WWII IMPACT ON ART & CULTURE

CULTURE CHANGES

Before

- Different religions accepted

- Each country had their own language, methods and levels of education

- Art, music, and dance were flourishing, and new arts forms were being introduced

- Architecture varied with beautiful buildings and landmarks; thousands of years old, all influenced by Carolingian, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Modern and International styles.

During/After

- Jewish & Catholics persecuted

- Many schools closed, curriculum was changed, and access to a college education was limited

- Many artists fled Germany, famous paintings and treasures were stolen, destroyed or went missing, and only traditional German music & dance was considered acceptable

- Nazi architecture characterized by three forms: a stripped neoclassicism, vernacular, and utilitarian. Many buildings and landmarks were destroyed or severely damaged. Some never restored or rebuilt.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION (CATHOLIC, JEWISH)

- The Roman Catholic Church suffered persecution in Nazi Germany.

- The Nazis claimed jurisdiction over all collective and social activity. Clergy were watched closely, and frequently denounced, arrested and sent to Nazi concentration camps. Catholic schools, press, trade unions, political parties and youth leagues were eradicated.

- Anti-Catholic propaganda and "morality" trials were staged. Monasteries and convents were targeted for expropriation. Prominent Catholic lay leaders were murdered, and thousands of Catholic activists were arrested.

Prisoner's Barracks of Dachau Concentration Camp.

- In all, an estimated one third of German priests faced some form of reprisal in Nazi Germany and 400 German priests were sent to the dedicated Priest Barracks of Dachau Concentration Camp.

- Of the 2,720 clergy imprisoned at Dachau from Germany and occupied territories, 2,579 (or 94.88%) were Catholic.

- During the German Occupation of Poland (1939–1945), the Nazis brutally suppressed the Catholic Church in Poland

- It is estimated, based on German Death Book records that over 200 thousand Catholics died at the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp. Germans killed millions of non-Jewish ethnic people, as part of their genocide cleansing. Many of these were Europeans from strong Catholic practicing countries (like Poland & Hungary) that never even made it to camps.

Public execution of Polish priests and civilians in Bydgoszcz's Old Market Square, 9 September 1939. The Polish Church suffered a brutal persecution under Nazi Occupation.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION (CATHOLIC, JEWISH)

- The introduction of the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935 further increased Jewish marginalization. Jews were banned from marrying non-Jews and their citizenship was removed, including their right to vote.

- As time progressed, Jews were barred from all professional occupations and Jewish children were prohibited from attending state schools. In 1938, further laws decreed that men must take the middle name 'Israel' and women 'Sarah'. All German Jews would have their passports marked with a 'J'.

- On 9 November 1938, the Nazis initiated pogroms (organized attacks on a particular group) against the Jews in all Nazi territories. It was a night of vandalism, violence and persecution that many have since described as 'the beginning of the Holocaust'.

Main entrance to the Auschwitz-Birkenau killing center. This photograph was taken some time after the liberation of the camp in January 1945.

- 91 Jews were murdered, 30,000 were arrested and sent to concentration camps and 267 synagogues were destroyed. This night became known as Kristallnacht – the 'Night of Broken Glass' – so called because of the smashed glass which covered the streets from the shops which were looted.

- In 1941, Nazi anti-Jewish policy became more radical. Jews were marked with a Star of David badge. The first deportations of Jews from Germany to ghettos and camps (Auschwitz-Birkenau) in the east began.

- Based on transportation records to camps, kept by the Germans, an estimated 6 million Jews were killed. This does not take into account the unknown number of victims whose bodies were never recovered or for whom there were no records. Based on population records across Europe, it is estimated that 60% of the European Jewish population were killed.

In this April 19, 1943 file photo, a group of Jews are escorted from the Warsaw ghetto by German soldiers.
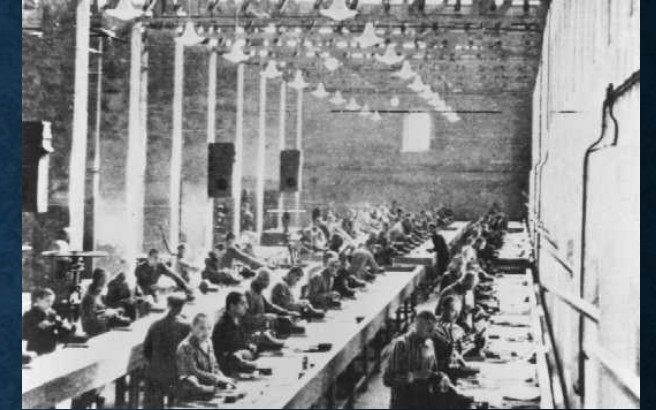
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

Rail cars containing possessions taken from deportees. This abandoned train was on the way to Germany loaded with personal effects (in this case, pillows) taken from Auschwitz victims.

Prisoners at forced labor in the Siemens factory. Auschwitz camp,

View of a section of the barbed-wire fence and barracks at Auschwitz

A transport of Jews from Hungary arrives at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Soon after liberation, surviving children of the Auschwitz camp walk out of the children's barracks.

EDUCATION

- Many schools closed due to evacuations or German persecution

  - Many countries tried to evacuate their children to safer areas.

  - England closed most schools in cities. This meant that around a million children who were not evacuated, were now without schools.

  - In several countries, millions of children studied in bomb shelters or in the open air

  - The occupiers tried to turn the school children of Eastern Europe into obedient slaves or soldiers, with minimal primary education.

  - Some Universities in invaded countries were shut down by the Germans and for others, tutors and students were dramatically reduced because of war work.

- Many schools were used for propaganda

- Either German or Russian was taught in school

- A college education was limited to select students. Example: In Hungary, if your father served in the Hungarian army, the children were denied a higher education.

Teaching Math in the fields.

ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE)

- In mid 1933 when Hitler took complete control of the government, the arts scene changed to be used for government propaganda. This regulation meant an exodus of artists from Germany and a retreat back to more structured forms, like ballet and less inventive, styles of dance and other art mediums from the artists who remained.

- The totalitarian regimes greatly affected the works of many artists. The dictators wanted the art and literature to conform to the ideas of the regime.

- Degenerate art (German: Entartete Kunst) was adopted in the 1920s by the Nazi Party to describe modern art. During the dictatorship of Adolf Hitler, German modernist art and works of internationally renowned artists, were removed from state-owned museums and banned in Nazi Germany on the grounds that such art was an "insult to German feeling", un-German, Freemasonic, Jewish, or Communist in nature.

- Those identified as degenerate artists were subjected to sanctions, dismissed from teaching positions, forbidden to exhibit or to sell their art, and in some cases forbidden to produce art.

- Art produced during times of war typically had a few goals.
  - Provide proper propaganda for or against certain aspects of the war
  - Show the reality of war

"France and the Jew." A haunting caricature of a Jewish man with claws gripping a globe

The exhibition was designed to convince French people of the necessity of antisemitic laws, including the possible removal of Jews from France. It was funded by the Nazi propaganda office.

ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE) - DURING WWII

- During World War II, both professional and amateur artists created images in response to the circumstances they faced. It brought a sense of normality to their daily lives and a means to challenge or support the rule of the Third Reich and its allies.

- Under the extreme conditions of war, occupation, and the Holocaust, artwork also became a way to document atrocities and preserve memories

Henry Moore, 1940

Henry Moore became fascinated by 'tube shelterers': 'I had never seen so many reclining figures, and even the train tunnels seemed to be like the holes in my sculpture.'

Shoe Lane, London, EC4
Leonard Rosoman, 1940

Served with the Auxiliary Fire Service and captured this disastrous moment as a wall collapses on two firemen. One of the firemen was killed - a fact which haunted Rosoman for the rest of his life.

"Solidarity: Prisoner Supports His Exhausted Comrade"
By Richard Grune

Art as Survival: The Terezín Concentration Camp
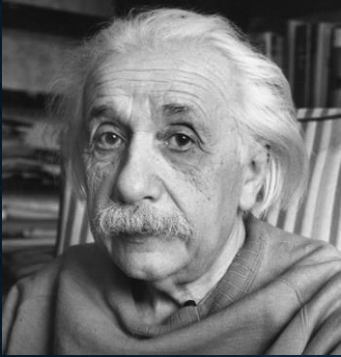By Peggy Rosenthal

Battle of Germany by Paul Nash, 1944
Surrealist painter

A Vision of History
By William Franklin Draper

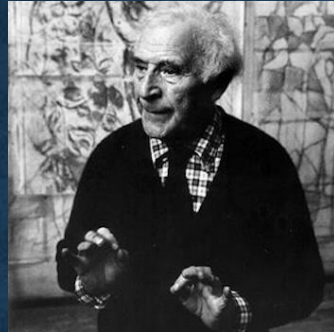

Destroyed or Lost Art Relics From World War II

# ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE) – ARTIST STORIES

In 1938, Einstein left his home in Germany to escape persecution from the Nazis and sought refuge in the United States. In light of his experience, he campaigned for the creation of an organization that would give aid to the countless others who have to flee their countries in the face of war, political upheaval, and natural disasters.

Artist Marc Chagall is known for the dream-like imagery of his artworks, which often revolve around his own personal history, Jewish motifs, and themes from European folklore. In 1941, upon realizing his life was at risk from the Nazi Occupation, he fled to America with the help of a forged US visa arranged by the American Vice-Consul in Marseilles.
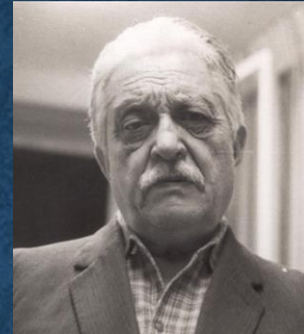
Romanian-born Marcel Janco is best known for being one of the founders of Dadaism, an European avant-garde art movement, and a leading figure in Constructivism. Facing violent anti-semitic persecution during WW2, Janco emigrated to British Palestine in 1941 where he worked as an art promoter and teacher and encouraged the development of local Jewish art.
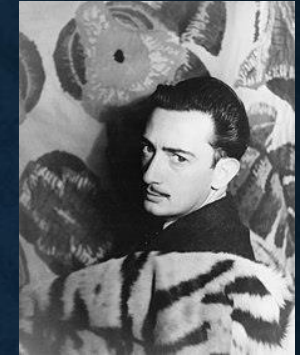
Renowned Surrealist Salvador Dali was born in Figueres, Spain. He and his wife were forced to emigrate to the United States in 1940 to escape the ravaging effects of WW2 throughout Europe. The couple were issued visas by the Portuguese consul in Bordeaux and remained abroad for eight years. Dali's arrival in New York is credited as being one of the reasons the city became an important art center after the war.
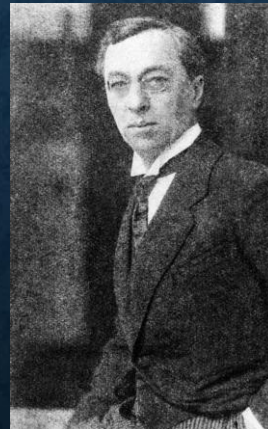

Frank Auerbach was born in Berlin to a Jewish family in 1931. When he was seven years old, his parents arranged for him to travel to Britain to escape the Nazi oppression that was dominating the country. They were sent to a concentration camp not long after.

Despite starting his career in law and economics, Wassily Kandinsky is generally considered to be one of the foremost pioneers of abstract art. Born in Moscow in 1866, he was forced to flee from his home in Germany to France in 1933 when the Nazis closed the Bauhaus School of Art and Architecture where he taught.

In 1937, 57 of his works were confiscated by the Nazis in a purge of "degenerate art". Kandinsky had a strong interest in the relationship between art and classical music and also believed that art should be an expression of an individual's inner life, instead of following artistic trends.

ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE)

- Due to the turmoil with the events of World War II, museums and churches were forced to hide their treasures in fear of Nazi's stealing or destroying them.

- In August 1939, the Czartoryski Museum prepared for war and sixteen cases were packed with their most precious objects and transported and stored in Sieniawa, while the rest of the collection was carried down to the cellars of the museum.

- In 1940, Winston Churchill famously said of the nation's art treasures: "Hide them in caves and cellars, but not one picture shall leave this island."

- Shortly after the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, in just 10 days the staff of the Tretyakov Gallery and the Pushkin Museum in Moscow packed most of the more valuable items in their collections and shipped them away from the Capital.

Storing the art in the quarry during World War Two improved the National Gallery's understanding of preserving art
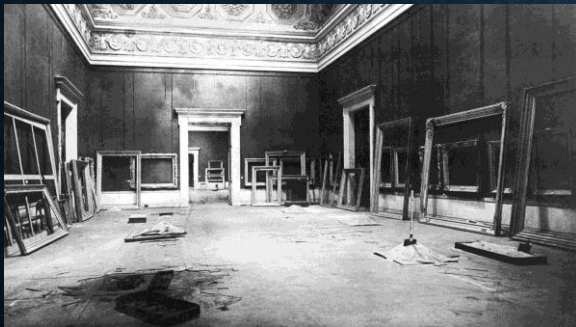

One night in mid-July, Russia secretly loaded their packed-up treasures onto a special train consisting of 17 cars, departing from Moscow to Novosibirsk (3,300 km from the capital)

- Rome moved most of its treasures to Monte Cassino, a countryside Abbey. Unfortunately, a lot were destroyed when it was bombed during the battles to retake Italy from the Germans.

- The Second World War altered the map of Europe, and redistributed art on an unprecedented scale. Few people know the astonishing extent of art looting during the war. Adolf Hitler and his deputy Hermann Göring raced one another to steal artworks.

- Most of the treasures not destroyed have been recovered, but there are several that are still missing.
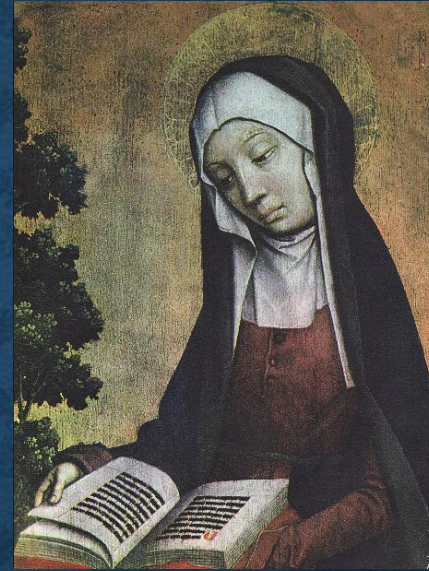
ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE) – MISSING TREASURES

Raphael, Portrait of a Young Man. Stolen by the Nazis, although the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that it has been known "for years" that the painting survived the war
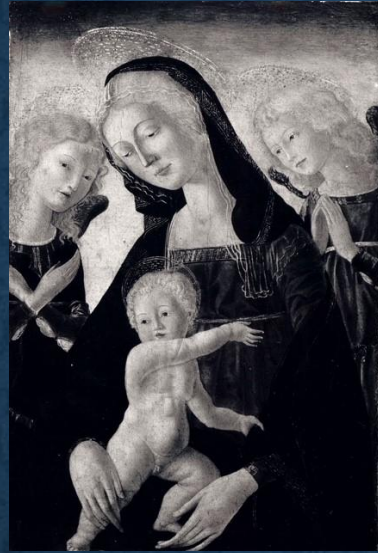
The Mother of God with the Child, 1470s, tempera on panel. Stolen by the Nazis.

Saint with a Book, 15th century. Stolen for Adolf Hitler's planned Führer Museum in Linz.

Madonna with Child (triptych), 14th century. Stolen in WWII.

The Sword of Islam was a ceremonial weapon given in 1937 to Benito Mussolini, who was pronounced as the Protector of Islam

The Amber Room was a chamber decorated in amber panels backed with gold leaf and mirrors, located in the Catherine Palace of Tsarskoye Selo near Saint Petersburg.

Constructed in the 18th century in Prussia, the room was dismantled and eventually disappeared during World War II. Before its loss, it was considered an "Eighth Wonder of the World".

ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE)

- The Nazis were dedicated to the concept that German Culture was the greatest in history, but, as with all parts of art, Hitler took an interest in suppressing the work of all those he considered "unfit" while promoting certain composers as proper Germans.

- All musicians were required to join the Reichsmusikkammer, or "Reich Music Chamber", part of the Reich Chamber of Culture founded by Joseph Goebbels in 1933. Membership required a so-called Aryan certificate (descendants from the Proto-Indo-Europeans), meaning that Jewish musicians could no longer work, along with people from many other races, religions and cultures.

- The Reichsmusikkammer promoted classical music by German composers such as Beethoven and Wagner, as well as Austrians such as Mozart.

- The Nazi government identified certain music, composers and performers as entartete Musik. Designation into this category was based upon the race, ethnicity, and political orientation of the composers and performers.

Wunschkonzert für die Wehrmacht - was the title of a German radio program that was broadcast between 1939 and 1941 during the Nazi era. Filled with proprganda.

Royal Navy crew members aboard a minesweeper perform as part of an amateur dance band.

- In 1938 Nazi Germany passed an official law on Jazz music. It deals with the racial nature of the music and makes laws based on racial theories. Hitler felt it posed a threat to European higher culture and was therefore forbidden except in the case of scientific study.

- The works of Jewish classical composers were banned, including those of Gustav Mahler, Felix Mendelssohn, Arnold Schoenberg, George Gershwin and Claude Debussy (who had a Jewish wife). The popular music of Irving Berlin (also Jewish) was completely banned.

- Military music was also promoted, but lighter, non-political music was a source of escapism for many. The Wunschkonzert für die Wehrmacht [de], or "Request Concert for the Armed Forces", was a radio program broadcast from Berlin.

ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE)

- In the early 20th century, prior to the election of Hitler as chancellor in 1933, Germany built the roots for today's modern dance style. With the sensation of Ausdruckstanz, or Expression Dance, prolific choreographers such as Rudolf von Laban and Mary Wigman got their start and began setting a new standard for dance around the world.

- As with music, in September of 1933, dance fell under the rules of the Reichskulturkammer (Reich Chamber of Culture). This was to oversee that all the art being created in the new socialist state was conforming to Nazi beliefs and policies.

- The sub-chambers divided culture into seven different arenas: film, music, fine arts, theater, literature, press, and radio. Without a clear definition of where dance would fit in, it fell under the blanket of theater, where Goebbels was able to keep a watch on developments that made some choreographers and dancers fall out of favor with the government.

Mary Wigman expressionist style of German choreography that revolutionized dance at the turn of the 20th century, dismantling ballet's technical perfection and idealized stories.


Wartime dancing at Blackpool Tower 1 November 1945

- With Hitler wanting a more structured style of dance like ballet, this placed modern dance in a bind—with its new prominence in German society, was it going to be allowed to survive or would it become a relic of degenerate art?

- Modern dance turned out to be the exception to this rule—as long as those in charge agreed with each work. This allowed Modern dance to exist but removed from it the central idea of emotional and human exploration by enforcing it to adhere to strict, anti-Semitic and Aryan propaganda guidelines.

ARTS (ART, MUSIC & DANCE)

- One dance form that was more regulated, in theory at least, was Jazz. This was because, like in Music, "Jazz was considered a danger to the core values of German society because it represented a culturally and racially foreign influence."

- European Folk-dance fell into a similar category. It was not German, it reflected other cultures, and thus it was frowned upon. It faded into the background along with their affiliated dance clothing styles. However, other forms of dance (swing, jitterbug & fox-trot), grew in popularity.

- Dance became a **Morale Booster** for citizens and soldiers, through its very nature of bringing people together. It was a way to escape the pressures of life under the constant threat of bombing and death.

- Dance halls sprang up everywhere and people danced in the streets.
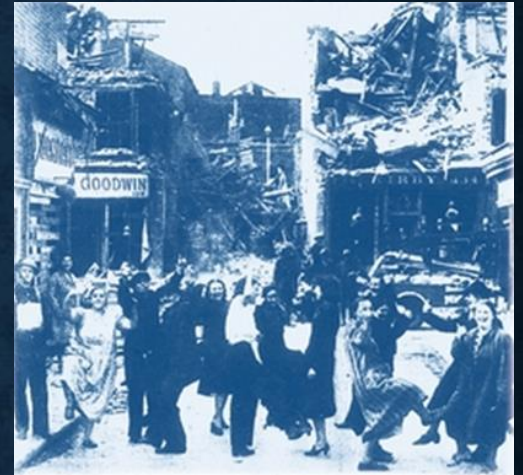
"We Danced While They Bombed

Locals dance around a piano in Bow Way, London, during the blitz. 29th September 1940

"Officers and Their Dates Enjoy a Dance Given at the Officers' Club, 2nd Service Group, at an Air Base Somewhere in Iceland." 13 December 1943.

Swing was very popular in the dance halls.

FOLK DANCE DRESS

After World War II a revival of interest drew dancers back to the traditional squares, schottisches, and polkas.

Poland

France

Ireland

England

Russia

Scotland

Germany

Hungary

Austria

Italy

FOLK DANCE DRESS

Spain

Norway

Bulgaria

Switzerland

Finland

Netherlands

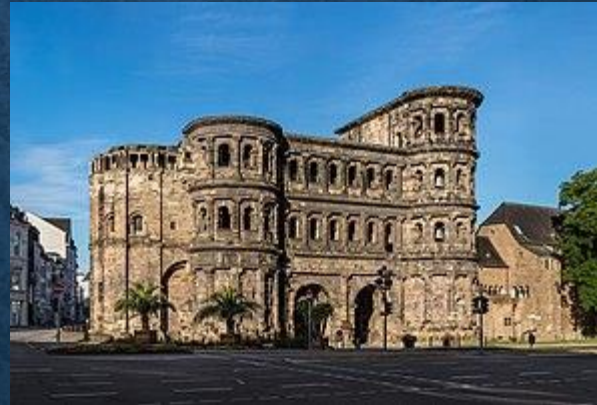Ukraine

Denmark

Sweden

Romania

EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURE

- European architecture was a mix of styles developed through the ages; Celtic, Carolingian, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Classicism, Historicism, Art Nouveau, Modern and International styles.

- Most of the buildings in Europe were thousands of years old.

- Each country had its unique styles along with influences from neighboring countries. But Germany was a complete mix of all of these styles.

Brandenburg is an 18th-century neoclassical monument in Berlin

Porta Nigra was built in grey sandstone

Cathedral Church of Saint Peter) is a cathedral in Cologne

The entrance of the pre-parliament in St. Paul's Church

Hambach Castle is considered a symbol of the German democracy movement because of the Hambacher Fest which occurred here in 1832

Neuschwanstein Castle is a 19th-century historicist palace on a rugged hill of the foothills of the Alps in the very south of Germany,

NAZI ARCHITECTURE

- Nazi architecture, promoted by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime from 1933 until its fall in 1945, connected with urban planning in Nazi Germany. It is characterized by three forms: a stripped neoclassicism, a vernacular style and a utilitarian style.

- While similar to Classicism, the official Nazi style is distinguished by the impression it leaves on viewers. Architectural style was used by the Nazis to deliver and enforce their ideology. Formal elements like flat roofs, horizontal extension, uniformity, and the lack of decor created "an impression of simplicity, uniformity, monumentality, solidity and eternity," which is how the Nazi Party wanted to appear.

- Greek and Roman influence could also be seen in Nazi architecture and typography, as they drew inspiration from monumental architecture of ancient Rome and Greece to create a sense of power. The Nazis also shut down the Bauhaus movement, which emphasized functionalism and simplicity.

A model of Adolf Hitler's plan for Germania (Berlin) formulated under the direction of Albert Speer, looking north toward the Volkshalle at the top of the frame

- The Volkswagen was a product of Nazi architecture industrial design. Hitler commissioned Ferdinand Porsche to design a "people's car"; to be affordable and accessible to all Germans, which resulted in the creation of the Volkswagen Beetle.

- The Nazi regime staged several "Degenerate Art" exhibitions to condemn modern art as harmful to German culture. This led to the persecution of many artists and architects, including members of the Bauhaus movement.

Cover of the exhibition program: Degenerate Art Exhibition, 1937.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

- The events of World War II (1939–1945) and its aftermath had a significant impact on the development of building technology and, consequently, architectural possibilities. Steel and other building materials were in low supply due to the needs of the war effort, which prompted the use of novel materials like aluminum.

- Many landmarks and buildings were damaged or destroyed. Most have been rebuilt. However, much of the original craftsmanship is lost forever. The war's immense devastation also contributed to the development of modern architecture and pre-fabricated buildings.
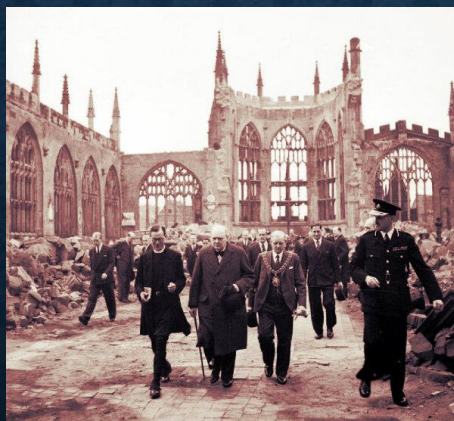
EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

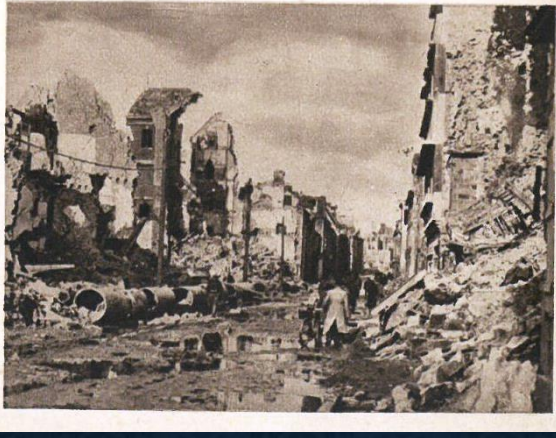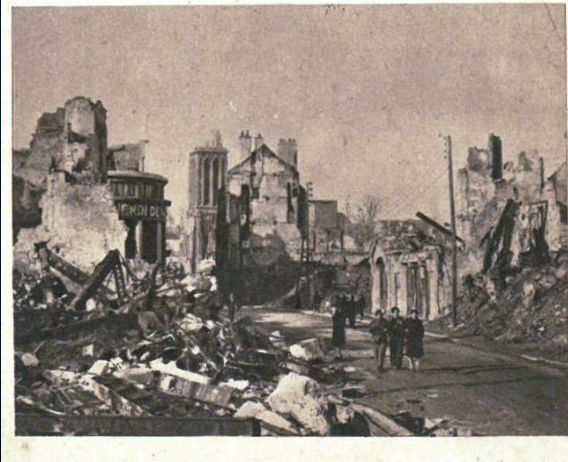## St Michael's Cathedral of Coventry, UK

Following the bombing of the cathedral in 1940, Provost Richard Howard had the words "Father Forgive" inscribed on the wall behind the altar of the ruined building.

The city has had three cathedrals. The first was St Mary's, a monastic building, from 1102–1539, of which only a few ruins remain. The second was St Michael's, a 14th-century Gothic church designated as a cathedral in 1918

This St Michael's Cathedral now stands ruined, bombed almost to destruction during the Coventry Blitz of 14 November 1940 by the German Luftwaffe. Only the tower, spire, the outer wall and the bronze effigy and tomb of its first bishop, Huyshe Yeatman-Biggs, survived.

The current St Michael's Cathedral is built next to the remains of the old one. The foundation stone of the new cathedral was laid by Elizabeth II on 23 March 1956. The cathedral was consecrated on 25 May 1962

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Rue de Bayeux in Caen, France

Although most of the city of Caen was destroyed during the WWII bombings, it was quickly rebuilt after the war. The modern architecture blends with what little remains of the historical part - its castle, medieval streets, and a few churches.

The battle for Caen lasted just under two months and was so vicious 73% of the city was destroyed and it is estimated 3000 local people; children, women and French civilians, died.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Buda Castle, Budapest, Hungary

Buda Castle was the last major stronghold of the Nazi and Hungarian troops. The main entrance to the castle was destroyed - and never rebuilt.

And the devastation continued after the war: the communist dictatorship destroyed many buildings for ideological reasons, even though they could have been saved or rebuilt. Many iconic buildings, including several churches and the Castle Garden, fell victim to communist "restoration".
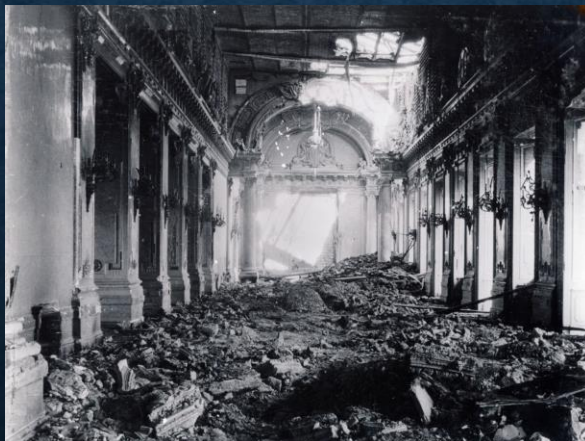

Historical Buda castle and palace complex of the Hungarian Kings in Budapest. It was first completed in 1265, although the massive Baroque palace today occupying most of the site was built between 1749 and 1769. The complex in the past was referred to as The Royal Palace.
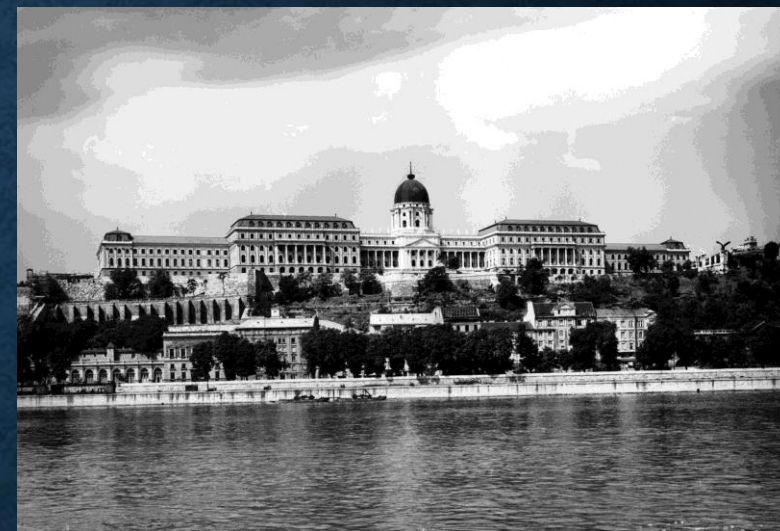
The siege of Budapest was one of the most brutal battles of World War II, with the Castle District suffering the greatest damage. Only 1,400 of the approximately 6,500 flats standing in the vicinity of Castle Hill remained intact.

Clearing of the ruins began almost immediately after World War II, but the restoration of the palace was not undertaken.

After the defeat of the 1956 revolution, the solidified Kádár regime intended a more cultural function for the palace after its restoration. The castle now houses the Hungarian National Gallery and the Budapest Historical Museum.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Matthias Church, Budapest, Hungary

During World War II the church was badly damaged. Matthias Church was used as a camp by the Germans and Soviets in 1944-1945 during the Soviet occupation of Hungary.


Matthias Church was built in the 13th century, and since then it has been extended and rebuilt so many times: each era, style, ruler and Castle siege has left its mark on the building.
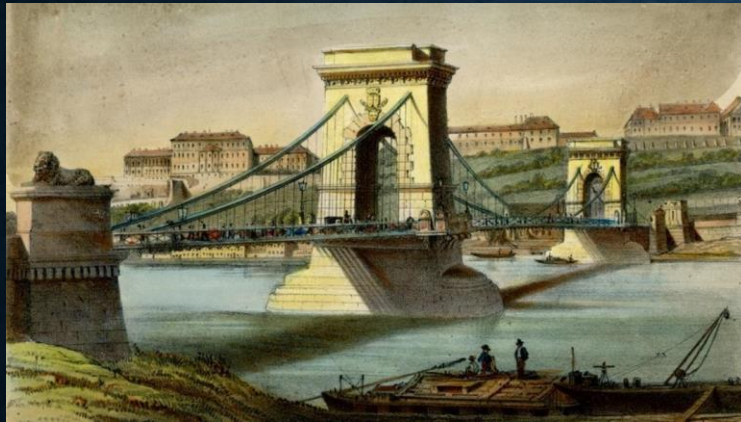
During World War II, the city suffered serious damages, but fortunately, there were treasures that they managed to save. Such was the case with the stained glass windows made by Bertalan Székely and Károly Lotz, which were taken from the church and hidden during the war. The originals can still be seen on the southern side of the church.
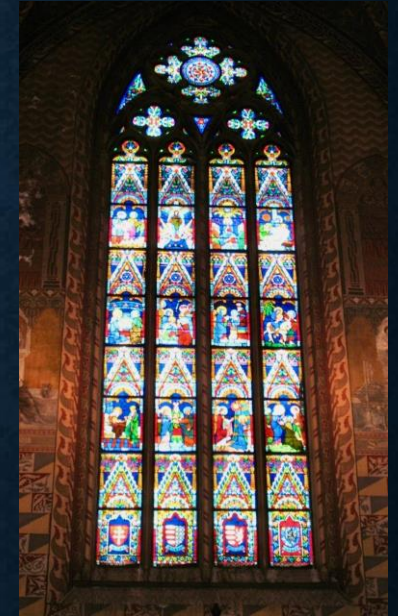
EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Széchenyi Chain Bridge Budapest, Hungary

The Széchenyi Chain Bridge and Buda Castle in ruins after World War II (1946). In World War II, the bridge was blown up on 18 January 1945 by the retreating Germans during the Siege of Budapest, with only the towers remaining.

The foundation stone of the Chain Bridge is located under the bridgehead in Pest. It was laid down 180 years ago, on the afternoon of 24 August 1842,

It was rebuilt and reopened in 1949.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Leuven University Library, Leuven, Belgium

Founded in 1425, Leuven University and its libraries underwent a turbulent history throughout the centuries. Precious collections were taken away, historical buildings disappeared in fire, and each time collections had to be restored.

The Leuven University Library in Leuven, Belgium, has the unfortunate distinction of being destroyed twice. The 17th-century book repository was demolished the first time in August of 1914 in the early stages of World War I by the German Army, who set fire to the town of Leuven. The library was rebuilt only to be leveled by the Nazis in 1940 during WWII.

Belgium painstakingly rebuilt the library, again, after the war.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

National Library of Serbia, Belgrade, Serbia

The National Library of Serbia, founded in 1832, was completely burned during WWII in the bombing of Belgrade by the Nazis on April 6, 1941. It was reportedly the only library destroyed on purpose in WWII. Hitler's decision was based on his position that the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia should not exist as a state.

Much of the library's holdings were destroyed, including 1,300 medieval manuscripts, more than 300,000 books printed in Serbia between the 15th and 17th centuries, 2,000 letters by distinguished Serbian and South Slovac people, as well as Ottoman manuscripts, newspapers, engravings, and maps documenting hundreds of years of history. The bombing also destroyed 8,000 structures in the city and killed 4,000 people.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Royal Opera House, Valletta, Malta

Was erected in 1866. The island came under aegis of the British Empire in the 19th century and became a key port for the Royal Navy.

On the evening of Tuesday, April 7, 1942, the theatre was devastated by Luftwaffe bombers. The portico and the auditorium were a heap of stones, the roof a gaping hole of twisted girders. The rear end starting half-way from the colonnade was however intact.

The remaining structures were levelled down in the late 1950s as a safety precaution.

On August 8, 2013, an open-air theatre was officially inaugurated. The theatre was named Pjazza Teatru Rjal after the original structure.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, Austria

Founded in 1137 following the Treaty of Mautern, the partially constructed Romanesque church was solemnly dedicated in 1147 to Saint Stephen

Reconstruction began immediately after the war, with a limited reopening 12 December 1948 and a full reopening 23 April 1952.

During World War II, the cathedral was saved from intentional destruction at the hands of retreating German forces when Wehrmacht Captain Gerhard Klinkicht disregarded orders to "fire a hundred shells and reduce it to rubble".

However, on 12 April 1945, civilian looters lit fires in nearby shops as Soviet Army troops entered the city. The winds carried the fire to the cathedral, where it severely damaged the roof, causing it to collapse. Fortunately, protective brick shells built around the pulpit, Frederick III's tomb, and other treasures, minimized damage to the most valuable artworks. However, the Rollinger choir stalls, carved in 1487, could not be saved.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

City of Vienna, Austria
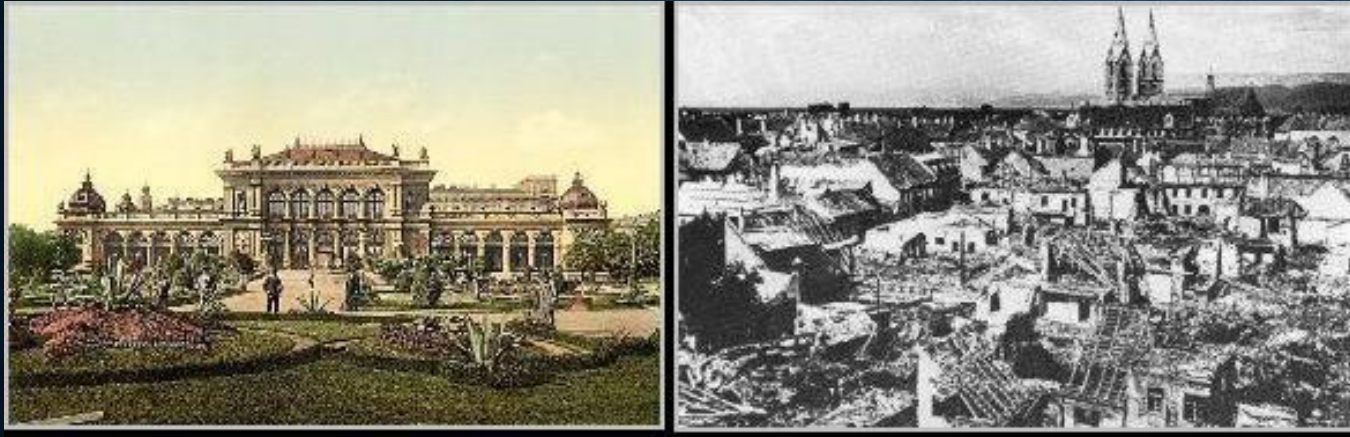
The major bombing of Austria started with an attack on Wiener Neustadt by U.S. command on August 13, 1943. The US air force together with the British 205th squadron carried out bombing raids on Austria until 1945 from their Italian bases.

The city suffered heavy damage in the last months of World War II, and much rebuilding was done after the war.

The Allies after the war helped Austria rebuild. The character of Vienna as a whole remains much the same as in the years before the war.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Abbey of Monte Cassino, Italy

The Battle of Monte Cassino, also known as the Battle for Rome, was a series of four military assaults by the Allies against German forces in Italy during the Italian Campaign of World War II. The objective was to break through the Winter Line and facilitate an advance towards Rome.

Close to the hearts of many Italians, Monte Cassino, a Catholic monastery situated high on a rocky hill above the town of Cassino, was a symbol of peace and magnificence for hundreds of years. .
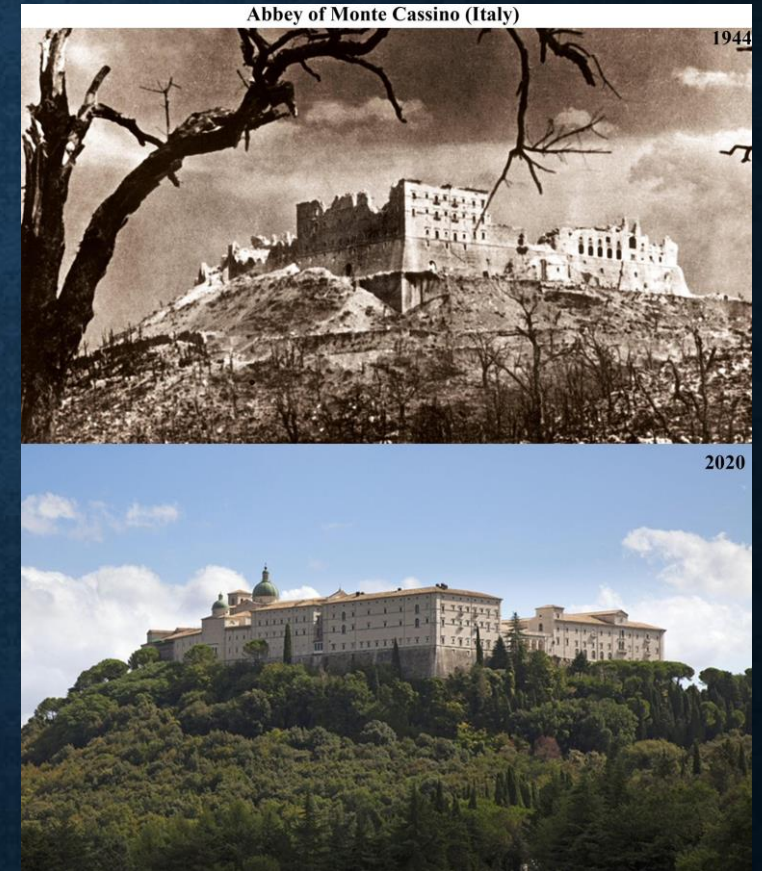
The Abbey was rebuilt after the war. In the early 1950s, President of the Italian Republic Luigi Einaudi gave considerable support to the rebuilding. Pope Paul VI consecrated the rebuilt Basilica on 24 October 1964. During reconstruction, the abbey library was housed at the Pontifical Abbey of St Jerome-in-the-City.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Nevsky Prospekt in St. Petersburg, Russia

On 21 January 1924, Vladimir Lenin, whose health had degenerated after several unsuccessful assassination attempts and three strokes, died at the age of 53. Petrograd did not delay. A week later, the city of St. Petersburg was renamed Leningrad in honor of the man who had incited the Bolshevik Revolution.

Nevsky Prospekt was founded in 1710 to connect the Alexander Nevsky Monastery with the Admiralty. A glade was cleared in the swampy forest and wooden bridges built over the rivers. Slowly, government buildings, churches and small settlements grew up along the new road.

Seige of Leningrad: The 872 days of the siege caused extreme famine in the Leningrad region through disruption of utilities, water, energy and food supplies. This resulted in the deaths of up to 1,500,000 soldiers and civilians and the evacuation of 1,400,000 more (mainly women and children), many of whom died during evacuation due to starvation and bombardment..

In the post-war period, the avenue was returned to its former name, and huge renovation works were undertaken. New metro stations popped up along the length of Nevsky Prospekt, and an enormous obelisk celebrating Leningrad's bravery in the war was erected on Ploshchad Vosstaniya.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Königsberg Castle, Germany

Following the bombing of Königsberg by the Allies in the Second World War in 1944, the castle completely burnt down. However, the thick walls were able to withstand both the aerial bombing and Soviet artillery, as well as urban fighting in April 1945, allowing the ruins of the castle to stay standing.

Was one of the landmarks of the East Prussian capital Königsberg, Germany (since 1946 Kaliningrad, Russia).

Kaliningrad was to be rebuilt as a model town on the remains of Königsberg, without reminders of its German past left standing. The ruins of the castle were periodically blown up over the next several years, with the last remnants being destroyed in 1968 on Leonid Brezhnev's personal orders.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Frauenkirche Dresden, Germany

Before the fire-bombing, Dresden was, possibly, Germany's most beautiful city with its Baroque center. Frauenkirche was a massive and impressive Baroque edifice built during the 18th century, 1743 to be exact.

Frauenkirche was able to withstand the bombings and even acted as a bomb shelter during the Allies' fire-bombing of the city. But it collapsed due to the heat caused by the sustained explosions. Its dome fell on the 15th of February at exactly 10 in the morning.

It was not rebuilt right after the war ended. Its ruins were made as a memorial by the local leaders of then East Germany. However, that decision was changed after the reunification of East and West Germany — the Frauenkirche was restored. Its painstaking restoration went from 1992 to 2005.

EUROPEAN LANDMARKS – BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

Berlin Royal Palace, Germany

The front façade of the Palast der Republik in 1986 from Unter den Linden

During World War II, the Stadtschloss was twice struck by Allied bombs: on 3 and 24 February 1945. On the latter occasion, when both the air defenses and fire-fighting systems of Berlin had been destroyed, the building was struck by incendiaries, lost its roof, and was largely burnt out.

The royal palace was one of Berlin's largest buildings and shaped the cityscape with its 60-meter-high (200 ft).

After the fall of the Berlin wall, it went through many deconstruction and reconstruction.
In 2020, the palace with the reconstructed bronze reliefs and plaques on the portal initially designed by the architect Eosander.

SUMMARY

World War II was a global war that lasted from 1939 to 1945. A state of total war emerged, directly involving more than 100 million people from over 30 countries.

The major participants launched their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities behind the war effort, blurring the distinction between civilian and military resources.

By the end of World War II, much of Europe and Asia, and parts of Africa, lay in ruins. Combat and bombing had flattened cities and towns, destroyed bridges and railroads, and scorched the countryside. The war had also taken a staggering toll in both military and civilian lives.

World War II was the deadliest conflict in human history marked by 50 to 85 million fatalities. Causes of death included massacres, the genocide of the Holocaust, strategic bombing, premeditated death from starvation and disease, and the only use of nuclear weapons in war.

As fighting came to an end in 1945, people the world over faced for the first time the unprecedented extent of destruction and loss of life caused by World War II. As the costs of victory came into devastating focus, the diplomatic responses, rising global tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, and social disruption that followed in the aftermath of this conflict showed that World War II was truly "the war that changed the world."