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Securitized Migrants and Postcolonial (In)difference:
The "Arab" Between Myth and Image

Draft paper submitted for the CPSA Conference, Vancouver 2008
Work in progress: not to be quoted without author's permission

This paper examines the ways in which Muslim identities have been securitized within and beyond the context of global anti-terrorist campaigns. In particular, I look at North African Muslim communities, within Europe, who find themselves at the intersection of various transnational links, such as those of migrant labour, postcolonial (in)difference, and political exile. This work in progress stems from my general research interest in postcoloniality in international politics. Methodologically, I pursue my investigation by using Appadurai's notion of "scapes" and later discussions on transnational politics to examine the intersections between various sites of identity production and performance: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes.

I find Appadurai's notion of "scape" enabling for my project since it denotes a sense of fluidity and irregularity of shape of the various landscapes that are being surveyed, but also a much needed 'situatedness' in which they are embedded (1996: 33). Thus ethnoscapes constitute, according to Appadurai, the landscapes of persons whose experience of territorial displacement (immigrants, refugees, exiles) not only involves deeper gradations of displacement (such as political, cultural, and economic), but also affects 'the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree' (ibid). The ethnoscapes mapped by this paper comprise North African migrants living on the fringes of French society, intellectuals engaged in cultural mediations and translations between France and the Maghreb (such as Kader Attia and Merzak Allouache), and colonial *indigène* (native),[1] whose displacement of self bears significant implications for understanding the historical situatedness of the 'Arab' signifier.

Mediascapes map the processes of production and dissemination of images and information, and the imaginaries that such processes help create and sustain (Appadurai, 1996: 35). I thus use visual narratives as loci of mediation for political practices, and for repertoires of ethnoscapes and ideoscapes. The later analyses of visual productions of Kader Attia and Merzak Allouache provide insights into the intersections between these three dimensions of global cultural flows in the Franco-Maghrebian context, and provide alternative understandings of the interactions between immigration, consumerism, securitization, and identity shifts. Ideoscapes express the overlaps between images, imaginaries, and ideologies in ways which both sustain and subvert certain chains of ideas and concept that operate as tools for political legitimation in today's world: rights, democracy, freedom/autonomy, identity, tradition, etc.

I argue that the various interactions between these dimensions of global cultural flows in the (post)colonial context of the Franco-Maghrebian encounter allows us to

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[1] "Indigène" is the French term that was used during colonialism by the French to designate all the non-French people who were subjects of the French Empire. The term had (and continues to have) a pejorative connotation, since it implied someone who was not "civilized", and who could not make claims to a full citizen status of the French Republic. For an insightful examination of the concept of 'indigène' within the French colonial and post-colonial contexts, see Blanchard and Bancel (1998). I translate 'indigène' as 'native.'

situate the 'Arab' as a racialized category, as a global actor, and as a stereotype within a 'perspectival set of landscapes', to use Appadurai's expression, which are inflected historically, linguistically, and politically (1996: 33). Between the conventional site of citizenship practices, and that of aesthetic and media productions, the North African (Maghrebian) communities are assigned a fragile socio-political space, which they inhabit as potential security threats needing to be contained (the "Arab" as image), as much needed cheap labour, and as exoticized and absolute cultural difference (the "Arab" as myth). [2]

Current critical discussions on the representations of 'Arabs'/Muslims within the rhetoric of the 'war on terror' attempt to expose the flawed nature of the stereotypes, which circulate regarding the Muslim 'other' as disseminator of terror. While I do not question the value of such critiques, I argue that the limited and narrow confines of the 'war on terror' context provide little background for something as complicated and ambivalent as the construction of the 'Arab' as a racialized category. This why I choose to begin my analysis with a discussion on the role and function of stereotypes, and on the politics of supplementing the negative image of the other with a positive content, which is meant to retrieve the other's lost dignity. I then move on to engage the ambiguousness of the 'Arab' signifier, its shifting political functions within a series of historical contexts, such as the French colonial project in the Maghreb, the nationalist projects of North African post-independence states, and postcolonial France. The uneasy and fragile overlap between the 'Arab' signifier and the figure of the Maghrebian migrant in France provides the basis for a discussion on the link between postcolonial immigration and practices of securitization. The literature within the area of critical International Relations that addresses the topic of migration glosses over a crucial aspect in understanding the securitization of migration, namely the link between securitized identities and (post)colonial difference. More specifically, the paper critiques Roxanne Doty's analysis of anti-immigrantism in Western democracies, which attempts to deconstruct practices of statecraft that police migrants and migration flows without considering the postcolonial context within which such practices are enacted.

On the role and function of stereotypes
In this paper, I work with and around stereotypical images of Maghrebian migrants and of *beurs*[3] in French society in order to analyze the politics that underpins

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[2] I use North African and Maghrebian interchangeably, insofar as North Africa is also known as the Maghreb region, encompassing Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

[3] 'Beur' is a term whose etymology is quite contested. Initially, it was used in France to designate, in a pejorative way, Arabs. It was in the '80s that the term was adopted subversively by young Arabs as a way to emphasize their different status in French society, but also to demand for recognition. But other opinions suggest that this was a term used by Arabs to refer to themselves, which originated in the projects [*banlieues*], and which represents the inversion of the two syllables composing the word 'Arab' in French, 'a-rabe.' The practice of reversing syllables to create new words in French belongs to a practice of speech originated in the projects, called *verlan*, and which is used by youth from underprivileged backgrounds. The word *beur* has thus come to signify a French citizen of North African origin. However, as shown in chapter 5, this word discriminates according to social status, usually referring to French people of North African origins, living in or coming from the projects.

the substitutions of stereotypes operated by certain critical accounts in International Relations. Such substitutions are done with the purpose of countering the negative effects of stereotypical images of 'Arabs' or 'Muslims' within the context of the 'war on terror.' But in this process of substitution other stereotypes get created, and the narrow confines of the 'war on terror' rhetoric serves to incarcerate understandings of Muslim identities within simplistic binaries of wrong/correct images and autonomy/freedom.

The stereotypes of the 'Arab', most particularly in the context of the violent Franco-Maghrebian encounter, have a violent genealogy linked to colonialism. The imagery associated with the 'Arab' or the 'Muslim' carries sometimes contradictory, or at least apparently contradictory, overtones: the stereotype of the brave and noble Arab knight co-existed, and to a certain extent, it still does, with that of the Arab as a cruel, lazy, and cunning person (Blanchard et alia, 2003: 39). The coexistence of these seemingly opposed stereotypes was related to their provenance. The former came mainly from Orientalist literary and artistic currents that imagined an exoticized and seductive Orient, whereas the latter came into existence in particular from popular imagination, which was fed by the myth of colonialism as embodying the binary of civilization vs. barbarism (ibid.). These myths are seemingly opposed, but in fact they constitute two facets of the same practice, which is stereotyping. There are no positive stereotypes, since idealized images refer to practices of exoticization that relegate a group to the realm of fantasy. As Rosello explains, stereotypes can be regarded as 'medieval walls behind which we feel protected and safe' (Walter Lippmann quoted in Rosello, 1998: 11). This observation implies that stereotypes construct 'a pleasurable form of togetherness', and they are usually performed as invitations to position yourself on the side of the dominant group (ibid.). Rosello's predicament is how to 'decline' such an invitation, since simply opposing them to 'positive' images does not diffuse their harmful potential. Consequently

> "[t]o declare them wrong, false, to attack them as untruths that, presumably, we could hope to replace by a better or a more accurate description of the stereotyped community, will never work." (1998: 13)

This discussion on stereotypes mirrors Rey Chow's concern with the politics of representing the 'native'. In *Writing Diaspora*, she remarks that the politics of 'native as image' is rarely explored, in the sense that there is always a tendency to pit the politics of depth against the politics of image (surface), (see Chow, 1993: 29). This practice implies an attempt to restore the inner truth of the 'native', by substituting the 'bad' image with a 'correct' image that both annihilates the former and validates the 'native's' authenticity (ibid.). Taking my cue from Rey Chow, I look into the politics of the 'Arab' as image, and into the dynamics involved by substituting this surface-image with a depth-image, which attempts to restore the authenticity of 'Arab' people.

The ambivalent valences of the 'Arab' as 'image' and 'myth'
In an insightful study of the politics of language in the Maghreb, Alek Toumi devotes some space to the contradictory and yet captivating multitude of signified meanings (*signifiés*; or Jean-Jacques Nattiez' 'traces') that are associated with what he calls the signifier 'Arab' (*signifiant 'arabe'*). He wonders which of the following images the 'Arab' signifier triggers in our minds:

> "the Arab Saddat or the Arab Saddam, the Arab Hassan or the Arab Ben Bella, the king of Kuweit or better his "Arab subjects", the Negro Arab (*l'arabe "bon nègre"*) or the 'nigger' Arab (*"bougnoule"*),[4] the colonizers from Saudi Arabia or the North African colonized?" (2002: 113)[5]

Toumi makes the above statement in the context of a project, which attempts to explicate the multiple character of the Maghreb, as a region in which 'Arabs', depending on the usage employed, can designate either the colonizers who had come from the Arabic Peninsula in the 7th century AD, or the term used by the French colonizers to designate the 'native' populations of North Africa. In the latter instance, Toumi remarks that the French term 'arabe' indicated, with colonialism, the 'minority' status of the various ethnic groups inhabiting North Africa (2002: 114). The author points thus not only to a current confusion elicited by the overlap between the former colonizers (the invading groups from the Arabic Peninsula) and the diverse peoples living in the Maghreb. Toumi is most particularly interested in analyzing the current political projects of post-independence states in North Africa, which have actively undertaken a policy of 'Arabization.' He advocates for the understanding of a multiple Maghreb, a space not of a simplistic linguistic binary (French vs. Arabic), but of a plurilingual diversity that negotiates its existence *against* and *with* the totalitarian aspirations of both its colonial legacies and postcolonial realities.

The signifiers 'Arab', 'Arabic', and 'Arabization' acquire here complex and paradoxical connotations. 'Arabization' refers to the linguistic policies undertaken by governments in the Maghreb, whereby they attempt to enforce a homogeneous and uncontested Arab identity through the introduction of modern standard Arabic. This set of policies is viewed by Maghrebian intellectuals as a violent imposition of linguistic practices and cultural norms, which are considered foreign to Maghrebian societies. Also, the purpose of this set of policies is the erasure of Maghreb's multiplicity (understood as a rich diversity of languages, religions, and communities), and its supplanting with a unified vision of 'Arab-ness', which does not tolerate dissent. Consequently, 'Arab-ness' as performed within the texts of Maghrebian intellectuals inhabits a double articulation: the ideal of Arab identity (understood as tolerant and hospitable to difference) lives in close and agonizing tension with an understanding of 'Arab-ness' as Arabization (associated with religious and cultural fundamentalism).

Thus what we have here is an intricate overlap of various significations and historical contexts that complicate our understanding of the 'Arab.' Toumi claims that the 'Arab' as employed in French (*l'arabe*) represents an allegory of the process of manufacturing the image of the colonized 'native' (*indigène*). As mentioned earlier, the French term *arabe* designates in one gesture all those individuals who are seen as coming

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[4] *Bougnoule* is a pejorative term used in French to designate not only Arabs, but any person considered non-European and 'of colour' (Jewish, Arab, Berber, African). The word is African in origin (Wolof) and it initially designated in Wolof language a black person. The meaning was purely referential and thus neutral. However, with the onset of French colonialism, the meaning was adopted by French settlers in Africa to designate, in a derogatory and racially inflected manner, the 'native' of colour, and thus it applied to Arabs, Berbers, Blacks, and Jews. The closest translation of *bougnoule* into English would be 'nigger.'

[5] My translation. All quotes from French sources are my translations, unless otherwise indicated.

from outside of Europe (South of the Mediterranean to be precise) and who are considered to be 'of colour', such as Blacks, Arabs, Berbers, Jews, and others. The racial dynamics implied by this term are significant, insofar as the homogenizing overlap had been noticed by several scholars, such as Fanon in his *Black Skins, White Masks*. When Fanon quotes Sartre's dictum according to which 'It is the anti-Semite who *makes* the Jew', he is tracing a parallel between anti-Semitism and Negrophobia in the context of French colonialism (1967: 93).

Moreover, Toumi takes issue with placing an equal sign between the 'Arab' signifier (English) and *l'arabe* (French). In his opinion, the English signifier indicates the Middle Eastern 'Arab', whose image has been created and propagated through various media productions (news, advertisement, cinema, videos, etc.). Within the North American imaginary, the 'Arab' stands for '[v]eils, sunglasses, flowing gowns and robes, oil wells, limousine and/or camels' (Jack Shaheen quoted in Toumi, 2002: 121).[6] Toumi notes thus that within this North-American set of ideoscapes, the ethnoscape that is being summoned pertains to the geographical space of the Middle East and the Golf countries (which he calls the 'Arab myth') (2002: 121). Within the French ideoscape, however, *l'arabe* signifies Maghrebian individuals, and most particularly Algerians:

> "The 'image' of *l'arabe* in France is thus that of the North-African proletarian, former colonized, the migrant labourer who speaks a 'creolized Arabic', a mixture of Franco-Arabo-Berber, the faraber or even Berber,[7] who eats couscous and baguettes." (2002: 123)

In fact, Toumi goes as far as to indicate that the equivalent socio-ethnoscape of *l'arabe* (or *l'Arabe image* as he labels it) within the North-American ideoscape is not the 'Arab', but 'the Mexican agricultural labourer from California or the black from Harlem' (2002: 122). Moreover, in a critique of Edward Said's translation of Albert Camus' *Stranger*, Toumi notes that the proper translation of 'l'Arabe' should be 'Colonized Man', the 'Other slave', or 'Jew-Arab-Negro', and not the 'Arab' (2002: 125). What is at stake with this translation is not a facile equalization or transposition of 'l'Arabe' into the 'Arab', but an awareness of the socio-political realities of North Africa during colonialism. Thus what is ultimately at stake is much more than a translation, but the propagation of an image that conflates dissonant political and economic realities. Toumi's preoccupation with a careful socio-political translation of complex realities resonates with Benjamin Stora's recent analysis of what he calls the confederate spirit emerging in the South of France in the aftermath of the decolonization of Algeria.

Echoing Toumi's injunction that 'arabe' should be understood as the 'Other slave', 'Colonized Man' or 'Jew-Arab-Negro', Benjamin Stora traces an interesting parallel between the North-American legacy of Southern Confederacy and France's current treatment of North-African migrants (most particularly Algerians). Stora claims that

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[6] Original translation.

[7] *Faraber* or *sabir* is the dialect spoken in the Maghreb region, which is a mixture of Arabic, French, and Berber, a language completely foreign to the Arabic spoken in the Middle East.

"[a] 'Confederate' imaginary – akin to that held by the 'poor whites' (*petits blancs*) of the United States – grew and calcified at the heart of the French society. It includes its own references, myths, emblematic figures, and a civil war: the Algerian War." (2006: 153)[8]

The author remarks that the Algerian War represents a founding moment not only for the new modern French nation (see, for example, Ross 1995), but also for what Stora labels as 'Confederate Nationalism under a Republican Mask' (2006: 157). It is thus interesting to explore the politics of travelling translations (see Shohat and Stam 2005). As Ella Shohat and Robert Stam remark, '[w]hen debates travel, a problem of translation often exists in a very literal sense, resulting in a collision of in some ways incommensurable vocabularies' (2005: 295). Such travelling translations of 'Arab/arabe' map complicated intersections of ethnoscapes, ideoscapes, and mediascapes, whereby equivalences that we might take for granted trigger unexpected parallels and associations. What I find captivating about this exercise of mapping the 'Arab/arabe' 'scapes' is the way in which it complicates facile critical accounts of the racial dynamics inscribed by the current 'war on terror' (as discussed later on in this paper), and, most importantly, the manner in which it disrupts the discursive monopoly of the Anglo-centric empire. Such a monopoly tends to reduce all complexity to its own parameters of understanding.[9]

In the (post)colonial French context, the legacy of the Algerian War has amplified anti-Arab racism, which targets immigrant communities. More specifically, the term *immigré*, which in English is usually translated as 'migrant', encapsulates, in the French context, very specific racial and class connotations. Thus *immigré* actually designates individuals of North African background, Muslim, uneducated, and working as low-skilled labourers. Following Blanchard and Bancel (1998), Albert Memmi (2004), and Hafid Gafaiti (2003), I thus understand the term *immigré(e)* to designate not only a racial difference, but also a class difference in the constitution of North African migrants as a racialized social category. But perhaps it would be more apposite to adopt a Derridean frame and understand their racialization and marginalization as *différence*.

Theorizing on the postcolonial as a concept and as a practice, Stuart Hall remarks that the term encompasses a 'kind of political event of our "new times" in which *both* the crisis of the uncompleted struggle for "decolonization" *and* the crisis of "post-independence" states are deeply inscribed' (1996: 244). As he specifies, postcoloniality is, to a certain extent, the transition from difference to *différence*, from a polarized vision

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[8] Benjamin Stora's article is translated by Paul Silverstein.
[9] I do not claim here that by bringing forth the French (post)colonial dimension of racial categories such as the 'Arab', I unproblematically and definitively enact a disruption of the Anglo-centric discursive monopoly. There are other contexts which I leave unexplored in this paper, and which undoubtedly could throw further light on the complexities of the 'Arab' as image and myth. See, for example, Aihwa Ong's analysis of the practice of Islam in Malaysia. She examines the political practices of 'Sisters of Islam', an organization of Muslim Malay women, which sees 'Arabocentric, narrow, and anachronistic reading of Islamic laws inform[ing] contemporary male chauvinist interpretations' (2006: 44). Thus in this context, the 'Arab' signifier overlaps with Toumi's condemnation of the ongoing 'Arabization' projects in the Maghreb, driven by post-independence states, and which he characterizes as neocolonial in intention and praxis.

of social and political life to forms of transculturation and cultural translation (1996: 247). My preoccupation lies not only with processes of cultural translation, but also with the manner in which such processes translate into social and political categories. Thus *différence*, in this particular case, points to the location of the North African migrant (*l'immigré*) as a racialized category, within a society whose imaginary is haunted by its recent colonial past, and by its concurrent aspiration to an unitary and undisturbed national identity. Therefore speaking about 'l'arabe' in France is inextricable from colonial history and memory, from postcolonial (in)difference and the ensuing rhetoric on immigration and security. As analyzed later in this paper, within the French postcolonial context, the intersections between immigration and security are inseparable as ideoscapes from ethnoscapes of 'Arab-ness', and from the mediascapes that contributes immensely to their (re)production. As Albert Memmi insightfully suggests in *Portrait du décolonisé*, 'the North African migrant [*le Maghrébin*] is not a Russian or Romanian migrant, a stranger arrived there by chance, he is the illegitimate child [*le bâtard*] of the colonial affair, a living reproach or a permanent disillusion' (2004: 97).

Racializing the 'war on terror' and the politics of the 'Arab' signifier

Recent discussions on the politics of representation of Arabs/Muslims have inscribed the boundaries of stereotypical representation between Orientalism and fundamentalism (Zine 2006), in an attempt to discredit both stereotypes.[10] The purpose of these discussions is, among other things, to oppose such stereotypical constructions and supplant them with the 'correct' image, thereby rescuing the dignity of the 'Arab/Muslim other.' However meritorious in their intent, such discussions encapsulate certain problems. By framing the debates on the representation of 'Arab' others within the confines of the 'war on terror', these critical account also inadvertently expose the politics of this framing: in discourses that critique the negative images of 'Arabs/Muslims' they inevitably re-inscribe the boundaries of the very stereotypes they attempt to dismantle, but, also, most importantly, they gesture towards the limits of what can be known and of what constitutes the 'political' in today's world.

In taking on the construction of the 'terrorist' within the discourse of the 'war on terror', Kim Rygiel remarks that such a construction relying on Orientalist images has undergone a shift, namely that the image of the young, educated and mobile Arab/Muslim man has come to supplant the 'classical' Orientalist image of the fanatical Muslim man as an uneducated and 'unenlightened' individual (2006: 148). Rygiel suggests that the altered image of the 'terrorist' is usually pitted against an Anglo-American male identity, which is privileged as the normal and moral representation of masculinity. However, focusing on such a binary of masculinities obscures the ways in which the identity formations of the 'Arab' and the 'Muslim' is much richer and more complex than the reduced version of 'professional young terrorist' vs. 'Anglo-American male identity' allows us to perceive. Moreover, understandings of the current shifts and metamorphoses of images of 'Arabs/Muslims' are more textured than a diagnosis of contemporary representations of such images as a 'competition of masculinities' permits us to see (see Rygiel 2006: 149). Moreover, the referent of 'Anglo-American male

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[10] See, for example, Jasmin Zine, Kim Rygiel, and Jane Freedman's essays in *(En)Gendering the War on Terror. War Stories and Camouflaged Politics* (2006).

identity', even though used in a critical manner, performs the function of crystallizing our understanding of the 'political' in Anglo-American parameters. This critique does little to unsettle the Anglo-American hegemonic vision of global politics. These current discussions also discount the political richness that emerges from the concept of the 'Arab' and the manner in which it has operated, shifted and metamorphosed historically.

One recurrent image that seems to haunt not only various mediascapes (North American and Western European), but also critical discourses on the 'war on terror' is the that of the veiled Muslim woman. The veil has thus become not only a symbol of what is considered to be a Muslim femininity, but has also become a fetishized symbol of the Western woman's desire to rescue the dignity of her othered sisters. Debates over the 'right' or 'wrong' character of the veil have been ongoing for the last couple of decades within Western societies, and the overall dichotomy that has been created is that between autonomy/freedom and oppression. Jane Freedman, in an analysis on the French debate regarding the wearing of the headscarf (*l'affaire du foulard*), remarks that while some Muslim women adopt a more Western feminist point of view and reject the veil as oppressive, '[f]or others, the wearing of the headscarf is an autonomous decision, a key part of their identity' (2006: 184). Freedman's investigation coincides with the already mentioned general trend to regard the veil of the Muslim woman as a symbol either of autonomy (and thus self-determination), or as a sign of oppression. While I sympathize with her efforts to retrieve the dignity of the Muslim woman, and endow her with agency and self-determination, I think Freedman's analysis glosses over a number of significant implications of these debate.

Firstly, exploring the issue of the veil within such a facile binary of autonomy vs. oppression is telling of the lack of preoccupation with how the veil operates politically in various contexts. Although the veil is a powerful symbol that stands for a particular vision of Muslim femininity, it is also fair to claim that the veil represents an epiphenomenal manifestation of certain socio-political configurations. Let us consider Fanon's analysis of the function of the veil within the context of colonial Algeria, which he put forth in his essay "Algeria Unveiled" (1965). Fanon's focus on the veil of the Muslim woman exceeds simplistic preoccupations with whether the Muslim woman is repressed or not. Rather his interest lies in exposing the complex layers that make donning a veil or removing it a highly political act. He places such an act within the violent context of the anti-colonial struggle of the Algerians, and he thus attributes this symbol a relational character, which allows us to perceive the ambivalent and nuanced processes in which the wearing or the removal of the veil are embedded. For example, wearing a veil was considered by many Algerian women a sign of resistance against and protection from what was considered to be the invasive gaze of the colonizers, an attempt to protect the last stronghold of Algerian society that the colonizers had not yet manage to break, namely the private space.

However, with the Algerian War of independence, the veil acquired contradictory and ambivalent functions. Initially, women used traditional clothing in order to hide their identities as anti-colonial fighters, and carry weapons and information unhindered. For a while, they were able to successfully employ the Europeans' mindset according to which

Muslim women lacked agency and determination, and thus they were seen as harmless. But as soon as it was revealed that women were involved in the anti-colonial struggle, and security checks against women became much more rigorous, many Algerian women removed the traditional clothes and donned European outfits in order to blend in, and by-pass French guards unnoticed. They could thus carry information or weapons by passing as European or Westernized women. Gillo Pontecorvo's *Battle of Algiers* explores the controversial issue of the *porteuses de bombes* (women bomb-carriers), who used European clothes and hairdos in order to slip by check points unnoticed. What stays with the viewer of Pontecorvo's cinematic piece is not a feeling that these women are constantly in control of their lives, endowed with freedom and self-determination. Rather Pontecorvo is careful to underline the blurred boundaries of autonomy and oppression, self-determination and dependence. Pontecorvo's *porteuses de bombes* are undoubtedly strong women, but they are also fragile parts of complex networks of local patriarchies and of a rather masculine vision for national liberation.

What emerges from these two treatments of the Algerian woman and her relation to the veil is not only an interesting intersection between mediascapes (Pontecorvo's cinematic rendition), ethnoscapes, and ideoscapes, but also what Fanon calls a 'historic dynamism of the veil that is very concretely perceptible in the development of colonization in Algeria' (1965: 63). Thus if the veil had been during colonialism not only a symbol of a patriarchal configuration of certain parts of Algerian society, but also a manifestation of a taboo with regards to the foreign occupation (Fanon, 1965: 47), with the Algerian War, the veil became a means, an instrument (Fanon, 1965: 63). What escapes Freedman in her analysis of the headscarf debate in France is the possibility that the veil has complex functions, none of which can be reduced to autonomy or oppression. In her article, she disapprovingly quotes certain Muslim women from France who joined in the ban against the headscarf. For example, Saoud Benani, a representative of an association of young Maghrebian women, is quoted saying: 'To legitimise the wearing of the headscarf is to put under pressure those who are fighting for their emancipation and their liberty' (Benani quoted in Freedman, 2006: 184). I argue that Benani's statement captures a delicate and fragile issue within the headscarf debate, namely the multiple and contested character of Muslim femininity. Freedman does not meaningfully entertain the notion that Muslim women can recognize patriarchal domination and fight against in different and even contradictory ways. For a woman like Benani to talk about emancipation, it does not signify (as Freedman seems to believe) that she is Westernized, and thus implicitly not a proper or genuine representative of her sisters.

Moroccan sociologist Fatima Mernissi's analyses of the roles of the veil and of gender dynamics in Muslim societies, are testimonies to an engaged feminism of Muslim women that is not necessarily 'Western' in its character or framing. In *Beyond the veil: Male-female dynamics in modern Muslim society*, Mernissi is trying to uncover the sources of female oppression in Muslim societies (most particularly in Morocco), and grapple with traditional justifications offered for this oppression. The author goes beyond simplistic oppositions such as colonizer-colonized, oppressor-oppressed or foreign-authentic/native. Rather, she is more interested in the in-betweenness of such complex relationships, in the spaces in which various claims interact and contest each other's

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positions. Claims coming from the French colonial administration, Arab nationalists, modernization fanatics, and traditionalists all serve to submerge women in a deeper shadow. Mernissi brings to the reader's attention the complicities of contradictory elements that trigger sexual anomie in Moroccan society. For example, schooling for girls was advocated by Arab nationalists, who wanted to defeat the French at any cost. Thus the state became the main threat to traditional male supremacy, enhancing paradoxically both the autonomy gained by women, and the sexual repression that takes place in a depressed economy.

To claim that complex gender dynamics in Muslim societies can be reduced to the veil as either a sign of autonomy or of oppression represents, in a simultaneous move, a liberal fetishization of individualism/autonomy/freedom, and a refusal to transcend these limiting parameters in order to understand the multiple reality of the Muslim woman from different perspectives. The self-righteous gestures of Western feminists who attempt to redeem the Muslim woman in one way or another serves to re-inscribe the boundaries of the much circulated stereotype of the Oriental woman. Thus, Mireille Rosello's solution to the conundrum of 'bad' vs. 'good' stereotype relies not on a resistance against a 'bad' image (oppression) by replacing it with a positive one (autonomy), but on a subversion of the power of stereotype by employing sarcasm and humour, and by disturbing the implied homogeneity of the stereotype. She believes the question of 'What can I do against stereotypes?' is important, but perhaps more important is 'What can I do *with* a stereotype?' (1998: 13). This is why I choose to explore later in this paper, the disruptive potential that emerges from certain aesthetic productions with regards to stereotypical representations of 'Arabs' and/or 'Muslims.' Through an exploration of aesthetic productions such as Kader Attia's performative art and Merzak Allouache's cinematic narrative in *Salut Cousin!*, I also look into the intersections produced by what Appadurai calls mediascapes, ideoscape and ethnoscapes (1996).

Migration-scapes in International Relations: moving beyond or around the state?

I thus argue that in aesthetic productions as in IR, images as stereotypes and stereotypes as images permeate the various narratives put forth either by artists/producers or by academics. Such stereotypes are constantly performed whether in more prosaic forms of discourses on migration and securitization, or in artistic and cinematic narratives. And if IR is an ensemble of stories we tell about the world (see Weber 2001), then the task of this paper is doubly productive: I explore the performance of cultural stereotypes in International Relations, and the performance of international relations (with)in cultural and cinematic manifestations of stereotypes. Roxanne Doty notes how

> "[t]his non-place that immigration insistently points us toward is precisely where desire lurks; within anxieties about order, divisions between the inside and the outside, insecurities over who belongs and who does not. This is where desire does its productive work. This is where we must look for 'the state'." (2003: 6)

The aesthetic productions that are explored later in this paper deal precisely with desire: the desire of migrants for a better a life, enforced by the fantasy of Europe as a land of all possibilities; the desire of border officials and of European societies to keep

them on the margins so that they may reflect themselves in the fantastic mirror of nationalism as unitary and homogeneous nations; the anxieties and insecurities of migrants about their identity and the identity of their children born on European soil. Such desires constantly infiltrate the imaginative and narrative strata of these aesthetic encounters. But contra Doty, their purpose, however, is not to find "the state" (albeit in its unstable desiring postures), but to understand the dynamics and the perverse alchemy of racism, immigration, and (post)colonial memory.

Roxanne Doty's *Anti-Immigrantism in Western Democracies* focuses on discourses of racism and anti-immigration in a number of Western democracies, one of which is France. I thought her analysis of migration discourses and the performance of desire through practices of statecraft would provide a helpful and interesting complementary perspective to the portraits of migrants and migration found in Franco-Maghrebian cultural productions. In here I argue that the connection between desire and belonging performed by processes of statecraft and securitization translates into narratives of exile and fantasy, whereby escaping one's grim and limiting reality through migration or exile is both a fantasy and a process of transgression.

In a chapter entitled "*Seuil de tolérance*", Doty analyzes the case of anti-immigration discourses in France. More specifically, she focuses on the contradictory relation between 'the schizophrenic pole of desire' of the French state toward 'infinite freedom, defying boundaries, promoting perpetual flow of goods, capital, and human bodies' and the centripetal desire towards order, unquestioned identity and security (2003: 58). This tension between totalizing and non-totalizing tendencies has translated into policies that initially allowed migrants to come into France almost without restrictions 'as cheap and mobile foreign labour' (2003: 60). Doty adds that the increased migration of mobile cheap labour also meant the relegation of such labour to the fringes of French society. The tension that became apparent was between a certain ideal to which French society held of itself, as the cradle of human rights, and the reality of large groups of people living in a state of sordid marginalization (see Balibar 1994).[11]

Through a thoughtful analysis of post Second World War French policies regarding migration, Doty establishes a connection between the need of French society for cheap and dispensable labour, and the racism that permeates French political discourses and practices. Moreover, she explores the paranoid desire of the state to re-configure its identity to the standard of homogeneity, while excluding from participation those on whose labour and presence it depends for the satisfaction of its schizophrenic desire for deregulation and unimpeded commercial flows. At one point, Doty uses Homi Bhabha's conceptualization of the nation as the disjunction between the pedagogical and the performative (2003: 62). Bhabha understands the nation as narration split between 'the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical [understood as on a 'pre-given historical origin *in the past*'], and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative [understood as the incoherent fragments of daily life that 'must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a coherent national culture']' (2004: 209). Therefore

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[11] This tension receives an attentive treatment in Balibar's "'Rights of Man' and 'Rights of the Citizen.' The Modern Dialectic of Equality and Freedom" (1994).

when Bhabha refers to the splitting between the 'pre-given historical origin *in the past*' and the gathering of incoherent fragments into one coherent national whole, in the case of France, the most important element in the understanding of the alchemy between national identity, immigration and racism is colonialism. I cannot see how the issue of migration in France can be discussed without making mention, and exploring the inevitable links between colonial and post-colonial exploitation of cheap labour.

Unfortunately, Doty's analysis of France does even not mention the terms 'colonial' or 'colonialism.' To understand the absurdity of anti-immigration policies in France, the roots of racism towards migrants, and the inexplicable fear and anxiety of this society towards Muslim and African migrants in particular, one has to understand the mechanisms, stereotypes, and desires put in place and performed with the onset of the colonial rule in Africa. Max Silverman makes it clear that one cannot speak of a clear break between the colonial and post-colonial eras in France. In fact, 'contemporary France has been formed through and by colonization' (Silverman quoted in Gafaiti, 2003: 209). Aside from the mass migration of the formerly colonized to France and the repatriation of the *pieds noirs*[12] after the independence of Algeria, it is the very structure of society that still operates according to legal structures

> "which were largely formed in the context of management of the colonies abroad and immigrants at home, and which are still the source of forms of exclusion today. Balibar sees colonialism as a fundamental determinant of contemporary racism: 'Racism in France is essentially colonial, not in terms of a 'leftover' from the past but in terms of the continuing production of contemporary relations'." (Silverman quoted in Gafaiti, ibid.)

Consequently, to analyse the legal structures and the policies that are promulgated without a postcolonial exposé, to use Linda Hutcheon's expression (1994), obscures the ways in which France's racial discourse and multicultural pretensions stem from its colonial legacy. Doty's unjustifiable omission of the postcolonial from the analysis of contemporary French society implies that redefinition of 'what it means to be French', as she put it, has nothing to do with the colonial legacy and its continuing reconstitution into discriminatory policies and racist discourses. She starts her examination of the anti-immigrantist discourses in France with the mass migrations that took place in the period after World War II. But as Driss Maghraoui suggests, '[c]ontrary to the generally held belief' that France's violent encounters with issues of race and migration stem from the process of 'post-war immigration', it was 'the colonial period [that] was at the heart of deep-rooted stereotypes and racism within French society' (2003: 214).

Therefore to understand why France refused, through the amendment, in 1993, of Article 23 of the Code de la Nationalité Française, to grant automatic citizenship to the children born in France coming from migrant families, and thus to abandon *jus soli*, one needs to see who in particular was targeted by these laws. Most of the European migrants, such as those from Italy and Portugal, had been assimilated into French society. It is the North Africans (*Maghrébins*) and the sub-Saharan Africans who were intended as targets, because their 'visibility' and their difficulties in 'integration' made them

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[12] European settlers in Algeria during colonialism.

undesirable to France. Moreover, what does this 'visibility' mean? Is it simply a reference to race? It is not only a racial reference. As Memmi insightfully remarked, in a passage quoted earlier, the *immigrés* are constant reminders of the colonial disillusion, they are 'the illegitimate children [*bâtards*] of the colonial affair' (2004: 97).

Consequently, their visibility is not merely a racial visibility, but a reminder of the painful state of anomie in which the French Republic has been living since 1789. Assessing the problematic and yet successful marriage between the ideals of the French Revolution (liberty, equality, fraternity) and the expansion of the French colonial empire in its aftermath, Blanchard and Bancel claim that

> "the *native* [*indigène*] type allows us to simultaneously think of the emancipating ideal of the French republic shared by a wide spectrum of French society, of its assimilating heritage of national unity, which has always refused that an entity exist outside the body of the nation, and also of a racialized vision of the world, since it systematically places the colonised Other to a level inferior to that of the reference model."[13] (1998: 33)

This statement indicates not only the paradoxical relationship between human rights and colonialism in the French context, but it also serves to illustrate the manner in which the migrant becomes a point of negotiation between the colonial legacy and the postcolonial racist policies. Moreover, another issue with Doty's examination of French anti-immigrantist practices is that it remains at the level of the state. Since the purpose of her investigation was to examine how 'statecraft is desire' (2003: 9) and how the 'non-place of immigration' is where 'desire lurks' (2003: 6), she seems to suggest that migration can be understood most productively within practices of statecraft. I beg to differ. I hope that my examination of a few Franco-Maghrebian narratives illustrates that migration can be productively and meaningfully explored in aesthetic productions.

 If indeed Doty wished to remain true to her aptly put statement according to which 'the unconscious censuring of desire […] takes the importance of a scream that echoes throughout many sites where statecraft does its work', ranging from academic journals to remote villages, and from the street of major urban centres to 'the many borders crossing areas in our globalized world'(2003: 2), then her investigation of anti-immigrantism should have moved beyond the listing of state enforced discriminatory policies. If indeed 'the sites where statecraft does its work' are multiple, then it would have been productive to explore them in their multiplicity, through an analysis of how the politics of everyday life in its sublimation of desire constitutes the realm of international politics. Doty deconstructs the dearly held notion of the unitary and rational state as the main actor of world politics (dearly held by disciplinary IR) in order to reconstitute a national space where statecraft is desire. The deconstruction is important and notable, but it does not really go beyond the supplanting of a certain set of characteristics with another set. The ultimate implication of her analysis is that the international realm is really mainly about the state, or as she phrases it, about 'practices of statecraft.'

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[13] My emphasis.

Moreover, Doty seems to think that by replacing one set of signifiers (rational and unitary) with another (schizophrenic and paranoid), the stereotype of the state in IR is displaced. What we have instead is a reconstruction of the state, but according to different parameters, namely as a heterogeneous and desiring set of mechanisms. What Rosello's conceptualization of the stereotype teaches us is that the stereotype contaminates all discourse with which it comes into contact. Doty's analysis is an enactment, after all, of her desire 'to oppose stereotypes as meaningful statements', which is a self-defeating attempt (see Rosello, 1998: 13). Instead, stereotypes 'have to be treated not as the opposite of truth but as one of the narratives that a given power wants to impose as the truth at a given moment' (Rosello, 1998: 17). Doty's analysis had the potential to destabilize stereotypes and treat them as power-narratives, but her exploration limited itself to a demonstration of the irrationality of the state and its less than unitary nature.

Furthermore, Doty's investigation of anti-immigrantism practices within Western democracies illustrates Linda Hutcheon's point about the dangers of engaging in postmodern deconstruction without a postcolonial exposé (1994). Doty's analysis of anti-immigration discourses in the contemporary French context revolves around concepts such as schizophrenic desire, racism and migration without grounding such concepts in a much needed discussion on their (in)congruities with the legacy of French colonialism. As already mentioned, there can be no meaningful examination of anti-immigrantism in France without an attentive contextualization of such an issue within a postcolonial framework.

Transcending stereotypes? Ethnoscapes, ideoscapes, and mediascapes as mediators of political practices

Kader Attia's performative art and Merzak Allouache's cinematic narrative are brought forth in this paper as instances of complex interactions between visual, ideational and racial scapes that serve to disturb facile dichotomies of good/bad stereotypes, but also to disrupt certain assumptions about race and ethnicity, about migrants' desire of belonging, and about cultural mediation and translation. Kader Attia is a young artist born into a family of Muslim immigrants from Algeria, and who grew up and was educated in a suburban ghetto outside of Paris, in Sarcelles (Tami Katz-Freiman 2006). Much of Attia's art attempts to mediate the quandaries of a particular encounter between 'an uprooted North African culture and a seductive Western culture' (Katz-Freiman, 2006: 19). Kader Attia's aesthetic mediations are suffused with irony and sarcasm, as he intentionally ridicules and unsettles both the longing for Western products among the Maghrebian migrants, and the racist and exclusionary character of French society. Through his innovative montages and installations, he targets both the ephemeral happiness promised by Western consumerism, and the eternal happiness promised by religion.

One such an ironic work is *Hallal* (2004), whose space of manifestation is a chic Parisian Left Bank gallery which Attia transformed into a boutique called Hallal, filled with trendy clothing items all carrying the brand of Hallal, supposedly created by a 'trendy young designer.' Attia's ironic religious twist on the brand name in an age of global cultural and material flows, also serves to deepen 'the schism between stereotypes

and fantasies', as Katz-Freiman has expressed it (2006: 20). As Attia himself remarks, hallal and kosher products can be nowadays purchased everywhere since the sophisticated globalized market attempts to reach various groups of consumers. But his fusion of the consumer's fetish (the brand name) with the religious fetish (the notion of purity denoted by hallal/kosher) attempts to 'make up for the lost connection with their [migrants'] countries of origin, and bring them closer to their cultural and religious roots' (Attia quoted in Katz-Freiman, ibid.). Thus Attia's ironic twist that disavows any notions of political correctness, transcends the dichotomy created between the Front National's condemnation of the 'Arabs' as foreigners who corrupt the purity of the French nation, and the North African community's desire for a long lost purity of its culture.

A different sort of irony, perhaps better expressed as dark humour, is evinced by his window installation entitled *Moucharabieh* (2006). The windows installations are inspired by Moorish architecture and are supposed to contain an intricate pattern of arabesque designs. However, when the visitor approaches the windows, it becomes apparent that the beautiful and intricate designs are created from hundreds of police handcuffs linked together. The subtle and yet powerful metamorphosis of a beautiful architectural design into a threatening symbol that evokes police brutality and the more general national policing of North African communities in France, adds multiple layers to the racial category of the 'Arab' in French society as a securitized migrant. The more powerful underlining irony is that 'moucharabieh' is an intricate lattice design that allows the inhabitants of a household to look outside and observe the exterior without being seen (Katz-Freiman, 2006: 25, note 5). Thus the installation also echoes the perversity of the Maghrebian migrant communities' confinement to a marginal space of unwanted invisibility.

Mireille Rosello sees the young people of Maghrebian background in France and 'second-generation mediators' and as 'perpetual guests' (2001: 89). This double label refers to the largely circulated notion in French contemporary debates on immigration according to which the children of North African migrants are called 'second-generation migrants', even though they are born and raised in France, and thus implicitly they are forever relegated to the status of 'perpetual guests' within the French nation. Merzak Allouache's cinematic production *Salut Cousin!* (Hey, Cousin!) (1996) blurs the limits of hospitality within French society by intentionally confusing the roles of host and guest, and by undermining the authority of the host as an informed gateway to the society in which he lives, and the innocent character of the guest who is meant to relish, in ignorant bliss and with unconditional gratitude, the hospitality bestowed on him by the host. Allouache's cinematic narrative follows the misadventures and mis-communications of Mok, a French born man of Algerian background living in Paris, and his cousin, Alilo, recently arrived from Algeria for business. Mok constantly attempts to perform the role of the *French* host who needs to introduce his unsophisticated poor cousin to the intricacies of Parisian life. Language plays a crucial role in their mis-communications and mis-translations, insofar as Alilo is at pains to understand Mok's jargon, and Mok constantly disparages Alilo's heavily accented French.

As Rosello insightfully remarks, Allouache chooses to portray Mok, the French host, as a 'decidedly unreliable native informant' (2001: 96), who boasts more than he can offer. She sees Mok as a 'Westernized Arab who takes pride in his perfect French and ridicules his cousin's Algerian French' (2001: 97). Mok's 'perfect French' is in fact a jargon spoken by young people in suburban ghettos, which Alilo finds incomprehensible. Allouache is thus playing with the idea of the host and is interrogating the boundaries that separate host from guest. Mok performs the role of the host, but really he is the 'perpetual guest' in a society in which difference is subsumed under the ideal of uniformity and secularism. Mok boasts to Alilo that his neighbourhood is chic and trendy, for his cousin to discover later that he is living in a poor and unpopular *quartier*. But in fact Mok lives on the periphery of French society, and is constantly made to feel that he can never be a proper host. Allouache's intention seems to be to both expand the limits of hospitality and interrogate them at the same time. The tragi-comical reversal of roles in the end is highly symbolical: Mok is deported to Algeria (supposedly 'back home' to a country he had never seen), and Alilo settles in Paris. In a surprising twist of events, the roles of host and guest are thus reversed, and it is now Alilo's role to introduce Mok to his neighbourhood in Algiers, by warning him where to go and what and whom to avoid when he arrives there.

Aside from its humorous character, *Salut Cousin!* constitutes also a meditation on the complex and paradoxical interactions between immigration issues, racial hierarchies, 'Arab-ness' and 'French-ness.' The cinematic narrative subverts stereotypes of the 'Arab migrant' and of the 'French citizen' without trying to prove them right or wrong. In a socio-political context in which the perfect host is always the white European citizen, Allouache casts as the imperfect host a man from an immigrant non-European background. The point is ultimately that there is no such thing as the perfect host: the practice of hospitality within the complicated context of the French nation-state is always mediated by exclusionary practices and racial hierarchies. The very idea of 'host' and 'guest' within the confines of nation-states conjures up images of exclusion, temporariness, and the ever-present possibility of inhospitality. But the context complicates itself even furhter when the (post)colonial dimension is being taken into account. As mentioned earlier, the Algerian migrant is never just another 'guest. She/he constitutes always a reminder of France's lost imperial lustre. Mok and Alilo constitute two faces of the encounter between 'France' and 'Algeria': the *beur* and the *immigré*.[14]

Kader Attia and Merzak Allouaches' visual narratives exemplify not only possibilities for the transcendence of stereotypes or, to use Rosello's phrase, of what one can do *with* stereotypes, but also the political mediation at work in the interplay between ethnoscapes ('Arabness', 'Frenchness'), mediascapes (cinema, art), and ideoscapes (migration, security, colonialism). By listing these scapes I do not intend to put them forth as secure and self-contained entities. Rather by pointing certain characteristics associated with various scapes I seek to identify the key terms that allow us to contextualize the Franco-Maghrebian (post)colonial encounter.

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[14] For a definition of *beur* see note 3. *Immigré* has been explained earlier in this paper.

<u>Conclusion</u>

This paper attempted to illustrate some of the complicated socio-political tropes that emerged out of the Franco-Maghrebian (post)colonial encounter. In particular, my intention was to both expose the ambivalent and fragile characteristics of the 'Arab' as a (post)colonial racial signifier, and the political processes that have been involved in its creation and reproduction. I thus argue that a framing of the 'Arab' within the narrow confines of the 'war on terror' rhetoric and context (albeit in critical ways) does little to unsettle the racial hierachies in which this construct is embedded. Exploring the specific (post)colonial context of the Franco-Maghrebian encounter allowed me to re-frame the securitization of the North African migrant in a more textured political context, that goes beyond the 'war on terror' debate, and that engages the historical specificities which link together colonial memory, securitization of migrant labour, and anti-Arab racism.

In Roxanne Doty's examination of French anti-immigrantist discourses, the terms 'colonial' or 'colonialism' are not even mentioned in passing. Doty's omission of the (post)colonial in the French case seems to reiterate the stance of the French mainstream position according to which colonialism is something consummated and terminated, with little relevance for the future. Whereas, as Balibar emphatically suggests, not only is colonialism at the heart of understanding contemporary migration issues in France, but today French society is also witnessing a 'recolonization of migration' (2004: 41). What follows is a radicalization of racist discourses and of exclusionary practices. Such a blatant dismissal of something so vital to understanding migration (the colonial factor) is not surprising coming from the field of IR with its by now notorious marginalization of postcolonialism from its theoretical perspectives. But it is very surprising coming from an IR scholar who is often identified as having postcolonial sensitivities, and whose work revolves around practices of marginalization.

Because of this recurrent disillusion with critical IR's half-hearted approach towards postcoloniality, I chose aesthetic narratives as my media of understanding the intersections between migration, race and insecurity. Kader Attia and Merzak Allouache's visual narratives illustrate the relevance of the visual in understanding contemporary political processes. As Cynthia Weber has remarked, the linguistic turn in IR, while making tremendous contributions to the field, has 'ex-communicated' the visual from the linguistic (2008: 137). I have thus attempted to bring together, within the scope of my explorations, both the linguistic (Alek Toumi's analysis) and the visual (Kader Attia and Merzak Allouache) as mediators of complex political practices. I have thus tried to illuminate the ways in which, in the context of the Franco-Maghrebian (post)colonial encounter, the linguistic and the visual constitute inseparable spaces for political mediation, and for the performance of racialized hierarchies. Appadurai's concept of *scape* complemented my understanding of contemporary migration processes in France and their securitization, by providing a layered and multiple socio-political context, which encompassed flows of images, ideas, and people, and by inflecting them with racial, gendered, and class dimensions.

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