

Revival of Sacred Places through Post-War Architectural Interventions

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Abstract:

Sacred places hold profound spiritual and cultural significance, serving as spaces for worship, reflection, and community cohesion. Armed conflicts often devastate these spaces, disrupting not only their physical structures but also the cultural identity and sense of security of affected communities. According to UNESCO, over 1,600 religious and cultural heritage sites have been damaged in conflict zones as of 2021. This research aims to propose new design approaches that revitalize the sacred places in postwar cities. The study adopts a multi- method approach, incorporating cultural and contextual analyses, theoretical framework development, and architectural typology research. It further examines materials, structural considerations, symbolic functions, sustainability, resilience, and universal design principles. Restoration impact assessments and a review of best practices supplement the analysis. Focusing on the Grand Mosque Square in Douma, Damascus, Syria, as a case study, the research demonstrates how architectural interventions can balance tradition with modernity. By addressing historical authenticity and contemporary functionality, these strategies can revitalize sacred spaces, fostering sociocultural healing and resilience. Ultimately, this study advocates for the role of architecture in rebuilding not only physical landmarks but also the collective identity of war-affected communities.

Keywords:

Sacred place, Post-war architecture, Architectural intervention, Cultural restoration, Symbolic restoration, Community involvement, Heritage preservation.