

“A MUSEUM IS A WAY OF REMEMBERING”.
 AROUND THE JUBILEE OF THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF THE CITY
 OF KRAKÓW

The article presents the reflections accompanying the author during his work on the monograph of the Historical Museum of the City of Kraków and in the context of the 120th anniversary of its founding. The history of the Museum served as a mirror showing how the understanding, experience and “expression” of Krakow’s citizens has fundamentally changed over the past 120 years.

In recognition of the fact that caring for the memory and the past of the city is an important and fundamental task of both the Museum and the Society of Friends of Kraków History and Heritage (literally “society of *lovers*...”), the author assumes that the focus of their mission is the contemporary inhabitant of Kraków, who is to “love” the city here and now, and who wonders what is to be the object of this love. Pious dogmas about the unique

value of the extraordinary royal city seem insufficient to arrive at an answer. Therefore, the development of the Historical Museum of the City of Kraków and its activities is presented by the author as follows:

- the museum in the position of a defender (1899–1917), guardian of artefacts;
- the museum at the crossroads (1917–1934), when the institution was looking for its modern identity;
- the museum as a player (1934–1939), when the artefacts collected and protected were recognised as a development resource that should serve the city;
- a bourgeois museum at a bad time for the bourgeoisie (1945–1964), when under the Polish People’s Republic the citizens of Kraków remained bourgeois in the world without bourgeoisie;

- the museum again at the crossroads (1964–1984), when the facility expanded its premises, but did not have a clear shape and character.

Only at the beginning of the 21st century was it possible to return to the vision of the first director of the Museum, Jerzy Dobrzycki, who saw it not as a collector of artefacts, but as a place where the public gathers around the collection, traditions and customs, where a community is created.

The jubilee exhibitions from the *Moving* cycle and the #jestemkrakow (I am Kraków) described in the article also served to build such a community. The guiding principle was that the Museum is aware of the times and their needs – the needs of Kraków citizens, and being aware of these needs must always mean being open to change. One of the signs of this openness was the change of name of the institution, which since March 1, 2019 has been operating as the Museum of Kraków.