

Losses of cultural heritage in Kyiv region as a result of the Russian invasion: mechanisms of cultural self–defense

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The article examines the scale of losses of immovable cultural heritage in Kyiv region as a result of the Russian invasion and identifies mechanisms of cultural self–defense. The main types and kinds of losses of cultural monuments are outlined, practices of their protection are analyzed; cooperation of state authorities, public activists, the scientific community and international organizations in searching for mechanisms of cultural heritage preservation is studied; prospects for post–war restoration of cultural objects are determined. The UNESCO World Heritage List and cultural heritage objects in Ukraine, particularly in Kyiv, inscribed on it according to the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage are analyzed. The UNESCO Tentative List of World Heritage objects is also examined, three of which are located in Kyiv. The national list of cultural heritage monuments of national and local significance in Kyiv region and Kyiv, inscribed in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine, is also analyzed, and cultural objects in Kyiv region that were damaged or destroyed to a greater or lesser extent as a result of military actions are identified. Preliminary results of research within the joint interdisciplinary applied research work of the Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies and the Department of Regional Studies and Tourism of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv "Material and Spiritual Losses of the Population of Ukrainian Polissia as a Result of the Russian–Ukrainian War and Their Overcoming" (2025–2027) are summarized. In particular, preliminary results of work in Kyiv region by the comprehensive Ukrainian studies expedition "Polissia–2025" and practical research by students of the Geography Faculty of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv are taken into account. As a result of expedition research, destruction of immovable cultural heritage in Kyiv region was identified, analytical (before/after) and photographic materials (destroyed/ruined/damaged) of monument destruction were obtained. Joint efforts of state authorities, local self–government, scientists and public activists and international organizations regarding documentation of losses of immovable cultural heritage that occurred as a result of military actions and regarding the use of cultural self–defense mechanisms for future restoration of cultural monuments and tourist attractiveness of Kyiv Polissia are shown.

KEYWORDS

Ukraine, Ukrainian Studies, Kyiv region, cultural heritage, immovable cultural heritage object, Russian invasion, losses, mechanisms of cultural self–defense

Introduction

Russian aggression against Ukraine, especially after the full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022, has led to large-scale damage or even destruction of cultural heritage, which poses a great threat to national security. Since the loss of cultural values (archaeological, aesthetic, ethnological, historical, architectural, artistic, urban planning, scientific, and others) destroys material and spiritual heritage, which also affects the formation of national identity. Both material and spiritual cultural heritage of the people is an important cultural value, part of historical memory, and its damage or loss is a social trauma for the people, which will be extremely difficult to overcome.

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The study is dedicated to examining the losses of immovable cultural heritage objects in Kyiv region as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and mechanisms of cultural self–defense and development of the region's tourist potential in conditions of war and post-war reconstruction.

It is carried out within the framework of the joint interdisciplinary applied research work (hereinafter – RW) of the Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies and the Department of Regional Studies and Tourism of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (hereinafter – RIUS KNU) "Material and Spiritual Losses of the Population of Ukrainian Polissia as a Result of the Russian–Ukrainian War and Their Overcoming" (2025–

2027, state registration No. 0125U002317, supervisor – O. Trachuk).

For the implementation of the RW, at the initiative of RIUS KNU, a comprehensive Ukrainian studies expedition "Polissia-2025" was launched (expedition leader – O. Trachuk), with the aim of collecting ethnographic, religious studies, folklore information, whose participants document the destruction of objects of material and intangible cultural heritage of Ukraine on site. Special attention is paid to immovable cultural heritage, particularly archaeological, which turned out to be more vulnerable than previously thought. Leading archaeologists from KNU are involved in the implementation of the RW – Professor R. Terpylovskyi and Associate Professor P. Shydlovskyi, leading tourism specialists from KNU – Professor O. Liubitseva and Associate Professor I. Vynnychenko, KNU students (on a voluntary basis), as well as employees of RIUS KNU – Professor H. Lozko and L. Otroshko, who conduct field archaeological, ethnographic, religious studies and tourism research on a regular basis¹.

All of Ukraine, and especially – the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the Crimean Peninsula, the line of confrontation and Ukrainian Polissia, particularly Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Chernihiv – have suffered especially as a result of Russian armed aggression. The problem of preserving cultural heritage requires comprehensive research to find possible ways to prevent destruction and mechanisms of cultural self-defense, which will allow preserving cultural objects even in emergency conditions during martial law. Because this determines the preservation of national collective cultural memory and tourist attractiveness of Polissia and other regions and their post-war economic recovery and use for tourism purposes and their economic stability.

Research methods

Research Objective – to investigate the scale of losses of immovable cultural heritage in Kyiv region as a result of the Russian invasion and to identify mechanisms of cultural self-defense.

Tasks: to outline the main types and kinds of losses of immovable cultural heritage in Kyiv region; to analyze protection practices; to study the role of state authorities, public initiatives, the scientific community and international organizations in searching for mechanisms of cultural heritage preservation; to determine prospects for post-war restoration of cultural objects.

The source base of the study consists of the legislative framework, particularly the Laws of Ukraine *On the Protection of Cultural Heritage* and *On Tourism*, the international UNESCO Convention *Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*; analytical reports and open data of relevant ministries and organizations, including the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine (hereinafter – MCSC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (MFA), the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation (hereinafter – UCF); the Ukrainian Center for Cultural Studies (hereinafter – UCCS); the Ukrainian State Institute of Cultural Heritage (hereinafter – USICH) and others; documents and materials of these and other organizations regarding the protection of cultural heritage in threatening

conditions and conflict zones; domestic and international studies on cultural losses and mechanisms of cultural self-defense and modern methods of digitization of cultural monuments and data about them; publications in mass media and on interactive resources of public organizations (hereinafter – PO) that document specific cases of destruction in Kyiv region and other regions of Ukraine; results of applied research by teachers and students of the Department of Regional Studies and Tourism of KNU, comprehensive expeditions of RIUS and monitoring expeditions of the Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, etc.

The following methods were applied: historical-source method of comparative analysis of documents, websites, analytical reports, interactive maps, objective data and other materials to identify cultural heritage objects and the scale of their destruction; case study of specific examples of destruction in Kyiv region in materials of research and student practical work placed on separate digital resources; content analysis of documents, reports, publications in state media, scientific and PO, etc.

Results

According to the Law of Ukraine *On the Protection of Cultural Heritage* dated 08.06.2000 No. 1805-III

cultural heritage – a set of cultural heritage objects inherited by mankind from previous generations, cultural heritage object – a notable place, structure (work), complex (ensemble), their parts, movable objects associated with them, as well as territories or water objects (objects of underwater cultural and archaeological heritage), other natural, natural-anthropogenic or human-created objects regardless of their state of preservation, which have brought to our time value from an archaeological, aesthetic, ethnological, historical, architectural, artistic, scientific or artistic point of view and have preserved their authenticity (*Law of Ukraine, 2000: art. 1*).

By types, cultural heritage objects are divided into structures (works); complexes (ensembles) and notable places. By kinds, cultural heritage objects are divided into: archaeological; historical; monuments of monumental art; objects of architecture; objects of urban planning; objects of landscape art; landscape; objects of science and technology, etc. (*Law of Ukraine, 2000: art. 2*).

Cultural heritage objects of Kyiv region and Kyiv that suffered as a result of war under martial law are under constant threat of destruction and require special attention from the state, local self-government, the public and scientists regarding their protection and preservation, including certification, digitization (scanning), conservation, museumification, repair and restoration or reconstruction, etc. (*Law of Ukraine, 2000: art. 1*).

The powers of central executive authorities in the field of cultural heritage protection include, in particular,

registration of cultural heritage objects of local significance in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine and making changes to it regarding monuments of local significance", as well as "maintaining the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine, coordinating and controlling the certification of immovable cultural heritage objects (*Law of Ukraine, 2000: art. 5*).

The State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine (hereinafter – State Register) consists of a register of monuments of national significance and a register of

¹ Order of the Director of RIUS KNU "On the Ukrainian Studies Expedition Polissia-2025" dated 04.06.2025.

monuments of local significance. In total, in Kyiv region there are 38 state-registered monuments of history, archaeology and architecture of national significance (as of 20.09.24) (*List, 2024*), and 481 of local significance (as of 26.02.2025) (*List, 2025*). In the city of Kyiv there are 249 state-registered monuments of history, archaeology, architecture and urban planning, science and technology of national significance (as of 16.06.2025) (*List, 2025*), and 1385 of local significance (as of 02.09.2025) (*List, 2025*).

Documentation of destruction and damage to cultural objects of Ukraine is carried out at the state level, as well as through public initiatives and thanks to cooperation with scientists and authorities and local self-government. And this problem is very relevant today, because in conditions of constant shelling, the protection and preservation of cultural heritage should be treated carefully and registers of losses should be maintained.

The formation and implementation of state policy in the fields of cultural heritage protection, museum affairs, export, import and return of cultural values, restoration and preservation of national memory is ensured by MCSC. UCF created an interactive "Map of Cultural Losses" (*UCF, 2022*). This map visualizes the scale of destruction of cultural heritage objects as a result of war crimes of the Russian occupation regime and refutes the myth that the Russian army allegedly targets exclusively military infrastructure facilities, and is constantly updated.

From now on, almost all the destruction that the Russian army has inflicted on Ukraine's cultural heritage can be viewed in real time. Such visualization of their crimes will once again prove that Russia is a lying terrorist country that, contrary to any international rules of warfare, international conventions, destroys everything in its path. We also hope that this map will become a strong argument during discussions with partners about excluding the Russian Federation from various international cultural organizations or associations, said V. Berkovskyi, executive director of UCF (*UCF, 2022*).

International support for domestic research in conditions of military threats occurs through cooperation at the state level with international state and PO. In particular, the state UCCS, which collects and analyzes data and conducts research to support fact-based decision-making and cultural policies. UCCS focuses on cultural development in the regions, providing analytics and strengthening capacity for cultural management at the local level. UCCS in partnership with PO *Cultural Dialogue* in partnership with the support of ISAR Unity within the project *Sectoral Support Initiative for Civil Society of Ukraine*, implemented in a consortium with the Ukrainian Independent Center for Policy Studies and the Center for Democracy and Rule of Law, thanks to the support of the American people provided through the United States Agency for International Development USAID, conducts research on losses and damages in the field of culture of Ukraine (*Kozlova et al., 2024*).

UCCS also implements the RES-POL project – Rapid Expert Support for Culture and Media Policies in Ukraine – rapid expert support of the European Union (hereinafter – EU) in the field of culture and media in Ukraine. Based on the results of the 2023–2025 project, a Report and Analytical Sectoral Notes were prepared regarding the state of intangible, immovable and movable cultural heritage, as well as cultural heritage not subordinated to MCSC (*RES-POL, 2024*).

PO also participate in documenting and digitizing cultural heritage losses. In particular, PO *Anti-Corruption Headquarters* (chairman S. Mytkalyk) with the support of

the International Renaissance Foundation launched a project – an interactive *Map of Destruction and Restoration*, which accumulates information about all damaged or destroyed as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine objects of civil infrastructure, as well as information on restoration work (*Map of Recovery*); PO *HeMo: Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Lab* – Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Laboratory, which documents damage to cultural heritage objects (director V. Dvornikov) (*HeMo, 2025*); PO *Workshop of Academic Religious Studies* created a project and website *Religion on Fire*, which posts documented data on damaged or destroyed religious objects and places of worship of various Ukrainian religious organizations during the Russian-Ukrainian war in Ukraine (*Religion on Fire, 2025*), etc.

Documentation of cultural losses of Ukraine's archaeological heritage is carried out by the Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (hereinafter – Institute of Archaeology NAS of Ukraine) on 30.08.2022 organized a special Monitoring Archaeological Expedition (hereinafter – MAE) (leader A. Buiskykh), which operates as part of Kyiv and Chernihiv regional teams (*On the work of MAE, 2023*). According to MAE data "in Kyiv and Kyiv region, 345 archaeological monuments were studied, of which 97 were damaged" (*On the work of MAE, 2023*). Based on the results of the study of Ukraine's cultural heritage in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war, specialists of the Institute of Archaeology NAS of Ukraine found that "of immovable heritage, archaeological monuments are most vulnerable, which can be studied by remote monitoring and satellite images" (*Reient, Denysenko, 2024: 59*). The Kyiv Architectural-Archaeological Expedition (leader – V. Ivakin, head of the Department of Archaeology of Kyiv) is actively working on studying the region. Based on the results of archaeologists' research, the city of Kyiv and Kyiv region remain one of the most thoroughly studied territories. "Damage of various scales and origins was recorded, mostly related to earthworks during the construction of military engineering facilities" (*On the work of MAE, 2023*). Among them, in particular, the archaeological monument of national significance in the village of Bilohorodka "Dytynets of Bilohorodka" (fortified settlement of the chronicle city of Bilhorod and cemetery of the IX – XIII centuries) suffered (*List, 2024*). Rescue archaeological research is ongoing on the damaged part of the dytynets of chronicle Bilhorod. They are conducted by the regional archaeological team of the Institute of Archaeology NAS of Ukraine (leader – I. Zotsenko) as part of the Architectural-Archaeological Expedition together with the culture department of the Bilohorodskaya territorial community. Archaeologists also studied several other archaeological monuments of local significance in Kyiv region, particularly in Makariv (burial mounds of III – I millennium BC) and Vyshhorod (historical landscape of ancient Rus city of Vyshhorod, within Vyshhorod Mountain, from the foot of the slopes of the Kyiv Plateau in the south to the northern border of the outlier IV – III millennium BC, XI – end of XX century) and Bilohorodka (ground cemetery X – XIII century AD) (*On the work of MAE, 2023; List, 2025*).

According to the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereinafter – Convention), developed by the United Nations (hereinafter – UN) to protect and promote the cultural and natural heritage of mankind in 1972 and ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 1988, only

valuable cultural heritage objects that are threatened with disappearance or destruction due to serious impacts, including "outbreak or threat of military conflicts" can be included in the World Heritage List (hereinafter – UNESCO List) (UNESCO, 1972: art. 11, p. 4).

Analyzing the UNESCO World Heritage objects visualized on the interactive world map posted on the website, it should be noted that compared to other countries, Ukrainian monuments are represented catastrophically few (*World Heritage List, UNESCO*). Therefore, the UN pays little attention to the destruction of cultural monuments in Ukraine. This is completely unfair, because it is known that there are a large number of unique natural and cultural monuments on the territory of Ukraine, the destruction of which as a result of military actions may become an irreparable loss for Ukraine and the world. In particular, the UNESCO List includes only a few cultural objects – 6 of cultural type and 1 natural: St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv and related monastic buildings; Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra; Lviv – ensemble of the historical center; Struve Geodetic Arc; Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe; Residence of Bukovinian and Dalmatian Metropolitans; Ancient City of Tauric Chersonese and its chora; Wooden Churches of the Carpathian Region in Poland and Ukraine (*Ukraine. UNESCO*). Therefore, Ukraine's cultural organizations should now actively engage in advocacy and lobbying for the protection of cultural heritage in world organizations, submitting documents to protective organizations while it is relevant.

In this matter, help for Ukraine from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is very important – this is a non-governmental organization that works on the preservation and protection of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage objects around the world and evaluates the natural and cultural significance of objects. The National Committee of Ukraine implements the Council's proposed program at the local level and can take responsibility for any parts of the international ICOMOS program related to Ukraine in particular, working in close cooperation. On December 9, 2024, the general reporting meeting of the Ukrainian National Committee of ICOMOS was held in Kyiv, at which ICOMOS members discussed the state of preservation of cultural monuments in war conditions as a result of Russian armed aggression continuing in Ukraine since 2014, ways to improve legal protection of cultural heritage in the state, means of increasing the effectiveness of specialists' activities in the field of monument protection (*Meeting of the Ukrainian, 2024*).

In conditions of Russian aggression against Ukraine, there arose an urgent need to nominate other cultural heritage objects to the UNESCO List – preparation and submission of documents on the basis of which the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS consider the issue of including cultural heritage objects in it (*Law of Ukraine, 2000: art. 1*). In this regard, the nomination of the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone to the UNESCO World Heritage List is indicative, which did not take place due to the suspension of the nomination process. This happened because of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which led to destruction, danger to personnel and made further financing and necessary procedures and necessary research, which are important for nomination, impossible.

A very important achievement of Ukraine at the international level was joining the UNESCO Executive Board for 2025–2029. On November 7, 2025, at the 43rd session of the UNESCO General Conference, the largest

number (137) of states voted for it (*General Conference, 2025*). At the same time, the Russian Federation will not enter the Council for the second time in a row. Membership in this Council makes it possible to strengthen international cooperation in the field of education and science, more opportunities to protect Ukraine's cultural heritage, which suffers from Russian aggression, and promote national initiatives at the global level. The 43rd session of the UNESCO General Conference adopted another important Ukrainian initiative – a resolution on proclaiming November 27 as the International Day of Engagement in Science for Sustainable Development. An important event was Kyiv's official receipt of UNESCO City of Music status and its joining the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, which was an important international recognition of the musical heritage and modern potential of Ukraine's capital. And two Ukrainian dates were included in the UNESCO Anniversary Calendar for 2026–2027: the 100th anniversary of the National Historical and Cultural Reserve "Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra" and the 150th anniversary of Mykola Leontovych (*Delegation of Ukraine, 2025*).

As of 2025, 12 objects of cultural type, 3 – mixed, 1 – natural have been included in the UNESCO Tentative List of important cultural and natural objects of world heritage at risk of destruction (*Tentative Lists, UNESCO*). When an object is nominated and evaluated, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee makes a final decision at annual sessions. Among them are cultural monuments of Kyiv, in particular: national monuments of history, monumental art and architecture of Kyiv – St. Cyril's Church (XII century) and St. Andrew's Church (XVII century 1747–1762) (*List, 2025a*), as well as a monument of architecture, history, science and technology of local significance – Complex "Astronomical Observatory of St. Volodymyr University of Kyiv" (XIX century, 1845) (*List, 2025b*).

Through critical analysis of the above sources, damage or destruction as a result of Russian attacks of known cultural heritage objects of Kyiv Polissia, included in the State Register and marked on interactive maps, was analyzed. According to MCSC data, a total of 112 cultural monuments were damaged or destroyed in Kyiv region and Kyiv as a result of Russian attacks (as of 25.08.2025) (*List of monuments of local significance..., 2025*).

In Ukraine's capital, as a result of Russian attacks, a number of immovable cultural heritage objects were damaged. Among them are monuments of history, architecture, urban planning and monumental art of Kyiv of the XIX century of national significance: complex of buildings of Taras Shevchenko National University, including the Red and Yellow buildings and Maksymovych Scientific Library of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (XIX century); National Museum of Arts named after Bohdan and Varvara Khanenko (late XIX – early XX century); ensemble of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Nicholas and Parish House (XIX century, 1899–1909); Building of the Pedagogical Museum (early XIX century, 1910–1912), where the Ukrainian Central Rada worked, and now the Kyiv City Teachers' House is located (as well as the Museum of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921, etc.); complex of buildings of the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" (late XIX – early XX century), etc. (*List, 2025a; List of monuments of local significance..., 2025*).

Also, other cultural monuments of history and architecture of Kyiv of the XX century of local significance suffered from Russian shelling – museums, theaters, galleries, artistic and religious buildings, educational and

scientific institutions, monuments of landscape art, science and technology, etc., in particular: National Philharmonic (late XIX century, 1882); National Museum "Kyiv Picture Gallery" (early XIX century); National Scientific Natural History Museum of NAS of Ukraine (early XX century); Profitable house or "Khanenko Estate" (early XX century, 1913–1916); Museum of Outstanding Figures of Ukrainian Culture (complex of buildings of late XIX century); Kyiv Literary Memorial Museum-Apartment of Mykola Bazhan (1934–1935) and Kyiv Literary Memorial Museum–Apartment of Pavlo Tychyna (1980), located in a residential building on Tereshchenkivska, where famous writers, scientists, state and political figures of early XX century lived; National Museum of Taras Shevchenko (second half of XIX century); Taras Shevchenko Park (1860); Kyiv State Academy of Decorative and Applied Arts and Design named after Mykhailo Boichuk (1982); Theater "Kyiv Small Opera" – architectural monument of the former Lukianivka People's House (1900–1902); Kyiv TV Tower (1968–1973); Church of St. Ioasaf of Bilhorod (1999), Great Choral Synagogue in Podil (XIX century, 1897–1898); Museum of Hetmanate (end of XVII – with superstructures of XIX century), etc. (*List, 2025b; List of monuments of local significance..., 2025; Map of Cultural Losses, 2022; Map of Destruction and Restoration; HeMo, 2025; Religion on Fire, 2025*).

In Kyiv region, as a result of Russian attacks, several dozen cultural heritage objects of Kyiv region of the XX century of local significance were damaged or completely destroyed – architectural, cultural, religious buildings, monuments and memorials, etc.

In Brovary district, the following were damaged – Church of the Ascension of the Lord in the village of Bobryk (building of 1998); wooden Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the village of Peremoha (XIX century, 1892); Church of the Resurrection of Christ (temporarily adapted school building) in the village of Rudnytske; mass grave of soldiers and monument to fellow villagers (village of Lukianivka) who died in 1941–1945 (installed in 1957, 1975), etc. (*Mykhailova et al., 2022; Map of Cultural Losses, 2022; Map of Recovery; HeMo, 2025; Religion on Fire, 2025*).

In Bucha district, the following were damaged – Evangelical Church "Salvation" and youth center (2003) in Vyshneve; Church of St. Andrew the First-Called (2010–2016) in Bucha; Church of St. Peter and Paul (building of XX century 1990s) in Bucha; Archive-library of Viacheslav Chornovil Foundation (modern building) in Bucha; Memorial monument to Afghan war veterans in the form of a BRDM-2 combat vehicle on a stone pedestal (installed in early XXI century) in Bucha; Mass grave of soldiers and monument to countrymen (Hostomel) who died during the Great Patriotic War (installed in 1951); Church of the Holy Prophet Elijah and Apostle Andrew the First-Called (building of 1997) in Hostomel; Monument to the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called (built in 2011) in Hostomel; Irpin Biblical Seminary (built in early 1990s) in Irpin; Church of the Protection of the Mother of God (building of 2020–2021) in Irpin; Alley of Heroes of Pryirpinnia (arranged in 2014–2021) in Irpin; Church of St. George the Victorious (building of 2021) in Irpin; Central House of Culture (building of 1952–1954) in Irpin; Monument to workers who died in World War II (reconstructed in 2016) in Irpin; Holy Trinity Church of OCU (1909–1914) in Irpin; Irpin City Public Library named after M. Rylsky (modern 1961) in Irpin; Church of St. Nicholas of OCU (1999) in Irpin; Church of the Nativity of the

Blessed Virgin Mary of UGCC (2015) in Irpin; Library branch (building of early XX century) in the village of Horenka; Church in honor of the Prophet Elijah and Apostle Andrew the First-Called in the village of Horenka; monument to fallen soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the form of a BRDM military vehicle installed on a stone pedestal (installed 2014–2021) in the village of Huriivshchyna; Church of the Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the village of Lypivka (building of XXI century); Church of St. John the Baptist (modern building) in the village of Moshchun; village house of culture (modern building) (village of Nizhylovychi); Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (modern building) in the village of Petrushky; village house of culture (modern building) in the village of Petrushky, women's monastery of the Icon of the Mother of God "Hearer" (built in 2012–2016) in the village of Fasova; Palace of Culture named after T. H. Shevchenko (modern building) in the village of Borodianka; bust of Taras Shevchenko (installed in 1999 on Taras Shevchenko Square) in the village of Borodianka; Local History Museum of Borodianka region (modern building) in the village of Borodianka; monument to countrymen who died in the ATO/JFO zone (built in 2020) in the village of Borodianka; memorial to fallen soldiers on mass graves (arranged in 1953, 1957, 1973) in the village of Borodianka; monument to victims of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 (XXI century) in the village of Borodianka; monument to St. Archangel Michael (installed in 2015 in the park) in the village of Borodianka; Makariv Historical and Local History Museum (modern building) in the village of Makariv; monument to fellow soldiers who died during World War II (built in 1967) in the village of Makariv; Makariv Public Library and Children's Library (building of early XX century, 1957–1958) in the urban village of Makariv; old house (early XX century), where during World War II the headquarters of the 1st Ukrainian Front was located in the village of Makariv, etc. (*Mykhailova et al., 2022; Map of Cultural Losses; Map of Recovery; HeMo, 2025; Religion on Fire, 2025*).

In Vyshhorod district, the following were damaged – Byshiv House of Culture (modern building) in the village of Byshiv; Church of the Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary (building of 2010) in the village of Byshiv; National Museum–Reserve "Battle for Kyiv in 1943" (1958) in the village of Novi Petrivtsi; Museum of Weaving (1967) in the village of Obukhovychi; memorial monument to fellow villagers who died in World War II (XX century) in the village of Pidhayne; memorial monument to Hero of the Soviet Union Ivan Serhienko (1984) in the village of Pidhayne; Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (building of 2008) in the village of Yasnohorodka, etc. (*Mykhailova et al., 2022; Map of Cultural Losses, 2022; Map of Recovery; HeMo, 2025; Religion on Fire, 2025*).

In Bila Tserkva district, the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior (built in 1833–1939) in the city of Bila Tserkva was damaged.

In Kyiv region, the following were completely destroyed: in Brovary district – wooden Church of the Ascension of the Lord (UOC MP) of the second half of the XIX century (1879) in the village of Lukianivka; wooden Church of St. George (UOC MP) in the village of Zavorychi (1873); in Fastiv district – wooden Church of St. Nicholas (UOC MP) in the village of Zahaltsi of Borodianka district (built in 1746); Church in honor of the Prophet Elijah and Apostle Andrew the First-Called in the village of Mostyshche in Vyshhorod district – village library in the village of Pidhayne. Ivankiv Historical and Local History

Museum in the village of Ivankiv of Vyshhorod district (XIX century, opened 1981) (Mykhailova et al., 2022; *Map of Cultural Losses*, 2022; *Map of Recovery*; HeMo, 2025; *Religion on Fire*, 2025).

The list of losses of cultural monuments, unfortunately, may be replenished while the war continues, but this list of unique immovable cultural objects is a symbol of the Kiev Polissya, damaged during military operations, but unbreakable! In these conditions, special domestic and international commissions should work together to survey registered and newly discovered and newly lost cultural heritage objects and monuments of local significance on the territory of Kyiv and the region, damaged as a result of military actions as a result of Russian armed aggression against Ukraine.

According to the Law *On Tourism*, tourists and excursionists both before and during the Russian-Ukrainian war have the right to "reliable information" "about the customs of the local population, monuments of nature, history, culture and other objects of tourist display, which are under special protection" (Law of Ukraine, 1995: art. 25). Therefore, today it is necessary to take care of the need for state registration and obtaining protective status of a cultural monument and subsequently getting on the UNESCO List and inclusion in cultural-educational tourist routes of Kyiv region, because Kyiv Polissia is one of the most affected regions of Ukraine as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Mechanisms of cultural self-defense include: physical protection and construction of temporary shelters for monuments with sandbags, wooden or other structures, metal shields, etc. Mandatory evacuation of funds according to established protocols, including the movement of museum collections to safe regions or abroad; documentation (certification and protective documentation) and digitization (digitization, 3D scanning, creation of registers and lists of damaged monuments); public initiatives for preservation and protection of monuments by local self-government and volunteers. Involving international support: assistance from UNESCO and other organizations in financing and expert support, for example, in digitizing cultural monuments, etc.

In practice, scientists and researchers should develop recommendations for state authorities regarding mechanisms of cultural self-defense of cultural heritage, which will allow: to record their experience of cooperation in using digital technologies to preserve cultural monuments; to increase the role of public initiatives in cultural self-presentation and transform cultural losses into a new impetus for the emergence of new cultural objects that will reproduce the authenticity of the Polissia region and raise tourism to a priority profitable sector of the economy and strategic partnership of Ukraine on the future joint European Tourism Platform; to secure international support for post-war restoration of cultural objects.

Prospects for restoration of objects damaged or destroyed as a result of Russian military actions in Ukraine lie in making every possible effort to preserve the current appearance of cultural objects that have considerable cultural value for quality post-war restoration. For this, it is necessary to place information about destruction and losses on all possible information resources, actively develop digital information technologies and virtual museums or virtual reality (virtual glasses, etc.). This is very important for finding partners and attracting international grants to domestic projects for the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage after the

war and effective integration of cultural self-defense mechanisms into the National Security Strategy of Ukraine.

Discussion

The presentation of the results of the conducted research took place on November 21, 2025 at the conference *Cultural Heritage and Natural Resource Potential in Tourism and Community Development: Scientific Foundations, Practices, Collaboration*, held at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, dedicated to the 35th anniversary of the founding of the university department of regional studies and tourism

Conclusions

Thus, the study analyzed that the losses of immovable cultural heritage of Kyiv region as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine are significant and require a systematic approach to restoration. Losses of cultural monuments of Kyiv region have a multidimensional character: from minor damage to material destruction of architecture and churches to complete loss of cultural centers and museum funds. It was found that as a result of combined Russian attacks on Kyiv and Kyiv region after the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, 112 historical, architectural, archaeological, religious and other monuments of immovable cultural heritage of Ukraine of both national and local significance were damaged. These are mainly cultural, museum, religious, educational, scientific, library, archival, artistic, memorial, urban planning, science and technology, memorial and other objects. The protective UNESCO World Heritage List was analyzed and cultural heritage objects in Ukraine, particularly in Kyiv, inscribed on it according to the UNESCO Convention *Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, were identified. The UNESCO Tentative List of World Heritage objects was also examined, three of which are located in Kyiv. The national list of cultural heritage monuments of national and local significance of Kyiv region and Kyiv, inscribed in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine, was also analyzed, and cultural objects of Kyiv region that were damaged or destroyed to a greater or lesser extent as a result of military actions were identified. Preliminary results of research within the joint interdisciplinary applied research work of the Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies and the Department of Regional Studies and Tourism of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv *Material and Spiritual Losses of the Population of Ukrainian Polissia as a Result of the Russian-Ukrainian War and Their Overcoming* (2025–2027) were summarized. In particular, preliminary results of work in Kyiv region by the comprehensive Ukrainian studies expedition "Polissia-2025" and practical research by students of the Geography Faculty of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv were taken into account. As a result of expedition research, destruction of immovable cultural heritage of Kyiv region was identified, analytical (before/after) and photographic materials (destroyed/ruined/damaged) of monument destruction were obtained. It was determined that mechanisms of cultural self-defense – from physical shelter of monuments to digital documentation – demonstrate society's ability to withstand the challenges of war. It was substantiated that an important task for preserving cultural memory and determining prospects for post-war restoration of cultural objects after victory remains the integration of state programs, international support and local initiatives. The role of state authorities,

public initiatives, the scientific community and international organizations in searching for mechanisms of cultural heritage preservation was studied. It was shown that through joint efforts of authorities, local self-government, scientists and public activists, it is possible to document losses that occurred as a result of military actions for future restoration of cultural monuments and tourist attractiveness of Kyiv Polissia.

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Втрати культурної спадщини Київщини внаслідок російського вторгнення: механізми культурного самозахисту

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У статті досліджено масштаби втрат нерухомої культурної спадщини Київщини внаслідок російського вторгнення та визначено механізми культурного самозахисту. Окреслено основні типи та види втрат культурних пам'яток, проаналізовано практики їх захисту; досліджено співпрацю державних органів влади, громадських активістів, наукової спільноти та міжнародних організацій у пошуку механізмів збереження культурної спадщини; визначено перспективи післявоєнного відновлення культурних об'єктів. Проаналізовано охоронний Список об'єктів Всесвітньої культурної спадщини ЮНЕСКО та визначено об'єкти культурної спадщини в Україні, зокрема в Києві, що внесені до нього, згідно з Конвенцією про охорону всесвітньої культурної і природної спадщини ЮНЕСКО. Розглянуто також Попередній Список об'єктів всесвітньої культурної спадщини ЮНЕСКО (три з них знаходяться в Києві). Проаналізовано національний перелік пам'яток культурної спадщини національного та місцевого значення Київської області та Києва, занесених до Державного реєстру нерухомих пам'яток України та виявлено культурні об'єкти Київщини, що були більшою або меншою мірою пошкоджені або зруйновані внаслідок військових дій. Узагальнено попередні результати досліджень у межах спільноти міжdisciplinarnої прикладної науково-дослідної роботи Науково-дослідного інституту українознавства і кафедри країнознавства та туризму Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка «Матеріальні й духовні втрати населення Українського Полісся внаслідок російсько-української війни та їх подолання» (2025–2027 рр.). Зокрема, враховано попередні результати роботи на Київщині комплексної українознавчої експедиції «Полісся–2025» та практичних досліджень студентів географічного факультету КНУ імені Тараса Шевченка. У результаті експедиційних досліджень виявлено руйнування нерухомої культурної спадщини Київщини, отримано аналітичні (було/стало) та фотоматеріали (знищено/зруйновано/пошкоджено) руйнування пам'яток. Показано спільні зусилля державних органів влади, місцевого самоврядування, науковців та громадських активістів і міжнародних організацій щодо фіксації втрат нерухомої культурної спадщини, що сталися внаслідок військових дій та щодо використання механізмів культурного самозахисту для майбутнього відновлення культурних пам'яток та туристичної привабливості Київського Полісся.

Ключові слова: Україна, українознавство, Київщина, культурна спадщина, об'єкт нерухомої культурної спадщини, російське вторгнення, втрати, механізми культурного самозахисту.

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