecca Castel 2015: 47–66, Kieslinger et al. 2024: 77–80). Therefore, naming in this kind of *batey* is primarily exonymic, i.e. an act by non-residents, such as the cane company or the state, who create place-identities which differ significantly from inhabitants' ones because they hardly attribute any intrinsic affective or social value to this place.

Figure 1: Educational Centre Batey Cachena.
Regional [Unit] 05–06 'Education is Formation' (Kieslinger 2022)

20 Etymologically, the choice of *Cachena* seems motivated by the Cachena cattle breed, originally found in the mountains of the Iberian Peninsula. This breed was used for the production of milk, beef, and carrying burden (Manson's 2016: 251). Although we do not know how widely spread Cachena is nowadays in the DR, such usage of cattle is still common, as shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

If present, the state is the second most important actor shaping the classical sugar cane *bateyes*, besides the cane producer. It is not uncommon in *bateyes* that their toponym only appears in written form on state-run institutions, as shown in Figure 1. Thus, such mural inscriptions on the locale mark the function of the building onto which they are written but they also often serve as the only means to mark the location, as usually done with town signs. The lack of proper town and road signs alone is indicative of the fact that toponyms are largely coined by non-residents in this setting. This becomes more ostensible when looking at the slogan under the toponym: "Educar es formar" ('Education is formation'). In light of the double function of this mural identifying the building as a school and the adjacent settlement as a *batey*, there is also a double interpretation of this slogan. On the one hand, it comments on the value of schooling in shaping one's knowledge and character. On the other hand, however, there is a *batey*-specific interpretation that would not arise in another context. Considering stereotypes about *bateyes*, this slogan can allude to the mentioned national discourse that construes *bateyes* as underdeveloped settlements, where formation is needed more than elsewhere because *bateyes* are not seen as being on par with ordinary, 'proper' settlements (e.g. Martínez 2016: chap. 2–3, 5; Kieslinger et al. 2024). In this discursive frame, formation is envisioned as a correction brought into the *bateyes* from the outside, ignoring residents' creative potential and their capacity for self-determination.

The reproduction of this negative attitude towards *bateyes* would be less prominent without the explicit classificatory element *batey*, as the alternatives below demonstrate (especially Section 3.2.3: Figure 3).

3.2.2 Villa Algodón

Villa Algodón (Figure 2) is located in the region of Barahona, in the Southern Dominican Republic. Its neighbouring settlements are referred to as *bateyes*, many are even numbered. Surrounded by sugar cane fields as well, *Villa Algodón* is a place where the sources of income seem more diverse than sugar production. Nevertheless, as the background in Figure 2 shows, *Villa Algodón* still exhibits many features of classical sugar cane *bateyes*, with shacks from sheet metal and wood being predominant. Generally, the infrastructure is in difficult condition and there are signs of material deprivation. However, as illustrated by the building directly behind the town sign, the settlement expands and more solid buildings and infrastructure are under construction.

Figure 2: 'Welcome to Villa Algodón' (Kieslinger 2022)

Compared to Dominican villages, *Villa Algodón* is surely not privileged but, rather, socioeconomically disfavoured. In comparison to neighbouring *bateyes,* however, *Villa Algodón* appears less precarious because it is visibly on its way to infrastructural and administrative improvement. Therefore, there is also a town sign marking the locality, which is not the case for all surrounding settlements. The town sign of *Villa Algodón* was built seemingly in a private initiative by inhabitants, for it differs from the usual style (see Section 3.2.3: Figure 3). Maybe a less routinised writer was originally at work before someone corrected the spelling error in the term *Algodón* (literally: 'cotton', which might refer to what was cultivated there historically), by adding a missing accent <´> on top of the second <o> in a different colour. Town signs built by the administration seldom display such deviations from normative Spanish and are, in turn, pictorially more enriched (see Section 3.2.4: Figure 5).

Returning to the function of classificatory elements in toponymy (see Section 3.1.2), the choice of *villa* on the town sign of *Villa Algodón* appears motivated by the expansion and improvement of this settlement. Inhabitants apparently wished to distance themselves from their (former) status as *batey* residents. Eliminating

the term *batey* from the village's name is, on the linguistic level, complementary to the infrastructural and social improvements.

In the next subsection, one sees that *Villa Algodón* occupies an intermediate position in terms of infrastructural development and life standards if compared to *Cachena* (Section 3.2.1) and *Don Juan* (Section 3.2.3).

3.2.3 Don Juan

Don Juan is in the province of Monte Plata. Many residents work for a pineapple producer whose centre of production is in the adjacent province of Cotuí, close to the city of Cevicos. Residents reported that sugar was produced in this region some decades ago but the production ceased because other crops were more profitable since the end of the sugar boom in the 1980s and 1990s (E_INF_3, E_QUAL_15). Planning our way through this region and searching for *bateyes*, a pedestrian informed us that *Don Juan* was "la madre de los bateyes" ('the mother of the *bateyes*') in this region, i. e. the former logistic centre. This is why it has expanded into a municipality.

Figure 3: Don Juan, Inscription and Painting (Kieslinger 2022)

With this development in mind, we analyse the large, three-dimensional town sign that displays a plethora of pictorial elements commenting on the past and present of the settlement (Figure 3). Specifically, it is also telling to consider what is not depicted, despite being ostensible when walking through the settlement and talking to the residents.

We start with the sequence of letters <DO> and <JUAN>, except the first <N>, which requires individual discussion. These letters depict the diversification of agricultural production, namely pineapples, bananas and plantains, citrus fruits, and maracuja. Cattle raising is also depicted, portraying cows and sheep on a meadow with a tin milk can on the left bottom corner of the letter <A>. Generally, bright colours are used and the farmers in the pictures seem content. The overall impression is positive, even optimistic given that crops are depicted in abundance. Crucially, such farming activities are precisely what many sugar companies forbid their worker, in order to prevent a diversification of their income and bind them to work in the cane fields (e.g. Zecca Castel 2015: chap. 2, Kieslinger et al. 2024). In this light, the letters convey the message that the restrictions of the past are overcome now. A major difference from the past is that residents no longer produce for the domestic market but on a global scale, which has led to the implementation of better standards as far as working conditions are concerned (E_INF_3, E_QUAL_15).

The past is painted on the pedestal, displaying sceneries of sugar cane farming. From the left to the right,[21] one sees: a wagon carried by oxen; a sugar cane field (see Figure 4, for a contemporary impression) with two cane cutters; the Ozama River; and a horseman riding through fields. Considering the reality of *bateyes* discussed above, this portrayal of sugar cane cultivation is ostensibly idealised, rather than realistic. Wagons like the one depicted still exist but the cattle are often malnourished. Moreover, cutting cane by hand is a task for masses of workers (whose barracks are not shown either). The fact that the horseman represents a *capataz* 'supervisor' of cane cutters – i.e. an authority – is hardly deducible, due to the supervised workers being absent from the scenery. So, although the town sign admits that *Don Juan* used to be a *batey*, there is an ostensible effort to lessen the memory of former hardships in the scope of the possible. Note that the linguistic level parallels the imagery, with the classificatory term *batey* being absent from the town sign. However, so is *villa*, maybe due to its ironic and, thus, possibly counterproductive effect in the construal of *Don Juan* as a 'truly' advanced place, especially if compared with a settlement like *Villa Algodón,* where much of the typical *batey* life-world remains visible.

21 The farmer and crops in the middle seem to form one pictorial unit with the imagery in the letter <J>.

Figure 4: Cattle carrying sugar cane (Kieslinger 2022)

There is a last, significant aspect of place-making and specifically place identity in this town sign, depicted in the first <N>. The background shows a Dominican flag. An officer stands in front of it. Thus, the town sign marks *Don Juan* as pertaining to the Dominican nation-state. Considering how far the settlement is from the border with Haiti, this marking seems superfluous at first glance. As *batey*-hood is connoted with the presence of Haitians, however, these pictorial elements imply that the settlement's advancement and structural improvement are construed as tantamount to becoming a 'proper' Dominican place, *viz.* one without Haitians. This message bears sociological relevance, as Haitian migrants are still a significant demographic group in adjacent *bateyes*, where they labour on pineapple farms (E_INF_3, E_QUAL_15). Therefore, the construal of *Don Juan* as a purely Dominican can only be understood by comparing it to its vicinity, still perceived as *bateyes*.

3.2.4 Sector Colonial de San Luís

The final example of materialised toponymy demonstrates how flexible interpretations of toponymy can be. Additionally, it shows that naming as a practice consists of a series of micro-speech acts, rather than a global one. The multitude of toponyms may continue to exist. Alternatively, however, it may be levelled out until a final toponym gets conventionalised (see also Siegfried-Schupp 2017, Dohardt

2022). Yet even when the topo-multinymity is reduced, the interpretative diversity of the toponym(s) continues as before, based on disparate perceptions of a place and life-worlds.

The town sign shown in Figure 5 is from San Luís – the former seat of the *Ingenio Ozama,* i. e. a *batey central*. Nowadays, the *ingenio* is in ruins. The adjacent structures were absorbed into the expanding capital, Santo Domingo. Despite this development, parts of San Luís remain socioeconomically disadvantaged. There are formal and informal businesses but owners and employees struggle to make them profitable. Employment opportunities that can secure local families' livelihoods exist but not sufficiently. Therefore, many people work outside of San Luís, e. g. on construction sites, in small commerce, or as home helps (Kieslinger et al. 2024, Kieslinger accepted).[22] This partial lack of perspectives brought about criminal activities in the quarter, especially after nightfall.

Figure 5: 'Welcome to the Colonial Sector of San Luís' [God is real] (Kieslinger 2022)

22 See also E_GROUP_7, H_QUAL_56, H_QUAL_57, H_QUAL_58, H_QUAL_59, H_QUAL_60. After the closure of the *ingenio*, Haina's development, in the South of Santo Domingo was very different from San Luís. Tourism developed, thanks to the adjacent *Playa Gringo* 'Gringo Beach'. Other industrial branches came and people started private businesses. The overall level of schooling and infrastructure is higher. Next to Dominicans, Haitian nationals live in Haina but also US Americans and Asian immigrants. One of our interviewees describes them as "aplatana'o full" ('fully levelled', H_QUAL_76), i. e. assimilated to, or integrated into Dominican society. Haina, thus, is now more neatly integrated into the capital than San Luís (see also H_KONT_15, H_KONT_16).

The road sign discussed here was found next to a private garage. Comparing the typography of the sign with the inscriptions on the garage, one concludes that they are from the same hand.[23] Thus, this town sign, too, was likely built in a private initiative and to comment on the place.

First, we analyse the micro-history of this town sign on the grounds of its scriptural elements, discussing the motivations behind having changed its wording. Second, we discuss some of its possible interpretations.

The layout and grammar of the inscription indicate that the town sign was remodelled. The original inscription must have been: "Bienvenidos. El Sector Colonial" ('Welcome. The Colonial Sector'). Additions might have been added because the previous inscription sounded somewhat unidiomatic, due to the lack of the local preposition *a* 'to'. However, when the writer reworked the inscription, he or she overshot the target, producing an ungrammatical sentence: "Bienvenidos *a el* Sector *la* Colonial de San Luís" (our emphasis). The intended wording is: 'Bienvenidos *al* Sector Colonial *de* San Luís' ('Welcome to the Colonial Sector of San Luís'). The fact that <a> was added later is visible because, normally, the preposition *a* and the definite article masculine *el* 'the' combine into a portmanteau-morpheme: *al*. Here, however, the morphemes remain uncontracted. As the element <San Luís> is comparatively small if compared to <El Sector Colonial>, it seems that <San Luís> was added to the bottom of the inscription later, to avoid confusion with the Colonial Sector in the city centre (see below). The writer also added the missing preposition *de* 'of' to link the two spatial designations <El Sector Colonial> and <San Luís>. Additionally, a feminine article *la* was added.

The article *la* is superfluous from a grammatical point of view but it hints at one of the possible readings of this inscription, which equally depends on how the adjective *colonial* is understood. In the first interpretation, *colonial* is a denominal adjective derived from *colonia* 'colony'. Santo Domingo was the first colonial city of the Spanish empire in the Americas. Therefore, the historical city centre is called *La Ciudad Colonial* 'the colonial city' or, alternatively, *El Sector Colonial* 'the colonial sector'. The first designation is a feminine noun phrase, which might have been the source of the writer's superfluous *la* when composing the town sign. If this is so, the writer called San Luís the Colonial Sector, instead of the city centre.

Apparently, this comprises humorous social criticism. The socioeconomic situation of San Luís is nowadays rather tense, even though certain locations on its outskirts are better off, thanks to recent investments in infrastructure and the

23 The inscription "Dios es real" ('God is real') is a graffito by someone else.

real estate market (see Kieslinger accepted). Nevertheless, even these parts of the settlement cannot be compared to the historical city centre in terms of material wealth. Additionally, the importance of the Colonial City for Dominican national identity is immense. This historical site is constituted of historical monuments, parks, churches, hotels, luxurious properties, restaurants, foreign embassies, and buildings that carry symbolic value for Dominican nation-making, such as the National Pantheon (*Panteón Nacional*), where documents such as the first national anthem or the Declaration of Independence are displayed. By appropriating the name of Santo Domingo's Colonial Sector for San Luís, an ironic effect is reached by the clashing of the expectations one has in mind when thinking of the splendour of the Colonial Sector and encountering the arduous reality of San Luís.[24]

However, there is a second interpretation of this inscription, according to which one must discard the article *la* as a mere error. Furthermore, the adjective *colonial* is interpreted as a relational adjective derived from *colono* (feminine *colona*). *Colonos* were independent sugar cane cultivators who delivered to *ingenios* (e.g. Martínez 1995: 149). Indeed, San Luís' *Ingenio Ozama* used to buy significant amounts of sugar cane from *colonos*. One of our field assistants who grew up in a *batey* close to Santo Domingo recalls that his grandmother also produced for the *Ingenio Ozama*. Therefore, he interprets the road sign as a place commemorating these times.[25]

Thus, the interpretations of this town sign can be heterogeneous because diverse frames of reference co-exist in its vicinity and readers draw from heterogeneous experiential backgrounds.

24 Note that, from a historical perspective, San Luís has yet another link to colonial history. Present-day San Luís was one of the first places where sugar was produced, already during colonial times, when slavery still existed. Whilst enslaved people were working in San Luís, which was not yet integrated into the capital, the plantation owners – wealthy Spaniards – resided in Santo Domingo. In this sense, San Luís was indeed a colonial sector, in the sense that it existed already during the early days of the colony (Chardon 1984: 447, Kieslinger accepted). If the writer knew this, then the town sign could indeed be a *lieu de mémoire* (Nora 1989) to commemorate this aspect of the quarter's history.

25 "Sector colonial significa […] que es relacionado con colonos, muchos colonos en un batey; un batey de colonos" ('Colonial Sector means that it is linked to colonos, a lot of colonos in one batey, a batey of colonos')(co-researcher, in his forties, p.c. 17.09.2024).

4. Summary and Conclusions

This study has departed from multinymity as an empirical fact in onomastics, including toponymy. In the example of Dominican *bateyes*, we have demonstrated that multinymity plays a crucial role in place-making and the construal of place-identity. Concerning toponyms, multinymity may rise because of an official renaming, whilst older names continue in popular use. Also, multinymity may result from diverse actors having different names for the same place all along. Crucially, multinymity rises from routinised speech acts in face-to-face interactions and unofficial naming practices, some of which, however, may never become conventional nor official (see also Kuhn 2016: 136, Hassa 2016, Siegfried-Schupp 2017, 2021; Dohardt 2022).

This becomes clearer when considering classificatory elements denoting settlement types. Such elements frequently accompany toponyms or become part of them. Our data have shown that the line between such classificatory elements (mostly deriving from *nomina appellativa*, common names) and proper names (*nomina propia*) is gradual, rather than categorical (see also Nyström 2016).

The speech act of renaming or choosing a (new) classificatory element for a place is motivated by an aim to construe semantic transparency in spatial designations (see also Hough 2016a), according to the purpose and value attributed to settlements (see also de Stefani 2016). The semantic transparency of toponyms and classificatory elements is grounded in routinised naming patterns. Drawing from these patterns, speakers interrelate their experiential associations of places with other instances, upon hearing or reading a toponym. When giving or changing a name, these associative connections amongst places in the memory, as evoked by toponymy, are consciously realigned for place-making.

Thus, speakers' life-worlds are the basis from which toponymic practices derive. As Cresswell (2009: 5R) notes, people do not only memorise particular places. They also categorise their spatial experience which leads to the emergence of "normative places". This life-world perspective on memory and naming correlates to an onomastic observation made long ago:

> The fundamental law for something to have a proper name is that that something must already be classified with a common name: the name of what it is. Thus, Sicily is an 'island'; Spain, a 'country'; [...]. In this sense, the proper name is 'a name of second degree.' (Coserio 2024. 64, translated by Kabatek)[26]

This means, here, that a particular place must be considered a kind of normative place in order to obtain a toponym. The usage of a classificatory element, then, is first and foremost a symptom of making this belonging to a normative place explicit.

Given, however, that place-making is a continual and dynamic process, and the negotiation of place-identities in particular, is, so, too, it is no wonder that proper names as names of second degree may change through time and display variation in the present. The more persistent and always transparent, primary nature of common names explains why they become classificatory elements attached to opaque proper names for specification and disambiguation (see also Hough 2016a, Nyström 2016, van Langendonck/van der Velde 2016).

Furthermore, semantic transparency is also established by (re)naming a place, so that it refers metaphorically to another well-known one (see also Siegfried-Schupp 2017: 542–543, Brink 2016, and Arnaud 2022 on anthroponyms).[27]

Empirically, many instances of multinymity are, thus, more than a multitude of names. Rather, the diverse names testify to the strategic or affect-guided negotiation of (place) identities and the play with connotations and associations triggered by names. We suggest adapting the term *internymity* (also called *interonymity*) to describe this practice. Both terms were coined in literature studies to describe the emergence of intertextuality through names (e.g. Müller 1991: 143, Stocker 2002: 303, Reich 2011: 162, Kohlheim 2022). Because intertextuality can result from many means (e.g. quotes, allusions, or explicit comments about other texts), one does not need a term reserved for one specific intertextual device, such as recurrent proper names. Rather, we would like to draw attention to the fact that naming construes (socially relevant and denotational) meaning through the interrelations of names themselves in shared linguistic repertoires.

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26 „La ley fundamental es, pues, que, para que algo pueda tener un nombre propio, ese algo debe estar ya clasificado con un nombre común, el nombre de aquello que la cosa es. Así, Sicilia es una ‚isla'; España un ‚país', [...] En este sentido, el nombre propio es ‚un nombre de segundo grado'" (Coserio 1995: s.p.).

27 This practice also often leads to multinymity. Consider the city of Macau, also called the *Eastern Vatican*, the *Las Vegas of the East*, and the *Monte Carlo of the East*, etc. (Dohardt 2022).

Speakers memorise (a) names, (b) the structure of names, (c) and referents of names in interrelation and comparison, which we model as follows:

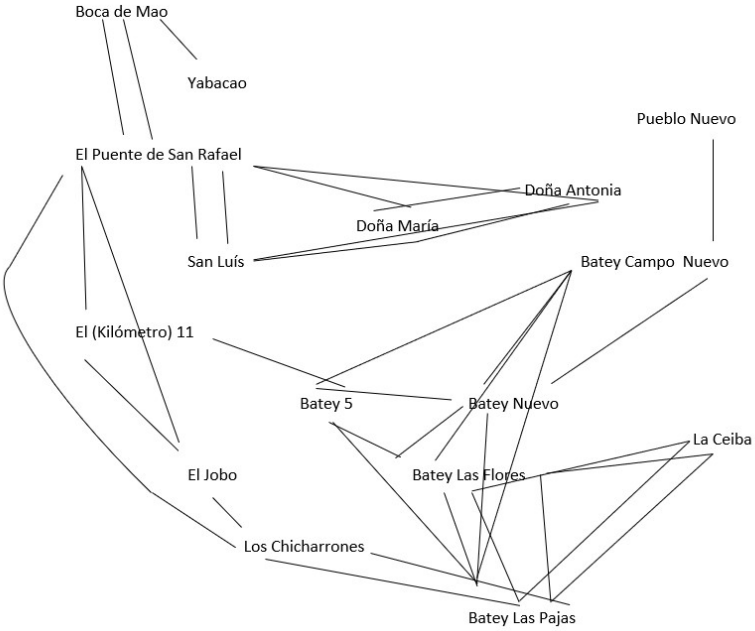

Figure 6: Connections between Toponyms and their Structural Elements[28]

Figure 6 visualises interonymity in a linguistic repertoire. Interonymic (re)alignment, e.g. when coining a new name or changing one, can be accomplished by vigour of: (1) derivation (e.g. *Juan* and *Juana*; *Consuelo* and *Consuelito*); (2) recurrent classificatory elements (e.g. *Don Juan, Señor Álaverz* and *Doña Juana*, *Señora Álvarez*, and *Batey Esperanza, Batey Central Baguay, Villa Esperanza, Villa Algodón,* etc.); and (3) recurrent semantic patterns (e.g. references to the flora in toponyms, such as *Batey Las Flores* '*Batey Flowers*', or *Batey La Ceiba* – a tree with a pear-shaped trunk). Figure 6 implies, too, that according to the individual associative connections of a speaker, one's interpretation of a given toponym may vary according to one's sense of place. As individuals share experiences at a given place, however, they may calibrate their toponomastic repertoires and come to similar or comparable interpretations and align their naming strategies.

28 This model is inspired by Bybee (1985: chap. 5), on *lexical strength* and *connection strength*.

Therefore, this study emphasises the relevance of individual speech acts of naming, mostly unofficial ones, which gradually grow into practices through repetition. This approach can be called 'toponymy from below'. From this perspective, the interdisciplinary dialogue in toponomastics and onomastics, in general, can draw new insights from pragmatics, studies on material culture, and practice theory, which all focus on the interrelation between the situational and the routinised. Also, these disciplines stress the fact that meaning is not mechanistically coded and decoded but interpreted procedurally and always positional.

Interviews

As toponymic data is discussed here, we refrain from displaying personal information of our informants. Generally, our sample is balanced between male and female informants as well as speakers of Haitian Creole and Dominican Spanish (comprising bilinguals and monolinguals). To keep the setting comfortable for participants, people were free to join and leave the interview at any moment. Here, we draw from 14 interviews, amongst which there are group discussions (E_GROUP_N); informal talks (E_INF_N); informal background conversations (E_QUAL_N); informal background conversations (H_KONT_N); and biographically orientated household interviews with visual and narrative tools (H_QUAL_N):

E_GROUP_7 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Kieslinger, Julia/Co-researcher (2022): Group Discussion with Motorcycle-Taxi-Drivers in San Luís.
E_INF_3 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Kieslinger, Julia (2022): Informal Talk at a Rivulet close to various *bateyes* in the Province of Cotuí.
E_QUAL_15 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Kieslinger, Julia/Co-researcher (2022): Informal Background Conversation with a Family in a *batey* in the Province of Cotuí.
H_QUAL_56 =	Kieslinger, Julia/Co-researcher (2023): Household Interview Interview with Residents in San Luís.
H_QUAL_57 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Co-researcher (2023): Household Interview with Residents in San Luís.
H_QUAL_58 =	Kieslinger, Julia/Co-reseracher (2023): Household Interview with Residents in San Luís.
H_QUAL_59 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Co-Researcher (2023): Household Interview with Residents in San Luís.

H_QUAL_60 =	Kieslinger, Julia/Co-reseracher (2023): Household Interview with Residents in San Luís.
H_QUAL_76 =	Kieslinger, Julia/Dohardt, Raphael/Co-researcher (2023): Household Interview with Residents in Bajos de Haina.
H_KONT_6 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Kieslinger, Julia (2023): Informal Background Conversation with "Teresa" about various bateyes.
H_KONT_11 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Kieslinger, Julia (2023): Informal Background Conversation with a Resident.
H_KONT_12 =	Kieslinger, Julia (2023): Informal Background Conversation with a former *capataz* ('supervisor of workers in a sugar company').
H_KONT_15 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Kieslinger, Julia (2023): Informal Background Conversation with a Resident.
H_KONT_16 =	Dohardt, Raphael/Kieslinger, Julia/Co-researcher (2023): Informal Background Conversation in Haina with various residents.

Figures

Figure 1 =	Kieslinger, Julia (2022): Educational Centre Batey Cachena. Regional [Unit] 05-06 'Education is Formation', Photograph.
Figure 2 =	Kieslinger, Julia (2022): Welcome to Villa Algodón, Photograph.
Figure 3 =	Kieslinger, Julia (2022): Don Juan, Inscription and Painting, Photograph.
Figure 4 =	Kieslinger, Julia (2022): Cattle carrying sugar cane, Photograph.
Figure 5 =	Kieslinger, Julia (2022): Welcome to the Colonial Sector of San Luís [God is Real], Photograph.
Figure 6 =	Dohardt, Raphael (2024): Connections between Toponyms and their Structural Elements, Diagram.

Funding Statement

This project is funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) – 443070760.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank, first and foremost, all our participants. We also wish to express our gratitude to our local co-researchers, Eugenio Castillo, Kirsis Heredia

de Castillo, and Wichna Joseph, for their support in conducting the interviews and assisting in the data analysis. We also thank the anonymous reviewer for the helpful suggestions.

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[***Abstract***: This study discusses toponomastic naming practices and the negotiation of place-identities in the Global South, in the example of so-called *bateyes* in the Dominican Republic, i.e. settlements with a historical connection to sugar cane production and transnational migration. Departing from multinymity as an empirical fact, we analyse the social dynamics of place-making through naming.

In this context, we demonstrate that the speech act of naming bears significance for the perception of the material world and how societies imbue it with social relevance and value. Moreover, we demonstrate that the distinction between classificatory nouns and names is more gradual than absolute. Having uncovered a wide range of relations between names (and classificatory nouns), we propose a model inspired by usage-based, cognitive linguistics to describe structural and semantic properties of names, as stored in a linguistic repertoire.]