

THE POST-WAR REBUILDING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

Chepurna Svitlana,

Ph.D., Associate Professor

O.M. Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv

After full-scale aggression Russian Federation, because of constant Russian shelling, cultural heritage which are located in the central historical parts of Ukrainian cities, have suffered significant damage.

Since the conditions of warfare and modern weapons are different from those used during World War II, the resulting damage is much more serious and severe. Thus, in the city of Kharkiv and the Kharkiv region, at least 198 architectural monuments were damaged, including two that were completely destroyed [1].

Therefore, the recovery of cultural heritage will be relevant in the post-war period, because it will be allowed to save such objects for future generation.

Determining methods for rebuilding damaged cultural heritage sites depends on many factors, namely the location, structural scheme, and materials from which the building is made. Restoration work is most often used for such objects, which is a complex and multifaceted complex that requires significant financial and human resources [3].

When restoring monuments, the main attention is paid to preserving their physical condition, and specific technological processes are used for restoration, which are aimed at preserving the architectural monument in its original form [4, 5, 6].

However, the process of eliminating the consequences of missile strikes often leads to further destruction of buildings and results in the loss of authentic structural elements [7]. This is what happened to the building at 13 Poltavskyi Shliakh Street; therefore, after reconstruction, it will no longer have historical value but will simply be a new building preserving its original appearance.

This is due to the fact that the first to arrive at the place are the State Emergency Service Units, whose primary task is to rescue people, followed by Public Utility Services that identify the remains of the building as construction debris. However, during the clearing of debris from buildings classified as architectural monuments, specialists in cultural heritage preservation, as well as architects or structural engineers, must be present.

It should be noted that armed conflicts fundamentally alter the architectural appearance of cities. During World War II, the central areas of Nuremberg, Munich, Dresden, and Warsaw were almost completely destroyed; however, their restoration took place gradually, taking into account historical documents, preserved visual materials, and eyewitness accounts. Nevertheless, there are numerous examples where damaged buildings were never restored, and new, more modern structures were built in their place – this approach can be observed in the redevelopment of the eastern part of Berlin.

Therefore, in the post-war period, the main tasks in rebuilding cultural heritage in Ukraine should include:

1. Conducting an inventory of the damaged sites and performing a technical assessment of the surviving structures.
2. Amending legislative and regulatory documents related to the protection of monuments.
3. Developing a Comprehensive Program for the Restoration of Architectural Heritage Sites.

European countries have experience in recovering such types of objects which can be applied to the rehabilitation of damaged monuments in Ukrainian cities. However, this process should take into account architectural particularities in order to preserve the unique identity of each historical area.

References:

1. How Kharkiv Region is Losing Its Historical Heritage? [Elec. resource]. – Access mode: <https://anticor-kharkiv.org/our-work/yak-kharkivshchyna-vtrachaye-istorychni-pamiatky/>, free (application date 22.10.2025).
2. How many buildings have been damaged in Kharkiv since the beginning of the war? [Elec. resource]. – Access mode: <https://stroyobzor.ua/ua/kharkov/news-city/skilki-budinkiv-poshkodzhenou-kharkovi-z-pochatku-viyeni>, free (application date 22.10.2025).
3. Levytskyi A.S. Issues of authenticity and comprehensive preservation of decorative elements of buildings during the restoration of architectural monuments / Levytskyi A.S. // Ukrainian art history discourse– 2025. – Vol. 4. – P. 77-84. – Access mode: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/396431774_PITANNA_AVTENTICNOSTI_TA_KOMPLEKSNOGO_ZBEREZENNA_DEKORATIVNIH_ELEMENTIV_BUDIVEL_PRI_RESTAVRACII_PAM'ATOK_ARHITEKTURI, free (application date 22.10.2025).
4. Conservation and restoration of cultural heritage sites / edited by I. Prokopenko. – Kyiv: Samit-knyga, 2022. – 434 p. – Access mode: <https://reherit.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Metodychnyj-posibnyk-konservatsiya-2022-1.pdf>, free (application date 22.10.2025).
5. Bondar G., Zhyteniova N. Reconstruction of architectural monuments of Kharkiv region using augmented reality / Hryhoriy Bondar, Natalia Zhyteniova // Professional Art Education. – 2023. – Vol. 4 (2). – P. 6-12. – Access mode: <https://dspace.hnpu.edu.ua/server/api/core/bitstreams/f313dc86-41a5-4c05-a435-3b3d95916e3f/content>, free (application date 22.10.2025).
6. Jolanta Dzwierzynska, Anna Prokop. Reconstruction of Historic Monuments – A Dual Approach. / Jolanta Dzwierzynska, Anna Prokop // Sustainability. – 2022. – №14 (21). – Access mode: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142114651>
7. Restoration of architectural monuments damaged by Russian aggression [Elec. resource]. – Access mode: <https://nakypilo.ua/teksty/suspilstvo/vidnovlennia-pamiatok-arkhitektury-poshkodzhenykh-unaslidok-rosiiskoi-ahresii/>, free (application date 22.10.2025).