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Exchange on Nick Onuf's 'Metaphoricizing Modernity,' Part II– Provincializing Metaphors, Reading (with) Onuf from Latin America

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Abstract: In this Dossier, four scholars reflect on Nicholas Onuf's leading article, 'Metaphoricizing modernity', (re)engaging with – and celebrating – more broadly Onuf's groundbreaking work from different places, perspectives, and angles. Part II rethinks (with) Onuf from Latin America, questioning and provincializing (certain) metaphors and metaphoricizing. Manuela Trindade Viana analyzes the conditions of possibility and the effects of 'Colombianization' as a powerful metaphor that came to circulate in Latin America since the late 2000s, in reference both to a specific diagnosis of a problem of violence and the solutions implemented to confront it. Challenging (certain) aspects of Onuf's account about what metaphors do in our worlds, she argues that the security policy domain valorizes the universal push underlying the imperative to make models travel as a condition for the legitimation of their work in crafting solutions that fit to 'similar problematically violent' situations in Latin America. Roberto Vilchez Yamato offers an-other (re)reading of Onuf's work. (Re)turning to Onuf's *World of Our Making*, he (re)thinks the correlation(s) between metaphors, rules, and the conditions of rule, drawing attention to the crucial place of language within Onuf's work. Supplementarily, Yamato engages with Onuf's more recent *The Mightie Frame*, 'the second half' of his 'decades-long project', suggesting a certain rethinking of the 'microphysics' of language, the conditions of thought, and the conditions of rule, within which metaphors and metaphorical complexes are given center stage. (Re)reading (some of) Onuf's work, he concludes his article wondering about how Onuf would respond to the question of provincializing metaphors.

Keywords: provincializing; metaphors; Colombianization; rules, rule, and conditions of thought; language; Latin America; violence.

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The intellectual poverty of a politically powerful metaphor: security experts and their making of the "Colombianization" of violence in Latin America[1]

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In 2011, I had the privilege of taking a PhD course with Nicholas Onuf at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio, in Portuguese). By then, he was already invested in thinking about how metaphors were pervasively part of our everyday language, not least in the field of International Relations (IR). I remember a particular example Onuf often brought up in classroom: that we referred to states *as if* they were persons – Brazil *thinks*; the United States *provokes*; China *declares*. These illustrations are more than an expression of the methodological nationalism with which most studies in IR discipline operate: they invoke a humanized personality to explanations of state behavior in world politics, encapsulating, in a single national territory, a homogeneous conduct whose understanding could be facilitated by its approximation towards the idea of a modern subject, with reason, freedom and choice among its main traits. Reading 'Metaphorizing Modernity' (Onuf 2024) makes me revisit that classroom and explore the juncture of my current intellectual curiosities with those guiding Onuf's discussion of the historical traces and effects of metaphors that have inhabited stories about being or becoming modern.

Here, I engage with Onuf through a powerful contemporary version of that methodological nationalism that came to circulate in Latin America since the late 2000s: 'Colombianization'. I read the latter as a metaphor mobilized by a 'community of speakers' (Onuf 2024: 4) linked to the field of security policy[2], simultaneously referring to a specific diagnosis of a problem of violence and the solutions implemented to confront it. As I discuss further in this article, the diagnosis and the solutions initially articulated as a way of coping with the 'Colombian case' came to travel around Latin America as a model labelled after the 'Colombian success'.

Accepting Onuf's (2024: 7) challenge to search for 'the fine print on the signposts' pointing to directions in which worlds should move, I dig into the conditions of possibility and the effects of 'Colombianization' so as to engage with two aspects of Onuf's (2024) account of what metaphors do in our worlds. The first is related to his claim about the constant change of signposts resulting from transformations we see as happening in the world (Onuf 2024: 2). In contrast to that vision, I argue that some metaphors are politically powerful precisely because they freeze historical movement and homogenize representations of the world. More specifically, I use the 'Colombianization' metaphor to show how it makes historical transformations irrelevant for particular problematizations of violence, and how the regional circulation of such metaphor turned multiple renderings of violent phenomena into a single story about the 'Latin American problem' to be solved by security experts.

The second aspect I want to engage with Onuf (2024) is a bit trickier. He relies on a set of metaphors to analyze the effects of metaphors: they bring concepts to life, make the story come alive, refresh stories (Onuf 2023: 4-5). In a first reading, my sense was that these images transpired an enthusiasm of the workings of metaphors in our worlds – which I resisted for the reasons already introduced here. A more careful engagement with his text, however, allows us to see that perhaps Onuf is enthusiastic about the *problematique* of metaphors, but does not necessarily revere their effects in normative terms. After all, as he claims (Onuf 2024: 3), 'Once chosen, metaphors work like rules (...) ruling the stories we tell about ourselves'. Now, if rules yield relations of domination and subordination (Onuf 2015), then metaphors crystallize relations of power through their representational function, making things *effectively* change and flow in the worlds they constitute. I take this more nuanced reading of Onuf enthusiasm to insist, nonetheless, that the metaphors he chooses to analyze the effects of metaphors valorize more what they enable than what they repress and erase.

In this sense, if the first aspect I am engaging with Onuf confronts movement and refreshment with fixation and homogeneity; in the second aspect, I offer erasure and repression in opposition to the enabling effects of metaphors valorized in Onuf's analysis. To give concrete contours to this discussion, the next section uses 'Colombianization' as an analytical window to explore the erasures needed for the emergence and regional circulation of such metaphor. By arguing that the representation of the 'Colombian problem of violence' into a single story is a political fabrication made possible by security policy experts, the second section turns to the rationale with which these professionals distill customized solutions to cope with a problem of violence that does not solely speak to the Colombian case anymore, but also to Mexico and Central America more generally. By critically interpreting the circulation of metaphors based on nationally-containerized 'models' as expressing a tension between the particular and the universal (Walker 1993), I argue that the security policy domain valorizes the universal push underlying the imperative to make models travel. At the same time, I show that such disposition is a condition for the legitimation of their work in crafting solutions that fit to 'similar problematically violent' situations in Latin America.

Metaphors as caricatures paving communication in a straight avenue

When demarcating the relevance of metaphors to the stories we tell about the modern world(s), Onuf contends that metaphorical complexes mark our locutionary social existence as we go about the labyrinth that language unescapably is (Wittgenstein quoted in Onuf 2024: 2). To the idea of labyrinth, Onuf adds a couple of other metaphors to refer to language: 'abundance of paths', 'forest of possibilities', 'turns, forks and dead ends', and 'a surfeit of choices' (Onuf 2024: 2), making for 'moments of confusion' in our socially linguistic existence. It is this difficulty in finding clearly discernible paths through language that makes metaphors so fundamental to social relations. They offer us possibilities of transit in this labyrinth: using a word or phrase referring to an object in place of another, our social use of metaphors makes communication possible by sewing representations of

likeness between 'what we think we see' of two objects (Onuf 2024: 3). If language offers us the labyrinth, it also provides the shortcut, as signs on the road helping us to find the 'right path', or alerting us to those we should avoid.

This is no different from the use of metaphors I see characterizing the field of experts in security policy. Decades appearing in the frontlines of debates about the problem of violence in Latin America turned what we have come to see as 'Colombia' into a sticking metaphor used to refer to problems that others in the region had to avoid. Indeed, by the late-2000s, 'Colombianization' became an increasingly present wording to evoke similarities between violence indicators in Mexico and Central America. In the first case, this metaphorical representation sheds light to promising avenues for comparison, given the similar levels of cruelty of the Los Zetas and the Medellin cartels, violence indicators, political corruption, degeneration of social cohesion, state capture, and institutional fragility characterizing both Colombia and Mexico (to mention but a few cases, see: Jordan 1999: 166; Carpenter 2005; Felbab-Brown 2009; *The Christian Science Monitor* 2010; García Villegas 2011: n.p.). In that same period, the 'Colombianization' metaphor also gained traction in diagnoses of violence anchored on Central America's rearticulated position in regional drug flows to account for the recent surge in violence indicators and deepened state corruption (cf. Ballvé; McSweeney, 2020: 805-806). In this sense, the manifestations of the problem of violence with which Colombia is widely known in the world came to be crystallized – through the metaphor of 'Colombianization' – into a commoditized representation of violence used to refer to what was (seen as) also happening in multiple parts of Latin America.

Many experts holding credentials to speak about the 'problem of violence' in Latin America have heroically jumped in the debate so as to provide cautionary notes about the pertinence of that metaphorical use (Scherlen 2009; Kan; Williams 2010; Cárdenas; Casas-Zamora 2010, to mention but a few examples). Based on indicators such as homicide rates and geographical distribution of the 'problem of violence', Mauricio Cárdenas and Kevin Casas-Zamora (2010, n.p.) consider that '[the violence problems in Mexico] remain of an order of magnitude which is altogether dissimilar from Colombia's'. Others have preferred to emphasize the distinctions between drug dealers and narcoguerrillas/narcoterrorists characterizing the protagonists of the problem of violence in, respectively, Mexico and Colombia (Cárdenas; Casas-Zamora 2010; García Villegas 2011, n.p.).

The nuances of these disagreements are manifold, but they all share the centrality of the 'Colombianization' metaphor in a discursive field (cf. Foucault 1981: 59-60; 1991: 54-55) characterizing the community of speakers on security policy. In other words, whether experts are for or against the use of that metaphor to affirm the likeness between violent dynamics in Colombia, on one side, and other parts of Latin America, on the other side, the privileged position of 'Colombianization' in the debates within that field makes us aware of the political traction this particular metaphor has come to acquire in the security policy domain.

Furthermore, while the pertinence of the applicability of the metaphor to the Mexican and Central American cases has been widely questioned, the terms upon which the metaphor relies have been largely ignored. In other words, the question governing

debates of security experts seems to be more 'where does the metaphor fit?', or 'what other metaphor could adequately fit here?', than 'what is the metaphor made of?'.

Indeed, the last decades have witnessed the emergence of multiple contesting problematizations of violence in Colombia (cf. Foucault 2010). Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and Coordinación Colombia-Europa-Estados Unidos (CCEEU) contend that any such diagnosis must incorporate the Colombian military and police forces as part the problem of violence, and not exclusively as the bearers of solutions on that front (FOR; CCEEU 2014). Franco Restrepo (2009) and Ronderos (2014) have insisted on how state violence has come to be organized in Colombia across the legal/illegal divide, by calling our attention to paramilitary historical complicities with the public force. In their turn, Balvé and McSweeney (2020: 827) claim that 'Colombianization' should refer to the military-agroindustrial complex that benefits from 'simplistic and superficial parallels between Colombia's history of drug-related violence and corruption and Central America's current experiences with these problems'. Also, I have argued elsewhere (Viana 2022) that renditions of violence in Colombia are far from historically static (as comparisons between 1980s Colombia and 2010s Mexico suggest): they have been rearticulated throughout the decades, through a gradual alchemy of 'the problem of the guerrillas', 'the problem of drugs', and 'the problem of terrorism'. Taking those interpretations seriously would lead us to confront every taken-for-granted claim of the problematization of violence in Colombia through the metaphor of 'Colombianization' with questions such as: which problematization of violence the metaphor stands for? In reference to which part of the country? Or even to what period of its history?

My argument here is that, despite the variety of diagnoses, the univocal sense that came to be attributed to the 'problem of violence' in Colombia through the metaphor of 'Colombianization' is a politically fabricated regime of truth that came to circulate with discursive authority in Latin America mainly, but not exclusively, within and through the professional work of security policy experts. Indeed, as the stickiness of metaphors deeply relies 'on what others say' they see (Onuf 2024: 3), it seems dispensable to work on the specifications required by the questions I have just mentioned in reference to the 'Colombianization' case. Because what we have come to know as 'Colombia' is so easily associated to qualifications such as 'narcodemocracy', as well as a state plagued by 'narcoterrorists' extracting their fire power from drug money, no further clarification is needed when one says 'Colombianization' – away from the labyrinth that the multiplicity of possibilities would take us to.

In providing shortcuts allowing for communication to easily flow among experts of the security policy field, metaphors do an important political job of erasing contestant problematizations of violence. They do so by de-contextualizing and exaggerating features of phenomena, so as to pave a straight avenue out of the labyrinth that the ambiguities characterizing both heroes and villains throughout history would entail. For this reason, the political effect of the 'Colombianization' metaphor is more revealing of those producing diagnoses – because the latter always expresses a particular problematization of violence instead of others – than of those perpetrating violence – that is, the definition

of the object of intervention for those experts results from the terms with which the problem is articulated.

Particular vs. Universal and the need to make "models" travel

But 'Colombianization' does more than erasing contestant problematizations of violence in Colombia. As Foucault (2010: 389) argues, the terms with which a given problematization is articulated provides the horizon of possibilities within which solutions are conceived. Indeed, when the metaphor of 'Colombianization' is evoked, it does not only refer to a specific rendering of the problem of violence in Colombia: it also comprises the set of policies invested to solve that problem – namely, Plan Colombia. Implemented from 1999 to 2005, and for additional five years in its second phase, Plan Colombia's ambition was to intensify the antinarcotics operations that were taking place in Colombia since the late 1980s, and to combine it with counterinsurgency operations aimed at fighting the fire power with which 'narcoterrorists' were characterized. Those measures were articulated based on the understanding that the fusion between guerrillas, drug trafficking, and terrorism accounted for the problem of violence in Colombia since the late 1990s (Viana 2022).

What the security experts have been disputing in the past few years is whether it is plausible to claim Plan Colombia as a successful formula; if this formula can be reproduced in other places experiencing similar 'problems of violence' (in their jargon, if it can be considered a 'model', or a 'best practice'); and, finally, under which circumstances it would justifiably travel (see, for instance, Scherlen 2009; Paul et al. 2014). To dispute the pertinence of the applicability of particular solutions to other places, this community shares with other technocratic niches an already established epistemological lenses in the policy world: the imperative of speaking numbers. Indeed, to enter the terrain of disputes regarding the truthfulness of the performance of a specific policy, experts need to frame their claims into a metrics, a set of indicators.

Importantly, even strong and repeated criticism towards a given policy is not a sufficient ingredient to hinder its vesting with a seal of 'model'. This is certainly the case with Plan Colombia, which has been highly contested from angles such as a cost-benefit rationale (the billions invested *versus* the results achieved) (Rasmussen; Benson 2003; Walsh 2004), the durability of its so-called achievements (Isacson 2010), and the lives lost so that those achievements could have been claimed (Isacson 2010; FOR; CCEEU 2014). Despite intense criticism, the 'efficient results' in terms of eradicated coca leaf crops, drugs seized, and drug traffickers arrested were compiled into Plan Colombia's portfolio, allowing for its use as the template for the Merida Initiative in Mexico (Scherlen 2009: 1; Paul et al., 2014: 20-36), for spokespersons of the 'Colombian successful formula' to circulate in positions of authority in Mexico[3], and for the Colombian military and police training centers to consolidate as a reference for their counterparts in Latin America and other parts of the world (Tickner; Morales C. 2014; Viana 2022). In other terms, the worlds where the status of 'success' cannot be legitimately attributed to Plan Colombia (Isacson 2010) coexist with the worlds where this claim is not only possible,

but technically legitimate and desirable. To the latter, 'Colombianization' has come to acquire a double meaning: both the problematization it came to be univocally associated with, and the measures implemented in its solving. Interestingly, the avenue of eased communication among those experts is so pavemented that eventual misappropriations of the metaphor – after all, 'Colombianization' came to mean, simultaneously, the degenerative stage of a problem of violence and the regenerative security policies that solved it – are dodged without even needing cautious signposts.

Now, since models are not produced to be confined, this community of experts on security policy needs indicators that are sufficiently 'universal' so that a given set of solutions can have its success or failure assessed and compared to promising sites for their travelling, understood as facing similar problems. In the case of Plan Colombia, the most common figures among those indicators are homicide rates, volume of drugs seized, and dealers arrested or killed (Walsh 2004). At the same time, 'particulars matter'. When these experts are disputing if a given model fits the problem to be solved in another place, we are led to infer that there is a concern with 'particularity' at stake for this community. Indeed, in different corners of the policy world, the so-called 'local turn' has been the usual reaction to criticisms regarding the lack of attention to cultural particularities and the resulting lack of durable effects of pasteurized solutions that have no local legitimation.

Thus, although metaphors such as 'Colombianization' explicitly express the methodological nationalism with which we so often approach phenomena of international politics, I argue that they are more accurately understood as what Onuf reads as the metaphor of 'limits' mobilized by Walker (1993) – an expression of a tension between particular and universal that constitutes the modern international (Walker 1993). On one hand, these experts on security policy have come to argue that 'local aspects' matter; on the other hand, they need to erase some particularities of phenomena of violence so that models can travel.

Nonetheless, as we have seen, the 'Colombianization' metaphor operates as a shortcut that appeals to exaggerated and de-contextualized features of a particular phenomenon to build analogies with another. In this sense, when disputing if a model fits, experts on security policy are actually debating if their shared vision of the caricature of Colombia matches their shared vision of the caricature in Mexico, for instance. Although 'Colombianization' suggests an originality of the problem of violence and the solutions articulated on its behalf – given its reference to 'Colombia' –, the metaphor makes sense precisely because detached from the dizziness that the not-so-straightforward thinking about the 'problem of violence' in Colombia would involve. The imperative to make models circulate that governs the community of experts on security policy ends up negotiating an admissible version of the particular – the caricature – so that the universal pulse underlying the vocabulary of 'models' can thrive.

This speaks a lot to Onuf's claim (2024: 5) about what is and isn't carried in the metaphor. If, as we have seen in the previous section, 'Colombianization' implies the erasure of contestant problematizations of violence in Colombia, the privileged position this metaphor has come to enjoy in the field of security policy has also important

political effects to the region. But 'Colombianization' also offers us a window through which we can grasp what is changed in 'the metaphorical landscape on the other side' (Onuf 2024: 5) when the metaphor circulates. Indeed, by compromising the particular in the valorization of the universal in the circulation of the 'Colombianization' metaphor in Latin America, experts on security policy reduce the problematizations of violence in the region to a homogenized story, thereby creating the legitimizing conditions for the circulation of one-size-fits-all solutions.

This does not imply that the particularity suggested in the wording 'Colombianization' means nothing, however. It matters greatly, once the caricature of Colombia also tells us a story about becoming modern. Indeed, the image suggested by 'Colombianization' is not only that of a country on the 'brink of the abyss' (DeShazo et al. 2007; Pinzón 2015) – to which the univocal problematization of violence I have analyzed in the previous section refers –, but also a story of regeneration made possible by the 'successful' implementation of a security policy formula (Pinzón 2015). In this sense, the 'Colombianization' metaphor evokes that which we fear happens with politics in a specific representation of the 'problem of violence' in a country that was on the verge of collapse; and it legitimizes that which we think we see as having successfully worked in Colombia to travel to other sites of Latin America experiencing what we conceive as similar problems.

Final remarks

Metaphors are, without a doubt, a powerful locutionary resource amidst the labyrinths of language. In 'Metaphorizing modernity', Onuf (2024) shows us how a specific community of speakers – scholars – have sided with, confronted, and refreshed metaphorical representations in order to account for modernity. In doing so, Onuf (2024) offers us a palette of important works in the discipline of International Relations that engaged with metaphorical complexes of life and growth; of motion and direction; and of space sequenced in time – all of them expressing stories about being or becoming modern.

In the juncture of Onuf's analytical disposition with my own track of curiosities, however, I find myself at unease with what I perceive as an emphasis on the enabling effects of metaphors transpiring in Onuf's text. Metaphors refresh the world (Onuf 2024: 4-5, 19), bring concepts back to life (Onuf 2024: 4-5), make stories come alive (Onuf 2024: 4, 20) – they are represented as giving movement and liveliness to our communication in making sense of the world.

By exploring a powerful metaphor in a community of speakers on security policy – which also includes scholars – I sought to expose how politically useful narrow-mindedness can be produced through metaphorical shortcuts. Against the vivid image of refreshment that Onuf (2024) valorizes in metaphors, I have argued how they can tell stories about what becoming modern should mean by also over-simplifying diagnoses and making ready-made solutions circulate on their behalf. As we have seen, 'Colombianization' not only invokes a shared vision of security experts about the problem of violence in Latin America, but also the solutions articulated to confront it. Underlying their instrumental problem/solution approach to politics, there is a common assessment of what

must be achieved in Latin America so that states can be 'strengthened' (*modernizing* the public force, as these experts' jargon claims), 'functional' (away from the 'failing' or 'failed states' vocabulary) and, 'thereby', 'more legitimate' (for bringing the state where it was absent beforehand is seen as a condition for citizen's lives improvement). In revealing the gears with which this community of policy experts speaks about and copes with the 'problem of violence' in Latin America, I expect to have provided a less enthusiastic lens than Onuf's through which we can think of metaphors and their effects as politically powerful precisely because intellectually poor.

Provincializing metaphors? a reading of Nick Onuf[4]

Roberto Vilchez Yamato

> At no point do I deny the conceptual imperialism embedded in the language of modernity [...]
> Onuf, 2023, p.15

Nick Onuf's 'Metaphoricizing modernity' (Onuf 2024) is no doubt a great contribution to the field of International Relations (IR), and to international studies more broadly. It is certainly a very original contribution, which innovatively focuses on the complexes of metaphors articulated in academic engagements with modernity, giving particular attention to seven specific metaphors ('boundary'; 'break'; 'juncture'; 'limit'; 'rupture'; 'stage'; and 'transition'). As a form of (re)turning to language, the article (re)turns to the metaphors – and their etymologies, complexes, correlations, and intertextualities – which inescapably accompany and (pre)condition modern language and modern political imagination and discourse. From those seven metaphorical foundations or starting points, the article enters, traces, and maps different conceptual and metaphorical relations and correlations which most commonly, and profoundly, condition 'our' imagination, thinking, speaking, and acting on and with-in 'our' modern world. From these entry, metaphorical points and traces, the article etymologically and intertextually suggests two – or, indeed, three – complexes of metaphors indissociably articulated to modernity: that of life and growth; that of motion and direction; and that of (spatial) frames and (temporal) sequences. It is an extremely original and dense piece, which deals with a vast and diverse set of literatures. At the same time, it has its focus very well delimited: modernity, the relevance of metaphors, and, more specifically, seven (modern) metaphors and three (modern) metaphorical complexes.

Considering all these different aspects, and their accompanying complexities and intertextualities, it comes with no surprise the (immense) difficulty in putting all together within the space-time of (only) one article (Onuf 2024). Thus, in terms of its internal structure of argumentation and more substantive terms, there seems to be at least three sets of questions that would invite Nick to respond to and further articulate his engagement with-in metaphoricizing modernity. The first has to do with his very conception of the complexes of metaphors: How does he conceive such complexes? How does he conceive the very metaphorical use of the idea of complexes of metaphors? How these complexes relate to each other, and, more specifically, with those seven metaphors? The second, considering that Nick begins and ends his article with quotations from Wittgenstein, has to do with the correlation between the (re)turn to language – and concepts – and the focus on metaphors and complexes of metaphors: How language, concepts, metaphors, and complexes of metaphors relate to each other? How is modernity articulated with these complexes, metaphors, concepts, and language? How does he conceive these correlations and articulations in relation to world politics and IR? The third

regards Nick's conception of or assumptions about the world: How does he conceive the world? How does he conceive the relation(s) between the world and those complexes of metaphors, concepts, and language? How does he conceive the relation(s) between the world, modernity, and those (modern) complexes and metaphoricizing?

Of course, none of these is quite new to Nick. The 'world' is the very opening word of his groundbreaking *World of Our Making: Rules and rule in social theory and international relations*, whose chapter 7 is entirely dedicated to 'world' politics (Onuf 1989, 2013a). It also marks the title of his *Making Sense, Making Worlds: Constructivism in social theory and international relations*, a collection of essays which includes his 'Worlds of our making', and which dedicates two of its four parts to 'The metaphysics of world-making' (Part II) and 'The art of world-making' (Part III) (Onuf 2013b). The reference to Wittgenstein is also not that surprising, considering that he had not only opened the very first chapter of his *World of Our Making*, eventfully entitled 'Constructivism', with a Wittgensteinian (metaphorical) epigraph – 'Language - I want to say - is a refinement, *im Anfang war die Tat* ('in the beginning was the deed')' (Wittgenstein, 1976: 420 *apud* Onuf 1989: 35) –, but had also dedicated a very especial place to Wittgenstein – literally, the 'Wittgenstein's Place' (Onuf 1989: 43-52) – with-in his inaugural conception of constructivism (Onuf 1989: 35-65). Moreover, as famously known, Nick has been a central figure in the so-called linguistic turn – or turn to language – in IR in the 1980's (Debrix 2003: 3). More recently, both Wittgenstein and the (re)turn to language were given particular attention in his *The Mightie Frame: Epochal Change and the Modern World* (Onuf 2018: 174-178). Nick's use of and engagement with metaphors are also not a novelty. In the 'Introduction' of his *International Legal Theory: Essays and Engagements, 1966-2006*, metaphorically named 'Theory as autobiography', Nick mobilizes metaphors not only to translate his 40 years of 'reading and writing theory', but also to structure the 'three parts' of his collection of essays and engagements (Onuf 2008: xix). In his *Making Sense, Making Worlds*, the third essay of its first part, which is dedicated to 'Constructivism', is entitled 'Fitting metaphors' (Onuf 2013b). More recently, while the very 'Prologue' of his *The Mightie Frame* is entitled 'Refreshing Metaphors' (Onuf 2018: 1-11), the metaphor of the 'margin' constitutively marks his *International Theory at the Margins: Neglected Essays, Recurring Themes* (Onuf 2023).

In 'Metaphoricizing modernity' (Onuf 2024), metaphors are taken to be the most fundamental conditions of possibility of thought and language, and, hence, of speech act, social construction, and world-making. Drawing on an analogy, metaphors seem to work in Nick's metaphoricized ontology of modernity as rules once did in *World of Our Making* (Onuf 1989, 2013a) and 'Constructivism: A User's Manual' (Onuf 1998b), that is, mediating, conditioning, and enabling the co-constitutive relations between social agents, institutions, and arrangements, themselves always already conditioning and conditioned by certain particular conditions of rule (hierarchy, hegemony, and/or heteronomy) (Onuf 1989, 1998b, 2013a). In other words, paraphrasing Maja Zehfuss' deconstructionist reading of his work, metaphors, as rules, constitute the very 'texture' of Nick's ontology of the modern 'social world' (Zehfuss 2002: 60). Thus, before questioning

his metaphors in 'Metaphoricizing modernity' (Onuf 2024), I offer a brief rereading of Nick's famous constructivist conception of rules (and rule).

Rules (and Rule)

In this context, then, it is important to remember that Nick gave the name 'constructivism' to an (then) emerging, new form of studying social relations, including but not limited to international relations (Onuf 1998: 58). Importantly, Nick's constructivism is not conceived as one more IR theory, but as an alternative ontology of social relations (Kubálková, Onuf and Kowert 1998: 20). Displacing the dichotomously structuring of the 'agent/structure' debate, his constructivism starts in the 'middle', that is, with 'rules' (Onuf 1998: 59). His is a 'rules-based' (Nogueira and Messari 2005: 172-175), 'holistic' (Reus-Smit 2013: 227) constructivism. Drawing much ontological and (meta)theoretical inspiration from legal theory, social theory, philosophy of language, and, most especially, speech act theory (Onuf 1989), Nick's social ontology conceives rules as always already intermediating the continuous process of co-constitutive relations between human agents and social arrangements (Onuf 1998: 59). On the one hand, through their speech acts and practices, human agents (re)construct social rules, which, in their (re)affirmation through those acts and practices, give form to social institutions and arrangements, including – national and international – societies (Onuf 1989, 1998, 2013a). On the other hand, social rules and individual human actions and practices are always already (pre) conditioned by politico-social arrangements and institutions, that is, they always already take place within a 'political society' constituted by unequal relations of super- and subordination (Onuf 1989, 2013a: chapter 6). In other words, rules yield conditions of rule (Onuf 1989, 1998, 2013a). In these terms, international relations refer to a complex political society (re)constructed through the intermediation of social rules and institutions always already (pre)conditioned by unequal conditions of rule, and always already constituting and being constituted by human agents (Onuf 1989, 1998, 2013a).

For Nick, as Zehfuss puts it, rules are *social* constructions that not only constrain and regulate aspects of the world, but also 'constitute' social reality (Zehfuss 2002: 20). Rules constitute the very 'texture of the social world' (Zehfuss 2002: 60). Concomitantly, while always already acting *within* a particular institutional context, that is, within a context of stable patterns of rules and correlated practices,[5] people, as agents, also 'act *on* this context' (Zehfuss, 2002: 20). In other words, rules constitute and regulate agents *and* agents (re)construct rules, which form institutions and social arrangements or contexts within which agents and rules are themselves constituted and regulated (Onuf, 1998, 2013a). Thus, rules are both politically *constituted* in the process of social interaction and socially *constitutive* of the political order. In (meta)theoretical terms, Nick's conception of rules is quite rich and complex. On the one hand, it is influenced by the philosophy of (ordinary) language, and, more specifically, by Wittgenstein and by Austin's, Searle's, and Habermas' speech act theories. On the other hand, it is influenced by both the positivist, rule-based conception of law of H. L. A. Hart and by the more process-oriented conceptions of international law, such as those found in the works of the Yale School of

International Law and in the work of Richard Falk.[6] More broadly, central to his conception of rules, and thus to his social ontology of a 'world of our making', is a fundamental correlation between *law* and *language* (Onuf 2013 [1989]: 66-95).[7]

However, if rules are stable patterns of relationships, it should also be pointed out that such patterns are not symmetrical (Onuf 1998: 63). This point is important because it helps us to understand the co-constitutive relationship between rules and political society, that is, between rules and rule (Onuf 2013a: 196-227). After all, as its subtitle expressly announced, *World of Our Making* was a study on *Rules and rule in social theory and international relations* (Onuf 2013 [1989]). According to Nick, as Zehfuss explains it, political society has two properties. On the one hand, there are always already rules (law and/as language) that give meaning to human activities, making them socially intelligible and meaningful. On the other hand, given the always already (pre)conditioning social and material asymmetries, 'rules result in an uneven distribution of benefits' which leads to and legitimizes a certain 'condition of rule' (Zehfuss 2002: 152). Thus, Nick correlates society and politics through the 'rules-rule nexus': while society is always already based on rules, 'politics always deals with asymmetric social relations generated by rules, that is, rule' (Zehfuss 2002: 152). In Nick's own words, 'where there are rules (and thus institutions) there is rule – a condition in which some agents use rules to exercise control and obtain advantages over other agents' (1998: 63).

Returning to German social thought, more specifically to the paradigm of *Herrschaft*, translated by him as the 'paradigm of political society', Nick understands such a political society as the expression of 'relations of super- and subordination – relations maintained through rules and obtaining in rule' (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 196). Rereading the three types of Weberian rule, Nick suggests three conditions of rule: *hegemony*,[8] *hierarchy*,[9] and *heteronomy*[10] (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 196-219). For him, social rules and correlated practices produce such conditions of rule as a socio-political condition from which agents, as institutions, 'can never escape' (Onuf 1998: 63).[11] Thus, the political-social world in which 'we' live is a world of hegemony, hierarchy, and heteronomy (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 227). And as its social-normative texture, rules are both *constitutive* of and *constituted* by this world of *asymmetric* relations.

The rules-rule nexus suggests the continuous and co-constitutive relationship between social rules and the asymmetric relations of super- and subordination, which, in other words, could suggest the continuous and co-constitutive relationship between rules and power. However, preferring terms such as 'rule', 'resources', and 'asymmetric' relations of 'super-' and 'subordination', Nick avoids 'using the term "power"' (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 237). It is not by chance, then, that he can be criticized, as Sinclair (2010:15-16) does, for privileging the *rules* part of the rules-rule nexus, leaving aside or underdeveloped discussions on *rule*, and, hence, on power and politics, in relation to his conception of rules. Nick, however, seems prepared to respond to this type of criticism, insofar as he pragmatically decided to enter and engage with the agent-structure debate through the intermediary path of rules, analyzing, on the one hand, 'how rules make agents and institutions what they are in relation to each other' and, on the other hand, 'how rules make rule, and being ruled, a universal social experience' (Onuf 1998: 63). Inspired by Kant,

Nick would suggest keeping the two models of practice – the 'rules model of practice' and the 'powers model of practice' – analytically separate, in order to show how each of them 'specify the terms of the agent-structure relation' (Onuf 2013b: 135).

Thus, I believe there is a significant critical potential within Nick's radical constructivism. Accompanying Sinclair's critique, I also think it is highly problematic 'to take the rules but leave the rule', that is, to consider his 'technical insights' on rules, while leaving behind or aside his engagements with rule and political society (Sinclair 2010: 15-16). But, notwithstanding Sinclair's critique, this criticism cannot really apply to Nick himself – at least not without a significant qualification. In this particular regard, it is important to recall that, as announced by its subtitle, *World of Our Making* is structured in two parts (Reis and Kessler 2016: 355-356, footnote 64): the first, dedicated to *rules* (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 33-159); and the second, to *rule* (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 161-289). More specifically, for example, while its chapter 6 (the second of its second part) expressly engages with 'political society' and the three types of (Weberian-Kantian) rule – hegemony, hierarchy, and heteronomy –, its chapter 7 (the third of its second part) discusses 'World Politics' through a constructivist rereading of Harold D. Lasswell's behaviouralist conception of politics, explicitly engaging with 'power politics' (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 196-227 and 228-257, respectively). Thus, in Nick's own case, the issue has nothing to do with taking rules and leaving rule, but, rather, with his decision to keep those two models of practice analytically separated (Onuf 2013b: 135; Sinclair 2010: 12).

Nonetheless, at least for Sinclair (2010: 36), the separation between rules and rule is highly problematic for anyone really interested in critically understanding 'the normative world'. Not only there cannot really be a hermetically sealed divide between the two, but, crucially, an understanding of rule must always already inform and 'colour' the understanding of rules (Sinclair 2010: 36). Otherwise, rules and their academic understanding end up not only being acritical and apolitical, but also legitimizing the status quo and ideologically universalizing and normalizing a world which is 'really' constructed by the elites and those (few) asymmetrically 'empowered through wealth, education, class, race, nationality and gender' (Sinclair 2010: 36). The main problem for her is that Nick seems 'uninterested in either the political ramifications of rules or the political nature of context' (Sinclair 2010: 11) in his technical taxonomic exercise; that is, in following Searle's 'categorization of speech acts' in order to analyze (legal) rules (Reis and Kessler 2016: 356). In other words, Nick's greatest flaw was not applying his own notion of rule to (international) law and (legal) rules (Sinclair 2010: 18). Hence, a critical (re)politicization of Nick's work would involve, among other things, considering how those conditions of rule and asymmetric relations of super- and subordination are embedded in the very conception of rules. Something similar, I think, could be speculated about Nick's (re) engagements with metaphors.

Provincializing metaphors?

In speculating about this question, which also names this reading of Nick's work, I suggest an ambiguous position. On the one hand, Nick has provincialized his contribution

with-in its very naming: 'Metaphoricizing modernity' (Onuf 2024). In speculating about how 'metaphors rule our lives by ruling the stories we tell about ourselves' (Onuf 2024), Nick wants to draw our attention to 'the metaphorical complexes ruling the big story of modernity' (Onuf 2024). As he openly puts it, his is a story about modernity; or, borrowing from the subtitle of his *The Mightie Frame* (Onuf 2018), it is a story about 'the modern world' and its metaphors and metaphorical complexes. Somewhat differently than in his inaugural *World of Our Making* (Onuf 1989, 2013a), Nick is now theoretically speculating about a much more critical, self-reflexive and provincialized, *modern* world (Onuf 2018, 2024). Indeed, complementing his previous engagement with the conditions of rules and rule in (a *non*-provincialized) *World of Our Making* (Onuf 1989, 2013a), Nick has dedicated 'the second half of a decades-long project' (Onuf 2018: 5),[12] that is, his *The Mightie Frame*, to 'the limits of possible knowledge for *modern* minds and the conditions of rule in the *modern* world' (Onuf 2018: 9, emphases added). More recently, his engagement with the 'margins' in his *International Theory at the Margins* (Onuf 2023: 1-21), also echoes (t)his provincialization of both the world and his own modern world. In so doing, much inspired by a *marginal* figure (or constitutive outsider?) within his thought (Derrida 1978, 1982), Nick self-critically responds to Charlotte Epstein's critique of his habit of searching for 'universals', that is, for 'an absent centre' (Onuf 2023: 16; see also Epstein 2013). And it is in this context, that Nick writes the following passage, beginning with the line I borrowed for the epigraph of this reading of his work:

> At no point do I deny the conceptual imperialism embedded in the language of modernity and, more particularly, in speaking of the modern world and associating everything else with tradition. I hold the emergence of international society to have been a unique event in human history, modelled as it is on the principle of sovereign equality among member states. In describing international society as the mighty frame within which the modern world has unfolded over several centuries, I cannot but marginalize and thus trivialize everything that modernity is not. After all, the modern world is *my* world, a Husserlian *lifeworld*. (Onuf 2023: 15-16)

As he (re)affirms in 'Refreshing Metaphors', the 'Prologue' of his *The Mightie Frame*, the story he tells therein is 'a story about the modern world writ large' (Onuf 2018: 10). Thus, it is unambiguous to me that Nick has been (more and more) self-critically aiming to provincialize his own assumptions and theoretical speculations about the world within his late works, insistently marking the 'modern' *character* of the world, including his own lifeworld. On the other hand, however, (t)his ((*un*)conscious) habit of or desire for '*writ*[*ting*] *large*(*r*)' seems to call for an-*other* thinking, or a *second* reading (Ashley 1988; Derrida 1981, 2016). And it is this – uncanny, unambiguous *and* ambiguous – position that provoked me to speculate about the question naming both this section and the article. As Nick puts it in that quoted passage, 'in speaking of the modern world', he does not 'deny the conceptual imperialism embedded in the language of modernity' (Onuf 2023: 15). In his story, 'the mighty frame' of the international society, 'within which the

modern world has unfolded over several centuries', has been 'a unique event in human history' (Onuf 2023: 15-16). Inevitably, as a delimited story, that is, a story about 'something' (a some 'thing' that (supposedly) 'is' – even if 'unfolded over several centuries'), it *negatively* marginalizes all that 'it' 'is not' (Onuf 2023: 16). And Nick seems to be very self-aware of such a constitutive form of negation, marginalization, and logocentrism (Derrida 2016). But, despite all his self-awareness and insistent effort to provincialize himself and his theoretical thought, Nick nonetheless writes the following passage in the 'Epilogue' of his *The Mightie Frame*, entitled 'Saving Constructivism':

> Language and rules are ingredients in social construction, and they inform all other so-called ingredients. […] I insist that rules yield rule. Conditions of thought (manifest in language) eventuate in conditions of rule (actuated through language), thanks to rules (expressed in language). This is the mighty frame for every society, and not just the modern world. (Onuf 2018: 228)

In *World of Our Making*, as Nick retrospectively observes himself, he aimed 'to frame the workings of any society in general terms', favoring 'space and structure over time and change' in his constructivist engagement with rules and rule in social theory and international relations (Onuf 2018: 6). In *The Mightie Frame*, he adds another dimension to that original framework. Limiting himself to 'the experience of modernity', Nick 'spatialize[s] time' and sketches five successive epochs or ages, as well as epochal transitions, stylized as 'space-time units' (Onuf 2018: 6). As he openly acknowledges (at least since the epigraphs opening the two parts of his inaugural book (Onuf 1989, 2013a: 33, 161),[13] Nick's work is profoundly influenced by 'the 'young' Foucault and his 'archeology of the human sciences'' (Onuf 2018: 7). Indeed, Nick's work on 'epochal change and the modern world' is a serious rereading of and reengagement with Foucault's *The Order of Things* (Onuf 2018: 7, 12). As the last quoted passage suggests, Nick's *World of Our Making* and *The Mightie Frame* articulate together a dense theoretical story about the correlations between the conditions of possibility of social construction, the conditions of possibility of *rules* and *rule*, and the conditions of possibility of *rule* and *thought*. And, crucially, weaving, conditioning, and enabling all these correlations and conditions of possibilities is *language*. Moreover, for Nick, the resulting formation is 'the mighty frame for *every* society' (Onuf 2018: 228, emphasis added). In the remaining lines of this reading, I want to briefly go back to language and then reposition my question.

As Sinclair (2010: 8) puts it, language for Nick is 'the key to understanding rules, and in turn, understanding the social world'. Beginning with social rules, Nick believes they are themselves 'a matter of language' (Sinclair 2010: 8). Indeed, as Zehfuss suggests, his conception of rules 'depends on speech acts' (Zehfuss 2002: 20). Following Austin's, Searle's, and Habermas' speech act theories, Nick conceives language as performative – and not merely constative or descriptive (Zehfuss 2002: 20; Sinclair 2010: 8-9). For him, speech acts become socially formalized as rules through social iteration and convention. Crucially, speech acts and social rules provide the correlational 'link between 'word' and 'world'' (Zehfuss 2002: 22). Moreover, they are also always already contextual. In

a Wittgensteinian vein, context is crucial because it is the social condition of possibility of meaning and knowledge. But, because the social context is linguistically constituted, it also 'depends on rules' (Zehfuss 2002: 22). For Nick, then, the systematic analysis of rules is the most effective way to better unpick and understand the ongoing process of mutual constitution between 'words' and 'the social world', which, in its turn, is the key to understanding how the social world works and is (re)constructed by human agents (Sinclair 2010: 8; see also Zehfuss 2002: 151-195).

In his "Metaphoricizing modernity" (2024), as well as in (parts of) his *The Mightie Frame* (2018), Nick offers a certain "microphysics" of language, the conditions of thought, and the conditions of rule, within which metaphors and metaphorical complexes are given center stage. As rules, metaphors seem to be the most fundamental, microphysical 'ingredients' conditioning and enabling 'social construction' (Onuf 2018: 228). They are crucial to likeness and representation, as well as to the very beginning of the life of concepts (Onuf 2024). Indeed, metaphors refresh concepts, keeping them alive (Onuf 2024). Moreover, they enable and condition our language, our conceptual systems, and worldviews, thus conditioning and enabling the constitution of a community of speakers and the substantiation of a shared world (Onuf 2024). At the same time, metaphors and concepts have deep and dense histories (Onuf 2024), which means that their (structural and structuring) iterability enables them to survive particular (ontic-ontological) contexts and travel across space and time. Thus, one of Nick's greatest contributions, at least in my reading, is his speculative theorization of metaphors as the microphysical and microhistorical ingredients enabling, conditioning, and weaving (all) those relations and correlations between words, concepts, language and the conditions of possibility of thought, rule, and social construction. In other words, borrowing from Bentley B. Allan (2018), Nick's engagement with metaphors provides a very important theorization of these 'cosmological' elements conditioning and enabling worldmaking.

In concluding this (brief) reading of Nick, I want to go back to the question of provincializing metaphors, which itself could be read as a metaphor for the question of provincializing rules, concepts, words, and language more broadly. And, indeed, I know how significant the language turn has been (and still is) for Nick. As previously suggested, Nick has been self-consciously provincializing his work and lifeworld, recurrently qualifying many of his engagements and theorizations in relation to 'modernity' and 'the modern'. Indeed, as some kind of Post-Kantian, Foucauldian, immanent critical engagements with the conditions of possibility of language and thought, both 'Metaphoricizing modernity' (2024) and *The Mightie Frame* (2018) are explicitly provincialized engagements with 'modernity' and 'the modern world' respectively. However, as the last phrase of the last quoted passage suggests, there seems to remain traces of *non*-provincializing assumptions, tendencies, and habits within Nick's work, which, even if unintendedly (or unconsciously?), calls (me) for (re)thinking and posing that question. So, regardless of time and space, different political-theologies, and diverse cosmological-world formations, Nick nevertheless affirms therein that 'the mighty frame' works 'for every society', which means that it works 'not just' for 'the modern world' (Onuf 2018: 228).

In so doing, Nick seems to disregard the – (post/de/neo-) colonial – *macro-logic* (Spivak 2012) always already *(pre)conditioning* the possibility not only of the formation but also of the (non-provincializing) universalization and normalization of rules, rule, thought, and language, including its words, concepts, and metaphors. Correlatedly, in speaking of 'language' (only) in the singular (that is, as 'One' (Derrida 1998: 39-40)), as repeatedly articulated with-in that last quoted passage ('*Language* and rules'; 'manifest in *language*'; 'actuated through *language*'; 'expressed in *language*' (Onuf 2018: 228, emphases added)), Nick seems to presuppose a certain universalizable form of language, enabling and accompanying 'the mighty frame for *every* society' (Onuf 2018: 228, emphasis added), which disregards a more macro-logical, and macro-historical *(anti-) Babelian* politics of language – or, indeed, *languages* (in their 'being singular plural' (Nancy 2000)) – as the condition of possibility of 'modern' metaphors, words, rules, and language (as One), and, hence, of 'modern' thought, rule, and worldmaking (see, for instance, Derrida 1998, 2002a, 2002b, 2016; Butler 2016; Spivak 2016). Among other things, at stake here is the 'global application' of *non*-provincialized 'political forms' (Davis 2008: 5) or 'universal middle term[s]' (Chakrabarty 2008: 83), including 'metaphors' and 'concepts' (Onuf 2024, 2018). In the statement that I borrow as the epigraph of this work, Nick openly acknowledges 'the *conceptual* imperialism embedded in the *language* of modernity' (Onuf 2023: 15, emphases added). And it is precisely because I do take very seriously his conception of the constitutive relationship between metaphors and concepts that I pose the question naming both this section and this article. I know that he is (ever more) self-aware and sensitive to this issue, as his recent turn to 'the margins' (Onuf 2023) attests. At the same time, I wonder how Nick would respond to this aporetic reading and questioning of some of the conditions of possibility of his work.

Notes

1 [Note by Viana] I thank Rob Walker for having provided, many years ago, the inspiration for this title. During the celebration of 20 years since the first edition of *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (1993), Walker used a similar version of this title ('It is politically powerful because intellectually stupid') when commenting upon certain trends of theorization within the field.

2 [Note by Viana] I read 'community of speakers' as a transnational technocratic field (Bigo 2016) of disputes, where the position of authority of those who hold credentials to speak about certain topics result from their specialized knowledge on those matters, as well as from their ability to express this expertise into a certain jargon and epistemological lens – as I will explore in more details in the next pages. In the case here analyzed, I understand this community as mainly comprehending scholars who not only publish about topics valorized in that field, but also who are often invited to evaluate specific policies; by consultants and activists, who interact with this circuit through foundations, think tanks, and other non-governmental organizations to which they are professionally linked, and who are often invited to assess and make recommendations of specific security policies; and by professionals of politics, whose discussions, negotiations, and maneuvers are sometimes seen as indispensable to the implementation and assessment of specific sets of problems/solutions in the security policy domain.

3 [Note by Viana] An emblematic example of this dynamic is the circulation, in Latin America, of the former director of the Colombian National Police, General Oscar Naranjo Trujillo as an authority in matters of security policy. Invited to participate in the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Latin America in 2013 and 2015 (held in Peru and Mexico, respectively), he addressed how the Colombian police revamped its public security policy after untangling the knot of the "drug problem" in the country. On the

first occasion, he attended the WEF as the director of the Latin American Citizenship Institute (Instituto Latinoamericano de Ciudadanía) based in Monterrey (Mexico), in addition to the two other positions he held at that time: counselor to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) on citizen security, and to the Peña Nieto's Mexican Presidency on security issues.

4 [Note by Yamato] In the 'Preface to the 2007 Edition' of his *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2008: xiii) explains that '[t]o "provincialize" Europe was precisely to find out how and in what sense European ideas that were universal were also, at one and the same time, drawn from very particular intellectual and historical traditions that could not claim any universal validity'. In other words, as he puts it, provincializing means 'to ask a question about how thought was related to place' (Chakrabarty 2008: xiii). It involves knowing 'how universalistic thought [is] always and already modified by particular histories', thus always already containing 'elements that defied translation' (Chakrabarty 2008: xiv). Correlatedly, provincializing involves the 'problem of translation of specific life-worlds into universal sociological categories' (Chakrabarty 2008: 78), that is, it involves a certain 'politics of translation' (Chakrabarty 2008: 78) that problematizes the 'global application' of *non*-provincialized 'political forms' (Davis 2008: 5) or 'universal middle term[s]' (Chakrabarty 2008: 83). Thus, provincializing opens 'our secular universals' to their (and our) 'own finitude' (Chakrabarty 2008: 90). In this article, I reread and question Nick's work inspired by Chakrabarty's.

5 [Note by Yamato] 'As recognizable patterns of rules and related practices, institutions make people agents *and* constitute an environment within which agents conduct themselves rationally' (Onuf, 1998: 61).

6 [Note by Yamato] I cannot elaborate on this point here. For a closer engagement with Onuf's conception of rules, see Onuf (2013a: 66-95; and 2008), Wind (2001), Sinclair (2010), and Reis and Kessler (2016).

7 [Note by Yamato] The second chapter of Onuf's *World of Our Making*, in which he develops his conception of rules, is tellingly entitled 'Law and Language' (Onuf 2013 [1989]: 66-95).

8 [Note by Yamato] 'Hegemony refers to the promulgation and manipulation of principles and instructions by which superordinate actors monopolize meaning which is then passively absorbed by subordinate actors' (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 209).

9 [Note by Yamato] 'Hierarchy is the paradigm of rule most closely associated with Weber because, as an arrangement of directive-rules, it is instantly recognizable as bureaucracy. The relations of *bureaux*, or offices, form the typical pattern of super- and subordination, but always in ranks, such that each office is both subordinate to the one(s) above it and superordinate to the ones below' (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 211).

10 [Note by Yamato] Here, Onuf distances himself from Weber, (re)approaching Kant and his reinterpretation of the (aporetic) relationship between autonomy and heteronomy (Onuf 2013a [1989]: 212-219). Onuf explains: 'If anarchy is a condition of rule unrelated to any agent's intentions, then international relations is no anarchy. We need another term to indicate the form of rule in which agents intend that they be ruled by what seem to be unintended consequences of exercising their rights. *Heteronomy* is a better term. Autonomous agents act freely, while heteronomous agents cannot act freely. Both terms refer to agents, not society. From a constructivist perspective, however, agents are always autonomous, but their autonomy is always limited by the (limited) autonomy of other agents. The exercise of autonomy makes heteronomy a social condition, which agents accept as an apparently unintended consequence of their individual, autonomous choices' (Onuf 1998: 77).

11 [Note by Yamato] The point here could be summarized with the following words of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, supplemented by a – 'political' – graft: 'In a general sense, [political] society is a universal *condition* of human life' (Viveiros de Castro 2011: 297).

12 [Note by Yamato] In commenting about his *The Mightie Frame*, Nick writes: 'It is less than history, it is more than just a story. I might have styled it a grand theory but for the pretensions of this turn of phrase. The book does present a theoretical framework, although it is *theoretical* only in the loosest sense of the term – a sense befitting the field of International Relations, in which I have labored as a "theorist" for fifty years. Rather, it is a report on a project, long pursued, written in fits and starts, ever shifting in form and thrust. Perhaps I should say: the second half of a decades-long project, the first half of which took form as *World of Our Making* (1989)' (Onuf 2018: 5).

13 [Note by Yamato] The first part, dedicated to *rules*, opens with the following epigraph: ''What, in short, we wish to do is dispense with 'things'. To 'depresentify' them.... To substitute for the enigmatic treasure

of 'things' anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse. To define these *objects* without reference to the *ground,* the *foundation of things,* but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance.' Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972: 47-48, emphasis in original)' (Onuf 1989, 2013a: 33). The second part, dedicated to *rule*, opens with the following epigraph: 'Rules are empty in themselves, violent and unfinalized; they are impersonal and can be bent to any purpose. The successes of history belong to those who are capable of seizing these rules . . .' Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (1977a: 151)' (Onuf 1989, 2013a: 161).

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Intercâmbio sobre 'Metaphoricizing Modernity' de Nick Onuf, Parte II – Provincializando Metáforas, Lendo (com) Onuf da América Latina

Resumo: Neste Dossiê, quatro acadêmicos refletem sobre o artigo de Nicholas Onuf, 'Metaphoricizing modernity', retornando – e celebrando – de forma mais ampla o inovador trabalho de Onuf a partir de diferentes lugares, perspectivas e ângulos. A Parte II repensa (com) Onuf a partir da América Latina, questionando e provincializando (certas) metáforas e metaforizações. Manuela Trindade Viana analisa as condições de possibilidade e os efeitos da 'Colombianização' como uma metáfora poderosa que passou a circular na América Latina desde o final dos anos 2000, em referência tanto a um diagnóstico específico de um problema de violência quanto às soluções implementadas para enfrentá-lo. Desafiando (certos) aspectos do relato de Onuf sobre o que as metáforas fazem em nossos mundos, ela argumenta que o domínio da política de segurança valoriza o impulso universal subjacente ao imperativo de fazer os modelos viajarem como uma condição para a legitimação de seu trabalho na elaboração de soluções que se ajustem a situações 'problematicamente violentas semelhantes' na América Latina. Roberto Vilchez Yamato oferece uma outra (re)leitura do trabalho de Onuf. Retornando ao inovador trabalho de Onuf, *World of Our Making*, ele (re)pensa a(s) correlação(ões) entre metáforas, regras e as condições de domínio, chamando a atenção para o lugar crucial da linguagem no trabalho do autor. De forma suplementar, Yamato oferece uma releitura do trabalho mais recente de Onuf, *The Mightie Frame*, apontado pelo próprio autor como 'a segunda metade' de seu 'projeto de décadas', sugerindo um certo (re)pensamento da 'microfísica' da linguagem, das condições do pensamento e das condições de domínio, no âmbito das quais as metáforas e os complexos metafóricos ocupam o centro do palco. (Re)lendo (alguns dos) trabalhos de Onuf, Yamato conclui seu artigo perguntando-se como o autor responderia à questão da provincialização das metáforas.

Palavras-chave: Provincialização; metáforas; colombianização; regras, domínio e condições de pensamento; linguagem; América Latina; violência.

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