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PRESERVATION OF THE MUSEUM HERITAGE OF UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF EMPHASIZING NATIONAL IDENTITY

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to show the need to preserve the museum heritage of Ukraine, to emphasize the importance of this process for Ukrainian national identity in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The **methodology** is based on the use of observation methods in relation to a wide set of data, specific facts; theoretical research method; the survey method, the method of systematic analysis of socio-economic phenomena, which made it possible to identify the main interrelationships and predict further development. The application of forecasting methods in the research will ensure the identification of prospects for the development of the museum business in Ukraine. **Scientific novelty.** The facts of the destruction and looting of museum institutions since the beginning of the full-scale Russian aggression have been considered. The condition of some museums of Ukraine in war zones is described. During the study of the topic, an attempt was made to solve the following tasks: to highlight the most resonant examples of damage and destruction by the Russian occupiers of museum heritage objects in the specified period; analyze these examples through the prism of statistics, scientific articles and journalistic evaluations; consider the public outcry that arose in connection with the facts of the destruction and looting of museums in war zones. **Conclusions.** The protection of cultural heritage sites as material manifestations of the centuries-old history of the Ukrainian people has become one of the strategic directions in resisting enemy expansion. Effective protection of Ukrainian cultural objects should be based on the experience of countries that have faced similar challenges and on modern mechanisms of international law, according to which Ukrainian cultural heritage is an integral part of the world's cultural heritage. Due to the impossibility of physical access, the protection of monuments in the temporarily occupied territories is limited to political statements, monitoring the situation and documenting crimes against cultural objects. The tactics of conducting hostilities taking into account the value of cultural heritage objects and obtaining basic knowledge on the protection of monuments by servicemen of NATO armies deserve special attention in the context of offensive operations of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Key words: museums, objects of museum heritage, national identity, state policy, russian-Ukrainian war.

ЗБЕРЕЖЕННЯ МУЗЕЙНОЇ СПАДЩИНИ УКРАЇНИ В КОНТЕКСТІ ПІДКРЕСЛЕННЯ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ

Анотація

Метою дослідження є показати необхідність збереження музейної спадщини України, підкреслити важливість цього процесу для української національної ідентичності в умовах російсько-української війни. **Методологія** базується на використанні методів спостереження стосовно широкого набору даних, конкретних фактів; методу теоретичного дослідження; методу опитування, методі системного аналізу соціально-економічних явищ, що дозволило виявити основні взаємозв'язки і спрогнозувати подальший розвиток. Застосування методів прогнозування в дослідженні забезпечить виявлення перспектив розвитку музейної справи в Україні. **Наукова новизна.** Розглянуто факти знищення й пограбувань музейних установ з початку повномасштабної

російської агресії. Описано стан деяких музеїв України в зонах бойових дій. В ході дослідження теми зроблено спробу вирішити такі завдання: виділити найрезонансніші приклади пошкоджень та руйнувань російськими окупантами об'єктів музейної спадщини в зазначений період; проаналізувати ці приклади крізь призму статистики, наукових статей і публіцистичних оцінок; розглянути суспільний резонанс, який виник у зв'язку з фактами руйнувань та пограбувань музеїв у зонах бойових дій. **Результати дослідження.** Захист об'єктів культурної спадщини як матеріальних виявів багатовікової історії українського народу став одним зі стратегічних напрямів у протистоянні ворожій експансії. Ефективний захист українських об'єктів культури повинен спиратися на досвід країн, що зіткнулися з подібними викликами, та на сучасні механізми міжнародного права, згідно з якими українська культурна спадщина є невід'ємною складовою світового культурного надбання. За неможливості фізичного доступу захист пам'яток на тимчасово окупованих територіях обмежується політичними заявами, моніторингом ситуації та документуванням злочинів, спрямованих проти об'єктів культури. Тактика ведення бойових дій з урахуванням цінності об'єктів культурної спадщини й отримання базових знань з охорони пам'яток військовослужбовцями армії НАТО заслуговує особливої уваги в контексті наступальних операцій Збройних сил України.

Ключові слова: музеї, об'єкти музейної спадщини, національна ідентичність, державна політика, російсько-українська війна.

Introduction. Contemporary Ukrainian culture is moving away from traditional approaches to actualising memory, adapting to the needs of the target audience. Various documents aimed at promoting Ukrainian culture declare the formation of an open information society, which should be based on the principles of respect for cultural identity and cultural diversity as a common heritage of humanity, including through the development of museums.

In today's world, museums are large-scale spaces for collecting, preserving and displaying the cultural heritage of the people. In addition, it is well known that museums also perform a social, political and economic function. In particular, historical museums provide visitors with accurate information, disseminate knowledge about the nation's past, promote historical and cultural heritage, help understand modern societies and shape visions of their future. In today's context of protecting Ukrainian national identity, Ukrainian museums should emphasise the outstanding importance of the historical and cultural heritage of our nation, and focus on the need to preserve and promote it.

The preservation of cultural heritage in emergency situations is a globally relevant task.

Emergency management in museums is actively developing, and a number of special studies have been devoted to it, on the basis of which emergency protocols have been drawn up. Similar protocols have already been implemented in institutions in the United States, Sweden, and other countries.

The organisation of the preservation of cultural heritage in wartime differs from the practices common to emergencies that may occur in peacetime. In this context, it is important to address the problems that arise when hostilities and occupation take place in a territory densely populated by heritage sites and institutions for their preservation. In Ukraine today, documents regulating the actions of employees in the preservation of museum collections are still being developed, and general recommendations for the implementation of conservation policy are being developed, which may be useful in similar situations today. Therefore, the analysis and understanding of the problems of cultural heritage preservation is an extremely relevant scientific topic.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problem of preserving the national cultural heritage in the face of modern security challenges is considered in a wide range of scholars in terms of its significance as a cultural heritage of the people of Ukraine. This perspective is undoubtedly important in the informational sense, as a convincing lever of the need for society to take care of its history and its material component. However,

the practical implementation of the preservation of the cultural heritage requires, first, a broad discussion of the priority task, and second, the search for mechanisms and means of preserving the national heritage. This problem has become part of the civilisational space, as the current upheavals demonstrate horrific cases and destruction of historical monuments to the point of their complete destruction or forced removal from the national heritage of Ukraine. It is enough to understand the helplessness that every conscious person feels now in relation to the cultural sites of national importance that remain in the annexed Crimea and the temporarily occupied territories. The use of these historical monuments today is either reformatted under the influence of a new meaning or is unknown at all.

Studying the latest conflicts of our time, this problem was studied by V. Akulenko (2013), T. Mazur (2019), D. Gamboni (2001), and others. Contemporary Ukrainian scholars are actively researching theoretical and practical issues on various issues of museum practice (Kot, 2020); identifying possible ways to protect monuments using the experience of countries that have experienced military conflicts (Rishniak, 2022), analysing the role of the state in protecting and preserving museum heritage (Kulyniak, 2012). At the same time, the problem of preserving and returning museum heritage to Ukraine remains an urgent scientific issue and requires comprehensive study.

The purpose of the article is to demonstrate the need to preserve the museum heritage of Ukraine and to emphasise the importance of this process for the Ukrainian national identity in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

To achieve this goal, the **following objectives** have been set: to analyse the theoretical, legal and applied aspects of the development of museums in Ukraine; to specify the directions of state policy and principles in the field of protection and preservation of cultural heritage; to characterise the role of the museum as a carrier of historical memory; to consider the world experience of museumisation of such monuments.

Methods and methodology of the study. In the course of the study, the following methods were used: observation of a wide range of data and specific facts; theoretical research; and survey method. Various methods of analysis, including methods of systemic analysis of socio-economic phenomena, systemic, comparative, which allowed us to identify the main relationships and predict further development. In the process of system analysis, a system is created that is described with the help of symbols or other means and is a certain structural and logical construction, the purpose of which is to serve as a tool for understanding, describing and more fully optimising the behaviour of a real system, connections and relations of its elements. The method of comparison is a method of scientific research, knowledge of reality, designed to establish common and distinctive features between processes, phenomena, and objects. The method of generalisation is a method of scientific knowledge that captures the general features and properties of a certain class of objects and makes a transition from the individual to the general, from the less general to the more general. Forecasting methods are a set of operations and techniques that, on the basis of retrospective data, exogenous (external) and endogenous (internal) relations of the object of forecasting, as well as their changes, make it possible to predict its future development. The use of forecasting methods in my research will ensure the realisation of the main goal – to identify the main prospects for the development of museums in Ukraine.

Presentation and discussion of the main research material. Promotion of the cultural museum product in Europe and the world is a way to establish the authority and subjectivity of Ukraine. The values, mission, and vision of Ukrainian museums have gone far beyond the professional environment and should become an essential subject of attention for governmental, self-governing, academic, and public institutions. The education of the nation, especially the youth, through the acquisition of the national museum culture should

be a leading link in state policy. Museums, which contain the material, intellectual, spiritual heritage and wisdom of the Ukrainian people, are an extremely important component for creating a high artistic, aesthetic, ethical, civic culture of a person and society, national patriotism, and national and state development.

Cultural heritage preservation programmes adopted in different regions of Ukraine are relevant today. For example, in February 2024, the Lviv City Council approved the Programme for the Preservation and Digitisation of Museum Heritage at its session. The decision was supported by 42 deputies. The programme is particularly relevant now, in times of war, when there is a daily threat of destruction of Ukrainian culture. The programme is aimed at preserving cultural heritage in the Lviv city territorial community, developing new approaches to systematising and preserving museum collections, and promoting Ukrainian heritage in general. Among the key points of the programme are the following: research and use of modern Ukrainian and international experience and current developments of specialists in the field of preservation and digitisation of museum heritage; training of representatives of the museum environment to improve digital competencies and apply the latest world practices of preserving museum heritage through digitalisation; development of methodological recommendations for digitising museum exhibits together with specialists in the field of digitisation; creation of a special structural unit

It is difficult to overestimate the feat of museum staff in a full-scale war. On 24 February 2022, all Ukrainian museum workers were at work, taking their families, relatives and friends with them. Museums, collections and exhibits were being rescued in all parts of Ukraine. Some people took exhibits out of the shelling, others spent the night with the collections, taking them down to the basement, and some had their museums as a home during the active hostilities. Someone is now keeping track of what has been lost and stolen by the occupiers in order to defend the ownership of the exhibits in court and return them home.

On 2 February 2023, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, together with the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption, created the Art Sanct Task Force to monitor the trade in art objects stolen by the Russians. Back in January 2023, experts at The New York Times noted that the Russian-Ukrainian full-scale war is the largest theft of art since World War II, when the Nazis plundered Europe. This is an attempt to undermine the national identity of Ukrainians, which is Russia's actual goal.

Moreover, this policy of Russia is far from new, as it has been consistently implemented and continues to be implemented in Crimea. It is known that as of 1 January 2014, 14 thousand cultural monuments of Ukraine, 54 museums, 300 thousand museum exhibits, and 6 historical and cultural reserves were concentrated on the peninsula (Ващенко, 2016, p. 33). Since the beginning of the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Russia has been purposefully implementing a policy aimed at seizing and destroying cultural heritage on the peninsula. In a short period of time, Russia has prepared a regulatory framework that made it possible to legalise Crimean cultural heritage in its legal field. Already on 8 August 2014, the "State Council of the Republic of Crimea" adopted the law "On Cultural Heritage Sites in the Republic of Crimea", which actually gave the green light to the appropriation of cultural heritage by the occupying power. The document, in particular, stated that "cultural heritage sites (historical and cultural monuments) in the Republic of Crimea are an integral part of the national wealth and heritage of the peoples of the Russian" (<https://culture.voicecrimea.com.ua/>).

Most of the specialised scientific and museum institutions on the Crimean peninsula were re-registered in accordance with the requirements of Russian legislation by the end of 2014. In particular, between 24 and 30 December 2014, the Bakhchisaray Historical and Cultural

Reserve, the Scythian Naples Historical and Archaeological Reserve, the East Crimean Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve, the Yalta Historical and Literary Museum, and the Chersonese Historical and Archaeological Museum-Reserve received Russian registration certificates. Thus, by the end of 2014, Russia had already created conditions at the legislative level for the “legal” functioning of institutions and establishments in the field of cultural heritage.

Cases of destruction of cultural heritage sites are regularly recorded on the Crimean peninsula. In 2015, the arched vault of one of the spans of the Mithridates Stairs was partially destroyed, in 2018, part of the vault of the southern gate of the Yeni Kale fortress collapsed, and in 2019 at the excavations of Panticapaeum (Mithridates), the columns tilted and the entrance to the site was closed; in the same year, 2019, the columns of the ancient city of Panticapaeum (Kerch) fell and were transported to the East Crimean Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve, no restoration work is being carried out.

In addition, under the guise of restoration work, Russia destroys cultural heritage sites. Thus, restoration work on the objects of the Bakhchisarai historical and cultural reserve was carried out by the Atta Group Corporation LLC based on the order of the “Council of Ministers of the Republic of Crimea” dated 12.29.2015 No. 1311-r. The contractor who performed the work had no experience in the restoration of historical and cultural objects. In fact, instead of restoration work, repair work was performed on the object (original oak beams were replaced, hand-made tiles were replaced), as a result, irreparable damage was caused to the object of cultural heritage – the only preserved example of Crimean Tatar palace architecture (Kot, 2020, p. 45).

Already in the first year of occupation, Russia started the practice of removing movable cultural heritage from the peninsula, thereby violating, in particular, Art. 11 of the Convention on measures aimed at the prohibition and prevention of the illegal import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural values, dated 14.11.1970, which indicates that the export or transfer of rights to cultural values that occurred as a result of the occupation are illegal.

An equally significant problem is that Russia is actively carrying out illegal archaeological excavations on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula, which defiantly violates the norms of international law. In particular, Art. 5 of the Convention on the Protection of Cultural Values in the Event of Armed Conflict dated May 14, 1954 on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Values in the Occupied Territory; Art. 9 of the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 dated March 26, 1999, which expressly prohibits the occupying power from carrying out archaeological excavations in the occupied territory, removing objects of cultural heritage from the occupied territory, modifying cultural property that may endanger evidence of a historical, scientific or cultural nature; Art. 6 of the Convention on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage dated November 16, 1972, in terms of preventing damage to cultural and natural heritage located on the territory of another state; Art. 10 of the Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage dated November 2, 2001, which indicates that permission to carry out any activity aimed at cultural heritage on the continental shelf or in the exclusive economic zone can only be granted by a sovereign state; Art. 32 “Recommendations determining the principles of international regulation of archaeological excavations” dated 05.12.1956, which emphasizes that in the event of an armed conflict, UNESCO member states occupying the territory of one or another state must refrain from conducting archaeological excavations on the territory occupied by them (Mankivska , 2016, p. 55).

In addition, in accordance with Art. 10 of the Law of Ukraine “On Protection of Archaeological Heritage” and Art. 35 of the Law of Ukraine “On the Protection of Cultural

Heritage”, carrying out archaeological explorations, excavations, other earthworks on the territory of the monument, the protected archaeological territory, in protection zones, in the historical areas of inhabited places, as well as researching the remains of human activities contained under the earth’s surface, is carried out under a permit issued by the central body of the executive power that implements state policy in the field of cultural heritage protection, which is the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine.

In order to organize excavations, the occupying state promptly re-established academic contacts of Crimean institutions with relevant Russian scientific institutions, which at various times were engaged in conducting relevant work on the territory of Crimea. According to available information, at least 29 legal entities have been involved in illegal archaeological work since the beginning of the occupation, whose representatives received more than 90 permits for archaeological excavations from the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation between 2014 and 2018. A significant number of archaeological excavations were carried out within the framework of the implementation of infrastructure projects – the construction of a transport crossing across the Kerch Strait, the construction of the “Energy Bridge to Crimea”, the main gas pipeline “Krasnodar Territory – Crimea” and the “Tavrida Highway”. Therefore, the terms of conducting archaeological excavations were limited by the terms of works according to the projects. At the same time, more than 1 million artifacts were mined by archaeologists only during the construction of the transport passage across the Kerch Strait (right there, pp. 56–57).

Recognizing all Crimean objects as its national property, but not having the physical ability to influence the situation, Ukraine conducts indirect monitoring of the state of monuments on the territory of Crimea and records the crimes of the Russian regime. Information comes to the central monument protection bodies from open sources, as well as from the Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories and numerous public organizations. In the UNESCO report “On Monitoring the Situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea for the 212th Session of the Organization’s Executive Council” dated September 10, 2021, it is stated that Crimean artifacts are being transported to Russia without the necessary preservation measures and permits of Ukraine; finds that are illegally exported to Russia or end up on the black market; the ancient city of Chersonesus Taurica suffers from misuse, as religious and entertainment events are held; Muslim burial grounds were destroyed during the construction of the Tavrida highway; the restoration of the Bakhchisarai Palace of the Crimean Khans, included in the previous UNESCO list, has a destructive nature, etc. (Rishniak, 2022, p. 161).

Indeed, in the conditions of the Russian occupation, the issue of accounting, preservation control, and therefore the fate of this huge cultural potential today is completely unpredictable. Paying attention to the scope of the task that has arisen before Ukraine, today the question of developing legal mechanisms to control the preservation and protection of cultural values of Ukraine, which are located on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula occupied by Russia, does not lose its relevance.

In the Law of Ukraine “On ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens and the legal regime in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine”, adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on April 15, 2014, a separate article (“Article 5. Protection of the rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen, cultural heritage -we are in the temporarily occupied territory”), the peculiarities of legal relations in various spheres of state and social life of citizens of Ukraine living in the temporarily occupied territory are determined. Paragraph 7 of this article states that in accordance with the norms and principles of international law, the responsibility for the protection of cultural heritage in the temporarily occupied territory rests with the Russian Federation as the occupying state (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1207-18>)

Classifying the actions of the Russian Federation towards Ukraine as an act of aggression, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (April 9, 2014) and the UN General Assembly (March 27, 2014) strongly condemned the Russian Federation's violation of international law, national unity, and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Underlining their commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, authoritative international institutions emphasized the illegality of the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and the importance of supporting Ukraine, calling (item No. 6) "all states, international organizations and specialized institutions shall not recognize any changes in the status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea or the city of Sevastopol" (<http://tyzhden.ua/Politics/106073>).

It should be noted that the painting school of Crimean artists has always stood out against the background of all Ukrainian easel painting. Despite the different manners of writing and the wide range of topics, Crimean painters are characterized by sharpening of figurative characteristics and bold experimentation with color, persistent search for new painting tools and brightness of color, the "purity" and juiciness of which attracted Western European collectors, thereby enabling original Crimean painting to take an active place in world fine art.

The ever-wide panorama of scientific and exhibition activities of the Simferopol Art Museum was complemented by active cultural and educational activities, the organization of various thematic and creative events, master classes. The museum initiated and organized conferences, published catalogs and booklets of personal and collective exhibitions, was a center for the study and collection of the authentic artistic heritage of Crimean art. In fact, the museum became a discussion and exhibition center, the activity of which touched on a wide range of problems of the theory of fine art.

Unfortunately, in the conditions of occupation and Russian propaganda, the main direction of the museum's activity is the popularization of Soviet values. Thus, in support of the All-Russian action "Night of Arts", timed to the anniversary of the revolution of 1917, the museum held a ceremonial opening of the installation "Lenin in October". The dedicated attitude of the museum staff is highly appreciated and recognized by awards from the Russian government, which calls it "high professionalism" and "loyalty to one's work" (Kuzmenko & Shportko, 2019, p. 225). All these and other similar measures cause indignation, because, being in the retrospection of Soviet art, the painting school of Crimea may gradually lose its identity. Today, cultural values of Ukraine are illegally exported and replenish the collections of Russian museums. Thus, in 2014, the Russian government illegally appropriated branch museums of the Museum of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Balaklava and at the battery in Sevastopol, as well as the private museum of O. Sheremetyev at the battery in Sevastopol (Tytova, 2016, p. 29-30).

The Russian-Ukrainian war, which entered its hottest phase on February 24, 2022, caused significant human losses, a humanitarian crisis, the destruction of many human destinies, the loss of homes and many other problems. Historical monuments, museums, cultural centers, territories where archaeological excavations are conducted, etc., were significantly affected by military actions (bombing, occupation of military positions, laying of trenches, etc.). In fact, this is an example of a serious threat to cultural institutions and heritage sites during armed conflict, which should be studied in order to find ways to avoid or reduce them.

It should be noted that in 2014, 29 of the 59 state museum institutions in the Donetsk region were occupied, and 24 in the Luhansk region. Employees of some institutions, with the support of local residents, managed to save some valuable items. Local communities quickly organized themselves and, together with museum workers, moved the exhibits to safer places. At the same time, for example. The Donetsk Regional History Museum did not immediately

accept the recommendations and in August 2014 its galleries were damaged by shells, which led to the loss of collections (Rishniak, 2022, p. 159). It housed a famous collection of gold and other valuables, the fate of which is unknown. According to S. Hlushko, director of the Donetsk Regional Museum of Local Lore in 2016–2018, about 134,000 exhibits remained in the uncontrolled territory. Let us emphasize that three departments of this institution remain on the territory controlled by Ukraine: the Memorial Museum-Estate of V. I. Nemyrovych-Danchenko and M. O. Korf, the S. Prokofiev Museum, the Great Anatolian Forest Museum, based on which at the end of August 2016 Donetsk Regional Museum of Local Lore was re-registered and moved to the territory of Kramatorsk (Halka, 2022).

The fate of the Donetsk Art Museum, whose collection includes more than 12,000 works, is different. Back in August 2014, there was information about the demands of the militants to the employees of the museum regarding the release of certain works of art. Now the museum functions on the basis of a branch – the only museum of folk architecture and life in the East in the village of Prelesne of the Slavyansky district (Tytova, 2016, p. 30). In 2014, the Stanichno-Luhansk Museum of Local Lore, which had a collection of over 50,000 objects, was also damaged. A projectile hit the building, and in 2014-2015, windows were broken several times. However, in the summer of 2014, museum workers moved the exhibits to the bomb shelter located under the museum. And in December 2014, the institution was evacuated to the city of Starobilsk. At the same time, the fate of many objects of this museum fund is unknown today. Among the objects of immovable cultural heritage that were destroyed during the active phase of the fighting in 2014 is the Savur-grave memorial, which is located on the borders of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions. In the course of fierce fighting between the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Russian Armed Forces the obelisk was damaged by the occupiers. Towards the end of 2015, the situation along the demarcation line of the parties within the Anti-Terrorist Operation, and later – the Joint Forces Operation, took on the characteristics of positional defense, and therefore active combat operations were not carried out, the destruction of civilian infrastructure became less. The fate of many collections from museum funds of Ukraine in territories not controlled by Ukraine remained unknown.

With the beginning of the large-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into the borders of our state, the problem of protecting Ukrainian cultural heritage became particularly acute. On the night of February 28, 2022, the Ivankiv Historical and Local History Museum burned down during the offensive of Russian troops in the direction of Kyiv. On March 1, 2022, the museum of the Vyshgorod State Historical and Cultural Reserve burned down as a result of being hit by shells. On March 2, the Borodyan Museum of Local Lore was hit by an airstrike, as a result of which the building and exhibits were damaged. On March 7, the Kharkiv Art Museum was hit by shelling from Russian troops, and the premises of the military-historical complex “Skelya” in Korosten, Zhytomyr Region, were completely destroyed.

On February 27, 2022, the former Shchors cinema in Chernihiv (built in 1935–1947) was seriously damaged by an enemy rocket. On March 11, 2022, the Dnipro House of Organ and Chamber Music, which was built at the beginning of the 20th century, was damaged. March 14, 2022 in the Vasylyvsky district of Zaporizhzhya oblast, the castle “Sadiba Popov”, which is an architectural monument of the 19th century, was shot with artillery. And on March 29, 2022, shelling in Kharkiv damaged another architectural monument – the fire department from the end of the 19th century. On March 30, 2022, in Trostyanka, Sumy Oblast, the Russian military hit Koenig’s house, which was set on fire. This beautiful landmark was built in the Art Nouveau style in Neskuchne Park in 1911. On April 14, 2022, in Mariupol, the Russian occupiers partially destroyed one of the city’s hallmarks – the Gamper Palace, built in the second half of the 19th century.

In general, as a result of hostilities in Ukraine, a lot of Christian churches were damaged – the Dormition Cathedral, the St. Anthony’s Church, the church in honor of the Myrrh-bearing Wife in the Kharkiv region; Ascension Church in the village of Bobryk of the Second Brovary deanery of the Boryspil diocese; Church (Pokrovska) of the Nativity of the Holy Virgin in Zhytomyr Oblast; Sviatohirskaya Lavra, Dimitrievsky Church, Transfiguration Church and the church in honor of the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos “Joy of All Sorrowful” of the Donetsk region; in Severodonetsk, Luhansk region, the invaders fired at the Christ-Christmas Cathedral. In Mariupol, the mosque of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and his wife Roksolana was damaged, in Kharkiv one of the largest synagogues in Europe, which was built in 1913, was damaged, the women’s monastery in honor of the icon of the Mother of God “Pochutnitsa” in the Kyiv region and the Assumption Mykola-Vasylivskiy monastery under Volnovakhay in Donetsk region. In total, until March 15, 2022, at least 28 structures of spiritual significance were damaged/destroyed to one degree or another (not including adjacent buildings), mostly in six regions of Ukraine: Kyiv, Donetsk, Zhytomyr, Luhansk, Kharkiv, and Chernihiv (Zagorodny, 2022) .

However, according to information provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as of April 1, 29 religious buildings, 16 buildings of historical importance, four museums and four monuments were destroyed or damaged in Ukraine. Differences in indicators are possible due to the fact that Ukrainian statistics include in the list of objects both those that are on the state register as monuments and newly discovered objects of cultural heritage, and those that can be taken to account potentially.

Conclusions and prospects for further research It should be noted that in wartime, the destruction of heritage sites can either be the result of collateral damage (for example, when a bomb aimed at one place inadvertently hits another) or it can be the result of intentional damage aimed at demoralizing the enemy and disrespecting the values and religious and cultural symbols of the enemy. In the realities of the current situation of the Russian-Ukrainian war, it is quite difficult to make a division according to the proposed criteria, this will obviously be done after the end of hostilities. However, individual cases of deliberate criminal actions of the occupiers, directed against the cultural heritage of our people, can be established even now.

On March 13, 2022, the Russian military looted the museum-reserve “Sadiba Popov” in Vasylivka, Zaporizhzhia region. On March 16, the occupiers carried out an aerial attack with a vacuum bomb on the Donetsk Academic Regional Drama Theater in Mariupol, which was built in 1956–1960 and is a monument of architecture, history and monumental art. On April 4, 2022, it became known that the Russian military shot a monument to Taras Shevchenko in Borodyanka, Kyiv region. On April 11, 2022, in Chernihiv, the enemy deliberately destroyed a memorial complex dedicated to the memory of defenders who died in battles for the sovereignty and integrity of Ukraine in Donbas. And on April 21, it became known that the Russians took Yukhym Harabet’s unique collection from the museum of medallion art from Mariupol to occupied Donetsk. This museum had more than 700 exhibits.

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