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VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO PRESERVE UKRAINE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE DURING THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

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Abstract. The article examines the problem of preserving Ukraine's cultural heritage in the context of the full-scale war unleashed by Russia in 2022. The authors emphasise that the destruction of monuments is not only a material loss but also an element of cultural genocide aimed at destroying the historical memory and national identity of the Ukrainian people. Particular attention is paid to the role of civil society organisations and volunteer initiatives, which are key actors in the rescue of cultural values, the organisation of digital conservation, evacuation and documentation of monuments. Examples of the activities of local headquarters, the Centre for the Rescue of Cultural Heritage, the international SUCHO initiative and UNESCO programmes are considered, demonstrating the effectiveness of civic solidarity and coordination with state and international structures. The article shows that it is the active participation of civil society organisations that allows for a rapid response to threats, combining modern technologies (3D scanning, digital archives) with historical practices, as well as strengthening the moral and humanistic dimension of heritage preservation. The study is based on analytical, historical-descriptive and comparative methods, combining theoretical analysis of scientific sources with practical study of specific volunteer and public initiatives. The work proves that the protection of cultural heritage in wartime is not only a humanitarian task, but also an act of spiritual resilience, national self-affirmation of Ukraine and a testament to the strength of civil society.

Key words: Ukrainian cultural heritage, Russian-Ukrainian war, cultural genocide, volunteer initiatives, community organizations, cultural resistance, digital preservation, 3D scanning, archiving, documentation of destruction, historical memory, national identity, humanitarian protection, international cooperation.

Introduction. The relevance of preserving Ukraine's cultural heritage during wartime cannot be overstated. Russia's full-scale aggression, which began in 2022, has presented Ukrainian society not only with humanitarian and military challenges, but also with a threat to the very identity of the nation.

Cultural heritage plays a key role in shaping national identity, as it accumulates historical experience, value orientations and symbolic meanings that form the basis for the development of society. In times of military conflict, these objects take on special significance as material and spiritual markers of collective memory, attesting to the community's right to its own history, culture and territory. Their destruction poses a threat not only to cultural heritage, but also to the humanitarian potential of the nation, as it deprives people of a sense of belonging, continuity and inner support. Therefore, the protection and preservation of cultural heritage in wartime is not just a professional or administrative task, but an important humanistic imperative aimed at protecting human dignity, historical memory and the future development of the country.

In wartime, when the threat to cultural values is immediate and urgent, the activities of volunteer communities, public organisations and local initiatives, which become the first line of defence for cultural heritage, take on particular importance. Their work goes far beyond technical procedures: by saving archives, evacuating works of art, fortifying monuments and creating protective structures, they are performing an act of humanitarian responsibility aimed at preserving historical and cultural memory. Each such step is a manifestation of deep humanity, solidarity and devotion to one's culture, and at the same time – moral resistance against attempts to destroy cultural heritage. In this context, the protection of monuments is not only a professional necessity but also an ethical duty of society, because the preservation of cultural heritage means the preservation of the spiritual foundation of a people, their right to memory, dignity and a future.

At the same time, the relevance of the topic highlights the need for a systematic approach to preserving cultural heritage, which involves combining state strategies, international standards, scientific recommendations and modern digital technologies.

At the state level, Ukraine is implementing a number of strategic documents aimed at identifying, protecting and restoring cultural objects, in particular through the creation of a National Register of Damaged Monuments, inter-agency coordination and the involvement of experts in the monitoring process. These steps provide an institutional framework for volunteer and community initiatives, facilitating the exchange of information and resources.

At the same time, the integration of international standards, such as the provisions of the 1954 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) Guidelines, allows for the implementation of uniform approaches to damage assessment, conservation and restoration of sites. This contributes to the harmonisation of Ukrainian practices with global efforts to preserve heritage during wartime.

Equally important are scientific recommendations that form the methodological basis for the restoration and digital archiving of monuments. The use of 3D modelling, photogrammetry, geoinformation systems and digital archives ensures accurate documentation, recording of the extent of damage and the possibility of virtual reconstruction.

Thus, the activities of volunteers and civil society organisations in Ukraine are not isolated – they are integrated into state policy, the international context and scientific practice, forming a multi-level system for the protection of cultural heritage.

Research status. Historiographical studies on the preservation of Ukraine's cultural heritage during the war demonstrate the importance of combining state strategies and public initiatives in preserving national memory.

Thus, Yu. Trach, in his work «Cultural Heritage in Ukraine: Initiatives for Preservation and Optimisation of Protection», emphasises a comprehensive approach that involves not only regulatory and organisational models for the protection of monuments, but also the use of modern digital technologies for monitoring and restoring objects. The author stresses that effective protection of cultural heritage in wartime is impossible without a systematic approach, professional training of specialists, and coordination of efforts at all levels (Trach, 2025).

In turn, V. Nadolska, in her work «Public Initiatives for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage Sites in Ukraine (2022-2023)», reveals the humanistic dimension of the topic, focusing on the activities of community and volunteer groups, youth groups, and expedition teams who documented destruction, recorded damage, and created databases for the future restoration of cultural values during the war (Nadolska, 2024). Her research pays particular attention not only to the methods of recording objects, but also to the participation of people who risk their own lives to preserve the memory of the nation's spiritual and cultural heritage for future generations. Together, these works form a contemporary scientific discourse that combines the technical, organisational and humanistic aspects of heritage preservation, emphasising that any physical destruction of a monument can only be compensated for by human dedication, care and the indifference of society (Nadolska, 2024).

In this context, it is also important to understand the problem at the level of international scientific discourse. The study conducted by the authors of the article «Crime against memory or cultural genocide? On the destruction of the cultural heritage of Ukraine during Russian aggression in the 21st century» emphasises that the deliberate destruction of Ukrainian cultural objects has not only a material but also a deeply symbolic dimension (Kravchenko, Kyzymenko, Husieva, & Krasilnikova, 2022). It is an attempt to deprive a nation of its right to its own history and identity, to erase its spiritual code, which has been formed over centuries. Therefore, the concept of «cultural genocide» is increasingly being used in scientific circles, as the destruction of heritage is aimed at undermining the foundations of national memory, without which it is impossible to imagine the future of the country (Kravchenko, Kyzymenko, Husieva, & Krasilnikova, 2022).

The theoretical aspects of developing approaches to preserving cultural heritage are discussed in the work «Cultural Heritage of Ukraine: Theoretical Foundations and Principles of Preservation» (Kyzymenko, Husieva, 2022). The authors emphasise that cultural heritage is not only a collection of material monuments, but also a symbolic space that shapes the values, moral guidelines and worldview of a nation. That is why its protection requires a combination of legal, cultural and educational approaches. The researchers emphasise that in the 21st century, the protection of cultural values requires the integration of scientific knowledge, interdisciplinary cooperation, active community participation and the formation of new principles that take into account the challenges of a globalised world and military threats (Kyzymenko, Husieva, 2022).

As the World Economic Forum emphasises, «An attack on a nation's cultural heritage can have far-reaching consequences. It is equated with an attack on freedom of thought, conscience and religion – and is described as a critical component of genocide» (Letzing, 2022). In this context, the creation of digital archives, the documentation of destruction, and the work of volunteers become not only a means of preserving memory, but also a tool for international justice, as demonstrated by the example of the National War Archive in Ukraine, which contains thousands of videos, photographs, and eyewitness accounts (Semeniuta, 2023).

Thus, volunteer and community initiatives to preserve Ukraine's cultural heritage during the war should be seen not only as a response to immediate destruction, but also as a manifestation of profound humanity, solidarity and love for one's homeland. Their activities are both an act of care and civic responsibility, combining local actions with global discussions about the value of cultural heritage as a universal foundation of human existence. Thanks to this, the preservation of monuments becomes not only a matter of history, but also a moral obligation of society to future generations, because every saved artefact preserves a piece of our collective soul.

The purpose of the article is to examine the role of volunteer and community initiatives in preserving Ukraine's cultural heritage in the context of full-scale war, to analyse their forms of activity and interaction with state and international institutions, and to identify the potential of digital technologies as an effective tool for supporting these initiatives in protecting national memory and cultural identity.

Results and Discussion. With the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, one of the most notable examples of volunteer and public initiatives in the field of culture is the Save Ukrainian Culture charity campaign, which was announced on 25 April 2022 by the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine (since 29 October 2025 – the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine), the Ukrainian blockchain company Everstake, and the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education (Save Ukrainian Culture, 2022).

The initiative aims to bring together Ukrainian and international experts – artists, architects, museum curators, restorers – to coordinate efforts to preserve the national cultural heritage. The project combines state support, civic engagement and digital technologies, which is in line with contemporary approaches to cultural policy in the context of military conflict (MKIP razom z Everstake, 2022).

One of the key tasks of the initiative is to record cases of destruction of cultural objects – museums, architectural monuments, libraries – and document the extent of their damage. According to the MCIP, at the time of the project's launch, more than 200 cultural heritage sites had been damaged (MKIP vzhe zafiksovano bilshе 200 epizodiv, 2022). This data forms the basis for further analysis, restoration plans and international advocacy for the restoration of Ukrainian cultural heritage sites.

The campaign also provides funding for restoration projects, ranging from the restoration of historic buildings to the restoration of museum exhibits, library collections, and archives. An important aspect of Save Ukrainian Culture's activities is to increase the international visibility of Ukrainian culture, which is seen as a form of cultural resistance to attempts to destroy or delegitimise Ukrainian identity. In this context, cooperation with international partners and information and media campaigns aimed at mobilising the global community are being actively developed. Well-known Ukrainian artists have become ambassadors for the initiative, including the Kalush Orchestra, rapper Skofka, and the popular blogger Stepan the Cat from Kharkiv, who has over 1.3 million followers. This creative approach to communication demonstrates a desire to attract new audiences, raise international awareness of the issue of preserving Ukrainian culture, and create an emotional bridge between art, technology, and social solidarity.

Save Ukrainian Culture is not only a charity campaign, but also a symbol of cultural resistance, demonstrating that the destruction of cultural objects is an attempt to erase the history, identity, and collective memory of a people. The combination of technological solutions with art and heritage is forming a new model of cultural diplomacy, within which Ukrainian artists, museum curators and architects are actively representing Ukraine on the international stage.

Another important example of civic consolidation is the «Cultural Heritage Rescue Centre initiative», established on 1 March 2022 in Lviv (U Lvovi stvoryly «Tsentr poriatunku kulturnoi spadshchyny», 2022). The organisation was established as a volunteer rapid response centre to assist state institutions and cultural establishments in the protection, evacuation and conservation of historical and cultural monuments, sacred buildings and museum collections.

An important area of the Centre's activity has been the establishment of international partnerships. In particular, the organisation sought support from the Committee for Aid to Ukrainian Museums (Komitet Pomocy Muzeom Ukraïnskim) in Poland, which acted as an intermediary in the supply of technical equipment and materials for conservation. A humanitarian hub was set up at the Warsaw Uprising Museum, where large amounts of aid from European countries were received. Thanks to the centralised transport of materials to Ukraine, it became possible to respond quickly to the needs of cultural institutions, even in frontline regions (Tsentr poriatunku kulturnoi spadshchyny, 2022).

The Centre's activities covered a wide geographical area – from the Lviv and Volyn regions to Ukraine's «hot spots» – Kherson, Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipro and Luhansk. Effective coordination through volunteer networks, WhatsApp groups, WeTransfer file sharing, and crowdfunding platforms ensured the preservation of numerous art collections that were under real threat of destruction.

The public initiative «Centre for the Rescue of Cultural Heritage» is a striking example of the institutionalisation of the volunteer movement in the field of culture and a model of effective interaction between state, public and international structures. Its activities convincingly demonstrate that even in times of greatest danger, society is capable of consolidating around common humanistic values.

In March 2022, in response to the unprecedented threat of destruction of Ukrainian cultural heritage, a unique international initiative was launched – the Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (SUCHO) project. It was founded by a group of digital humanities scholars – Anna Kiyash (Tufts University), Quinn Dombrowski (Stanford University) and Sebastian Majstorovich (Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage) (Dombrowski, Kijas, Majstorovic, 2022). It was the combination of their scientific experience and civic sensitivity that made it possible to create an effective platform capable of responding quickly to the threat of cultural data loss in real time.

The main goal of SUCHO is the rapid preservation and archiving of digital resources containing information about Ukrainian cultural heritage. This process involves not only the technical copying of websites, but also the formation of a comprehensive digital memory system that guarantees the long-term existence of cultural artefacts in a secure information environment, regardless of political, technical or military circumstances.

In a broader context, SUCHO's activities implement the concept of «digital humanitarian intervention» – a new phenomenon in contemporary cultural policy, where communities of scholars, IT specialists and civil society activists become defenders of the cultural rights of nations in crisis situations (Dombrowski, Kijas, Majstorovic, 2022). This approach goes beyond the traditional understanding of humanitarian aid: it combines science, technology and moral responsibility in a common desire to preserve what shapes human dignity – culture.

The Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (SUCHO) initiative is not just a technical or volunteer project – it is a strategic cultural phenomenon of global significance that is shaping new standards of behaviour for the international community in the field of cultural heritage protection.

Ultimately, Ukraine's experience with SUCHO has set a precedent on a global scale. It has convincingly demonstrated that culture can be protected not only within the physical walls of museums, but also in virtual space, where digital representation replaces destroyed materiality. SUCHO has opened up a new paradigm – digital ethics of heritage preservation based on trust, openness and cooperation. This project has become not just a response to the crisis, but a model of digital resistance and moral responsibility in a world where war, disinformation and technological risks threaten the very idea of historical memory. Its activities convincingly prove that in the struggle for culture, it is not force that wins, but memory; and it is memory that forms the spiritual foundation of civilisation.

During a period of full-scale war, the activities of the Heritage Rescue Headquarters play an important role in preserving Ukraine's cultural heritage. Its creation was a kind of mobilisation of the cultural front, bringing together representatives of various professional communities – museum workers, architects, archaeologists, volunteers and international partners. The activities of the Heritage Rescue Headquarters are coordinated by UNESCO, the International Council of Museums, ICOM-Disaster Resilient Museums, ICCROM – conserving culture, promoting diversity, and other institutions and rescue initiatives in Ukraine and around the world (Shyian, 2023).

The main mission of the headquarters is to survey, record and coordinate first aid measures for cultural heritage sites in areas affected by hostilities. The headquarters' activities are aimed not only at technically recording damage, but also at preserving historical evidence and cultural memory. The headquarters' staff inspected religious sites with damaged roofs and wall paintings, documented destroyed museum exhibits, and carried out rescue work in libraries where valuable books and archival documents were at risk of destruction.

The headquarters' activities were particularly intense in the Chernihiv, Sumy and Kyiv regions, which suffered the greatest cultural losses as a result of hostilities and shelling. In particular, a series of expeditions were conducted in the Chernihiv region using 3D scanning, laser scanning and aerial photography technologies to document the condition of monuments with high precision, with the participation of Ukrainian and international experts (Holubka, Portareskul, 2022). In the Sumy and Kyiv regions, damage was monitored, photo and video evidence of destruction was collected, and a database was created for further analysis and planning of restoration work. During the first six months of work, the headquarters' specialists surveyed more than 400 cultural heritage sites (Shyian, 2023). This result demonstrates the high level of coordination, professionalism and social responsibility of the initiative's participants.

The new expeditions after the de-occupation of the Kharkiv region were particularly significant, as members of the headquarters documented the extent of the cultural heritage losses in this region. They worked not only as researchers but also as guardians of collective memory, creating a unique

archive of destruction, which in the future will become the basis for restoration programmes and evidence of the aggressor's crimes at the international level. For example, in the Kharkiv region, damage to more than 50 churches and more than 20 museums was recorded, where volunteers, on a voluntary basis, protected cultural heritage artefacts from further destruction and destruction, and also made 3D scans of architectural monuments for digital conservation (Monitorynh spadshchyny zadlia vidnovlennia, 2023).

Based on the collected data, an information system for monitoring heritage has been created, which is constantly updated and supplemented with new information. This database stores not only photographs of damage and detailed documents according to the ICCROM (International Centre for the Study, Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) methodology, but also eyewitness accounts that provide an emotional and human dimension. This system allows the condition of monuments to be recorded in real time, the extent of damage to be documented, restoration processes to be monitored and restoration work to be planned. It also allows digital copies of endangered objects to be created, making them accessible to researchers, restorers and a wide audience anywhere in the world. Through the integration of aerial photography and 3D modelling, each monument is recorded in both physical and digital form, ensuring that its shape, details and symbolic significance are preserved even in the event of physical destruction.

The activities of the Heritage Rescue Headquarters in the frontline regions of Ukraine are not only a technical or restoration process, but also an act of cultural resistance aimed at protecting historical memory and national identity. The restoration of museums, estates and temples in the affected regions will not only be evidence of the physical revival of architectural objects, but also a sign of the victory of Ukrainian culture, which has survived despite the challenges of war. This confirms that the preservation of cultural heritage is an integral part of the process of national renewal and the affirmation of Ukraine in the global cultural space.

The activities of public volunteer headquarters have become living proof that cultural heritage is not only a matter for specialists, but above all a manifestation of civic consciousness and love for one's native land. The self-organisation of people in different cities of Ukraine has shown that in the most difficult moments of history, it is ordinary citizens who become the true guardians of culture. They have proven that heritage can be protected not only by law or technology, but above all by the strength of spirit, responsibility and an inner need to preserve the memory of their people.

Such civic activism has also found support at the international level. In particular, UNESCO announced the launch of an initiative to preserve Ukraine's Jewish documentary heritage, aimed at supporting Ukrainian archives and memory institutions in wartime. The programme involves the digitisation of documents that are at risk or already damaged in 10 memory institutions across the country. In addition, there are plans to train more than 50 cultural specialists in preservation techniques and to support artistic and research projects that highlight the contribution of Jewish heritage to Ukrainian culture (UNESCO launches initiative to preserve the Jewish documentary heritage of Ukraine, 2025). Thus, the combination of local citizen initiatives and international support demonstrates a comprehensive approach to preserving cultural heritage even in conditions of military conflict.

For example, the Backup Ukraine initiative is an international project designed to protect Ukraine's cultural heritage in the digital space. The Backup Ukraine initiative emerged as an innovative platform and mobile technology that allows Ukrainian citizens, as well as the international community of interested parties, to perform three-dimensional (3D) scanning of cultural objects – monuments, memorials, historic buildings, sculptures – using a mobile phone, in particular the Polycam app (Backup Ukraine, 2022). The resulting digital models are archived in a cloud environment, forming an open database of cultural heritage (Blue Shield International; WTOP News; World Economic Forum).

The Backup Ukraine project ensures the preservation of visual and structural information about cultural objects, even in the event of their physical destruction. Thus, the initiative emphasises that

culture in wartime is not a peripheral sphere, but an integral element of national security and self-identity. The project sets a unique technological precedent by engaging mass volunteer participation via mobile devices to record and archive heritage during hostilities (Backup Ukraine, 2022).

The Backup Ukraine initiative has the potential to become not only a digital archive in emergency conditions, but also an element of Ukraine's future state cultural heritage management system. According to UNESCO documents, Ukraine must develop a digital infrastructure for heritage preservation by 2026, creating unified registries and databases (UNESCO, Action Plan for Culture in Ukraine, 2024). In this context, Backup Ukraine can serve as a model for international programmes documenting cultural losses in areas of armed conflict.

Backup Ukraine can be seen as a new front in documentation, where a smartphone camera becomes a tool for protecting heritage, and every citizen becomes its guardian. The initiative combines technological innovation, civic responsibility, and international cooperation, forming a comprehensive model for the future – one in which the preservation of cultural heritage is the foundation of national resilience and part of global cultural security.

Among the current initiatives aimed at protecting and restoring Ukraine's cultural heritage in the context of full-scale war, the Argo project occupies a special place. It is not just a digital database, but an element of the information front, where Ukraine opposes Russian propaganda and long-standing attempts to appropriate Ukrainian history and culture (Proekt Arho – Povernennia ukrainskoi kulturnoi spadshchyny, 2022).

The project brings together volunteers, professional historians, art historians, researchers, and concerned citizens who are joining the great cause of documenting and returning Ukrainian cultural heritage. Unlike traditional state mechanisms, Argo's activities are based on the power of an active civil society.

The main goal of the project is to create an open, structured database of artefacts that have been stolen, illegally exported or are at risk of destruction. This database is populated by anyone who wishes to contribute via a special form on the website, after which the information is moderated and published. In this way, the protection of cultural heritage ceases to be exclusively a state task and becomes a joint endeavour of society.

Argo is working not only to gather facts, but also to establish a legal basis for the future repatriation of artefacts. Recording the circumstances of their removal, identifying the individuals and organisations involved, and analysing the systematic looting will form the basis for further restitution processes and bringing those responsible to justice.

A separate section of the website, «Crimea», demonstrates how the occupying authorities are using cultural monuments as a tool of propaganda and an attempt to legitimise the occupation (Proekt Arho – Povernennia ukrainskoi kulturnoi spadshchyny, 2022). This clearly shows that the war is not only military in nature, but also ideological: it is a clash of cultures, historical narratives and civilisational values.

Argo is therefore an expression of civic responsibility, a form of cultural resistance and an important component of the national survival strategy. While active hostilities continue on the battlefield, another battle is being fought in the digital space – for our history, memory and right to our own cultural identity.

It is worth noting that a particularly important aspect of contemporary cultural heritage protection is the adaptation of proven practices used during the armed conflicts of the 20th century, which may become a topic of research in the future. The experience of World War II and other major conflicts shows that organised volunteer groups and scientists are able to respond quickly to threats, evacuate valuable collections and document destruction, thereby minimising losses for future generations.

For example, during World War II, special units called «Mona Lisa» and «Monuments Men» operated in Europe, the United States and Great Britain, evacuating and protecting cultural property

from combat zones (Saxon, & Buchanan, 2021; Larsen, & Dubina, 2023). They organised the transport of museum collections, the restoration of damaged exhibits and the systematic documentation of losses. Such practices became the basis for modern protocols for the protection of monuments in crisis situations.

In Poland, during the occupation in World War II, numerous volunteer initiatives arose to save sacred monuments and archives, with local communities transporting books and documents to safe places themselves, often risking their own lives (Lewack, 1962). This experience showed that mobilising local communities and involving a wide range of volunteers increases the effectiveness of protecting cultural values in crisis situations.

In the current context of Ukraine, these historical lessons have taken on new meaning. Volunteer and community initiatives combine evacuation and conservation methods with modern digital technologies, 3D scanning and the creation of online archives (Hromadski volonterski shtaby z poriatunku khramiv ta ikon, 2025). Drawing on historical experience allows these organisations to quickly adapt to dangerous conditions, coordinate their work effectively, engage international partners and ensure the preservation of cultural objects even in frontline regions.

Thus, the integration of proven practices from the past with modern technologies and international coordination is critical for the formation of a sustainable model for the protection of cultural heritage in times of war and other crisis situations.

Conclusion. The study included a comprehensive analysis of volunteer and community initiatives that emerged in Ukraine in response to threats to cultural heritage during the full-scale war. Based on open data, official reports from the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, materials from UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOM, and the work of digital humanities scholars, the study examined mechanisms for the protection, documentation, and digital preservation of cultural objects. Particular attention is focused on projects such as Save Ukrainian Culture, the Centre for the Rescue of Cultural Heritage in Lviv, Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (SUCHO), Heritage Rescue Headquarters, Backup Ukraine, and the Argo public initiative, each of which represents different models of interaction between state institutions, expert communities, and civil society.

The analysis showed that volunteer and public initiatives have not only become an operational response to the threats posed by full-scale war, but have also become a key element of a new model for preserving Ukraine's cultural heritage, based on multi-level interaction between society, state structures and international partners, forming a fundamentally different approach to the protection of cultural values in crisis conditions.

The essence of this model lies in combining the physical protection and evacuation of artefacts, carried out by volunteers, local communities, museum workers and specialised mobile groups, with international support, which includes expert assistance, material resources, advocacy of the issue at the global level and the creation of a legal basis for future restitution processes, as well as the widespread use of digital technologies that enable rapid documentation, digitisation, 3D modelling, and the creation of online archives and databases necessary for recording losses, analysing the extent of destruction, and forming a body of evidence for international judicial institutions.

The combination of these components forms an effective cultural defence toolkit that reduces the vulnerability of heritage, expands the public's opportunities in the process of monitoring and recording, and ensures the preservation of historical memory even in cases where material objects are threatened with destruction. Thus, volunteer initiatives have become not just a response to the crisis, but a driving force for the formation of a new paradigm of cultural heritage management in wartime.

It is particularly important to draw on the historical experience of volunteer initiatives implemented during the armed conflicts of the 20th century. The experience of World War II and other military conflicts has shown that organised volunteer groups, museums and researchers are able to respond quickly to threats, evacuate valuable collections and document destruction. Studying and

adapting these methods to modern conditions makes it possible to increase the effectiveness of cultural heritage protection by combining proven practices with modern technologies and international coordination.

Based on the results obtained, a number of practical measures can be proposed. It is necessary to create coordination platforms to bring together state, public and international initiatives, which will allow for a rapid response to threats to cultural heritage. It is important to develop digital infrastructure for archiving and 3D documentation of cultural objects, particularly in frontline regions. Volunteers and specialists in the field of conservation and digital preservation should also be trained, which will increase the effectiveness of their work and reduce the risk of damage to monuments. International communication and educational campaigns aimed at raising awareness of the state of Ukrainian cultural heritage and attracting resources from the international community are equally important. Finally, monitoring and scientific analysis of the effectiveness of volunteer initiatives will allow recommendations to be developed for future crisis situations in the field of cultural heritage protection.

Thus, the experience of volunteer and community initiatives during the war demonstrates that the preservation of cultural heritage is not only a material but also a moral responsibility of society. Coordinated work, a combination of technology, humanism and international cooperation, forms a model of sustainable heritage protection that can withstand the challenges of modern conflicts and serve as an example for global practice.

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