

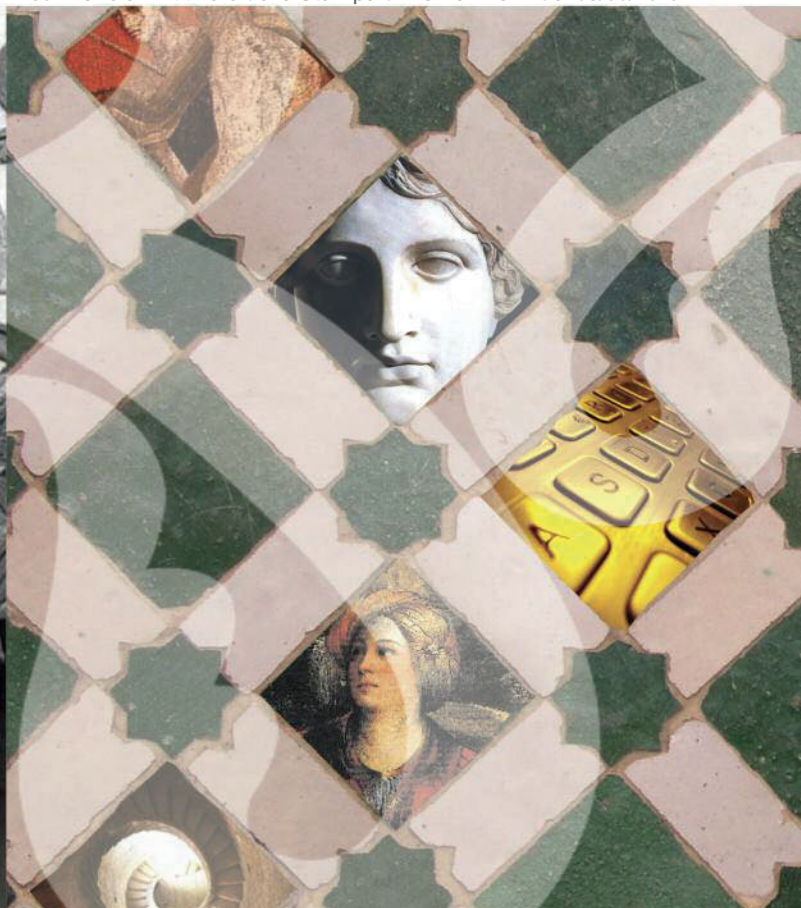


Centro Universitario Europeo  
per i Beni Culturali  
Ravello

# Territori della Cultura

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Centro Universitario Europeo  
per i Beni Culturali  
Ravello

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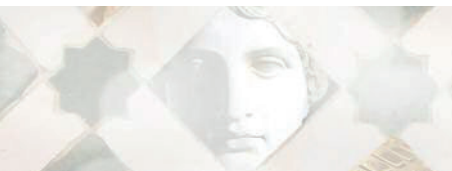
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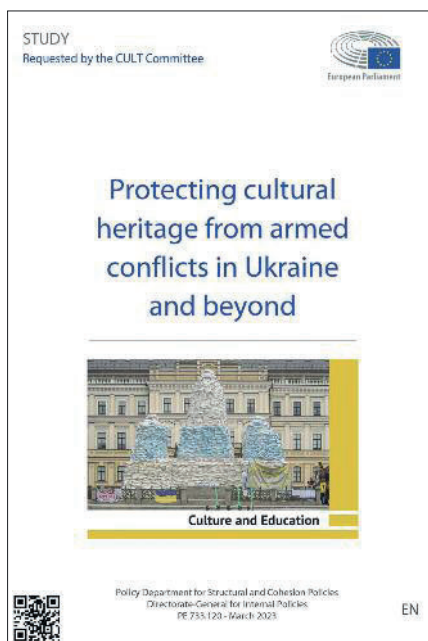


David Blackman

David Blackman,  
Membro Comitato Scientifico  
CUEBC

# Protecting cultural heritage from armed conflicts in Ukraine and beyond<sup>1</sup>

A study on this subject was commissioned by the Culture Committee of the European Parliament, and published in March 2023. The project leader was Dr. Evelien Campfens of Leiden University. [The study was published under this title by E. Campfens, A. Jakubowski, K. Hausler and E. Selter, for the EP Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, Brussels, 2023].



## 1. The **key findings** were:

- 1.1 cultural heritage is often targeted and may even be at the centre of armed conflicts;
- 1.2 cultural heritage protection is key to peace, security and the sustainable development of societies;
- 1.3 the protection of cultural heritage in armed conflict has a solid basis in international law. It is covered by international humanitarian law, but also human rights law, cultural heritage law and criminal law;
- 1.4 international initiatives to protect cultural heritage in Ukraine are numerous, and many actors are involved with overlapping mandates;
- 1.5 projects to safeguard or restore conflict-affected cultural heritage have major social impacts, and participation of local communities is key to their success.

## 2. **Solutions** proposed were:

- 2.1 states should have measures in place before a conflict breaks out;
- 2.2 cultural heritage protection should be integrated within the international system for humanitarian aid and peacekeeping;
- 2.3 independent monitoring of the impact of armed conflicts on cultural heritage would enhance accountability for war crimes, as well as post-conflict peace building efforts.

## 3. The following **Recommendations** were proposed:

- 3.1 address emergencies in Ukraine;
- 3.2 close the accountability gap;
- 3.3 coordinate measures and policies at the EU level;
- 3.4 ensure that preparatory measures are in place in EU Member States;
- 3.5 address the illicit trafficking in cultural objects from conflict zones;

<sup>1</sup> *Proteggere il patrimonio culturale dai conflitti armati in Ucraina e oltre*. Per una sintesi ragionata in lingua italiana, si veda: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/733120/IPOL\\_STU\(2023\)733120\(SUM\\_01\)\\_IT.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/733120/IPOL_STU(2023)733120(SUM_01)_IT.pdf)



*Employees remove the statue of Ukrainian philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda after a Russian bombing hit the Hryhorii Skovoroda Literary Memorial Museum, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Skovorodynivka village near Kharkiv, Ukraine, May 7, 2022. REUTERS/Ricardo Moraes TPX*

3.6 focus on community participation and memorialisation in the recovery and reconstruction phase.

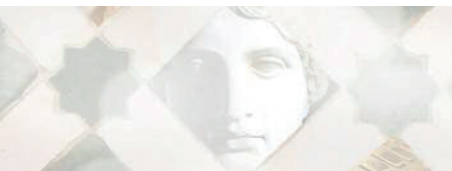
The study was presented in Committee on 27 April by Dr Campfens, with an online contribution from Kiev by Dr Dmytro Koval.

4. There was a positive response by MEPs, who raised a number of questions, including:

- 4.1 the need for a dedicated EU body to coordinate the protection of cultural heritage;
- 4.2 the need for coordination of national law enforcement and relevant EU agencies concerning the inevitable illicit trade when the rule of law breaks down;
- 4.3 to improve standards for the trade in cultural goods, to reduce the risk of trade in looted goods.

It was suggested that UNESCO is cramped because the Security Council is paralysed on the question of Ukraine. [But one must note that the UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay visited Ukraine in April 2023: DJB].

The Committee did not decide on follow-up action, but a representative of the EU External Action Service said that they were planning a conference in Kiev in May, to bring together EU and Ukrainian officials on cultural heritage and on law enforcement.



The Report, an executive summary (in English, Spanish, French, German and Italian) and a recording of the Committee meeting are available on the internet:

<https://bit.ly/733-120>

<https://bit.ly/3FxNAdf>

Earlier this spring a day of reports from Ukraine had been organised by the Society of Antiquaries of London: "Cultural Heritage as the Target and Victim of War: First-hand reports from Ukraine". This was chaired by Prof. John Hines, Vice-President of the Society, and comprised a series of reports on sites and objects from the Ukraine, and a Keynote Address by the Director of the National Museum of the History of Ukraine, Dr Fëdor Androschchuk.

Other contributions came from the Director of the Culture and Emergencies Unit at UNESCO, Krista Pikkat; and from Prof. Peter Stone, UNESCO Professor Chair in Cultural Property Protection and Peace at Newcastle University, speaking on behalf of Blue Shield International. He reported that NATO was discussing a Cultural Heritage policy. The proceedings are available on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5R1s5CsmgeE&t=106s>

The Ukraine's National Agency on Corruption Prevention has created a searchable database of art linked to Russians hit by sanctions. The Agency says that its purpose is "to make it easier for virtuous art market participants to carry out sanctions checks and make it difficult for Russian oligarchs to sell such assets." It currently lists more than 300 works of art, pointing out that this is an easy way for sanctioned Russians to hide and launder their money, evading sanctions. [*Guardian* 8/8/23]

## Structure of the Presentation

1. Introduction: threats to cultural heritage (CH)
2. Background: the situation in Ukraine
3. Main findings
4. Recommendations



27/04/2023 Presentation for the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT)

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*From the presentation of the study for the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT).*

## Immovable cultural heritage

- Destruction:
  - Extensive destruction of built heritage in cities Chernihiv, Mariupol, Kharkiv, Sumy
  - Direct attacks on institutions and monuments of symbolic importance to Ukraine (Skovorodynivka, Sviatohirsk, Ivankiv)
- Misuse:
  - Validation of Russian historic metanarratives
  - Undermining the evidences of the presence of other ethnic groups in the occupied territories



Museum in Skovorodynivka [photo made on Truth Hounds' field mission]

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## Archeological sites

- Conducting unnecessary and unlawful excavations in occupied territories (410 instances reported in Crimea in 2014-2020).



Map of unlawful excavations [Crimean Institute for Strategic Research]

### Consequences:

- Unavailability of data for Ukrainian or foreign research institutions
- A selective study of materials that serves the Russian historic metanarrative



Unlawful excavations of the burial mound "Hospitalny"

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