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# ICOM PRAGUE 2022

## Threats to Cultural Heritage in Ukraine: causes, consequences, and responsibility

# **179 days of Russian military invasion to Ukraine**

## Destruction of cultural heritage



Hryhoriy Skovoroda Museum,  
Skovorodnyvka, Kharkiv region



Mariupol Museum of Local Lore,  
Donetsk region

# Persecution of professionals who protect heritage and their relatives



## Illegal collection transfer



Mariupol. Donetsk region



Melitopol, Zaporizhzhia region



# Memory erasure and distortion. Propaganda in museums

Part of the temporarily  
occupied territory of the  
Zaporizhzhia region,  
Spring-Summer, 2022



## **At the same time:**

- **ICOM Russia does not condemn actions that destroy cultural heritage in Ukraine.**
- **Russian museum workers, in particular, ICOM members, participate in moving objects from museums in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, as well as creating propaganda exhibitions, which is a gross violation of the ICOM Code of Ethics.**

“...And our latest exhibitions abroad are just a powerful cultural offensive. A kind of “special operation” If you want, which a lot of people don't like. But we are coming. And no one can be allowed to interfere with our offensive... Thus, the main result of two major Russian and European art exhibitions in Paris is interpreted solely as the Russian flag flying over Bois de Boulogne... .. With the attitude to military action, everything is not so simple as well. On the one hand, war is blood and murder, and on the other hand, the self-affirmation of people, the self-affirmation of the nation ...”

*Mikhail Piotrovsky, the director  
of the Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia)  
“Rossiyskaya Gazeta”, June 2022*



## Russian imperialism continues in the 21st century.

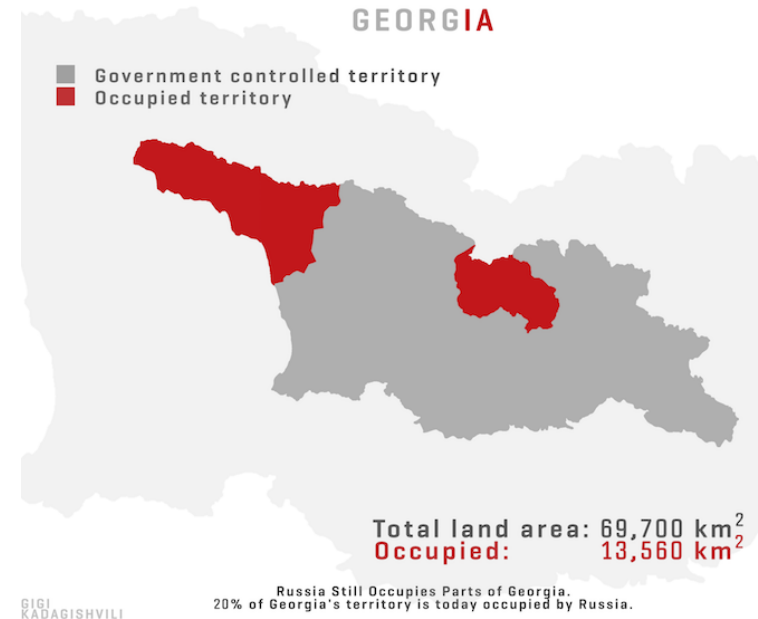
Russia's war with **Ukraine** actually started in **2014**, when Crimea and a portion of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions were occupied.

# Georgia

20% of the territory of Georgia is occupied by Russia, currently.

In Abkhazia, from 1993 till present up to 20 heritage listed buildings have been damaged or destroyed from and following hostilities, intentional damage, demolition, illegal excavations, and unauthorized restoration works.

In August 2008 war, in the Tskhinvali Region 14 sites were damaged during hostilities and a further 10 sites were destroyed. During the fighting 2 museums were damaged. Since the war, unauthorized works were reported at 24 sites, causing demolition and reconstruction of entire or parts of the historic structures.



## Statement of the ICOM Ukraine

ICOM Russia shows complete contempt for the values, founding principles, and mission of the International Council of Museums.

The destruction of Ukrainian cultural heritage, theft, and cross-border movement of its cultural artifacts in violation of international laws and ICOM's Code of Ethics unfold with the agreement or even with direct participation of Russian museum staff, in particular, members of the ICOM Russia.

**In light of all these facts and based on point iii of ICOM statute's *Article 4* ("Infringement of ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums"), we ask that Russian museums' membership in the ICOM was terminated, and recommend that ICOM members suspend their cooperation with Russian museums.**

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