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THE ARCHITECTURAL ENSEMBLE OF KIROV STREET IN VITEBSK

MARIA VERIGO, RAISA PLATONAVA
Polotsk State University, Belarus

The questions of the development of Kirov street in Vitebsk at the end of 18th – first half of 20th century on the basis of literary sources, analysis of archaeological excavations on the territory of Vitebsk, the photos are studied in the article. The features of architectural ensemble formation of Kirov Street and development are shown.

Kirov Street is one of the main thoroughfares of Vitebsk. It runs from the railway station on Privokzalnaya Square to the Kirov Bridge. Kirov Street is the main entrance to the city and it connects the right Bank and left Bank parts.

The street was formed in the late 18th – early 19th century and was called Vokzalnaya. It acquired the name after the announcement of the railway in Vitebsk and building of the railway station. In 1867 the Dvina (nowadays Kirov) bridge over the Western Dvina River was built.

In the early 20th century on the street there were the railway station, the 2nd store of the consumers society, R. Ulrich pharmacy, military Assembly, and the most important single-track tram line, which was quite a rare phenomenon at that time [1, 2].

In 1930 – 1934 it was known as Karl Marx Street, and only in 1934 it was renamed in honor of revolutionary and political leader S. M. Kirov.

The great Patriotic war brought a lot of destruction to Vitebsk, some of the buildings of Lenin street survived, but the buildings of Kirov street were completely destroyed, including the Kirov bridge across the Western Dvina river (fig. 1), and required full restoration and reconstruction [3].

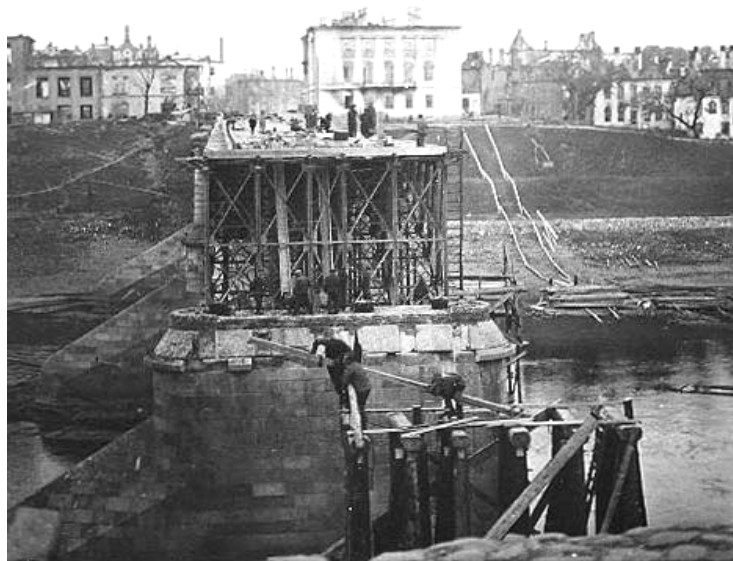


Fig. 1. Destroyed Kirov bridge. September 1941

Kirov Street's rebuilding started in 1947. According to architects' recollections, "it was not so easy to convince opponents in the need of 10-12 meter street widening to 66 meters." All architectural decisions were taken in Vitebsk. "The General project of planning, revival and reconstruction of Vitebsk" was developed in the Kharkov regional design Institute under the guidance of the architect Kasyanov and the plan was approved in 1946 [4].

During the street reconstruction a question of creating a coherent architectural ensemble of buildings was solved. The restoration lasted from 1948 to 1954. Street with the surrounding neighborhoods became the part of trunk diameter, crossing the city in the latitudinal direction and connected the Privokzalnaya square with town centre and Lenin Street, with its residential districts and public facilities (fig. 2) [5].

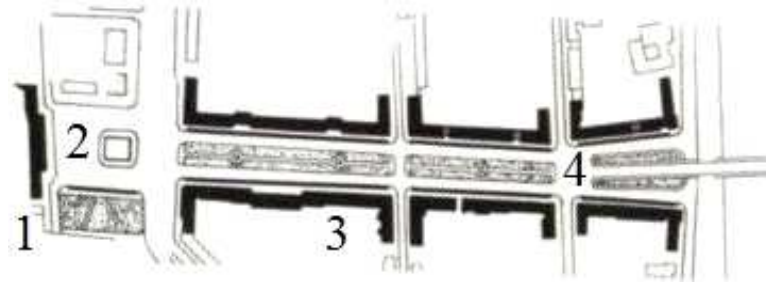


Fig. 2. Scheme of development of Kirov street:
1 railway station; 2 – the Privokzalnaya square, 3 – civil building; 4 – pedestrian walkway

Honored architect Boris Mezentsev, co-author of one of the seven "Stalin's skyscrapers" in Moscow, designed the new building of the railway station. Built in 1954, it became the main dominant feature of Kirov Street. The station building has two stories, consists of three rectangular in plan, volumes: central and two lateral. On the main facade of the Central building there are three wide arched shaped windows. The facade is decorated with bas-reliefs, stucco niches and small columns of the Corinthian order. In the middle of the main facade clock is mounted. Marble and crafted stucco ceilings can be seen in the interior of the station. Heavy classical chandeliers are used for lighting.

Overall management of the design and control of a new street project, which was constructed on the site of the demolished old building blocks, was performed by the main architect V. I. Gusev who lived in Moscow. The authors of the project were A. Y. Danilova and V. A. Danilov who had just arrived in Vitebsk, immediately after graduating from Kiev Institute of civil engineering. In housing designing were used typical sections, designed in the national architectural institutions. Four-, five-floor buildings in the style of Stalin's Empire (the same as for the station) were designed as a single ensemble. The first floor was devoted to shopping and household enterprises. This ensemble was completed just before the Kirov Bridge with the two buildings with increased angular part in the form of towers – the hostel of electro-technical college connecting with the hotel "Dvina". Despite of some complicated forms of decoration (stucco details, massive cornices, pilasters with Corinthian capitals and others) the street building stand out to have a unique architectural and artistic qualities and completeness of the composition. In the middle of the street there was a Boulevard with Avenue of linden and chestnut trees (fig. 3) [2, 6].



Fig. 3. Kirov street in Vitebsk. The beginning of the 1960s

The concept of Kirov Street buildings ensemble is based on the unity of compositional and stylistic techniques, also the basic principles were creatively used: attractiveness of buildings with wide-open elegant first floor shops; the light colour of the facades, realistic architectural forms of the buildings, well thought-out proportions and silhouette completion. The completeness to the architectural solution gives the orientation on a single compositional center of the railway station building. Also the unity of the ensemble gives a close height, the

length of the buildings, the rhythm of facades articulation, formed by horizontal rods, cornices, window openings. Moreover, every building and street has its own peculiarity [5].

The length of Kirov Street is 650 meters that is not large. Architectural ensemble of the street is included in the "State list of historical and cultural heritage of Vitebsk". It is a perfect place for those who want to relax from the noise and to enjoy the Western Dvina River walking [6].

Thus, it can be noted that during three centuries of its history, Kirov Street has changed, but has not lost its purpose. Nothing is left from old buildings of the first stage of its formation. However, despite the loss of its historical buildings, modern buildings of Kirov Street are the bright example of complete expressive architectural ensemble. This is the main entrance to the city, the personification of austerity and the individuality of each building.

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