

# **On the Visual Apartheid in Western Europe: Architectural Hegemony in the German Urban Landscape**

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## **Abstract**

This paper focuses on the visual lack of the Muslim minority in the contemporary German urban landscape. Through the reinterpreting of Gérard Genette's literary method of paratexts, I have analyzed architecture as the main text, while the media's response is the epitext from which this study analyzes the visibility of the minority in the physical space and the mediated space of Germany. This approach uses a critical cultural lens of analysis.

In German architecture, the physical markings of power regimes past and present are visible. From Prussian principalities to nation-state museums, the hegemonic powers have utilized architecture and urban planning to create and imprint their power structure on the physical space and place of each power regime's time period. The Third Reich utilized neoclassical architecture to create a looming opulence of grandeur, while creating death camps to silence the minority voices. In former East Berlin, statues of Lenin and communist street names dotted the landscape, while utiliz-

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ing socialist classism in their structural formation. The Berlin Wall stood as the physical barrier to the West to separate and secure the East German populace. Today, the nation-state of Germany is undergoing the stitching together of the east and west zones of Germany – and global flows of tourists, businesses, and intellectual traffic as well as the addition of the immigrant Turkish Muslim population that was marketed and recruited to rebuild Germany in the 1960s and 1970s. With any regime change, a shift in architectural representation also takes place in order to redirect memory to shine new or revitalized light on a particular era that is in line with the ideals and discourse of the new ruling regime. At the heart of power is the idea of what is deemed preservable, what should be demolished, and who or what should be silenced. I specifically look at the architectural structures of Muslim minority populations in Germany to see what reception they receive by way of the media. I will also discuss examples from the Jewish community to a lesser extent.

I outline what it means to be part of the imagined ideal and the Othering of minorities, particularly the largest German minority of Muslim Turks in the contemporary nation-state of Germany. I argue that beyond the literary and spoken hegemonies of the nation-state, the visual architecture of the urban landscape must also be analyzed according to power structures and marginalized voices. A critical approach is taken and a reinterpreting of Gérard Genette's literary method of paratexts is applied and appropriated to broaden the thresholds of interpretation to include architecture as "the text" from which to analyze the hegemonic power structure embedded in the urban landscape through secondary texts, or paratexts, presented by the media. I focus on three distinct cities involving three distinct situations that surround the architectural discourse in Cologne, Dresden, and Berlin. In some cases, we see the visual lack of architecture, whereas in others the paratexts render the minority spaces as lacking or delegitimate in order to create through the text the visual apartheid of the German other or minority community.

## **Architecture and Ideology**

Visual representations of a collective identity can be mapped by analyzing a given time period's architectural elements. Hegemonic powers have the ability to produce a representation of their power for local and global populations to experience by using urban and architectural planning. Architecture stands to create a stamp on the physical landscape, a mark that, if constructed correctly, can stand the test of time surpassing generations, empires, and likely the ruler's lifespan. The past preserved and the histori-

cal footprints of previous eras are clearly visible in the skylines of cities. This is surely also the case in Germany. In Cologne, Dresden, and Berlin, the connection between material culture, power, and architectural elements can be clearly perceived. I am, in other words, using the text of architecture to illustrate the power dynamics associated with remembering and representing. In Nazi Germany, Hitler took great care to create visual representations of his power. Structures were erected in a particular architectural style that was neoclassical and also used elements of art deco. Along with constructing urban monuments and buildings, Nazi architecture also includes the resurrection of concentration camps. This literal silencing of the Jewish populace is a clear hegemonic device to eradicate the Jews and other minority voices of the Third Reich from the German public sphere. In Weimar during the height of Bauhaus, the exile and flight of artists and architects due to their rejection by the Nazi regime became commonplace.

The matter is further complicated as the country after World War II was divided by the new border between the Soviet East Germany and Western Germany. The Berlin Wall was erected to physically divide Berlin, while the Eastern states were marked architecturally with Stalinist buildings and statues of Lenin and Stalin to visually represent socialist ideology. In 1990, the country of Germany reunited. However, the stitching together of the two ideologies is more akin to the forgetting and destruction of the former Eastern Germany. The question I ask is: how is Germany's present now being represented, remembered, and displayed and which memories surround this material representation?

In other words, what must be asked today is how are minorities and immigrant communities incorporated or not incorporated into the physical representation of the German city? Using the notion that architecture bears traces of the inherent power structures of ruling hegemony, are we therefore also able to detect transgressions to this power structure? As is clear from public policy, identity politics, and the overall relations between the "nation-state citizen" and the immigrant Turk, hegemonic power resides in the "Western" German. I use the term *Western* because the former Eastern German is also being eclipsed. Religiously, it is the Christian, or culturally Christian German, that holds the most hegemonic and cultural capital in today's Germany. Christian Democratic Union Chancellor Angela Merkel reigns, and the Jewish minority is slight and addressed in a complicated manner, between guilt and silence. The former Soviet population is asked to forget their past, re-socialize, and integrate into the capitalist, Christian matrix that forms the political and cultural stronghold in Germany. I argue that a pattern of silences in visual representations, in this case architecture,

minimizes minority voices in the contemporary German urban landscape. This amounts to the visual apartheid of all non-hegemonic groups.

When considered with respect to architecture, the visual gaze can be analyzed from two standpoints: the one who looks out from the windows of the physical building and those that look from outside in the voyeuristic view point of the spectator. Who is included and who is excluded is a crucial question when posed with regard to the power structure surrounding architecture. In this paper, I focus on the question of what is being represented, who architecture includes and who it excludes. The hegemonic power of the nation-state citizen is, therefore, at the forefront of my analysis. The secondary category of the immigrant Turk must also be remembered throughout each urban landscape analyzed in this paper. If the judgment that architecture equates the hegemonic structures of a society and silences minorities and subalterns, then one must also be aware and ready for the examples that transgress the aforementioned hegemonic framework.

Architecture and its monumental qualities and ability to create a long-lasting representation are a key medium for the study of memory *constructing*. Architecture is a tool for legitimizing a new power, just as the act of demolishing architecture is a way of delegitimizing a fallen power while the preservation of past architecture channels the ideological power of the past in a new light. I argue that architectural silences, or visual apartheid, of the immigrant Turk are a way to represent the present and the past in such a fashion that forgets the immigrant Turk. Architecture in this regard is presenting the primordial Germanic nation-state citizen, otherwise called the nation-state ideal, in the physical landscape. Yet, this form of power in architecture forgets the present, and consequently, the untold story of the changing population. However, any study that allocates space for memory must in tandem allocate space for forgetting. What are the hegemonic structures of the contemporary nation-state of Germany that allocate space for memorializing the past and the present? What entities in society are being forgotten? In the case of forgetting, what buildings are being demolished? What structures are being preserved? What does this do in re-envisioning the past to forget the movements that are deemed undesirable to the current hegemonic bodies?

### **Constructing Visual Apartheid**

Brian Ladd refers to buildings as the “symbols and the repositories of memory.”<sup>1</sup> In many ways, architecture is a way to frame a specific time period’s hegemonic, idealized self. Ladd refers to monuments as “selec-

tive aids to memory: they encourage us to remember some things and to forget others . . . shap[ing] public memory and collective identity.”<sup>22</sup> Ladd’s work looks at Berlin in particular and how visual representations of the urban landscape have shifted, essentially mapping the urban landscape in accordance to shifts in political power (Nazism, former Eastern Germany’s Berlin, and today’s unified Berlin).

Mary Louise Pratt proposes studying power dynamics between the West and the other via “contact zones” in order to decolonize knowledge. Her research maps spaces in which the colonized and colonizers encounter one another in realms of differing power dynamics.

A ‘contact zone’ is an attempt to invoke the special and the temporal correspondence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect. By using the term contact, I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination.<sup>3</sup>

James Clifford expands Pratt’s concept to focus on institutions that act as contact zones. Specifically, Clifford views the museum as a type of contact zone where power is exchanged and appropriated by the structure of the museum’s collection.<sup>4</sup> I suggest that architecture and urban planning could also be considered contact zones. While in this scenario, Germany is not a colonizer per se, it does act as a hegemonic power, while the immigrant Turk acts as the subaltern. Architecture as contact zone focuses on what is built, rebuilt, preserved, and not built. Architecture holds inherent hegemonic powers due to the approval process, funding process, and city codes. The architect, him or herself, can also be viewed as occupying a position of power, yet ultimately the structure is governed by the city planners and the funder. Therefore architecture, masked in the false consciousness of hegemonic rights, can create a contact zone in which the immigrant is silenced, excluded, and marginalized.

Are these visual silences of Muslim immigrants unique to Germany? Research has shown that visual silences occur with the banning of minarets in Switzerland and the banning of religious symbols in France. The current ban on minarets allows for Christian steeples and the unobtrusive domes of Judaism but excludes the markings of visual space and place of the Muslim minority. Politically, the ban that prohibits headscarves in France boasts secular ideals but at the core stands an aversion to the uncanny, the different, or the stranger to the hegemonic culture.<sup>5</sup> These visual seclusions create more inequality between the “citizen” and the “stranger,” exacerbating the differences between “us” and “them” while demonizing a visual

tradition that is deemed unorthodox to those among the cultural majority of the nation-states of Western Europe. In an era of political correctness in language, set against the backdrop of the atrocities of the racial politics of World War II, acts to mask and mute racial and ethnic minorities in everyday speech; however, visual apartheid is raging in Western Europe against the religious and the cultural morals of the minority populations. It is currently what is not voiced and not visually incorporated that is at the crux of Oriental othering in today's Western Europe. It is not through brute force but through subtle public policies that slowly disenfranchise and slowly eliminate from view the non-idealized. We are in the age of erasing the periphery, not incorporating a multicultural entity. We are in the age of visual apartheid.

### **A Methodological Approach: Reinterpreting Gérard Genette's Approach to Paratext**

In order to capture the dynamics of architecture's hegemonic structure and detail the silences of minorities in Germany within the visual, urban landscape, I have reinterpreted Gérard Genette's methodological approach to literature and his analysis of paratexts and applied his approach to the visual text of architecture. Paratexts are the secondary and tertiary texts associated with a main text. For instance in literature, the main text would be a novel, while the paratexts in this case would be reviews written about the novel, interviews with the novel's author, etc. Genette's method includes a formula where paratext = peritext + epitext, where the discourse circulating closer to the text is deemed the peritext (in literary terms, this would be the title, preface, footnotes), while those discourses located further away and mediated by say the media would be deemed epitexts.<sup>6</sup> Paratexts are at times texts in and of themselves – while at other times simply facts surrounding the main text such as the age, gender, or the historical time period the text was established. These paratexts are known as factual paratexts. Paratexts can be official (anything put out by the author or the publisher) or unofficial (the items that are usually epitexts like interviews).<sup>7</sup>

### **Factual Paratext: the Historical Analysis of Turkish Guestworkers in Germany**

In order to contextualize the main text, we must provide the historical analysis of the Turkish guestworker in Germany. The Turkish minority in Germany has its roots in the "guestworker" (*Gastarbeiter*) program instituted between the Federal Republic of Germany and various Mediterranean na-

tions shortly after World War II. The first wave of guestworkers were, until 1965, governed under a law that had originally been promulgated in 1938; this law allowed no freedom of movement or residency rights for the guestworkers, and reforms in 1965 did little to change the marginal status of these guestworkers in German society.<sup>8</sup> The notion of a guestworker had by this time actually had a long history in German society: “Gastarbeiter were to be what foreign workers had always been throughout German history, a mobile labor force outside civic society, economically necessary and socially excluded.”<sup>9</sup> During Germany’s industrialization in the nineteenth century, foreign workers were utilized as laborers under a temporary residence program that recognized only short stays in the country for occupational purposes. During World War I, Germany utilized over 1.4 million forced laborers in the war effort, and during the Third Reich, this by then well-established system was “expanded and radicalized” to comprise over fourteen million forced laborers. The fatality rate among such laborers was approximately 50 percent.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, the introduction of guestworkers into post-war German society was not established without precedent in German history, though it did not occur under the conditions of the dramatic atrocities of world wars. Nevertheless, as Eva Kolinsky points out, the dynamics of the foreign worker in Germany in the 1960s and 1970s inherited from previous such programs in German history a native-foreigner dynamic that had the effect of socially and economically isolating the guestworkers themselves. By the early 1970s, Turkish guestworkers had far outstripped all other Mediterranean ethnicities numerically, and had begun to settle permanently in Germany, despite the original design of the program as a temporary utilization of foreign labor in the process of rebuilding the German economy and social structure after World War II. The guestworker policy was officially halted in 1973, but this action had the paradoxical effect of actually increasing the number of foreign residents in the country as many workers chose to remain in Germany with the families they had brought with them.<sup>11</sup> This shift in policy produced, therefore, a population of “resident aliens” in German society that were no longer merely guestworkers, but a rooted and growing minority population.<sup>12</sup>

Under the original legal provisions of the program, guestworkers were only allowed to stay in barracks provided for them by the factories and plants they were assigned to work in; male workers were assumed to have arrived alone. Those workers who brought their families with them were not allowed to live with them in the worker’s barracks, and so were forced to find cheap housing in the poorest inner city neighborhoods and were

often forced to live in housing considered substandard by Germans.<sup>13</sup> The initial wave of guestworkers also had little opportunity to learn German due to their rigorous work schedule. The guestworkers mainly worked in unskilled manufacturing labor, with little opportunity for advancement. The first wave of Turkish guestworkers therefore constituted a culturally isolated group with little opportunity to interact with German society or integrate into its norms and benefits. This situation was primarily a function of the somewhat naive assumption on the part of both the Turkish and German governments that these workers would not put down roots in Germany and would instead return to Turkey. Besides the tendency to settle, other factors worked against any tendency to return to Turkey. One notable dilemma these workers faced was the difficulty of reintegration into Turkish society if they returned; many of these workers came from humble rural backgrounds and did not even know the formal Turkish national language, having only been raised speaking localized village dialects.<sup>14</sup> These workers' isolation from their home country and its labor market made the prospect of reintegration into Turkish society daunting. Yet their status in Germany made it difficult for them to actively seek to integrate into the large German society. This position of isolation has left a lasting mark on the Turkish migrant community in Germany to this day.

Discrimination and social isolation have resulted in ghetto-like living conditions for non-Germans, and Turks in particular, thereby repeating a vicious cycle of isolation and hesitancy (or inability) to integrate into German neighborhoods. This same pattern of discrimination has largely resulted in the segregation and ghettoization of Turks in German society as a whole. Though popular opinion has often accused ethnic minorities in Germany and elsewhere of "self-segregation," studies conducted among Turkish migrants in Germany during the 1980s refute this claim.<sup>15</sup>

### **Architecture as Text and the Media as Epitext**

For my research, the primary text constitutes architecture, while its paratexts involve the unofficial, public epitexts consisting of newspaper articles referencing the main text. "The public epitext" encompasses the media articles surrounding the external text. This spatial distance and unofficiality (meaning the architect would not be in direct control of the surrounding discourse) allows for a critical message to be distributed.<sup>16</sup> In my work, this is true of the newspaper articles surrounding the sites of my case studies in Cologne, Dresden, and Berlin. The public epitexts are gathered from Internet-posted newspaper articles from *Der Spiegel Online*, *Die Welt Online*,



*The New York Times*, and *News Bank*. This research project does not delve into the political economy of these epitext sources or the technological aspect of online news articles. Rather it stands to show that the public sphere in this paper consists of the reading publics associated with these epitexts. In other words, I utilize here Michael Warner's definition of a public sphere as the people who are interacting with certain circulated texts, in this case the text of the architecture and the epitexts of the media.<sup>17</sup> These public epitexts stand to show a layer of meaning that goes beyond that of the text itself and is a way to analyze the critique of these sites.

Paratexts, or external components to the main narrative (in my case, the main object), create layers of meaning. The conscious is the actual display of the building, while analysis of unconscious or subverted expressions allows one to gather a fuller meaning of this symbolic landscape through the uncovering and analysis of the architecture's paratexts. My use of news articles as epitext allows the case studies to be narrated by outside voices, a form of bringing the public sphere into my analysis of the architecture in three distinct German urban landscapes. These epitexts illustrate the process, feelings, and viewpoints external to the control of the architect and city planners.

Genette painstakingly separates the peritext from epitext, the preface from postface, the media representations of the text, and the intimate authorial correspondence about the main text. With regard to the building as text, I suggest that it is the funders, public, reception, location, and historical context that play a key role in the interpretation of the text. The funders dictate who will create and where. They control the visual landscape of that time in that place. The architect is a hired hand that creates a visual representation that is equal parts the architect's vision and the funder's anticipated product. The public consists of those being addressed by the building (those that will patronize the building) and those that indirectly engage with the building (walking and living in the area where the building is located).

At this point, a push and pull between target market and the public at large emerges. Genette refers to this phenomenon as the "choice of the public" and in the novel it is of importance: the preface for instance is that which is "guiding the reader also, and first of all, means situating him, and thus determining who he is."<sup>18</sup> This becomes particularly important when the target market of the text (text here understood as architecture) is a niche or periphery within the overall public, such as a religious minority. In the case of Cologne, for instance, the Cologne mosque targets the immigrant community that consists of practicing Muslims. In this case, Mus-

lms constitute a minority population with respect to the established public of Christian Germans, atheist Germans, or the international population of tourists that flood the area to see the Rhine and the iconic Kölner Dom (Cologne Cathedral). The question of place also becomes important. Genette speaks of contextual information, and in the battle to build the mosque, it is of importance to note that the mosque is not in the city center of Cologne, but rather in a suburb of Cologne. This brings up the issue of space and place. If the mosque were to be built near the city center or the iconic Kölner Dom would the contestation be more pronounced? Would the mosque have been able to be built? The question of tourism and the idealized urban landscape is also put to question. One must only think of the contestation over place attributed to the politics of place in New York City near the site of remembrance of September eleven and the controversial Islamic Center that was dubbed the “Ground Zero Mosque,” due to its physical proximity to the former World Trade Center (when in actuality it was not planned to be built on the site as the wording would allege; it was planned to be two blocks from the site itself).<sup>19</sup>

The city of Cologne, however, features a transgression of the hegemonic power of architecture. In this case, the representation of the immigrant is seen through the construction of the Cologne Central Mosque (DITIB-Zentralmoschee Köln), which when completed will be one of the largest mosques in Germany with minarets expected to reach a height of fifty-five meters.<sup>20</sup> This mosque stands in direct opposition to the ideals and issues associated with the minaret bans of Switzerland. Cologne, also a traditionally Catholic city known for its steeple-dotted skyline, is not banning the visual integration of the Muslim minority. Instead of a silence, a visual voice of the immigrant is emerging in Cologne. However, the epitexts of the Cologne mosque demonstrate that the issue is fraught with contestation. Before the building was even constructed, journalist Hildegard Stausberg of *Welt Online* captured the contestation when she wrote about the endless debates, conferences, city meetings, and information evenings for citizens that surrounded the concept of the building of the mosque. Another epitext describes a public petition that was heralded by the right-wing populist party, ProCologne, that was against having the mosque built.<sup>21</sup> Yet another epitext showed that “opponents in mosque building in Europe often claim that the number of mosques is rising much faster than the number of Muslims,” and it speaks to the opposition of the visual Muslim.<sup>22</sup> Only after all of these gatherings did the City of Cologne in 2008 approve the mosque to be built. The *Economist* ran a piece in 2007 that showed results of a poll that was done in Cologne that showed 31 percent of the popula-

tion opposed the building of the mosque and 29 percent wanted to see the architectural plans for the mosque “scaled down.”<sup>23</sup>

As of late, Lucas Wiegelmann’s epitext surrounding the ongoing building of the mosque, which is being financed through the Turkish Islamic Union and constructed by German architect Paul Böhm, claim that Böhm has inscribed Christian symbols in the construction of the mosque (small crosses and the Greek monogram for Christ).<sup>24</sup> Wiegelmann’s epitext on the issue was sardonically poised, asking to what end should Islam ignore its association with Christianity. Wiegelmann opens by stating “it again wasn’t a good week for Christianity.” The tone of the article is very much a matter of not questioning the legitimacy of a Christian architect putting Christian symbols on an Islamic mosque but instead seeks to make the issue seem preposterous and delegitimize the outrage of the Turkish Islamic Union.

The Turkish Muslim response has mainly been through epitextual and official streams. Protests were not held in front of the mosque by the Turkish Muslim community; instead, a representative from the Turkish Islamic Union (DITIB), the organization that is funding the mosque, Mr. Bekir Alboga, was interviewed on *ZDF*, a major German news channel. Mr. Alboga spoke of the happiness he personally felt now that the construction phase of the mosque is underway: the mosque is “*etwas was man sehen kann*” (something that one can see). He further explains that during the planning phase the building of the mosque seemed insurmountable, but now with the construction underway, it has become a reality.<sup>25</sup> Here we see through the formal epitext the official Turkish Muslim response; it is patient, but it is also showing the problems that come with attempting to make the Muslim identity more visual in Germany. Another mosque publicist responded by focusing on how important it was that the community gain a larger worship space since the Turkish Muslim community had outgrown their previous building that was described as being “*in ein hinterhof vorsteckt*” (hidden in a courtyard).<sup>26</sup>

I am not researching the validity of an epitext, but I am analyzing the hegemonic discourse that emerges in this text. This epitext is a clear example of the questioning of the legitimacy of an Islamic mosque in a Christian majority city, Cologne, and a Christian majority country, Germany. Wiegelmann’s article shows the voice of the majority and disregards the actions of the minority. The subconscious attitude of the journalist is that Germany is Christian and those that are not Christian should either put up with their mosques being Christianized or shouldn’t build a mosque on German soil in the first place. In this case, othering takes place through

sardonic humor. This article also calls to mind the hegemonic structure of a Christian architect being hired to build an Islamic mosque. Why is this the case? What does this say in regard to German architects being able to accurately represent the Turkish immigrant in Germany? To have an architect purposely engrave the majority's religion on a minority religion's place of worship speaks volumes about the contested space of the visual minority's voice in Germany. What seems to be a transgression is actually mired with Islamophobic debate that is documented in the epitextual media texts surrounding the mosque's construction.

Genette outlines the use of fictional prefaces in his analysis of peritext. The idea of text as fiction is poignant when one looks at the urban landscape of Dresden, Germany. Here we see a text of fiction. Though painstakingly rebuilt to mimic the pre-World War II past, this text is not authentic; instead it is a reconstructed fantasy. The layers of meaning that have been silenced act to cover the city, reinvent the past, and forget the recent past. Dresden is a city wrapped in historical nostalgia. This is where public memory is playing a key role in urban representation. Memories and architecture combine as the memory is a key aspect in the creative process of design. When an architect creates and a city planning committee chooses an architect to design for the city, memories are at work, memories that can originate in the unconscious. Dresden's remaking of the past unconscious reverts to a time of opulent hegemonic power. The trauma of the war, the massive destruction by the bombing of Dresden, the contestation of a former divided country, the shifting of population, and the present minority voice is completely ignored in a form of visual apartheid. Only the hegemonic voice of a particular German is heard and represented in Dresden. This fictitious representation is then used for economic ventures in tourism. Dresden is marketed as having an authentic past, while in actuality the reconstruction produces a type of Disneyfication of the urban landscape.

It is one thing to preserve a dilapidating building from ruin, but in the city of Dresden's case the bombing of World War II entirely destroyed its Prussian buildings. It is no longer preservation when a city builds from scratch a building that has been obsolete to the city's skyline. It becomes a gesture of rebuilding the past and not preserving the past. It becomes an ideological attempt to recreate. Mark Jarzombek evaluated Dresden's reconstruction of an imaginary "historical Dresden," which he found to be only the version of history that is state supported – that in the end creates a linear, homogeneous version of historical past that eliminates the actual multilayered fabric of that past. I argue that this re-envisioning of Dresden in accordance to the past homogenizes the view of the past, while at the

same time silences the view and representation of the present. Dresden shows clearly the political influence embedded in architecture and the politicized historical fantasies that can be created via city planning.

Dresden was firebombed during the end of World War II on February 13, 1945, and its historical landmarks and historic districts completely and tragically destroyed in the process. After the unification of Germany, debate swirled around proposed plans to rebuild the Frauenkirche (the Church of Our Lady) so as to exactly mimic its original form. In an insightful epitext, Jason James examines this public debate that took place in the earlier years of the twenty-first century. James proposes that the act of the rebuilding of the church “reflects a longing among many Germans to reverse loss and retrieve an unadulterated identity” that glides over the trauma and destruction brought about during the First and Second World Wars.<sup>27</sup>

This effort, controversial both in Dresden and in other parts of Germany, stands in contrast with the cathedral in Coventry, England, a city that suffered the same fate during the same war; the Coventry Cathedral has been “reconstructed” in such a way as to combine medieval and modern motifs that serve as a reminder of the original devastation.<sup>28</sup> A synagogue was reconstructed in Dresden along similar lines. These two methods of architecture therefore exhibit very different notions of German culture and identity, especially when it comes to dealing with the past. The architects behind both projects, therefore, are playing a key role in how their community will be passed down, defined, and remembered for future generations in Germany.

When evaluating the political economy of historic preservation, UNESCO funding is a key component. Dresden, rather the Elbe River that runs through the city, was deemed a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2004. but the distinction was taken away when the city constructed a modern bridge across the Elbe in 2007.<sup>29</sup> This clearly demonstrates the political ramifications of a previously deemed “historical” city when the city decides to incorporate contemporary design. Though with Dresden, the historic value must be problematized, it was not preserved but instead reconstructed to mimic its opulent baroque past. Evaluating Josh Ward’s article as an epitext, the following quote was found within the article: “UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee also played a clear role. It sat back and watched Dresden squirm while placing a questionable emphasis on purism. Behind this behavior is an attitude which holds that only the untouched have the right to claim the title of being part of the world’s cultural heritage; that culture is a sacrosanct remnant from the past. . . .” This quote is taken from the left-leaning *Frankfurt Rundschau*.<sup>30</sup> Here, the discourse of institutional power and preservation become quite clear. It becomes obvious that certain pasts,

even fictitious rebuilt pasts, of certain time periods are deemed untouchable to the contemporary voice in architecture.

This rebuilding erases the present and the near past to go to a place of historic nostalgia. Is this a move reverting to subconscious trauma? The end effect is a city that sparkles with opulent, baroque buildings, but the brutal fact remains that it is a reconstruction from the ruins of war-torn devastation. Now, a sort of Disneyfication of the baroque period, a fictitious land that tourists flock to and photograph exists, but is the experience truly *real*? What is missing is the present, for the destruction is the true history of the city, perhaps what could be deemed the ultimate post-bombing recreation of our times. As architect Daniel Liebeskind referred to in an epitext, an interview with a *Der Spiegel* interviewer Charles Hawley, "People want to have something of the city's glory days."<sup>31</sup> Can we not substitute "glory days" with "hegemonic times"? Liebeskind goes on to argue that "the city has been fundamentally altered. The events from the past are not a footnote, they are central to the transformation of the city."<sup>32</sup> Hawley points out that Liebeskind is an architect that has worked on sites of major traumatic events: the Jewish Museum in Berlin and Ground Zero in New York City. His architecture stands as blatant sites of memory construction. I argue that Dresden's fixation with the past in effect silences the present. This harkening back begs the questions: why is the Prussian time period chosen and why is the present not represented? Is the present make up of Dresden transgressing the state's ideal? Is the Prussian past a period that speaks to the hegemonic powers of today? Is rebuilding a way to deal with the trauma or a way to forget and architecturally erase the points of history Germany would rather not remember?

What is the architectural response to the minority? This question can stand to problematize contemporary Germany's anxiety of rebuilding physically the elements of the Jewish heritage, the synagogue destroyed by Nazis. The Nazi architectural silencing of the Dresden's Jewish population took the form of concentration camps. The Dresden Jewish community numbered 6,000 members in 1933, yet after the Holocaust in January 1945, this number fell to 174. During this period, the synagogue in Dresden was destroyed by SA stormtroopers on the pogrom night of November 9, 1938.<sup>33</sup> It wasn't until 1998 that a new synagogue was built; yet in a city that has chosen to reimagine itself through a strict conformity to historical style, the new synagogue was built in a style that does not reflect the historic Dresden synagogue. However, stone by stone the city *rebuilt* the city's most emphatic Christian symbol, the Frauenkirche, in strict compliance to its historical style. By comparison, the new place of worship for

the Jewish community features stark modernist architecture that does not physically resemble a synagogue; instead it stands as a nondescript, stone square. Its distinctively Jewish physical presence is silenced as it is not easily recognizable as a Jewish place of worship, nor does it possess any historical elements of the original architecture of the historic Synagogue, built by Gottfried Semper, even though Semper's opera house was reconstructed according to its original plans in the city center of Dresden. The Semper Opera House, in fact, stands as an international symbol of the city's historical distinctiveness. On the official epitext of the Dresden City website, it reads "Until 1985, Dresden residents were forced to do without their famous edifice."<sup>34</sup> All the while, the architect's renderings for the historic Synagogue were mute until 1998, and the city that prides itself on rebuilding decided to create a modern, nondescript building for the new synagogue. This example squarely illustrates the identity politics and negotiations in reconstructing a city. Here it is in fact the hegemonic ideals that are reconstructed, while the minority voices are either eclipsed entirely or constructed in a nondescript, muted form. Architecture has the power to represent those in power and to subvert or enact a visual apartheid upon those on the periphery.

A fictional text is also clearly present in Berlin. The notion of forgetting becomes particularly important when evaluating the contemporary aspects of Berlin architecture. In contrast to Dresden, Berlin has adopted many examples of modernist designs. The city once split between East and West Germany possesses two distinct architectural styles simultaneously in action from the end of World War II until reunification in 1989. One particular phenomenon is the demolition of former Eastern German buildings, monuments, and structures. The most obvious structure of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the Berlin Wall, was demolished on November 9, 1989. This wall stood as a physical barrier separating the political east and west sides of Germany. Today, small remnants and sections of the wall are still visible in the city. In 2006, the demolition of the Palast der Republik (Palace of the Republic) began an equally controversial yet less well-known event. This demolition was a physical way to silence and forget the GDR past, and it is a key example of symbolic representation through hegemonic power shifts. The victors of present day Germany are in this case tearing down the parliament building of the now defunct GDR. The epitext by Susan Stone declares the dismantling of the Palast der Republik, another example of Berlin "systematically stripping all signs of Communism."<sup>35</sup> Equally important in the issue of power structures of architecture is analyzing the new architectural building that is to be resurrected in the palace's place. A new, contemporary building that represents

present day Berlin is not going in its place: instead what will emerge is another example of Germany architecturally going back in time, to a period before both world wars, communism, and the immigration of Turkish Gastarbeiters – the Prussian-era Stadtschloss (Royal Palace) is going to be rebuilt. Is this architectural move a way to forget the unsavory aspects of German past and to further silence the current immigrants in Germany? Is Germany not simply moving back in time to a safe hegemonic past that represents the idealized German citizen, one that comes from the *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) of Germanic nostalgia? Forgetting the past, while simultaneously forgetting the present, this architectural shift in Germany represents the nation-state ideal that is based on primordial pasts.

The current powers would prefer to erase the GDR past, but is that really appropriate? More importantly, why reconstruct a Prussian palace? Why not utilize the architecture of today? Why go back and try to reconstruct history? This tactic is a way to reconstruct history, to put it in line with the ideological views of hegemonic entities. This decision is ominous: moving from communist palace to royal palace. The Stadtschloss was originally built under Frederick I's oversight beginning in 1698.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps a bit of tit for tat accounts for the decision in that the official Stadtschloss was destroyed by East German ruler, Walter Ulbricht in 1950.<sup>37</sup> The epitext by *Spiegel* reporter Matthias Schulz aptly displays the irony of the current situation: "East German socialism's center of power is now in the process of being torn down" by the hegemonic powers of the unified nation-state.<sup>38</sup> The politics of memory become apparent in this case study, and though the Palast der Republik has been demolished, the Stadtschloss construction has been put on hold due to austerity measures.<sup>39</sup> During the years of communist rule, the Palast der Republik was erected upon the ruins of the Stadtschloss. The Palast der Republik opened in 1976 to house the East German parliament. The building was found to be contaminated with asbestos in the 1990s and was closed under newly unified Germany. Its demolition took place from 2006 until 2008. Again we see a new rule and a new architectural perspective being put in place to usurp the memories of communist Germany.

This issue of rebuilding that has taken place in Dresden and Berlin is a form of desire that is mediated through the medium of architecture. For Jacques Lacan, the French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist,<sup>40</sup> desire was mediated through language, but in these cases the visual world is used as a way to construct the fantasy of a Germany before war or political divide. These reconstructions stand as the *objet petite a* (object of lost or unattainable desire). Architecture visibly represents the hegemonic ideals and desires of a society. It is the subaltern, minority representations that are



experiencing the Lacanian lack in the physical and symbolic landscape of the nation-state. Where Lacan's Symbolic Order is based on language I extend his idea of the Symbolic Order to apply to the urban landscape, the structure of meaning created by a nation-state's urban planning.<sup>41</sup> For the nation-state of Germany and much of Western Europe the immigrant is undergoing this visual lack. The symbolic lack is attributed to the hegemonic force, which is the nation-state of Germany that is founded on the primordial concepts of *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil). The Muslim, the other, is lacking the signifier of primordial belonging that the imagined community of the German-nation state is based on. Without possessing primordial roots, acceptance is not possible. With lack in power, the creative process of materializing a fantasy of identification through architecture is not granted to the immigrants. The power to plan and dictate the urban landscape is in the hands of the hegemonic forces, and so only the creative expressions of the hegemonic desires are constructed on the symbolic landscape.

Yet as we see in the Dresden and Berlin examples, these fantasies are built on unstable ground and can only be attributed to hegemonic, narcissistic fantasies. The unequal structure of the production of meaning through architecture shows that only some segments of society have the power of creatively symbolizing their reality upon the urban landscape, while the periphery struggles to have their fantasies recognized or incorporated.<sup>42</sup> This lack in representation creates an unending incompleteness in architecture as also in human existence – for as a consequence of the Othering that is attributed to the nation-state, the immigrant Turk is not able to assimilate. My study reveals the lack in visual voice, the visual apartheid that eventuates from the visual lack of the immigrant Turk in Germany. This is not to say that the immigrant Turk is naturally lacking but rather is not included in the construct of the nation-state power structure, with a core of primordial belonging constructed, the nation-state has inherently built the lack into the other. This phenomenon plays to the Freudian fears of the uncanny and creates an unnecessary binary of us and them, German and Turk, represented and silenced.

While the above examples illustrate the tendency of going backwards in architecture, Berlin is also a city whose urban landscape can be shown to incorporate the Muslim immigrant in certain areas of the city's landscape. Berlin is home to Islamic mosques. Yet as the epitext in *Der Spiegel* shows, where the mosque are visually represented, they are also contested by attacks of pigs' blood. These attacks provide evidence of the visual reaction of anti-Islamic collectives in Berlin. The article states that in the last six months before the article's publication date, seven known attacks have occurred on Berlin mosques.<sup>43</sup> These attacks are evidence of the contesta-

tion that occurs with even the limited architectural representations of the Muslim immigrant. Attacks on the minority are not new or original to the Muslim immigrant, however. Jewish synagogues have twenty-four-hour security, funded by the city through Berlin police officers, because the synagogues (or architectural voices of a minority, or non-idealized imagined German), are in constant jeopardy of an attack by a Neo-Nazi collective. In other words, along with visual apartheid, visual contestation is a powerful and real issue among minority groups in Germany. These attacks send messages: you are not welcome; you do not belong; your buildings are not welcome. These messages are used to further marginalize the minority and further other the non-idealized populations within Germany.

## Conclusion

The visual narrative that is constructed through city planning and architecture speaks volumes as to who is in power and who is silenced in an urban landscape. Architecture is complete in itself, and the same time, an art form and a form of hegemonic ideal that can be molded and crafted to envision and re-envision a symbolic landscape. My research focuses on the visual apartheid that is currently upheld in Germany as it is applied to the immigrant Muslim, and the marginalized and the contested sites of representation. I have evaluated three urban landscapes in Germany – Cologne, Dresden, and Berlin – and mapped significant architectural happenings that have, as I propose, further marginalized and silenced the Muslim immigrant's visual voice in the form of visual apartheid.

Through analyzing architecture's hegemonic stance and ideological capabilities, I have shown how symbolic landscapes can be sites of identity contestations. What may not be politically said in speeches or in official documents, because of fear of being deemed Islamophobic or politically incorrect, can be analyzed through the architecture that is built and that which is not built in contemporary Germany.

I go beyond the text of the building to look at the public epitext that surrounds these three sites of contestation (Dresden, Berlin, and Cologne) by using Gérard Genette's methodological framework of paratexts. Through this method, my research applies his literary method to that of the architectural text.

In the end, the silences of the Muslim immigrant emerge on the material landscape of major cities in Germany. In the case of Cologne, we see a large mosque built in the suburbs of the city of steeples. On first glance, one might deem Cologne to be a transgression of the ideals of visual apartheid, but when evaluating the epitexts, we notice the contestation that surrounds the building of the mosque and the debates and questions of legitimacy that

surrounded the implementation of the Islamic structure. While in Dresden and Berlin, a Lacanian lack ensues as the urban landscape is reappropriating architecture to go back to a time that forgets the atrocities of the world wars and ignores the representation of the largest minority in their cities, the Muslim Turks. We see in epitexts the Turkish Muslim response by way of official mosque spokespeople that hint at the visual apartheid they felt while in a smaller, more hidden building. Yet on the other hand there was an acknowledgement of the difficulty in seeing this larger, more visible building to fruition. The official nature of the response does not account for the average mosque member and to get at this level of reception would be a point of further research in which the field currently possesses a gap: the response of the Muslim immigrant to visual apartheid.

My research poses the question of power within architecture and asks to what degree are immigrant voices able to penetrate the visual, symbolic landscape of the German urban skyline? My use of paratexts extends the definition to go beyond the literary text and positions Genette's methodology to include the context of architecture as a main text, re-envisioning the main text to include that which is not linguistics, spoken and along the lines of the semantic, but rather that which is visual. I argue the visual is equally symbolic, ideological, and appropriated to hegemonic powers. What does the act of going back architecturally mean for marking an idealized landscape? Is this not just another example the nation-states' primordial fixation and the timeless construction of power regimes constructing an idealized past? My paper is not an exhaustive account of visual apartheid in Germany, but it is a start – and it begins to problematize the immigrant's voice in the urban landscape, or lack thereof.

## Notes

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