

FUNCTIONING FEATURES OF THE POLTAVA LOCAL MEMORIAL MUSEUMS

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Abstract

The study focuses on the functioning of local memorial museums in Poltava, specifically those dedicated to writers Ivan Kotliarevskiy and Panas Myrnyi. A feature of the activities of such museums in Poltava is the division into memorial and literary parts. Usually, each part is located in a separate building within the estate or is generally a separate museum, such as the Ivan Kotliarevskiy Literary Memorial Museum and the Ivan Kotliarevskiy Museum-Manor, located in the historical part of the city on Ivanova and Instytut'ska Hills, respectively, at a distance of 400 m as the crow flies. The memorial part presents furnishings with the personal belongings of the writers. The literary part presents publications of their works and everything related to literary creativity. In addition to the memorial and literary parts, the third component of local memorial museums in Poltava is the presence of a garden in the estate, the area of which varies significantly. In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, museums began to perform the unconventional function of rehabilitation from PTSD for military and civilians, and museum gardens in many cases became substitutes for therapeutic gardens.

Keywords: Local memorial museum; Feature; Functioning; Poltava

Introduction

The events of the Russian-Ukrainian war led to global changes in all spheres of life of Ukrainian society, including in museum work. Such changes took place in two main directions: the first is the acquisition by museums of exhibition and gallery functions instead of evacuated expositions; the second is the active involvement of museums in the process of psychological rehabilitation of military and civilian victims of the war. In the famous National Reserve "Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra" in Kyiv, a program for the military, "Spiritual Restoration through Culture," was launched in 2023 with the support of the charitable foundation "Ukrainian Lavra." As part of the program, military personnel – participants in hostilities live in the Lavra buildings for up to 10 days, recover within the walls of the monastery, go on excursions, and take part in master classes, including in icon painting. Their curators are priests, historians, and art historians who help them

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discover new creative abilities and learn more about the history and culture of Ukraine. Groups of military personnel with up to 20 participants, accompanied by a guide, tour the buildings and museums of the Lavra during the day and may attend religious services. Such programs are currently being developed for the families of fallen soldiers and prisoners of war. It is planned to expand them to other historical and cultural reserves of Ukraine.

Local museums are also actively responding to the challenges of today and are taking on the unusual functions of rehabilitation centers.

The authors conducted a study of the activities of three local memorial museums in Poltava – two dedicated to the life and work of the writer Ivan Kotliarevskiy and one, the literary and memorial museum of Panas Myrnyi, to compare their activities and functions. The field surveys and the study of specialized literature dedicated to therapeutic medical gardens at medical institutions allowed us to determine the presence of certain signs of therapeutic gardens in the gardens at local museums, which gives museums an unusual, but currently relevant, function of rehabilitation after PTSD.

Since the aspect of the study was local museums, which are simultaneously an object of cultural heritage (located in historical estates), contain an ethnographic and memorial component, are related to cultural and artistic activities, combine closed exhibition spaces and open spaces of landscape design, and perform a rehabilitation function along with the traditional one, this led to a wider list of the processed source base in the following areas:

- 1) museum as a “memory of place” with the preservation of artifacts and the historical environment [1], [2];
- 2) research into cultural heritage issues [3-11];
- 3) artistic component in monument protection, restoration, and museum activities [12], [13], [14];
- 4) influence of natural environment on artificial environment [15];
- 5) professional training of restorers, monument protection workers, and museum workers [16-20];
- 6) influence of war on cultural heritage and psychological state of society [21-31].

Materials and Methods

The research tasks determined a list of general scientific research methods. The analytical method enabled the processing of a diverse source base in various directions, allowing for the identification of both the main researched and unexplored aspects and, ultimately, the formulation of the scientific novelty of the presented research. The comparative analysis method allowed for the comparison of the principles of functioning of three local memorial museums and determined the commonalities and differences between them. The system analysis method allowed for the analysis of the activities of three museums at different hierarchical levels: thematic focus of the exposition, functional zoning of the territory, and list of functions.

The evidence base was the survey method and the photo fixation method. In particular, the processing of the source base proved that the local museums of Poltava remain unexplored in scientific English-language sources. Similarly, no comprehensive study was found that compares the activities of three museums under wartime conditions and analyzes their ability to perform an unusual therapeutic rehabilitation function. Additionally, specialized sources on psychology, manifestations, and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and information on the arrangement of therapeutic gardens for patients with psychological and nervous problems were processed. Based on this processing, a classifier of the defining features of a therapeutic garden was developed, and the presence of these features in the gardens of local memorial museums in Poltava was analyzed.

In particular, based on familiarization with rehabilitation activities in groups conducted by museums and the processing of specialized medical documentation, it was noted that in the absence of an artificially created therapeutic garden at a hospital with a three-part division according to the clinic of patients' diseases, in some cases the role of such a garden can be performed by gardens at local museums in large estates located in ecologically clean places away from highways and residential areas.

Results and discussion

Ivan Kotliarevskyi's Manor-Museum on Ivanova Hill

The manor of Ivan Kotliarevskyi on Ivanova Hill is an example of a reconstructed memorial estate. Its reconstruction was carried out based on existing iconography: a watercolor sketch by Taras Shevchenko, dated 1845, a lithograph by artist R. Mellin, the memoirs of contemporaries, and the plan of the estate of 1837 from the Poltava Regional Archive (Fig. 1) [32]. As a result, three buildings in the traditional style of Poltava folk architecture were recreated as closely as possible to the original ones – a house, a grain barn, a stable, and a sweep well (Fig. 2). In addition to existing iconography, authentic exhibits in open-air museums served as models for them.



Fig. 1. Schematic map of the memorial manor of Ivan Kotliarevskyi



Fig. 2. Reconstructed house of Ivan Kotliarevskyi

The manor complex was recreated in 1969, the year declared by UNESCO as the Year of Ivan Kotliarevskyi, on the occasion of the 200th anniversary, on the site where the founder of modern Ukrainian literature was born in 1769. It is listed in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine as a monument of national importance.

The manor was purchased in 1751 by Kotliarevskyi's grandfather, who served as a deacon in the Assumption Cathedral. The settlement of clergy close to the church was an ancient Ukrainian tradition. Archival texts from 1765 record that the house had two rooms for the owners, two for servants, and a granary and a barn on the estate. Since Kotliarevskyi himself had no descendants, the estate changed owners several times after his death. During Kotliarevskyi's time, the estate was located near the fortress walls, which have now been partially restored, and near the Assumption Cathedral, which was rebuilt during the time of independent Ukraine.

After the reconstruction, five exhibition halls were arranged in the house: a study, a living room, a parlor, a housekeeper's room, and a kitchen. The reconstructed house uses separate elements of the original house – the main beam with the Old Slavic inscription: "This house was created in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Year 1705, month of August 1" (Fig. 3), a part of the wooden vestibule.



Fig. 3. Ancient main beam with inscription

Museum workers have created authentic interiors featuring old furniture and books (Fig. 4). The housekeeper's room contains memorial items, including a board of green cloth, a mirror, and a chest of drawers for storing linen. The parlor features antique tables, a sofa, leather armchairs, an antique clock, and a painting by an unknown 17th-century Flemish artist. The kitchen is furnished with artifacts from the 18th and early 19th centuries – an antique table, bowls, and embroidered towels.

The war made adjustments to the museum's exposition. In the study, you can see photographs of soldiers and shell casings and powder containers painted with Petrykivka paintings. This becomes a kind of symbol of the transformation of a murder weapon into a work of art and an artistic act that claims that art wins. In the living room, you can see children's paper crafts. The museum holds various art workshops for children and organizes thematic excursions.

Poltava Literary and Memorial Museum of I.P. Kotliarevskyi

This museum is located in an old city mansion from the early 19th century – an architectural monument of national importance, which, according to legend, once belonged to the poet Vasyl Kapnist [33].



Fig. 4. Old living room

Built in 1805 – 1810, the one-story house in the classicist style is decorated with a four-column portico of the Doric order with a balustrade on both sides of the stairs leading to the main entrance and decorative cornices above all 23 windows and the main door (Fig. 5). The internal enfilade layout is typical for noble buildings of the beginning of the 19th century.

Founded in 1952 as a literary memorial, after the emergence of the Kotliarevskyi Manor-Museum in 1969, the museum gradually shifted the main focus of the exposition to the work of Ivan Kotliarevskyi and its connection with the present. It is in the museum's storage facilities that the manuscript archive of the father of modern Ukrainian literature is almost completely preserved. Today, the museum's exposition itself is located in six halls, and the seventh hall is an exhibition hall, where a new exhibition of the creative work of contemporary Poltava artists, interesting collections from private collections, etc., is presented every month (Fig. 6).

Two halls contain materials about the life of I.P. Kotliarevskyi, where furniture and certain objects of that period are displayed.

Two exhibition halls are dedicated to the work of the outstanding master of words, in particular to his three most famous works – the poem "Aeneid" and the plays "Natalka Poltavka" and "Moskal-charivnyk," which laid the foundations of new Ukrainian literature and drama. The materials of the museum collection also tell about the theatrical activities of Ivan Kotliarevskyi. Here are presented the first editions of his plays, posters, invitations, and photos of theater troupes and individual performers.

Two halls tell about the commemoration of the poet, starting from the first half of the 19th century and up to the present day. In one of these halls, there are chairs arranged, which allow its use for mass events, turning it into an improvised conference hall if necessary. One of the most interesting exhibits in these two halls is a tapestry with the image of Kotliarevskyi, made in the national style (Fig. 7).

Poltava Literary and Memorial Museum of Panas Myrnyi

The Poltava Literary and Memorial Museum of Panas Myrnyi in his estate is located on the outskirts of Poltava, far from the historical center, which is why it is so well preserved, including its household items and furnishings. In addition, for a long time, the first director of the museum was Panas Myrnyi's son, who preserved the memory of his father as much as possible. This museum ranks first in Ukraine in terms of the number of preserved authentic memorial items [34]. It has the status of a monument of national importance (Fig. 8).



Fig. 5. Historical building at 18 Vitaliia Hrytsaiienka Avenue, which houses the Poltava Literary and Memorial Museum of I.P. Kotliarevskyi

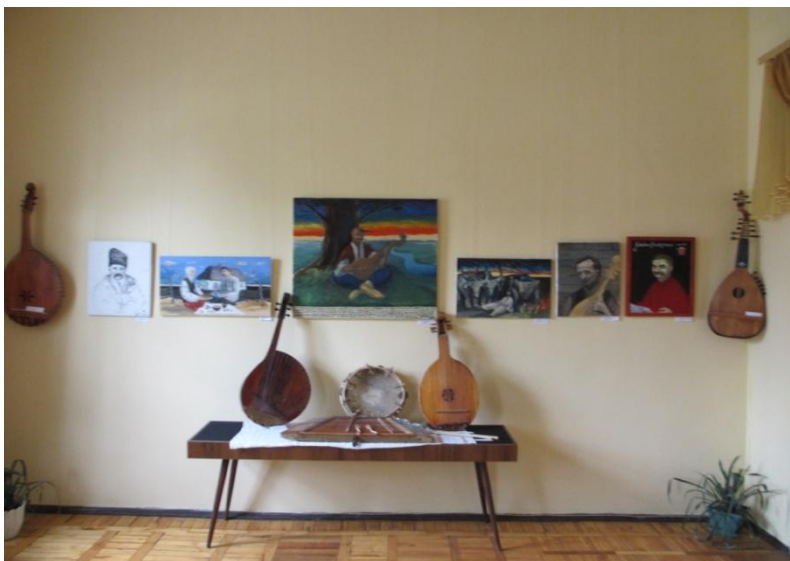


Fig. 6. Exhibition of Nazar Bozhynskyi in the exhibition hall of the Ivan Kotliarevskyi Literary and Memorial Museum

The Panas Myrnyi Museum is located in the estate that the writer purchased on the then 3rd Kobyshchanska Street in 1903. Here, in a one-story house with a basement, built in 1860, he lived the last seventeen years of his life with his wife and three sons. Most of his famous literary works were written here. From here, he went to the city center to serve in the provincial institution of the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Empire and died in this house. Famous Ukrainian artists visited this estate.



Fig. 7. Tapestry depicting Ivan Kotliarevskyi in the museum's exposition

The Panas Myrnyi Museum began its work in 1940, and, as already noted, for more than 20 years the director was Panas Mirny's middle son, Mykhailo. With the beginning of World War II, the exhibits were evacuated to Ufa, and in 1943, after the liberation of Poltava, the museum resumed its work. In 1962, the writer's son transferred the estate with the house, furniture, and personal belongings to the state (Figs. 9, 10).



Fig. 8. Memorial part of the exhibition in the house of Panas Myrnyi



Fig. 9. Authentic living room interior



Fig. 10. Authentic dining room interior

The museum exposition is located in two buildings. In the authentic wooden one-story house, in eight rooms, there is a memorial part that tells about the life of the family. This is a hallway, a study – the writer's bedroom, a dining room, a living room, his wife's bedroom, a children's room, a servants' room, and a kitchen. The exposition includes over a thousand authentic objects, books, photographs, documents, and manuscripts. The literary part is presented in a newly built house (1985), the exterior and interior of which are made in a traditional ethno-style with inserts of Opishnia ceramics on the facade and interiors with a lot of wood and reeds (Fig. 11).

In 1976, the estate-museum was declared a monument of landscape art.

Even before the large-scale Russian invasion of 2022, various children's folklore events were held on the territory of the large estate – "Give happy years to the owner of this house!" and "Who, who loves St. Nicholas?!"—and a folklore festival on the shore of the pond, "Oh, on Midsummer Night." In the literary part, creative evenings of Poltava writers were held; literary and artistic evenings dedicated to Panas Myrnyi and his contemporaries; master classes of the Poltava region's folk craftsmen; and vernissages of artists, masters of folk art. In the conditions of the war, the museum's activities were transformed, and events for wounded soldiers undergoing treatment and for refugee children were added.



Fig. 11. The literary part of the exhibition in the new building

A study of the state of Ukrainian society shows that the majority of military and civilian personnel have varying degrees of psychological and neurological problems, so now sanatoriums, rehabilitation centers, and museums are actively implementing non-drug measures to stabilize the psychological state of people with PTSD and after injuries and concussions. Various institutions are looking for their own methods of non-drug care, and nature therapy plays an important role here when nature becomes a therapeutic factor. These can be walks in nature under the supervision of doctors, excursions to open-air museums, and specialized so-called therapeutic gardens. However, this is not about the mass distribution of therapeutic gardens with a three-part division into zones for communication in groups, in pairs, and a zone of solitude, with strict requirements for lighting and the absence of dark, dense thickets. Although the need for

therapeutic gardens is beyond doubt, today there are only two projects of such gardens at specialized medical institutions in Lviv and Kyiv.

It is not by chance that we raised the issue of naturopathy and therapeutic gardens. Since it is impossible to arrange such gardens on a mass scale, in some cases, their role can be taken over by memorial estates such as the estate of Panas Myrnyi in Poltava. The argument is as follows:

- the estate is located in a picturesque open area, but among the manor development, far from highways and high-rise buildings;
- the territory is located in an ecologically clean zone, south of the centre of Poltava;
- the estate as a whole corresponds to certain features of a therapeutic garden: it has an entrance-representative part with flower beds and expositions; a semi-open garden zone with a lawn, paths, canopies, and swings for 1–2 people; and a semi-closed intimate zone near the pond with the writer's favorite three-hundred-year-old oaks, which the cameras are aimed at;
- the large area of the garden, over 2 hectares, allows for three-part zoning.

The Panas Myrnyi Museum was awarded the diploma of the laureate of the 1st All-Ukrainian Museum Festival "Museum of the Third Millennium" and the diploma of the winner of the museum film competition in the "Exposition Film" nomination for the 2005 film "Panas Myrnyi Museum."

Conclusions

Being in a stressful situation as a result of a full-scale war causes people to need to connect with their cultural heritage as a compensatory reaction. Unlike Kyiv museums, some of which have transported their most valuable exhibits for temporary storage abroad to partner museums, local museums continue to display their exhibits in full, thus becoming a substitute for many large museums.

A study of the activities of three local literary and memorial museums in Poltava allowed us to identify common and distinctive features between them.

The following factors are common:

- all museums are essentially not separate buildings, but memorial estates with a complex of buildings and landscape design, where the size and functional significance of the site vary greatly;
- in all museums (even in the Kotliarevskyi Memorial Manor-Museum), two thematic parts can be distinguished – a memorial one, which tells about the life of a prominent person, and a literary one, dedicated to her work, where various cultural events are traditionally held;
- in all museums, the emphasis is on maintaining authenticity and the ethnographic component, even the new house in the Panas Myrnyi estate has ethnographic features in the decoration of the facade and interiors;
- in all museums, architecture is combined with the natural environment, although in different proportions;
- in addition to the museum function itself, museums are a venue for various cultural events, to which, in the context of a full-scale war, rehabilitation activities with wounded soldiers and refugee children were added.

The differences are as follows:

- the museums were created based on different types of estates: a city mansion of the classicism era (Poltava Literary and Memorial Museum of I.P. Kotliarevskyi), a traditional

Cossack city estate of the mid-18th century (Manor-Museum of I.P. Kotliarevskiy) and a city estate of the 19th century on the outskirts of the city (Poltava Literary and Memorial Museum of Panas Myrnyi); therefore, the size of the plot and its significance in the museum exposition differ significantly: if in the Poltava Literary and Memorial Museum of Ivan Kotliarevskiy a small plot is not used by visitors, then in the Panas Myrnyi Museum a garden (and in terms of size – rather a small park) with a pond is used not only for museum functions, but also for holding mass media and psychological rehabilitation sessions;

- the large area of the Panas Myrnyi Museum allows for the full use of the greened part as an analogue of a therapeutic garden, since there are three necessary zones;

- for museums with a sufficient area (1 hectare and more), among the additional functions, the priority is the development of the rehabilitation function of the museum.

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