

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_header\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_header\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1216

## **UKRAINE: Russians attacked over 60 religious and cultural places of worship**

**Over 60 places of worship in Ukraine and sites of cultural heritage attacked by the Russians**

By Halya Coynash

KHPG (01.04.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3jcIA21> – Five weeks into its war against Ukraine, Russia has bombed or shelled over

sixty places of worship in at least eight oblasts (Kyiv; Donetsk; Luhansk; Kharkiv; Sumy; Zaporizhya and Zhytomyr). It has also destroyed or damaged many places of huge cultural significance.

It is for this reason that, instead of running for cover to escape Russia's relentless bombing and shelling of the city, Kharkiv municipal workers and volunteers worked together to protect the famous Monument to the great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko by totally covering with sandbags. There have been similar moves in Odesa, Lviv and other Ukrainian cities, but nowhere as dangerous as in Kharkiv which Russia has been unable to seize, and instead seems bent on destroying.

The very tall monument is a landmark of the city, which withstood the Nazis, but was in grave danger from the new invading force from the North. Work is also underway to protect the monument to Ukraine's Independence on Constitution Square and Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov has promised that they will endeavour to protect other monuments as well.

The Russian regime under Vladimir Putin has long demonstrated barbaric disregard for human life, as well as for places of religious and cultural significance. There may, however, be other more sinister motives for the horrific destruction to sites of cultural importance that Russia has caused since it began its invasion of Ukraine on 24 February.

The Russian regime does not recognize Ukraine's right to exist, and may well want to destroy the country's rich historical and cultural legacy, especially since this

demonstrates roots that go back far beyond the emergence of Moscow. Russian politicians and the state media have made almost childish attempts to try to appropriate the ancient monument of Chersonese in occupied Crimea as 'Russian', while also inflicting considerable damage on it, the 16th Century Khan's Palace (Hansaray) and other places of significance in Crimea. Ukrainians' valiant resistance to the Russian invaders has spoiled Russia's narrative, and it is quite possible that the blanket destruction to Mariupol and Kharkiv is, at least in part, prompted by the wish for revenge.

Some of the losses are irretrievable. Enormous damage was caused to a museum in Ivankiv, Kyiv oblast, with some of the works of Ukrainian artist Maria Prymachenko totally destroyed. In Mariupol alone, Russian strikes destroyed the Drama Theatre and a School of Arts, with both these having also been used to provide residents with shelter from the incessant bombing.

While Moscow may well be hoping, through such destruction, to undermine Ukraine's separate identity, the horrific vandalism also gives the lie to all of the excuses that the Kremlin has presented for its war against Ukraine. The claims that it is defending the Russian-speaking population and the Orthodox Church are grotesque in the light of the systematic destruction of the predominantly Russian-speaking cities of Kharkiv and Mariupol, and the huge amount of damage caused to churches, including those which are, at least for the moment, still linked with the Moscow Patriarchate.

The claim that the war is aimed at the so-called 'denazification' of Ukraine has been condemned by Holocaust survivors, the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine and international Holocaust remembrance organizations. It seems particularly

cynical given that it is Russians who bombed Babyn Yar, site of one of the worst Nazi massacres of Jews; another Holocaust memorial in the Kharkiv oblast and who killed Boris Romantschenko, a 96-year-old Kharkiv resident who had survived four Nazi concentration camps, only to die from a Russian missile.

Ukraine's Ministry of Culture and Information Policy has created a special website for documenting war crimes committed by the Russian armed forces against the Ukrainian population and sites of cultural heritage. The material will, hopefully, be used as evidence for criminal prosecution, either under Ukrainian legislation or at the International Criminal Court at the Hague. They invite people to send them information and / or photographic and video evidence regarding the damage of protected buildings; monuments; places of worship, etc, the plundering of museums, libraries and similar and the use of force by the armed forces during the above acts of plunder or destruction. The considerable evidence already amassed can be viewed here in Ukrainian and in English (most easily viewed in 'Gallery').

*Photo: Holy Dormition Cathedral, 1778 in the Kharkiv oblast damaged by Russian shelling on 3 March*

**[Further reading about FORB in Ukraine on HRWF website](#)**

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_footer\_layout in **[/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php](#)** on line **1266**

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in **[/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php](#)** on line **1266**

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_footer\_layout in  
/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-  
content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in  
/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-  
content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_template in  
/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-  
content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1268