

Evolution of Funding Models for Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Case of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call in Kraków*

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the long-term evolution of funding models for the St. Mary's Trumpet Call in Kraków from the 14th century to the present. While numerous studies highlight the benefits of cultural heritage, less attention is paid to the financial mechanisms required for its preservation. This study addresses this gap by examining an intangible heritage practice dependent on community engagement. The findings reveal three key aspects of heritage sustainability. First, the financing of the tradition transformed from a historical mix of municipal appropriations, royal patronage, the elite civic parish community, and private donations into a stable contemporary system. Second, the study demonstrates the interdependence between intangible and tangible heritage, as the tradition requires the maintenance of St. Mary's Tower. Third, diversified funding sources historically ensured continuity during financial instability. The paper concludes that the sustainability of multi-source funding models depends on both financial resources and institutional coordination among stakeholders.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, heritage funding models, stakeholder communication, Kraków, tangible infrastructure

Introduction

In recent years, numerous studies have demonstrated that cultural heritage can generate a wide range of economic, social, and cultural benefits, including job creation, tourism development, social cohesion, urban regeneration, and improvements in quality of life (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016). At the same time, researchers have noted that considerably less attention has been devoted to the sustainability of heritage itself, particularly to the institutional and financial mechanisms that enable its long-term preservation (Giraud-Labalte et al., 2015).

Funding is a fundamental prerequisite for the effective protection and long-term sustainability of cultural heritage. Stable financial resources enable the conservation of heritage assets, support the transmission of cultural practices across generations, and ensure the continued delivery of the social, cultural, and symbolic benefits associated with heritage. Consequently, heritage funding should be understood not merely as a cost, but as an investment in cultural capital and societal well-being (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, n.d.; Tisma et al., 2021, p. 2).

This perspective is reflected in international heritage policy frameworks. The World Heritage Committee has emphasized that the sustainability of the World Heritage Fund and broader heritage financing mechanisms constitutes a strategic concern and a shared responsibility of States Parties and other stakeholders, directly affecting both the credibility of the World Heritage Convention and the effectiveness and efficiency of heritage protection (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2024).

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The contemporary approach to heritage management increasingly departs from traditional models based primarily on public funding and government responsibility. UNESCO's resource manual *Managing Cultural World Heritage* promotes an integrated approach to heritage management, in which heritage is understood as a dynamic component of broader social, economic and environmental systems. Within this framework, the protection and management of heritage are no longer viewed as the sole responsibility of the public sector and taxpayers, but rather as a shared undertaking involving public authorities, local communities, civil society organizations, private actors and international partners. Consequently, contemporary heritage governance increasingly relies on multi-source financing models, which enhance financial resilience and reduce dependence on a single source of funding while strengthening the long-term sustainability of heritage protection (UNESCO, 2013, p. 2). Such a transition from a rigid, centralized budgetary framework to a model of distributed responsibility not only reduces economic risk but, more importantly, establishes a durable foundation for the continued functioning of urban cultural symbols (Murzyn-Kupisz, 2012, p. 197).

In light of the above considerations, the present paper analyses the long-term (from the 14th century) evolution of funding models applied to the St. Mary's Trumpet Call, one of the most recognizable elements of the intangible cultural heritage associated with Kraków's Historic Centre, a property inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1978 (Polish UNESCO Committee, n.d.). This case is particularly significant because it concerns intangible heritage; in contrast to tangible heritage, whose preservation primarily relies on the conservation of physical assets, the survival of intangible heritage depends on the continued engagement of communities and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge and practices. This makes it especially vulnerable to demographic, social and economic changes that may interrupt these processes (UNESCO, 2024; Kurin 2004). Consequently, the paper contributes to the growing scholarly debate on the financial sustainability of cultural heritage and the governance challenges associated with safeguarding intangible heritage in contemporary economies.

Research background

The St. Mary's Trumpet Call constitutes one of the most recognizable elements of Kraków's intangible cultural heritage, playing a significant role in shaping both the city's mythology and its *genius loci*. According to a well-known local legend, during the Mongol invasion of 1241, a watchman stationed atop St. Mary's Basilica spotted the approaching enemy forces and began sounding the alarm. Before he could complete the melody, he was struck in the throat by an arrow and killed, causing the signal to end abruptly (Klimkiewicz, p. 30). This narrative continues to provide a symbolic explanation for the distinctive interruption that characterizes the melody today (fig. 1).



Figure 1. Musical notation of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call

Source: Resources of the Municipal Headquarters of the State Fire Service in Kraków

At present, the trumpet call is performed every hour, twenty-four hours a day, throughout the year, from a chamber located approximately 55 metres above ground level in the taller tower of St. Mary's Basilica (the so-called *hejnalica* in Polish). At each hour, the melody is played four times, facing the four cardinal directions, symbolically addressing different parts of the city and its surroundings. To reach the performance site, the trumpeter must climb 272 steps, a journey that takes nearly three minutes. Beyond its practical function, the hourly signal has become a powerful marker of urban identity and a widely recognized symbol of Kraków's cultural heritage (Kucharski, 2021).

The earliest documented reference to the trumpet call dates back to 1392 and appears in surviving municipal account books. These records indicate that the melody was originally performed only twice a day: at dawn to signal the opening of the city gates and at dusk to announce their closure. The trumpeter also fulfilled important surveillance functions, warning residents of approaching danger, including fires and military threats (Piekosiński & Szujski, 1878).

The Kraków trumpet call is not an isolated phenomenon. Comparable traditions can be found throughout Europe, where tower signals continue to function as distinctive elements of urban intangible heritage. In German and Austrian cities, this tradition is embodied by official tower watchmen (*Türmer*), whose duties have historically structured the rhythm of everyday urban life (Monnet, 2023, p. 249). In cities such as Münster, from the tower of St. Lambert's Church, and Nördlingen, from the tower of St. George's Church tower watchmen continue to perform unique verbal and musical signals (Monnet, 2023, p. 250). In Nördlingen, for example, the traditional call "So G'sell, so!" ("All's well, craftsmen!") is sounded every half hour between 10 p.m. and midnight, symbolically confirming the safety and order of the sleeping city (Stadt Nördlingen, n.d.). A comparable integrative function is performed by carillons in Flanders and the Netherlands (Living Heritage Journeys, n.d.). These large tower-mounted bell instruments, found in historic urban centres such as Bruges and Utrecht, have long shaped the acoustic identity of public space. Their quarter-hour chimes, together with regular live performances by municipal musicians (*carillonneurs*), create distinctive urban soundscapes that structure collective experiences of time and place (Rice, 1925). Rather than being perceived as intrusive noise, they provide local communities with feelings of continuity, predictability, and ontological security amid the ongoing social and spatial transformations characteristic of contemporary cities (Rozykowski, 2002, p. 363; Giaccardi, 2012, p. 24).

Methods and Materials

The primary objective of this research was to trace the evolution of the financing system of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call from its origins in the fourteenth century to the present day, examining how it has transformed over time from traditional forms of patronage and institutional support into a contemporary, multi-source funding model. The analysis spans more than six centuries and begins in 1392, the date of the earliest surviving archival record documenting municipal expenditures associated with the maintenance of Kraków's city trumpeters.

The study is essentially based on a narrative review methodology, focused on the evolution of economic and institutional mechanisms surrounding financing of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call. Such an approach enables the critical synthesis and multidimensional interpretation of dispersed evidence derived from a variety of sources (Baumeister and Leary, 1997, p. 311). In this study, these sources included academic literature, policy documents, archival records, municipal reports, historical and contemporary media content. The secondary research was supplemented by an in-depth interview conducted with the current rector-custodian of St. Mary's Basilica in Kraków. It was particularly informative as the respondent has direct access to archival materials related to the Basilica and the tradition under study. However, a substantial part of these materials remains unpublished and is currently undergoing cataloguing and archival processing, which limits their direct use as research sources at the present stage.

The research material was organized into two main analytical components: a historical analysis of funding arrangements and an examination of contemporary financing mechanisms. The first component comprised predominantly historical, legal, and institutional sources. The first component comprised predominantly historical, legal, and institutional sources, gathering a total of 12 primary and secondary source materials. These documents originated from three main levels: international heritage guidance frameworks (specifically 5 official UNESCO and World Heritage Committee regulatory texts), national legislation (including the 1991 Act on the State Fire Service and the 1994 Act on Copyright and Related Rights), and local institutional and academic records (such as the 14th-century municipal account books of Kraków, nineteenth-century archival treatises, and historical-architectural monographs on St. Mary's Church). This included i.a. eighteenth-century testamentary records of private benefactors, historical municipal ordinances, and archival documents relating to the financing and governance of the tradition. Particular attention was devoted to legal acts regulating the status of the trumpet performers, including the Act on the State Fire Service (Act on the State Fire Service, 1991), relevant copyright legislation (Act on Copyright and Related Rights, 1994), as well as the statutes and budgetary documents of contemporary institutions responsible for the preservation and continuation of the tradition (Piekosiński & Szujski, 1878). The second component consisted mainly of the Polish media and literature regarding the St. Mary's Trumpet Call, i.a. sample sources concerning the Kraków trumpet call, including both media reports and articles addressing its funding. During the selection process, materials of a purely journalistic nature, tourist guidebooks, and press articles lacking substantive information on the structural or economic dimensions of the tradition were deliberately excluded from the analysis.

Evolution of funding models

The earliest documented evidence of payments to the city trumpeters dates back to 1392 and can be found in the municipal account books of Kraków. During the medieval period, the system was primarily municipal in character. The trumpeters were civilian employees operating within the structures of the city watch and tower guard, and their initial remuneration amounted to 1.5 “grosz” [0,015 zloty] per week (e.g. Piekosiński and Szujski, 1878). These payments reflected the utilitarian nature of the service, which at the time was closely linked to urban security, surveillance, and the regulation of daily civic life rather than to the preservation of cultural heritage. Its historical dependence on local authorities is symbolically embedded in contemporary performance practice: the second rendition of the melody, directed toward the west, is traditionally dedicated to the mayor and the municipal council as the historical patrons and financiers of the tradition (Mazan, 2003).

With the consolidation of state structures in the late 16th century, this system acquired an additional source of support based on direct royal patronage. During this period, the city trumpeters began to receive individual grants, stipends, and fixed salaries awarded through acts of royal favour. These payments were financed from state revenues derived from customs duties and were recorded in official public accounts alongside the remunerations of senior officials and members of the political elite. Historical records indicate that a considerable number of trumpeters benefited from such personal grants from the royal treasury between 1582 and 1590 (e.g. Walkowicz, 2025).

The emergence of royal patronage marked an important stage in the institutional development of the tradition. While the trumpet call continued to fulfil its practical urban functions, its performers increasingly became beneficiaries of mechanisms associated with state prestige and symbolic representation. Consequently, the funding structure evolved beyond a purely municipal framework, incorporating elements of central authority and monarchical support that strengthened both the status of the performers and the continuity of the practice itself (Rokosz, 2021).

Alongside municipal and royal funding, the financing of the city trumpeters was periodically supplemented by private testamentary bequests and dedicated endowment funds. Such forms of patronage not only provided financial support but also exerted a direct influence on the structure and communicative content of the tradition itself, as some donors required the trumpeters to perform additional melodies beyond the traditional signal (Green, 2011, p. 20). A notable, yet lesser-known example occurred in 1742, when Salomea Mołęcka, a local resident of Cracow, bequeathed 1,266 zloty to finance the daily performance of the trumpet call from St. Mary's Basilica (*The bugle call sounds from St. Mary's Tower...*, 2003). Similar forms of private patronage reached a more institutionalized form in the endowment established by a wealthy Kraków burgher couple, Tomasz and Julianna Krzyżanowski, whose capital generated a permanent salary for the city trumpeter and helped secure the continuity of the tradition during periods of financial difficulty, such as crisis in 1810 (Łepkowski, 1861).

In the second half of the 18th century, Kraków's economic decline, resulting from the political upheavals associated with the Partitions of Poland, significantly weakened the municipal capacity to provide regular financial support for the city trumpeter. As a result, the continuity of the Trumpet Call tradition was placed at risk. The survival of this tradition during this period depended largely on private donations, testamentary endowments, and ongoing support from Kraków's burgher community, which collectively compensated for the diminishing financial capabilities of local authorities (*The most famous tower in Krakow - the bugle call*, 2021).

A fundamental shift in the funding structure occurred in 1873, when responsibility for service on St. Mary's Tower was officially transferred to members of the newly established Municipal Fire Brigade (Bieniarzówna & Małecki, 1994). This change represented a major institutional transformation in the financing of the tradition. The trumpeter ceased to function as a civilian municipal employee and became part of a public service organization financed through the municipal budget. As a result, the performance of the Trumpet Call was incorporated into the administrative and financial structures of a permanent public institution, providing a higher degree of financial stability and organizational continuity. This process was further reinforced in 1883, when public funds were allocated to the construction of facilities that enabled continuous observation of the city and the safe performance of the Trumpet Call from the external gallery surrounding the tower chamber (Krakow Ensemble, n.d.). The integration of the tradition into the organizational framework of the fire service marked a transition from a model reliant on a combination of municipal appropriations, royal support, and private patronage to one embedded within the structures of the modern public sector. In doing so, it substantially strengthened the long-term financial sustainability and institutional resilience of the tradition.

During the interwar period (1918-1939), the institutional status of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call underwent further stabilization. A major turning point occurred with the introduction of regular radio broadcasts of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call, first locally in 1927 and subsequently nationwide in 1928. Through its incorporation into the programming of Polish Radio, the tradition acquired a new communication platform that significantly expanded its audience and symbolic reach beyond the boundaries of Kraków (*The Magic of Radio...*, 2020). As its communicative role expanded, the Trumpet Call gained greater public visibility and cultural significance, further strengthening the case for its continued institutional support.

Following the socialist period, another important milestone occurred in 1992 with the establishment of the State Fire Service. As part of this reform, the trumpeters were formally incorporated into the organizational structure of the Municipal Headquarters of the State Fire Service in Kraków, holding either non-commissioned or commissioned officer ranks. This institutional reorganization resulted in the standardization of their employment conditions and shifted responsibility for their core remuneration from the municipal level to the central government budget administered through the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (Nowocień, 2012).

The participatory contribution of the elite civic parish community has been continuous since the 14th century, establishing a structural link between the tangible asset and the intangible tradition. Early administrative accounts record dedicated community donations and the constant institutional care provided by the archpriest to the watchmen-trumpeters. This multi-century interaction is documented sequentially in the parish chronicles - written in Latin until the 19th century, and subsequently in Polish. While the Parish of St. Mary's holds structural rights over the basilica complex, including the higher tower where trumpeters maintain a 24-hour watch, contemporary governance requires joint management. The ecclesiastical administration coordinates all heritage interventions with the municipal authorities and the State Fire Service. This co-management framework regulates how the tower is maintained, manages visits by foreign musicians, and outlines exceptional departures from tradition. It also governs additional elements in the musical repertoire performed after the trumpet call, such as the national anthem, the European Union anthem, or pieces for other specific socio-cultural occasions. For the parish, the St. Mary's bugle calls constitute not only an instrument of faith, but a sign of unity for the local community through good times and bad, which has been connected from the very beginning with the social existence of Krakow itself and the non-verbal communication of the lives of Christians gathered around St. Mary's parish church (Bochniak, 2018).

As an integral part of the urban community until World War II, the parish maintained a unique relationship with the Kraków Municipal Council and its subsequent counterparts. The financing of the bugle tower (*Hejnalica*) had been tied to municipal funds from the Middle Ages up until 1939. During the communist period, the tower remained under the management of the city authorities, albeit in an atmosphere of opposition and underlying hostility. It was not until the 1990s that the parish regained its formal ownership entry in the land register. Since then, it has fully managed the property from an owner's position, acting as the true heir to the medieval community - both town and parish (Dobrzycki, 1961).

Contemporary funding model

Over time, the evolutionary process described above culminated in the emergence of a contemporary multi-source funding model based on several distinct sources of financial support. Importantly, these sources are not pooled into a single budget but are allocated to specific cost components associated with the continuation of the tradition. As a result, different funding streams are responsible for financing particular elements of the system, including the remuneration of the trumpeters, the maintenance of the tower and performance facilities and infrastructure-related expenditures, and other operational costs necessary for the uninterrupted performance of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call. Although the latter expenditures concern tangible assets, they constitute an essential material foundation for the continued performance and safeguarding of this intangible cultural tradition. Unlike in earlier periods, when private donations were occasionally earmarked specifically for the performance of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call, contemporary private contributions are not distinguished as a separate funding category dedicated exclusively to the tradition. Instead, such donations are typically incorporated into broader financial resources supporting the activities and maintenance of St. Mary's Basilica. The following parts examine these expenditure categories in conjunction with their respective funding sources, illustrating how individual components of the system are financed within the contemporary funding model.

Remuneration and other financial benefits of the trumpeters

This component consists of the trumpeters' salaries financed directly from the state budget. The trumpet call is performed by a team of seven firefighters employed by the Municipal Headquarters of the State Fire Service in

Kraków, who work on a 24-hour shift rotation system. Their base remuneration is determined by the national salary regulations applicable to all members of the State Fire Service. In addition to their regular salary, the trumpeters receive supplements related to length of service, rank, and the specific conditions of their duties, including allowances associated with working at height and exposure to variable weather conditions (Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 2 February 2020, § 4).

As members of the State Fire Service, they are also entitled to annual bonuses, uniform allowances, and other benefits available to public service personnel. The incorporation of the trumpeters into the institutional framework of the State Fire Service provides a high degree of financial stability and organizational continuity, significantly reducing the vulnerability traditionally associated with the funding of cultural practices. At the same time, the prestige attached to this highly distinctive role within the national emergency services helps offset the demanding nature of the work environment, which requires the regular ascent of more than two hundred steps to reach the performance location and the performance of duties under challenging physical and climatic conditions. The attractiveness of the position within the contemporary labour market is reflected in recruitment data published by the Municipal Headquarters of the State Fire Service in Kraków. The most recent official recruitment procedure, conducted in 2021, attracted 35 applicants for a single vacant position (Kucharski, 2021).

In addition to their official salaries, the trumpeters are entitled to receive copyright-related remuneration and income derived from the commercial use of their performances and public image. Such revenues are generated through civil-law agreements associated with commercial audio-visual productions, documentary films, media broadcasts, and other projects featuring the Trumpet Call tradition (Act on Copyright and Related Rights, 1994). In addition to these revenue streams, elements of traditional patronage continue to persist. Among them are customary seasonal gifts provided to the trumpeters by the Archpriest of St. Mary's Basilica. While economically marginal, such practices retain symbolic importance, reflecting the historical relationship between the performers and the ecclesiastical institution that has been associated with the tradition for centuries.

Equipment and tourist infrastructure

A second pillar of the funding system consists of support provided by local and regional government institutions. Under Polish law, municipal and regional authorities are not permitted to directly supplement the salaries of State Fire Service personnel from their own budgets. As a result, the Municipality of Kraków and the Małopolska Regional Government (Marshall's Office) contribute to the safeguarding of the tradition primarily through investments in tourist equipment, small infrastructure, and promotional activities. A recent example is the financial contribution of the Małopolska Regional Government towards the acquisition of a set of eight professional trumpets valued at more than PLN 150,000 (*New trumpets for St. Mary's bugle callers...*, 2026). Such investments are particularly important given the accelerated wear of instruments resulting from their continuous use and exposure to demanding environmental conditions at the top of St. Mary's Tower.

Routine maintenance and operations of the taller tower of St. Mary's Basilica

The taller tower of St. Mary's Basilica, from which the Trumpet Call is performed, is owned not by the Municipality of Kraków but by St. Mary's Parish (Pajor, 2021). Under a tripartite arrangement involving the Parish, the Municipality of Kraków, and the State Fire Service, responsibility for the routine maintenance and operation of the tower rests with the Parish rather than the city. Consequently, expenditures related to cleaning, utilities, and day-to-day maintenance are financed by the Parish, partly through revenues generated from tourist admissions to the tower. Tourist visits constitute an important source of funding within the contemporary financing model. Admission fees paid by visitors wishing to access the tower and observe the location from which the Trumpet Call is performed generate a regular and predictable revenue stream, with visitor quotas frequently reaching full capacity. These funds are subsequently reinvested in the maintenance, operation, and accessibility of the site, thereby providing essential financial support for the material infrastructure that enables the continued performance of the tradition.

Conservation and restoration of key architectural elements of the taller tower of St. Mary's Basilica

Conservation activities are financed through dedicated heritage protection mechanisms aimed at safeguarding the material infrastructure that underpins the continued performance of the tradition. This arrangement highlights an important institutional distinction between financing the performance of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call itself and financing the preservation of the architectural environment that makes its uninterrupted continuation possible. Large-scale conservation and modernization works are supported through specialized heritage preservation

programmes and earmarked conservation funds dedicated to the protection of Kraków's historic monuments. These investments have included improvements to the trumpeters' facilities, such as sanitary upgrades and the installation of climate-control systems after 2014 (Karwat, 2015).

A substantial component of the overall funding framework is therefore directed towards the conservation and restoration of the tower from which the Trumpet Call is performed. A notable example is the comprehensive restoration and regilding of the eighteenth-century crown atop the tower spire. The project involved the application of gold leaf, the installation of a modern lightning protection system, and specialized conservation works carried out at a height exceeding 80 metres. Owing to its scale and technical complexity, the undertaking required significant financial resources and was financed through grants provided by the Social Committee for the Restoration of Kraków's Monuments (SKOZK) together with dedicated heritage conservation funds (Polish Press Agency, 2024).

The structure of the contemporary funding model of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call is summarized in **Table 1**. As demonstrated above, the safeguarding of the tradition relies on a diversified system of financial support involving multiple institutional actors, each responsible for financing specific components of the overall cost structure. The figure illustrates the principal funding sources and their respective roles within the contemporary governance framework.

Table 1. The structure of the contemporary funding model of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call

Source	State Fire Service	Municipality of Kraków Małopolska Regional Government (Marshall's Office)	St Mary's Parish admission fees paid by visitors	Social Committee for the Restoration of Kraków's Monuments (SKOZK)	Additional sources
Expenditure	Basic remuneration of the trumpeters (non-commissioned officer or officer-rank) Service and seniority allowances Thirteenth salary Uniform equivalent and awards	Target and equipment purchases Funding of instruments (e.g. trumpets) Development of tourist infrastructure	Ongoing repairs and maintenance of the facility Cleaning and upkeep of cleanliness Utility and energy costs	Conservation and restoration of key architectural elements of the taller tower of St. Mary's Basilica	Copyright income for trumpeters Remuneration for commercial use of image Customary holiday gifts

Source: own elaboration

Taken together, the case of the funding model of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call demonstrates that the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage frequently depends on sustained investment in tangible heritage assets, whose preservation provides the physical conditions necessary for the continued practice of living cultural traditions.

Conclusions

The evolution of funding for the St. Mary's Trumpet Call illustrates a gradual transition from a predominantly municipal financing model to a multi-source system encompassing municipal, state, ecclesiastical, and private resources. **Table 2** summarizes the evolution of funding models for the St. Mary's trumpeters' salaries, highlighting the major shifts and milestones in personnel compensation and mechanisms of financial support from the 14th century to the present day. It should be noted, however, that the analyzed historical sources restrict this framework strictly to the financing of the performers' wages; consequently, the technical and structural maintenance of the tower itself is omitted from this model due to a lack of explicit source data.

Table 2. Evolution of Funding Models for the St. Mary's Trumpeters' Salaries

Period Year	Principal funding entity	Characteristics
From 1292	Municipality of Kraków	Municipal model. Trumpeters remunerated from municipal funds as members of the city watch. The earliest documented reference appears in municipal account books.
Late 16th century	The King / Royal Treasury	State-supported model. Municipal funding was supplemented by fixed stipends financed from royal customs revenues. These payments were recorded alongside the salaries of state officials and members of the political elite.
1742-1810	Private patrons	Endowment-based model. Private donations and testamentary bequests ensured the continuity of the tradition during periods of financial crisis and expanded the repertoire to include Marian trumpet calls.
1873-1926	Municipal Fire Brigade of Kraków	Institutional turning point. Trumpeters were incorporated into the permanent uniformed structures of the municipal fire brigade and received remuneration through the municipal budget. Their role shifted from a civilian occupation to a public safety function.
From 1927	Polish Radio	Media turning point. Integration into the national media system through regular radio broadcasts. The tradition acquired nationwide visibility, contributing to the symbolic value and branding of Kraków.
Contemporary period	Contemporary period, Municipality, St. Mary's Parish, copyright-related revenues	Multi-level funding model. The central government finances the St. Mary's trumpeters' salaries through State Fire Service positions, while additional personnel income is generated through copyright and image-related rights. In contrast to these individual compensation mechanisms, the broader technical and structural costs are shared between municipal and ecclesiastical entities: the municipal authorities support targeted investments and conservation projects, whereas St. Mary's Parish, as the formal owner of the tower, covers routine maintenance and administrative costs.

Source: own elaboration based on Mazan, L. (2003). The trumpet call flows from St. Mary's tower. Anabasis Publishing House.

The case of the St. Mary's Trumpet Call demonstrates that the long-term sustainability of intangible cultural heritage depends not only on its cultural significance but also on the evolution and adaptability of its funding arrangements. Tracing more than six centuries of financial history reveals several important conclusions.

First, the financing of the tradition has undergone a profound transformation. While the remuneration of the trumpeters was historically dependent on a combination of municipal appropriations, royal patronage, private donations, and testamentary endowments, the contemporary system provides a significantly higher degree of financial stability. The incorporation of the trumpeters into the structures of the State Fire Service shifted responsibility for their salaries to a publicly funded institution, reducing the uncertainty that characterized earlier periods and ensuring the continuity of the tradition regardless of fluctuations in local revenues or private support.

Second, the study highlights the close interdependence between intangible and tangible heritage. Although the Trumpet Call itself constitutes a living cultural practice, its continued performance depends on the preservation, maintenance, and modernization of the physical infrastructure of St. Mary's Tower. The contemporary funding framework therefore combines mechanisms supporting the performers with heritage conservation programmes dedicated to the architectural environment in which the tradition is embedded. This finding confirms that safeguarding intangible heritage frequently requires sustained investment in tangible heritage assets.

Third, historical evidence demonstrates the importance of diversified funding sources. During periods of financial instability, private benefactors and dedicated endowment funds played a crucial role in ensuring the continuation of the tradition. Even though contemporary private donations are no longer directed specifically to the Trumpet Call, the broader funding model remains based on multiple complementary sources, each financing different expenditure categories and reducing dependence on a single stakeholder.

More broadly, the case illustrates that the sustainability of a multi-source funding model is not determined solely by the availability of financial resources. It also depends on the effective management of stakeholder relationships, coordination mechanisms, and communication processes among the institutions involved. In this respect, the St. Mary's Trumpet Call presents a particularly interesting paradox: while the tradition itself originated as a form of urban communication, its contemporary survival likewise depends on communication - between public authorities, heritage organizations, ecclesiastical institutions, cultural actors, and the wider community that collectively contribute to its safeguarding.

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