

AGATA KUBALA (University of Wrocław) / Copying after masterworks of ancient art. The plaster cast collection of the Museum of the University of Wrocław and its ideological and academic context

Plaster cast collections of antique art, considered to be ideal form, constituted a significant part of public expositions in the European museums of the 19th c. The Museum of the University of Wrocław was then holding one of the biggest such collections among university museums in Europe. This paper presents the collection of plaster cast copies of antique art objects held at the University of Wrocław and contextualizes it within the tradition and purpose of academic art collections in Europe. To define the idea underpinning the creation and gradual expansion of Wrocław-based collection, and to present it against its European background, the paper also refers to cast collections held at other academic institutions. Wrocław-based collection is also contextualized within the philhellenic ideals setting the criteria for objects collected by the newly created museums and determining the ways in which these objects were exhibited.