

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Faculty of History



ABSTRACT

of dissertation

for the conferment of educational and scientific degree

"Doctor" in the professional field 2.2 History and Archaeology

in the doctoral programme "Archaeology - Museology"

on the topic:

**„Cultural and Natural Heritage Management Strategy of Municipality
Pavlikeni“**

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Sofia 2024

The dissertation was discussed and submitted for defense by the Archeology Department at the Faculty of History of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" on 29 January 2024. The text of the scientific research consists of 255 typewritten pages. The dissertation is constructed of an introduction, three thematic chapters, a conclusion and a list of the literature used. Each chapter in turn is divided into separate paragraphs with corresponding sub-paragraphs. There is a noticeable disparity in length between the three chapters. This is due to the fact that in the first and second chapters the historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality is discussed and analysed separately, whereas ideas for the future are also provided. In chapter three, only general perspectives and a strategy for the development of the sites, festivals and customs under study are applied. The text contains images that are included in the exposition itself, not separated in an independent appendix. They are included within it because it is necessary to instantly orient the reader to the volume of the general topic under study. Non-socialized archaeological monuments are not included in the thesis because they will be the subject of future independent study, under the necessary conditions.

I. General characteristics of the dissertation

In recent years, the problem of proper management of cultural, historical and natural heritage has been enshrined in various bills worldwide. As a consequence, specific plans, programmes and strategies related to their conservation and popularisation have appeared in the policies of many countries. Museums, public collections, historical and natural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality have been partially studied in 2018 by the author of this study. The topic of the management of the cultural and natural heritage of the Pavlikeni Municipality itself has not been a subject of serious academic research, neither among historians nor among local historians. Such circumstance highlights the relevance and novelty of the proposed topic.

The selection of the topic was triggered by the necessity of studying the current state of the cultural, historical and natural heritage of the Pavlikeni area. In this way, all the indicators related to the proper management of the sites could be analysed by making a qualitative risk assessment of their existence and development.

This dissertation sets several main research objectives:

- Assessment of the current state of museums, public collections, historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality;
- Assessment of the existing institutional administrative structure, its relevance and its staff capacity;
- Assessment of the potential for development of all the studied elements of the cultural, historical and natural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality;
- Proposals for the modernization and optimization of the management of the cultural, historical and natural heritage in accordance with contemporary museological trends, modern methods for the presentation and advertising of cultural products, according to the current opportunities for budgetary and external funding;

In order to accomplish these objectives, the following tasks need to be completed:

- To analyse the current state of the cultural, historical and natural heritage;
- To examine the performance of those responsible for the preservation and management of cultural, historical and natural heritage;
- To monitor the stages in the development of cultural, historical and natural heritage management;
- To propose alternative solutions for the future strategic development of the cultural, historical and natural heritage;
- In relation to the implementation of the objectives, it is also necessary to examine the existing scientific, research and local studies literature;
- To carry out site visits and interviews with staff, museum workers and local historians and others involved in heritage management;

The literature used in this dissertation can be grouped into the following categories:

- Research - related to the theories of the museum and its contemporary functions;
- Scientific - providing information on the historical and ethnographic development of the region, its demographic and cultural research;
- Local history - related to the study of the past of the region to the micro-level of the settlements constituting the municipality;

The research methodology used involves primarily an analysis of the volume of information obtained from studies and publications of different nature and content. Source materials directly or indirectly related to the topic under consideration have been analysed and selected. By synthesizing the processed data, some basic regularities have been derived, corresponding to the set objectives. Some of the historiographical materials, as well as some documentary sources, have been subjected to critical analysis with a view to noticed inconsistencies and contradictions. Contemporary theoretical studies in the field of museology are also taken into account, but the focus is on the use of relevant practices, methods and possibilities for the specific area of Pavlikeni.

The documentary sources used to construct this dissertation are diverse in their thematic content. Due to the specific connection of the topic with the Pavlikeni area, the largest share is covered by the local literature. In the introductory part of the present scientific work the names of some researchers, who were engaged in the study of history, development of museum work, cultural-historical and natural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality, are mentioned. The work with the volume of research and scientific literature concerning the subject under consideration leads to the conclusion that an increased interest has been observed after year 2000. A significant contribution to the management of the analyzed sites is the application of the Bulgarian and International legislation.

The source base used for the construction of the dissertation also includes archival units from the Regional State Archive - Veliko Tarnovo and the Central State Archive - Sofia. Among the sources used are also publications from the periodical press dating from the Liberation to the present day. Unpublished sources such as interviews with persons related to the sites under consideration are presented in the text. In the dissertation they are cited as personal archives, with the consent of the interviewees.

In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, field observations were made by visiting all the sites, festivals, rituals and museum lessons described in the dissertation that took place in Pavlikeni Municipality in the period 2019-2024.

The examples provided do not complete all of the research and publications used related to this study. They are intended to outline the main trends in the study of the history of cultural and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality from its origin to the present day. Observations of the literature used show that the topic of cultural and natural heritage management hardly stands out as an independent research area. It can be found directly or indirectly in the context of general studies that concern the history of the Pavlikeni Region.

In the course of the work specific activities have been implemented in the field of popularization, preservation and development of the cultural-historical and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality with the participation of the author of this study. Some of them are presented in the chapters of the dissertation. The most significant and contributory ones are considered to be the regularization in the Ministry of Culture of the General Historical Public Collection - Mihaltsi, the General Historical Public Collection - Karaisen and the General Historical Public Collection - Vishovgrad (2021-2022), the organization and hosting of a scientific conference " The Pavlikeni Region in the Liberation Struggles of the Bulgarian People in the 19th Century" in the village of Vishovgrad on 7 July 2023 and the winning project proposal under the 2023 Amateur Art Programme of the National Foundation for Culture with a project entitled "The Unknown Cultural and Historical Heritage of Pavlikeni Region" in October 2023.

II. Structure of the dissertation

The introductory part of the dissertation includes general information about the town of Pavlikeni and its importance as a municipal centre. Also outlined are the general lines of the research, the relevance of the topic, the methodology used, the literature and the documentary basis, which are highlighted in the above paragraph.

The first chapter, "Museums and Public Collections", consists of 11 main parts divided into separate sub-topics. It covers the museums and public collections of the Pavlikeni Region, providing information on their development over the years. In order to give specific ideas for the future of the institutions, their current state is traced. The public collections are arranged alphabetically according to the name of the villages where they are located. During the course of the study, activities concerning the popularization and preservation of some of the museum collections were carried out with the participation of the author of this study, and these are also described. No official data on museum holdings and operations are included here, because the information is confidential and the author does not have access to the registers at the Ministry of Culture, for which each museum provides information annually in its annual reports.

The first part of the chapter is devoted to the History Museum - Pavlikeni and its branch Antique Ceramic Centre - Pavlikeni. It presents the history of the museum and discusses all

its departments - "Archaeology", "Ethnography and Renaissance", "New and Recent History" and "Art Department". Special attention is dedicated to the unique exhibit, which is a movable cultural property with a category of national significance - the Perpetual Calendar, created on the idea of Matey Preobrazhenski - Mitkaloto in 1870. In order to objectively assess the management, an analysis of the current state of the institution is made by examining the following elements thereof: infrastructure to the facility, building stock, services offered, educational initiatives, staff potential and functionality of the "souvenir shop". Recommendations are made for improving the museum's performance through the use of the underground premises and their conversion into a library and a representative hall. Providing additional income through the renovation of the 'souvenir shop'. Regrouping the Art Gallery and providing a second room suitable for temporary exhibitions, conferences and other events. Recommendations are made for re-ordering and innovations in the museum exhibitions. The activities of ongoing projects are analysed.

After the research it is concluded that the material base and the building fund of the History Museum - Pavlikeni are maintained in good condition. The only exception is the roof construction and the need for a slight cosmetic interior repair in the corridor. The museum lacks a scientific archive, a library and a representative hall. If these were constructed it would improve the workflow of the institution and attract visitors. If the "souvenir shop" is rebuilt and digitalisation is started in stages, additional financial income will be generated. Part of the exhibitions in the departments follow the old museum exhibition concepts. By adding the newly acquired exhibits available in the museum, it is possible to build other concepts reflecting the past. A positive result is the completed project for the "Restoration and conservation of the "Perpetual Calendar" by Matey Preobrazhenski", kept in the History Museum - Pavlikeni, because this provides the necessary showcase with a regime for the proper preservation of the exhibit. The implementation of the project "Revitalisation of the space, renovation and renewal of the expositions in the History Museum - Pavlikeni" outlines a good perspective for the development of the institution in the future.

As a branch of the Historical Museum - Pavlikeni, the Antique Ceramic Centre - Pavlikeni was also visited. Besides the history of the complex, its layout, adjacent buildings, excavations, funded projects, renovation and socialization of the site are also analyzed. Suggestions are made for new services to be included by the History Museum - Pavlikeni in relation to the Antique Centre, completion of the guest house, planning of new excavations, updating of the opening hours of the complex, provision of transport, fresh water and groceries. Organization and techniques for the realization of the Ancient Balkan Land Festival are analyzed.

The second part of the first chapter traces the development of the Historical Museum - Byala Cherkva and its affiliates House-Museum "Tsanko Tserkovski" and House-Museum "Rayko Daskalov". All the departments of the museum - "Archaeology", "Ethnography", "History of Bulgaria XV-XIX centuries", "New and Recent History of Bulgaria", "Nature" and "Art" are examined. It is noted that its work consists in collecting, documenting, preserving, researching and promoting the monuments of culture located only on the territory of the town of Byala Cherkva. The fact that the "Nature" Department is in a separate building is emphasized. This is the most impressive one, because it houses the only natural history museum collection of its kind in the Veliko Tarnovo Region, named "To Nature with Love".

Attention is drawn to the Tsanko Tserkovski House-Museum, where artefacts are displayed that represent Tserkovski's life as a poet, teacher, editor and politician. Separately, the House-Museum "Rayko Daskalov" is analyzed, where an exposition on the life and work of the prominent politician and statesman Rayko Daskalov is positioned. It is noted that the buildings of the two branches are immovable cultural monuments of national importance.

In order to make an objective assessment of the management of the cultural and natural heritage, an analysis of the current state of the museum and its branches has also been made here by examining the following elements: infrastructure to the facilities, building stock, services offered, educational initiatives, staff positioning and the functionality of the "souvenir shop".

After the research it is concluded that the Historical Museum - Byala Cherkva has a rich museum resource. The museum fails to maintain the building stock of its branches, with the exception of the Tsanko Tserkovski House Museum, and specific proposals are made to solve this problem. The institution lacks a scientific archive and storage facilities for the different departments. This hinders the work of the staff, so attention has been paid to how to separate them. The fact that there are no facilities for access for the disabled and toilets for visitors is a negative element compared to the established conditions for tourism. It would be appropriate to have souvenir shops and ticket offices in the branches. This circumstance is required in order for them to be fully operational. The inclusion of new services and the construction of a representative hall will bring additional revenue to the institution. In order to solve the mentioned problems, the chapter gives concrete examples with draft proposals on various measures for the museum and its affiliates. The exhibitions in the departments follow outdated historical concepts - museum and research, so the static nature of the exhibitions needs correction. Attention is paid here to the original names of the house-museum "Tsanko Tserkovski" and the house-museum "Rayko Daskalov". They are contrary to the established spelling norms of the Bulgarian language, because the word house museum is spelled separately, not with a hyphen.

From the third to the eleventh part of the first chapter set out consistently: Ethnographic Museum Exposition - Byala Cherkva, General Historical Public Collection - Vishovgrad, Historical Museum Collection - Varbovka, Ethnographic Household Collection - Gorna Lipnitsa, Art Residence "The Old School", Memorial Museum Collection " Serafim Severnyak" - village of Gorna Lipnitsa, Agricultural "Museum" - village of Gorna Lipnitsa, General Historical Public Collection - Daskot, General Historical Public Collection - Karaisen and General Historical Public Collection - Mihaltsi. All sites have been examined independently, tracing their development and current status.

After the analysis, it is specified that Pavlikeni Municipality owns nine museum collections. Of these, four are regulated as public collections. All of them are subordinated to community institutions, with the exception of the collection in the village of Daskot, and have a common historical profile. Of the self-declared museum collections, two are located in the village of Gorna Lipnitsa and have different themes - a memorial one dedicated to the writer Serafim Severnyak and an agricultural one, while the one in the town of Byala Cherkva is ethnographic. Insufficient funding and maintenance of their building stock are highlighted as common problems. They differ significantly from municipal museums because of the variety

of exhibits they have. Specific proposals are given to develop the public collections in trend with the standards of contemporary Bulgarian museology. In their exhibits the emphasis is on the role of an individual local personality or event of important historical significance, not just on the objects on display. Information is provided on projects already undertaken in the relevant area. At this stage, the General Historical Public Collection - Daskot and the General Historical Public Collection - Mihaltsi are reported as finalised. It is highlighted that the developments in the others will continue.

The museum activity in Pavlikeni Municipality has an extremely important role in the development of the local culture. It enables people to communicate freely with the regional natural and historical heritage. The sites under consideration are important factors for revealing unknown to the general public knowledge related to the past of the Pavlikeni Region. Institutions seek to establish or re-establish a relationship with their visitors using entertaining and interactive exhibitions. They are oriented both to the specialists and the less educated guests in this field. They produce cultural knowledge and are fundamental to the formation of human education. In order to survive, it is necessary to look for new reference points and reasons for their existence, because they are proving to be uncompetitive to the new educational and research centres.

After the analysis of the museums and public collections, it is found that most of them and their expositions emerged relatively recently, during the era of late socialism. In their construction they were subordinated to the then highly centralised and ideologised state model of museum work. In the period of Transition, in the 1990s, many of the museum collections were almost abandoned. This circumstance led to a number of current negative consequences for their material condition and especially for their functioning.

Contemporary social and political conditions allow the creation of collections and expositions that reflect not just all historical periods, following certain general postulates. They can focus on what is specific to a particular village, town or region. It would be beneficial if the History Museum - Pavlikeni, the History Museum - Byala Cherkva and the management of the public collections in the Municipality of Pavlikeni would pay attention in their future work to what is specific to them. In this way, they will distinguish themselves from other museum centres and will be more interesting and attractive to visitors.

The second chapter of the study is devoted to the cultural heritage and examines the historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality. From the first to the third part of the chapter the historical heritage sites are presented, which are significant immovable monuments, sites and buildings contributing to the preservation and conservation of the local culture. This group includes archaeological monuments with a certain degree of socialisation. These are the Roman Captage at the village of Musina and the Roman "Obelisk" - Lesicheri. Apart from these, there are a number of sites unknown to science and the public that need immediate protection. The possibilities for their conservation and development are analysed in Chapter Three.

In order to sufficiently justify the places of memory of the generations, the reenactments of the marches of "The Band of Filip Totyu", "The Band of Hadzhi Dimitar and Stefan Karadzha" and "The Band of Pop Hariton" in Pavlikeni Municipality are presented in detail. It describes how the "Pustia" of Varbovka met the heroism of Filip Totyu's followers in one of the longest and most memorable battles of its time. Information is given about the localities of "Vehtite Lozya" (Vineyards), "Dyado Panova Korja", "Dalgi Dol" and "Kanladere", revealing the footsteps of the battles of Hadzhi Dimitar's and Stefan Karadzha's bands in the Pavlikeni region. The areas of "Chernichak" and "Komitski dupki" (Komitski holes), which are sites related to the formation of Pop Hariton's bands, are also explored. It is emphasized that all the sites, except those related to the Pop Hariton's Band, are immovable cultural monuments of national importance.

Part of the cultural and historical heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality is associated with sites symbolizing the Christian faith and notable personalities from the glorious past of Bulgaria. The third part of the chapter deals with churches built before the Liberation in 1878, the only monastery in the Pavlikeni region and two tombstones. The author of this study notes the fact that the Christian churches are active and do not have museum status. However, with the permission of the priests under whom they are assigned, guided tours to them are allowed respectively: for the Church Temple of St. Dimitar", the town of Byala Cherkva to the Historical Museum - Byala Cherkva, for the Church Temple "St. Paraskeva Church, village of Karaisen to the Historical Public Collection - Karaisen, for the Church "Uspenie Presvetaya Bogoroditsa" ("Dormition of the Mother of God"), village of Mihaltsi to the Historical Public Collection - Mihaltsi, for the Church "The Holy Prophet Elijah", village of Vishovgrad and the Monastery of St. John the Baptist, village of Rositsa of the General Historical Public Collection - Vishovgrad. The preservation and the tourist service to the tombstones of priest

Petar Nikolov Draganov and Tsanko Tserkovski in the area of "Slaveevi Forests" demonstrate the adoration of the grateful population to the work of these activists.

Due to the urbanization of settlements and illegal logging, there is massive deforestation, leading to huge problems related to pollution and environmental protection. As a result, nature conservation is becoming a part of the lives and practices of small settlements, mostly villages, so the fourth part of the chapter focuses on natural heritage. In the Pavlikeni Municipality, the Musina Cave, the Geocomplex "The Precipices", the Geocomplex - Zarapovo Eco-trail, Chukata Eco-trail, Negovanka Eco-trail and the Pavlikeni Zoo are considered as its elements or monuments. It is pointed out that the ZOO is the only working one in Veliko Tarnovo Region, which is another advantage for tourism development.

So far, the efforts of local researchers and local historians have been focused mainly on studying and popularizing the material cultural heritage of the municipality. Therefore, the last part of this chapter is the first to focus on the invisible legacy of the ancestors or the so-called intangible cultural heritage. In the territory of Pavlikeni Municipality several customs and practices can be considered as its elements - the Winter custom "Ivanovi Vlachugi", the tradition of Todorovden, the Folklore Festival "Humour in Folk Art" and the "Parade of Masks" in Byala Cherkva. Unlike the rituals associated with Todorovden, the masquerade games and festivals, which have analogues elsewhere in the country, the specificity of their reproduction is currently unique to this region. This gives them a special place among the preserved local traditional rituals and is a reason to look for ways to preserve and promote them.

In summary, this chapter concludes that cultural and natural heritage is grouped according to different classification principles. Its current state is shown and its development over the years is traced. Relevant ideas on its inclusion in the tourism sector in Pavlikeni Municipality are provided. During the study of the examined sites and elements of intangible cultural heritage, activities concerning their popularization, preservation and uplift have been implemented with the participation of the author of this study, which are also described.

The third chapter, which is also the last one, is devoted to the perspectives for development and building a strategy for the development of the cultural and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality. It is divided into five parts. As a general finding from the previous chapters, the fact that the museum expositions in the Pavlikeni region have thematically outdated concepts is clarified. The visitors who explore them are from different age groups,

and not all of them manage to understand their contents. In order to solve this problem, the first part of the chapter recommends the use of new technologies in the work of museum institutions. Through their use, it is possible to overcome the current conservatism and backwardness from the modern achievements of historical science in expositions. The current activity of museums and the application of modern technologies in them is analyzed, with special attention paid to digitalization, the status of websites and social network accounts of museum institutions in Pavlikeni Municipality. Other technological innovations in the sphere of museum activities, supporting the work process, are proposed.

The second part explores the activities with the public inside and outside the museum building. Ways of exhibiting and interacting with visitors to the museum product are explored. Methods, attractions and fun complementary moments are proposed, aiming at increasing audiences. Practices for engaging audiences through the use of modern technology are demonstrated. Most emphasis is placed on museum education and techniques for creating specific strategies, plans, and programs. There are different personality groups globally and these can be targeted to each. It was recommended to involve children between the ages of 5 and 19, students with special educational needs, students, retirees, and active school teachers. Museum lessons, games, thematic celebrations linked to national or world holidays and the implementation of the 'museum in a suitcase' method are among the good practices demonstrated. The benefits of organising cultural routes and involving the local community in various events are presented. The Pavlikeni Historical Museum and the Byala Cherkva Historical Museum are implementing the 'Holiday in the Museum' campaign, so its current activities are analysed and recommendations are given for greater success.

The most significant problem for the cultural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality is its insufficient popularisation. In order to attract more visitors there is a need for proper advertising. Therefore, in the third part of the chapter its types are discussed as a way of promoting the studied sites. The pros and cons of a possible choice of television, print, radio or internet advertising are analysed. New forms of advertising such as frequent media participation by museum professionals and working with other museums in the country and abroad are proposed. Specific successful project activities that have taken place are discussed, providing a way to advertise and disseminate heritage.

In the fourth part of the chapter, alternative solutions for additional financial revenues are given through specific examples. In order to gain cash income, the museums and public collections in Pavlikeni Municipality have to start offering new activities, so strategically feasible services are described here. Another relevant activity is marketing. It is involved in developing strategies to attract tourists willing to make use of their leisure time. Its activities are oriented towards creating conditions for optimising the value of the products and prices in the museum so as to meet the expectations of visitors. As a form of modern cultural management, project work is an important and essential part of efforts to find alternative and additional sources of funding for work in museums and public collections, so these are also described. Partnerships with foreign museums, foundations, NGOs and private banks are pointed out as good practices in this regard.

In order for the relationship between the institutions to be effective, a strategic solution is the proposal for the development of a strategy for a unified system uniting museums, public collections, historical and natural sites in Municipality Pavlikeni, which is discussed in the last part of the chapter. Museums and municipalities are part of the system which, according to current legislation, is charged with the protection of cultural heritage. Specific legal provisions concerning the work and responsibilities of the institutions involved are therefore cited here. Another strategic proposal for the development of cultural and natural heritage is the creation of a Club or NGO "Friends of the Museum" at the History Museum - Pavlikeni. The most at risk group in Pavlikeni Municipality is the natural heritage, therefore the local authorities and the society should realize the need for its preservation, development and its role as a tourist attraction. Elements of intangible cultural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality are also in a risk group. In order to preserve them, it is recommended to include themes related to the local Bulgarian festive-ritual system, crafts and livelihoods in the educational programmes and events calendar of museums, public collections and community centres. Apart from the sites with varying degrees of socialisation mentioned so far, there are a number of other monuments in Pavlikeni Municipality with potential for inclusion in the cultural heritage system. It has been pointed out that a significant part of them are immovable archaeological sites, they are not listed in any public register and it is of fundamental importance to register them. Otherwise, these sites will remain without institutional protection and will not receive the appropriate status with boundaries, protection zones and management plans.

Within the structure of Pavlikeni Municipality, there is a Department of Humanitarian Activities. Therefore, recommendations have been made to include in its databases registers of museums, public collections, historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage. For the better functioning of the cultural heritage of the Pavlikeni area, it is necessary to include all the historical and natural sites on its territory in a strategically unified system, the centre of which is a unit in Pavlikeni Municipality. Together with its management and the staff of the other establishments, various tourist and educational routes and programmes could be developed, participating in common projects. For the successful development of cultural tourism it is essential to have places for recreation, food, accommodation and convenient infrastructure, for this reason the availability and functionality of these elements is analysed here.

In the summary of the third chapter it is confirmed that the problems and challenges faced by museums, public collections, cultural, historical and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality can be summarized in several groups - registration and digitization of cultural heritage elements, funding, building stock, staffing, work with the public (popularization, educational programs), conservation and restoration, introduction and use of new technologies in museums. These are the main areas in which to focus efforts when looking for new approaches and perspectives for their upward development. There is also a need to create a common institutional framework for action on local heritage conservation and development.

In this last chapter specific practices are proposed, the application of which can improve and modernize the work of museums, helping also for the proper management and popularization of the cultural-historical and natural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality. Since the reports of the museum units for the previous years have not been made public, the author of this study is not able to derive specific values and estimated figures for the growth or decline in the visitor flow, the available inventory museum units in the funds, the number of guided tours and other activities carried out by them. In the budget of Pavlikeni Municipality the total financial figures for the History Museum Pavlikeni and the History Museum Byala Cherkva are presented, but they do not provide separate information on how the funds were spent. It is therefore recommended that the museums in Pavlikeni Municipality start publishing their annual reports in the public space, as many municipal museums in Bulgaria do.

In the final part of the dissertation some general conclusions are made, resulting from the conducted research. It is specified that it presents the state, development and perspectives of the museums, public collections, historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality. An analysis of their current state is made in order to seek the right way for their preservation and future development by building a unified strategy for their management.

Cultural and natural wealth needs to be realised as a resource which can be put at the heart of a future modern industry. The dissertation work can serve as a basis, a model for the construction of a municipal strategy or program, in which the issues related to the preservation, popularization and management of museums, public collections, historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality can be included. Therefore, the direct participation of the local authorities in the process of preserving the cultural, historical and natural heritage is declared, and this is a guarantee for the adequate attitude of the interested public. Such a strategic document would further develop the priorities outlined in this study into detailed programmes for the relevant areas. In its eventual development, the specialists responsible for its future implementation should be predominantly involved. In this way the local population will be directly involved in the issues surrounding heritage management.

Museums, public collections, historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage should be an integral part of the business card of Pavlikeni Municipality. The competitiveness of the destination is to be found in its tourist sites, which do not exist on their own, but are part of the image of this city. Thanks to them, its image is built and maintained. It is assumed that in the future people will increasingly prefer nearby destinations and short trips. If Pavlikeni Municipality adopts a strategic management policy aimed directly at the preservation and popularisation of its cultural and natural heritage, it has the potential to become an internationally recognised attractive destination for cultural and historical tourism. It will be characterised by an optimal combination of environment, preserved cultural heritage and satisfied tourists. Focusing on a supply rather than a demand market will achieve significant economic and social benefits from tourism in the long term for the whole Pavlikeni Municipality.

Contributions to the dissertation:

- Analysis of the current state of the cultural, historical and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality;
- Research on the activities of the responsible officials and institutions regarding the preservation and work related to the cultural, historical and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality;
- Tracing the stages in the development of the management of cultural, historical and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality;
- Proposing alternative solutions for the future strategic development of the cultural, historical and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality;
- On-site visits and interviews with officials, museum workers and local historians and other persons related to the management of cultural, historical and natural heritage in Pavlikeni Municipality;
- Assessment of the current state and potential for the development of museums, public collections, historical, natural and intangible cultural heritage in Municipality Pavlikeni, by analyzing the functionality of the existing institutional administrative structure, its relevance and staffing.;
- Proposals have been prepared for the modernization and optimization of the management of the cultural-historical and natural heritage in accordance with contemporary museological trends, modern methods for the presentation and advertising of cultural products, according to the real possibilities for budgetary and external funding.;

Publications on the dissertation topic

Miteva, D. The battle path of Hadzhi Dimitar's and Stefan Karadzha's band in Pavlikeni Region – in: Bands and Band tactics in the national liberation struggles of the Bulgarian people in the 19th century. Veliko Tarnovo: Abagar, 2022, p. 164-180.

Miteva, D. Municipal museums and their educational functions – in: P. 3. Notices of the Municipal History Museum-Breznik, Breznik: Municipal History Museum - Breznik, 2020, p.162-172.

Miteva, D. The Enlightening, Revolutionary and Political Face of Priest Petar Nikolov Draganov – in: Notices of the History Museum of Dryanovo. Volume 3. Dryanovo: History Museum – Dryanovo - in print .

Miteva, D. Winter custom „Ivanovi Vlachugi“ – in P. 5 Notices of the Municipal History Museum-Breznik, Breznik: Municipal History Museum - Breznik. – in print.

Gratitudes

The preparation of this dissertation is the result of lengthy reflection and discussion of specific topics and ideas with Prof. Dr. Nadya Manolova-Nikolova. Regarding the systematization and arrangement of the overall text in it, active assistance was provided by Asst. Dr. Iliana Borisova-Katsarova. The present work includes information on the intangible cultural heritage of Pavlikeni Municipality, in relation to which Prof. Dr. Mira Markova gave valuable guidance on the necessary literature and its analysis for the researched field. The author of the present study would like to express his gratitude to the listed specialists, who helped with their invaluable support in the overall work process.