

## THE IMPACT OF WARLD WAR II ON THE ARCHITECTURAL URBANISM: EXAMPLE OF SSSR AND GERMANY

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**Abstract.** *War has a terrible impact on humanity, not only people are affected but also the architectural objectives made by them. The destruction of a building for an architectural purpose means the destruction of the history behind them and the work done to achieve it. The fascists did so during the war, they wanted to destroy any memory or history related to the SSSR.*

*How does war affect people's lives? What about architectural urbanism? Many architectural objects are preserved, restored and protected from demolition. War is an impertinent danger to national heritage of every country. The aim of this paper is to investigate the impact ad consequences of the war on architecture. It also analyses the way architects work with the tragedies of the 20th century, what is a good war monument and how to live with such a memorial every day. The paper illustrates that while the war always has a physical impact on buildings and structures, meanwhile changing the perception of architecture by the architects themselves. It polarizes attitudes towards architecture and its significance. Traditional architecture gains importance and admiration as it resists through ages. However, global styles of architecture have become trendier and more fashionable. The paper illustrates the impact of war on the physical as well as the symbolic aspects of architecture in the world.*

**Keywords:** *architecture, war, urbanism, history.*

### Introduction

*“War and architecture have a long and often parasitical relationship; the building and unbuilding of urban centres, the making of enclaves, walls and segregated residential and city zones has been fundamental to urban form and human experience. The destruction of buildings and cities has therefore always been an integral part of winning and losing wars”.*

(Esther Charlesworth)

The aim of this paper is to investigate the impact of the war on architecture. This rapid swift of conditions, brought by the armed conflicts, affected professionals and ordinary people’s attitudes towards architecture as a representative of social and cultural meanings. This paper is an attempt to understand the change of people’s attitudes towards architecture as an outcome of the war aggression and its impact of the formation of contemporary architecture in the world.

### War consequences on architecture

The destructive consequences of this phenomenon do not stop at the social and political dimensions, it also directly affects the cultural heritage of a nation, including architecture. Throughout history, national and world wars have changed the vector of human progress. Suffering obvious dramatic effects, the whole of society and the nation is reconfigured to suit the context.

During the 20th century, cities in Europe, Asia and Africa were affected by wars aggressions. While medieval cities were protected by defensive walls to protect them from external attacks, “more recently, the re-erection of yet another wall in Jerusalem, 25 feet high and part of a 21-mile barricade, is being built to separate Israelis and Palestinians” [2].

However, not only buildings and structures are destroyed, but also architecture and places that carry meaning and significance for its inhabitants and people. As Bevan put it, “there has always been another war against architecture going on – the destruction of the cultural artefacts of an enemy people or nation as a means of dominating, terrorizing, dividing or eradicating it altogether” [1].

For Vanderbilt, war is the extension of architecture by other means. He argues that, “apart from the obvious architectural connotations of war — the need for defensive shelter, the status of architecture as a target — there is a breadth of associative meaning between the two enterprises: both are about the exercise of control over a territory; both involve strategic considerations of the most apt site-specific solutions; both involve the use of symbol, rhetoric, and cultural context” [4].

From an architectural and infrastructural point of view, war generates short and long-term consequences both in development and in the practices of securing it.

In short, in peacetime, with the necessary conclusions, but also for the purpose of conservation, follow massive interventions in architecture and urbanism.

### **Wartime reconstruction plan**

The period from 1941 to the mid-1950s occupies a special place in the history of the development of Soviet architecture. On June 22, 1941, fascist Germany treacherously attacked the Soviet Union, the Great Patriotic War began, and the peaceful construction of socialism was interrupted.

From the very first days of the war, architects with weapons in their hands fought the enemy, actively participated in military construction, in particular, carried out large-scale camouflage work. The implementation of camouflage work in the capital was led by K. Alabyan, D. Chechulin, B. Iofan, S. Chernyshev and other architects. The architects of Leningrad, which was under enemy blockade, had to work in extremely difficult conditions. They actively participated in agitation and propaganda activities organized by the party committees of the city. Following the traditions of revolutionary Leningrad, N. Baranov, L. Ilyin, V. Kamensky, A. Nikolsky, B. Rubanenko, I. Fomin, L. Rudnev and other architects, together with representatives of the artistic intelligentsia of the city, created projects for military propaganda design of streets, campaign posters, worked on the problems of the future restoration of the city.

The Nazis deliberately destroyed monuments of national history and culture. The fascist General Reichenau cynically asserted in his order to the troops: "No historical or artistic value in the East matters." By erasing monuments and monuments of architecture from the face of the earth, the Nazis sought to destroy the national identity of the people. Particularly affected were historical architectural and artistic values in the suburbs of Moscow, Leningrad - Petrodvorets, Pavlovsk, Pushkin, Gatchina, unique architectural monuments of Novgorod, Pskov, Kyiv and many other cities of the RSFSR, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic republics.

In 1942 A commission was established for the registration and protection of monuments of art, headed by the academy I. E. Grabar. By the end of 1942, the architectural monuments of Kalinin, Kaluga, Istra, Torzhok Staritsa, Borovsk, Volokolamsk had already been surveyed. In the same year, A. Shchusev completed one of the first projects of restoration and restoration work on the New Jerusalem Monastery in Istra. Particularly widespread work on the restoration and restoration of architectural monuments unfolded, of course, in the postwar years.

### **Urban restoration and rebirth**

After the war ends on 8 May 1945, much of Berlin is nothing but rubble: 600,000 apartments have been destroyed, and only 2.8 million of the city's original population of 4.3 million still live in the city. In accordance with an agreement signed by the Allies, the city is divided into four sectors and administered jointly by the occupying powers, the United States of America, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union.

Previous sad experiences have shown that the urban areas affected by the war become platforms for experimenting with new visions, aiming to restore the built fund. But what lies behind this process? The emergence of landmarks as a symbol of power has been fervently appreciated by architects in restoration programs. One of the most representative examples is the restoration project of the German Reichstag (fig.1, fig.2). The building was built for the Diet of the German Empire, which was succeeded by the Reichstag of the Weimar Republic. The latter would become the Reichstag of Nazi Germany, which left the building (and ceased to act as a parliament) after the 1933 fire and never returned, using the Kroll Opera House instead; the term *Reichstag* has not been used by German parliaments since World War II.



Figura 1. House of Parliament, Berlin



Figura 2. House of Parliament (restored), Berlin

*Reichstag* was a ruin after the Second World War and after the integration of the glass dome (fig.3, fig.4) as a hope for a better life and a transparent leadership of to architect Norman Foster, the building became the second most visited place in Germany [3]. The Reichstag has long been a complex architectural sign in German history, As the first permanent home of a unified national parliament, it was completed in 1882 to a Neo-High Renaissance design at the instigation of Kaiser Wilhelm I. From the day of its opening, it was the home of a weak and fragmented parliament, whose power was resented and distrusted by the militaristic Kaiser Wilhelm II [3]. Though Bismarck preferred a British architect, an all-German competition led to the appointment of Paul Wallot. And though the brief called for a German national style, the classically inspired design was felt to be suitable as an expression of the parliament's position as a powerful component of the German empire. Classical architecture referenced the civic virtues of ancient Rome, and a balance of proportion as a metaphor for a balance of power. The building itself helped structure the political field, assuming power and the existence of other powers [3].



Figura 3. The glass dome of House of Parliament



Figura 4. The glass dome of House of Parliament

### Conclusion

Interestingly, all wars have changed values, societies, cultures and economies, but they have never changed the urban or building configuration. We have already learned to build as tall and imposing as possible, the next step would be to create safe buildings for people in case of armed violence.

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