

Plaster Casts of Dalmatian Sculptural and Architectural Heritage in the Glyptothèque of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts



Sadreni odljevi djela dalmatinske kiparske i arhitektonske baštine u Gliptoteci Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti

PRILOGI POVIJESTI UMJETNIČKIH INSTITUCIJA U DALMACIJI | CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORY OF ART INSTITUTIONS IN DALMATIA

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SAŽETAK

Gliptoteka Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti prvi je i jedini muzej u Hrvatskoj specijaliziran za skupljanje sadrenih odljeva. U radu je naglašena misija i vizija koju je imao njezin osnivač u trenutku planiranja muzeja i sabiranja sadrenih odljeva kiparske baštine. Muzej je osnovao Antun Bauer 1937. kao Gipsoteku grada Zagreba, ističući njezinu dvostruku ulogu. Kao najvažnije ističe skupljanje sadrenih odljeva povijesnih spomenika i sadrenih modela hrvatskih kipara, u cilju prikaza povijesnog razvoja i umjetničkog stvaranja hrvatskoga naroda. Zbirke odljeva bile su okosnica pri osnivanju Gipsoteke, a njihova je specifičnost jedinstvena mogućnost sustavne prezentacije tijeka i razvoja hrvatskoga kiparskog stvaranja od nastanka hrvatske države. Muzej je utemeljio na načelima i duhu europskog fenomena prikupljanja sadrenih odljeva, stoga su u radu izdvojeni glavni europski uzori na koje se ugledao. Diljem Europe, definiranjem nacionalne baštine, sadreni se odljevi pojavljuju početkom 19. stoljeća kao odjek pokreta romantizma, kada se stvaraju brojne nacionalne zbirke odljeva u kojima je najzastupljenija skulptura srednjovjekovnog i renesansnog kiparstva. Time se brojni muzeji potvrđuju kao enciklopedijski i univerzalni u cilju izgradnje nacionalnog identiteta i kulture. U kontekstu osnivanja Gipsoteke važan je Musée de Sculpture Comparée u Parizu, u kojem se prema koncepciji Eugènea Viollet-le-Duca stvara muzeološki postav koji na jednom mjestu okuplja gipsane odljeve najvažnijih srednjovjekovnih spomenika francuske skulpture i arhitekture. Baueru je dodatna potvrda i poticaj da u Zagrebu osnuje sličan muzej bila spoznaja muzeoloških i edukativnih potencijala koje su imale zbirke odljeva.

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ABSTRACT

The Glyptothèque of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts was the first and still is the only museum in Croatia to specialize in the collection of plaster casts. It was founded on the principles and in the spirit of a European-wide phenomenon — the collection of plaster casts that led to the foundation of numerous collections and institutions. All around Europe, when national heritage was being defined in the early 19th century, plaster casts appeared as an echo of the Romantic movement. That was the time when numerous national collections of casts were created, mainly consisting of medieval and Renaissance sculptures. Numerous museums thus confirmed themselves as encyclopaedic and universal, aiming to develop national identity and culture. Informed by these ideas, an important body of national monuments of the Croatian cultural, sculptural, and architectural heritage from the pre-Romanesque era to the Renaissance from the region of Dalmatia was assembled in the Gypsotheca, today known as the Glyptothèque. The Collection of Plaster Casts of Croatian Historical Monument Fragments from the 9th to the 15th Century is one of a kind for several reasons. From the very founding of the museum, it was considered the most important section on which the whole conception of the museum's establishment was based. The mission of the museum is, through the prism of this collection, the systematic collection and presentation of the national cultural development and historical and artistic monuments from the domain of sculpture. This paper focuses on the provenience and the role of plaster casts from various archaeological sites and diverse collections Dalmatia-wide, which can be presented in the Glyptothèque and brought together in their original dimensions and in a single place.

KEYWORDS

Glyptothèque, Gypsotheca, museum of plaster casts, national sculptural heritage, plaster casts, Dalmatia

Magdalena Getaldić

Slijedeći europske muzeološke koncepte, Bauer svoju zbirku u Zagrebu skuplja u vrlo otežanim uvjetima Dru-gog svjetskog rata, ali s vizijom svojih francuskih uzora. Skupljen je znatan korpus nacionalnih spomenika hrvat-ske kulturne kiparske i arhitektonske baštine od razdoblja predromanike do renesanse, osobito s područja Dalmacije. U radu se prikazuje provenijencija i naglašava uloga sadre-nih odljeva s raznih arheoloških lokaliteta i različitih zbirki iz cijele Dalmacije, koji se u Gliptoteci HAZU-a mogu pre-zentirati i objediniti u izvornim dimenzijama i na jednom mjestu. Po uzoru na francuski primjer muzejske radionice odljeva u podrumima Trocadéra, Bauer organizira vlasti-tu radionicu u Gipsoteci i angažira stručnjake za izradu odljeva. Zahvaljujući radu muzejske radionice velikim je dijelom stvorena i odlivena zbirka nacionalnog kiparstva. Gipsoteka od 1947. započinje suradnju s Jugoslavenskom akademijom znanosti i umjetnosti u svrhu pripremanja i organizacije izložbe *Srednjovjekovne umjetnosti naroda Jugoslavije*, koja je održana u pariškom Musée des monu-ments Français u Palais Chaillot, 1950. Intenzivno su se lijevali kulturno-povijesni spomenici, čime je zbirka Gipso-teke znatno proširena, jer su odljevi nakon izložbe ušli u fundus muzeja. U radu je prikazano skupljanje dijela da-našnje Zbirke sadrenih odljeva fragmenata hrvatskih povi-jesnih spomenika od 9. do 15. stoljeća koja je jedinstvena iz više razloga. Od osnutka muzeja smatrana je najvažni-jim odjelom na kojem je počivala čitava koncepcija usta-nove, putem odljeva jedino je moguće sustavno skupiti i prikazati nacionalni kulturni razvoj i povijesno-umjetnič-ke spomenike s područja skulpture. Istaknuta je važnost i uloga odljeva u restauraciji i konzervaciji, stoga je čuvanje kalupa i odljeva ključnih spomenika od velike važnosti u očuvanju nacionalne kiparske baštine s naglaskom na ba-štinu s područja Dalmacije.

KEYWORDS

Gliptoteka, Gipsoteka, muzej sadrenih odljeva, nacionalna umjetnička baština, sadreni odljevi, Dalmacija

THE GYPSOTHECA OF THE CITY OF ZAGREB – MUSEUM OF PLASTER CASTS



Fig. / Sl. 1 Musée de Sculpture Comparée, Trocadéro, Aile de Pussy, 12th- and 13th-century hall (taken from: Roussel, J., Enlart, C., 1910, 9) / Musée de sculpture comparée, Trocadéro, Aile de Pussy, dvorana iz 12. i 13. stoljeća (preuzeto iz: Roussel, J., Enlart, C., 1910, 9)

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1 AG, the folder History of Museum, Antun Bauer: „*Glavna dužnost i svrha Gipsoteke*,” manuscript, Zagreb, December 1937.

2 AG, Bauer, Antun. Gypsotheca 1937–1947, 1948, 16; Nekić, Život i rad *dr-a Antuna Bauera*, 14.

3 Bauer did further studies during a study visit to Vienna in 1935–1936.

4 AG, Bauer, Antun. Gypsotheca 1937–1947, 1948, 17.

5 The Museum of Comparative Sculpture of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc was opened in 1882 in the Palais du Trocadéro. Second only to the Cluny Museum (1843), it contributed to the raising of interest in and the promotion of medieval architecture and sculpture.

6 AG, Bauer, Antun. Gypsotheca 1937–1947, 1948, 8.

7 Mendonça, „Plaster Cast Workshops. Their Importance for the Emergence of an International Network for the Exchange of Reproductions of art”, 99.

The museum of today, the Glyptotheque of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, was founded by Antun Bauer in 1937 as the Gypsotheca of the City of Zagreb, highlighting its dual mission. Its most important role was the collection of plaster casts of historical monuments and plaster models of Croatian sculptors, with the purpose of presenting the historical development and the creative art of the Croatian people.¹ On his frequent travels and study visits abroad, Antun Bauer became acquainted with numerous European museums and institutions that had a long tradition, with collections of plaster casts at their very core.² Their realisation of the importance and the museological and educational potentials of cast collections was a spur to and additional confirmation of his decision to found a similar museum in Zagreb.³ Thanks to Bauer's enthusiasm, museological thinking and carefully considered museological strategy, in 1937, the foundations for the creation of a museum were laid, as well as for the gradual organisation and documentation of the museum material. The collections of casts were the core around which the Gypsotheca was founded, and their specificity was the unique possibility for presenting the course and development of Croatian sculptural art right from the beginnings of Croatian statehood.⁴ By collecting plaster casts, Bauer positioned the Gypsotheca, today's Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptotheque, among the unique institutions in Europe with a particular set of materials, plaster casts. It was also the first institution in Croatia to specialise in plaster casts and sculpture. In his notes, Bauer cites as his model for collecting and casting collections of national monuments the Musée de Sculpture Comparée,⁵ which was opened in 1882 in the Trocadéro Palace according to an idea of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc.⁶ (Fig. 1) In it, through a depiction of the national heritage, he gave legitimacy to the course of development of the French national history of sculpture. Taking his cue from the Trocadéro, in which there was a workshop for plaster casts, in the Gypsotheca, Bauer organised his own workshop and took on experts for the making of casts. It was due in large part to this museum workshop that the casts for the creation of the national sculpting collection were made.

EUROPEAN EXEMPLARS FOR THE FOUNDATION OF A NATIONAL COLLECTION OF CASTS

The intellectual movement that stemmed from Romanticism in the early 19th century prompted the acceptance of other national art styles that had been considered barbarous in the previous century.⁷ This new stance towards culture also fostered the acceptance of unknown works of art, enabling the development of an international market for casts of individual national value. Every country had a unique stock of plaster casts and ornaments of its own, which it considered nationally important. They were derived from national

monuments as well as from excavation campaigns at archaeological sites in Europe and elsewhere, such as Egypt, India, Mexico, and Cambodia.⁸ Major collections of medieval and Renaissance casts are to be found in numerous museums and institutions, such as the Victoria and Albert in London and the Metropolitan in New York, while also important are the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest and the collection of casts in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow. In the second half of the 19th century, Wilhelm von Bode, a German curator and art historian, was particularly to the fore in the organisation of museums and collections. A less well-known detail of his lifework is the important role that he had in the 1870s in expanding the canon of collections of casts.⁹ It was due to Bode that medieval and Renaissance collections of plaster casts became the most extensive collections of casts up to the 1880s. He also managed to persuade the Italian government to rescind the ban on replicas, primarily brought in for the sake of protecting national monuments. In consequence, workshops in Milan, Rome and Florence started production on an almost industrial scale, and the casts of Renaissance works of art rapidly found their way into European museums. These casts were done in the Carlo Campi workshop in Milan, Gherardi in Rome and Paris or Giuseppe Lelli in Florence, and orders could be made from the catalogues they released.¹⁰ Such a workshop of casts, the Gipsformerei, was at work in Berlin from 1819 on; plaster casts from it can be found in numerous collections all around Europe, including in the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptothèque.¹¹ It needs to be pointed out that irrespective of how many plaster casts the workshop produced, Bode's attitude to the practice was ambivalent, as reflected in one of the recollections of his autobiography, *Mein Leben*.¹² Bode sadly remarks that during one of his trips to England, at the very beginning of the formation of museum collections, he had the chance to procure valuable drawings by Michelangelo and Raphael owned by Sir Thomas Lawrence much below their real prices, but his request was rejected at the most senior ministerial level, the sum wished for being allotted for the purchase of classical antique plaster casts. This is, though, evidence of the spirit of the time, of the importance attached to and the demand for collections of casts. Apart from Berlin, a model for collections of medieval and Renaissance casts was the South Kensington Museum in London.¹³ The creation of its medieval and Renaissance casts is owing to the work and efforts of John Charles Robinson, an enthusiast for the then-popular Gothic Revival movement and of Henry Cole, a lover of Renaissance art.¹⁴ The Royal Collection of Casts of the Victoria and Albert was reopened in a separate wing of the building in November 2018 after a major restoration and renovation operation. The Collection of Casts is known for including top works of European art — classical, medieval, and Renaissance. On display are casts of the Davids by Michelangelo and Donatello, Trajan's Column, Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise, the Portico de la Gloria in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, and many others.¹⁵ (Fig. 2)

A special place among collections of plaster casts of medieval and Renaissance artworks can be claimed by the Musée



Fig. / Sl. 2 The Royal Collection of Casts of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo: Magdalena Getaldić, 2019. / Kraljevska zbirka odljeva Muzeja Viktorije i Alberta, London. Fotografija: Magdalena Getaldić, 2019.

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Ibid, 100.

9

Warren, *Bode and the British*, 122.

10

Bognár, Rózsavölgyi, *The Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Plaster Casts of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts*, 94.

11

Hiller von Gaertingen, *Berlin Supplies the World with Gods*, 216.–225.

12

Warren, *Bode and the British*, 122.

13

Today, the Victoria & Albert Museum, London

14

Anderson, *Reception of Ancient Art: the Cast Collections of the University of Tartu Art Museum in the Historical, Ideological and Academic Context of Europe (1803–1918)*, 50.

15

Flour „On the Formation of a National Museum of Architecture': The Architectural Museum versus the South Kensington Museum", 211–238.

16

Bognár, Rózsavölgyi, *The Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Plaster Casts of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts*, 95.

17

Pressouyre, *Le musée des monuments français*, 2007.

18

The Bourbon Restoration was that period of French history after the fall of Napoleon in 1814 and 1815 and up to the July Revolution of 1830.

19

Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879), one of the best-known French architects and restorers of the 19th century, also known for the reconstruction of medieval monuments. His best-known restoration undertaking was the renovation of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris.

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For more, see on the website "Cit  de l'architecture et du patrimoine: Monumental sculpture, Galerie des moulages".

21

Welfel , „Le nouveau mus e des Monuments fran ais“, 21–27.

de Sculpture Compar e in Paris. It was founded in 1882 and is a continuation of a museum founded earlier, in 1795, the Mus e des Monuments fran ais, which was housed in the convent of the Petits-Augustins, today the home of the  cole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.¹⁶ Alexandre Lenoir was its founder and, for thirty years, its manager. The collection he put together consisted of original monuments of French medieval and Renaissance art removed from churches and palaces at the height of the French Revolution. The design of the interior was an essential part of Lenoir's coherent museological project; in the set-up, he aimed at achieving a vision that would be at once global and a monumental presentation of French art, giving visual value to the term of a given style and epoch, according to Winckelmann's diagram of the development of art. This conception of a museum was primarily educative, and so Lenoir put the works in chronological order in order to represent the history of sculpture through the ages.¹⁷ In the period of the Bourbon Restoration,¹⁸ Lenoir was forced to close his museum in 1816 and give most of the collection back to the previous owners. The museum, however, was the model for the creation of the Mus e de Sculpture Compar e in 1882, the concept of which was devised by Eug ne Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879).¹⁹ He made a proposal for the creation of a museum to collect plaster casts of the most important medieval monuments of French sculpture and architecture in a single place. His theses about the evolution of sculpture are illustrated in the presentation and set-up of plaster casts. A watershed year in the history of the Mus e de Sculpture Compar e was 1937, when its name was changed to Mus e des Monuments fran ais. The location changed too, for instead of being in the Trocad ero, it was housed in the Palais de Chaillot, developed for the international exhibition of 1937, where it still is today, one of the leading and one of the oldest museums in Paris dedicated to architecture and monumental heritage.²⁰ The earliest casts, made immediately after the foundation, were of the portals of the basilica Sainte-Marie-Madeleine in V zelay and Notre-Dame du Port in Clermont-Ferrand, together with several statues from the cathedrals in Chartres, Reims and Paris. The plaster casting workshop set up in the basement of the Trocad ero contributed greatly to the enlargement of the collection, which at the beginning of the 20th century numbered about 7,000 casts of mainly French originals. Most of the collection was produced or collected at the end of the 19th and in the early 20th century.²¹ The museum contains casts of sculptures of all periods, including items from Ancient Greece, Italy, Germany and Switzerland, with a strong emphasis on French sculpture of the Romanesque and Gothic periods.²² The museum's director, Paul Deschamps, reorganised the collections of casts, which he reoriented to French examples only. Completely redesigned, the museum became avant-garde with respect to its museological conception; his intention was to ensure the longevity of the works and to encourage the study of them. In 2004, it was integrated into a new cultural establishment called Cit  de l'architecture et du patrimoine.

Following the museum concepts of Viollet-le-Duc and Deschamps, who contributed to the strengthening of public

respect for French national medieval architecture and sculpture, Antun Bauer also put together a collection, in Zagreb, but in the very difficult conditions of World War II, his vision being derived from his French models. In 1937, Bauer founded the Gypsotheca, at the same time when the Musée des Monuments français moved into the Palais de Chaillot.

THE COLLECTIONS OF CASTS OF THE CROATIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS GLYPTOTHEQUE

In the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptotheque, the Collection of Plaster Casts of Croatian Historical Monument Fragments from the 9th to the 15th Century is one of a kind for several reasons; since its foundation, it has been held to be the most important section of the museum, upon which the whole conception of its establishment is based. Through the prism of this collection, the purpose of the museum is the assembly and presentation of national cultural development and art historical monuments from the domain of sculpture. This was also the original intention of other European museums and collections of medieval and Renaissance casts. The specificity of a museum of casts is important for some monuments that are located in situ in their own localities or else are parts of architectural structures, for example, portals that would otherwise not have a place in museums but in this way, through the casts, are accessible in full size in a single place. The collection of plaster casts of the national heritage in Croatia was not systematic throughout the 19th century; rather, sculptures were cast sporadically when needed for a given exhibition or for other purposes. Because of the lack of any proper institution in which to house them, their fates are unknown, a large number having disappeared or deteriorated. When the Gypsotheca was founded in 1937, the first institution in Croatia dedicated to casts and sculptures was created, and only then was it possible to think about systematic collection and casting in the field with a specific aim. The casts assembled by Dr Antun Bauer before the founding of the Gypsotheca and later gifted to the museum were the nucleus of the future collection. The first person to initiate and collect plaster casts in Zagreb was Izidor Kršnjavi,²³ who gathered international casts of ancient sculptures at the end of the 19th Century for the unrealized *Gyps Museum*. His casts later entered the Gypsotheca's collection.²⁴

The history of collecting casts of monuments of national importance dates back to the 19th century, but since there was no institutional concern and there were no similar collections in museums at the time, many monument plaster casts deteriorated beyond repair. The casts were made for propaganda purposes or various international exhibitions. For the Millennium Exhibition in Budapest in 1896 and for the Viennese Adriatic Exhibition of 1913, a whole series of our important artistic monuments were cast.²⁵ (Fig. 3) Because there was no proper institutional care for them, their fate is largely unknown, but a large number certainly vanished or decayed.²⁶ One such exhibition was the International



Fig. / Sl. 3 Exhibition of Croatian artists at the Millennium Exhibition in Budapest, 1896. (source / izvor: Kraševac, Irena, Tonković, Željka, Umjetničko umrežavanje putem izložaba u razdoblju rane moderne – sudjelovanje hrvatskih umjetnika na međunarodnim izložbama od 1891. do 1900. godine, Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti, 40. 2016., 205.) / Izložba hrvatskih umjetnika na Milenijskoj izložbi u Budimpešti, 1896. ↑

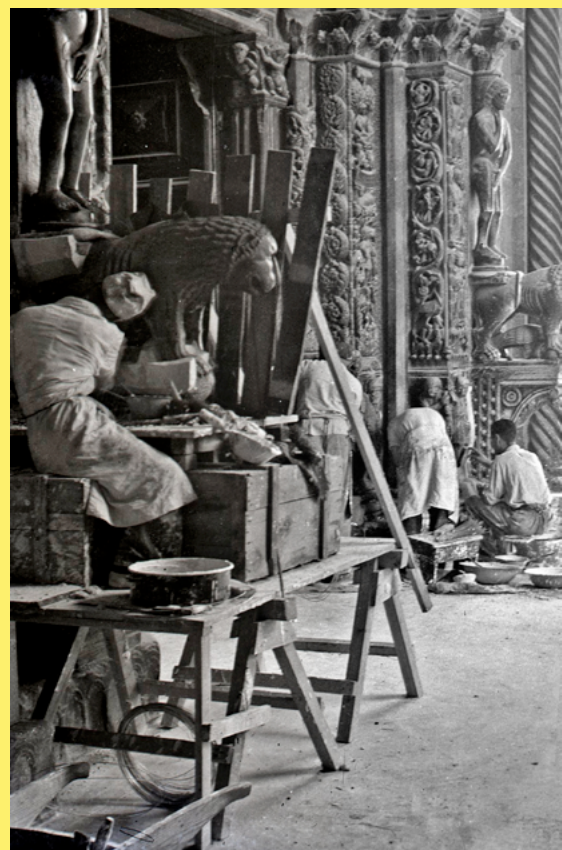


Fig. / Sl. 4 Casting of Radovan's Portal of the Trogir Cathedral supervised by Antun Bauer, Photographic archive of Glyptotheque, P-5 / Lijevanje Radovanova portala trogirске katedrale pod nadzorom Antuna Bauera, Fotografski arhiv Gliptoteke, P-5 ↑

Hunting Exhibition held in 1937 in Berlin,²⁷ which displayed plaster casts of Bosnian *stećci*²⁸, also to a large extent later falling into disrepair.

In the beginning, the foundation of today's collection consisted of about 200 casts, which the Committee for the Erection of a Monument to King Tomislav²⁹ in 1939 placed in the Gypsotheca for safekeeping, later becoming the museum's property. The committee was set up to erect a monument to King Tomislav and organise an accompanying exhibition. At the initial talks, a Millennial Exhibition was envisaged, all for the sake of commemorating the thousandth year of the existence of the Kingdom of Croatia; the making of casts of all the national monuments provided the legitimacy of historical continuity to the state of Croatia. According to the Minutes of sessions of the Managing Committee of the Society for the Erection of a Monument to King Tomislav, Professor Viktor Hoffiller, who was charged with the selection of items to be cast, reported that, in 1939 alone, 400 archaeological items of Old Croatian monuments had been cast.³⁰ This only says that one period, that of pre-Romanesque and Romanesque sculpture, was systematically collected, relating to the sites of St. Martha in Biaći, St. Mary in Biskupija near Knin, Kapitul near Knin, Koljane near Vrlika, St. Martin in Pridraga near Novigrad, Gradine in Solin and others.

With the support of this committee, in 1940, a major casting project in the field was organised in Trogir, where the casting of the Radovan's Portal of the Trogir Cathedral was addressed. Due to the war, it was not cast in its entirety, and the work was continued in 1947 with the support of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts. The casting was supervised by Antun Bauer and conducted by six restorers and several students from Zagreb. (Fig. 4) At the same time, some other monuments in Trogir were cast, including the composition of the Pietà by Niccolo di Giovanni Fiorentino, St. Sebastian and a detail from the Orsini Chapel.³¹ That same year, they made castings in Dubrovnik of the portal of the Friars Minor, the Renaissance window of St. John, and in Šibenik, a series of heads from the apse of St. James' Cathedral. Castings were made in Istria too, in collaboration with Academician Branko Fučić³², who is to be credited with a considerable segment of the collection of Glagolitic epigraphs. When he was still waiting to finish his degree, in August 1943, he worked at the Gypsotheca, learning the craft of making plaster casts.³³ Owing to him, a large part of the impressions and moulds of the Glagolitic monuments that were part of his pioneering research into Croatian Glagolitic monuments and coats of arms of the Istrian and Kvarner regions were made.

THE EXHIBITION MEDIEVAL ART OF THE PEOPLES OF YUGOSLAVIA IN PARIS

In 1947, the Gypsotheca began working together with the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts to prepare and organise the exhibition *Medieval Art of the Peoples of Yugoslavia*

22

The museum holds models of buildings and copies of architectural elements, sculptures, frescoes, and stained glass from French churches and castles, in addition to a collection of about 200,000 photographs. Special attention is claimed by the Galerie Davioud, which exhibits casts of sculptures from Strasbourg Cathedral (13th century), Bourges Cathedral (late 13th century), and the Church of Notre-Dame de Reims. The museum also includes copies of elements from the cathedrals of Angoulême, Aulnay, Autun, Cluny, Conques, Jouarre, Moissac, Sainte-Marie-des-Dames at Saintes, Saint-Gilles-du-Gard, Saint-Trophime d'Arles, Saint-Génis-des-Fontaines, Saint-Sernin in Toulouse, and Notre-Dame du Port in Clermont-Ferrand. More in: Pressouyre, *Le musée des monuments français*, 2007.

23

Izidor Kršnjavi (1851–1922), was a Croatian painter, art historian, writer, and politician. He was a significant figure in the architectural and cultural development of Croatia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

24

Getalđić, „Izidor Kršnjavi - inicijator zbirke sadrenih odljeva antičke skulpture i Gyps-Museuma“, 182–198.

25

FAA: The Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Fine Art Archive, collections of the Society for the Erection of a Monument to King Tomislav, box 8, 1939., 159.

26

AG, Bauer, Antun. Gypsotheca 1937–1947, 1948., 9.

27

The International Hunting Exhibition was held in Berlin from November 2 to November 24, 1937; *stećci* from Bosnia with hunting scenes were cast for the purpose.

28

Stećak refers to a type of medieval tombstone characteristic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, and parts of Serbia. These tombstones are unique to the region and are primarily found in areas that were once part of the medieval Bosnian Kingdom. The term *stećak* is derived from the Serbian-Croatian word *stojati*, which means „to stand.“ *Stećci* are large, rectangular tombstones with various decorative motifs and carvings. They can range in size, but they typically stand upright and are often adorned with intricate patterns and symbols. Most *stećci* date back to the 14th and 15th centuries, although some may be older.

29

In August 1925, the Committee for the Erection of a Monument to King Tomislav was founded, winning in September that year permission to operate throughout the Kingdom of SCS

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FAA, box 8, „Minutes of the Society for the Erection of a Monument to King Tomislav in Zagreb (from February 15, 1933 to March 7, 1940)“, 1939, 159.

31

AG, box 1, historical collection. „Collection of Historical Monuments in the Gypsotheca, Report,“ February 14, 1952.

32

Branko Fučić (1920–1999) art and culture historian, scientist, essayist, expert in medieval wall painting of Istria and Croatian Glagolitic heritage

33

AG, Personal Records box, 1941–1950., Branko Fučić

or L'Art médiéval yougoslave, which was held in the Parisian Musée des Monuments Français in Palais de Chaillot in May 1950.³⁴ (Fig. 5) A year later, in March 1951, the same exhibition was held at the Art Pavilion in Zagreb. The organisation of the exhibition was supervised by Miroslav Krleža,³⁵ while the setup was designed by Ljubo Babić.³⁶ This great exhibition was meant to present to the world public the artistic riches of the medieval period in Yugoslavia and was a major cultural event at the time.³⁷

Supporting the employees of the Gypsotheca, a number of plaster casters from various parts of the then Yugoslavia were taken on for the purpose of the exhibition. Monuments of history and culture were being intensively cast using the technique of casting in plaster moulds. This significantly expanded the collection of the Gypsotheca, as the casts later became part of the museum's holdings. Among the casts created at that time, from the Republic of Serbia, there were the portal of Studenica, the trifora from Studenica, and the bifora from Kalenić. Additionally, there was the portal from the Monastery of Visoki Dečani and the gable of the Dečani trifora from Kosovo. The hexafora of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik, several monuments from the Archaeological Museum in Zadar (then Museum of St. Donatus), as well as the choir stalls from the cathedral in Split, Croatia, were also included. Furthermore, around thirty *stećak* tombstones and *stećak* slabs from various sites were part of the collection. (Fig. 6)

During 1948, several major works were carried out in the field, of which one should mention the casting of the southern portal of the Church of St. Mark in Zagreb, the baroque portal by Francesco Robba on Kaptol, and the Gothic portal in Remete. In the late 1940s, the collection was supplemented with sculptures from the National Museum in Belgrade, the State Museum in Sarajevo, and a collection of casts from mithraea³⁸ from Bosnia. Large parts of the current Collection of *Stećci* Plaster Casts from various sites were cast, including whole or partial casts of *stećci*, slabs with ornaments, and epigraphs, principally from sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of them from Radimlja, and just a few from Croatia (Brotnjice) and Serbia. (Fig. 7)³⁹

THE MAKING OF CASTS OF THE MONUMENTAL HERITAGE AS PART OF THE ACTIVITY OF MUSEUMS

Independently of the exhibition in Paris, casting for the museum holdings went on, including the Giorgio da Sebenico Altar from Kaštela, for example, or the Erdödy Epitaph in Zagreb Cathedral. Intensive work on casting took place in Istria in 1951, on the whole of medieval interlacing monuments from the Archaeological Museum in Pula. It was considerably supplemented with new exhibits in 1952, originally cast for the exhibition *Gold and Silver of Zadar*, made over to the Gypsotheca after the show closed.⁴⁰ These are examples of choir stalls from the Zadar Cathedral and stalls

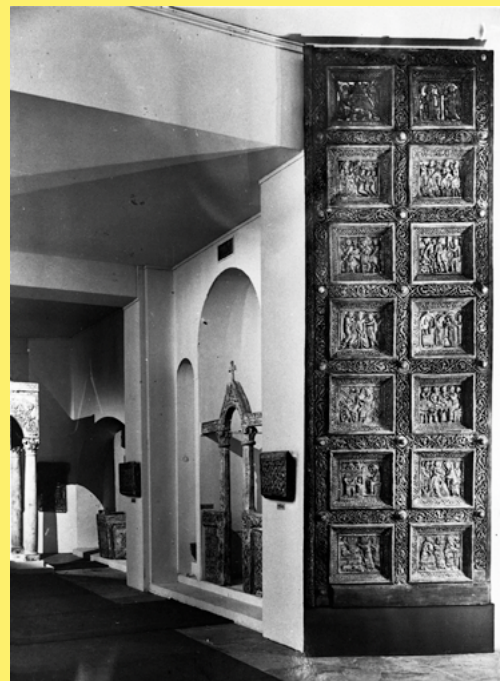


Fig. / Sl. 5 The exhibition *Medieval Art of the Peoples of Yugoslavia*, Musée des Monuments français in Palais de Chaillot, Paris, 1950, book of negatives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptotheque, VIII/204 / Izložba *Srednjovjekovna umjetnost naroda Jugoslavije*, Muzej francuskih spomenika u palači Chaillot, Pariz, 1950., knjiga negativa Gliptoteke Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, VIII/204



Fig. / Sl. 6 The plaster casts of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik and *stećak* tombstones, Photographic archive of Glyptotheque, G/F-22 / Gipsani odljevi Franjevačkog samostana u Dubrovniku i *stećci*, Fotografski arhiv Gliptoteke, G/F-22

↑



Fig. / Sl. 7 Work in the field for the Paris exhibition, Radimlja, 1950, book of negatives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptotheque, L-R-4-68 / Rad na terenu za izložbu u Parizu, Radimlja, 1950., knjiga negativa Gliptoteke Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, L-R-4-68

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34 AG, box 1, L'Art médiéval yougoslave (AMY), 1950.

35 Miroslav Krleža (1895–1981) was a prominent Croatian writer, poet, essayist, playwright, and critic. He is widely considered one of the most important and influential figures in Croatian literature and culture of the 20th century. Krleža's literary work spans various genres, and he was also involved in political and cultural activities throughout his life.

36 Ljubo Babić (1890–1974) was a prominent Croatian painter, art historian, art educator, illustrator, and scenographer. He played a significant role in the development of art history as a discipline in Croatia.

37 „Izložba srednjovjekovne umjetnosti naroda Jugoslavije“

38 Mithraea were religious sanctuaries or temples dedicated to the worship of the god Mithras, a deity who played a significant role in the mystery religion known as Mithraism. Mithraism was a mystery cult that emerged in the Roman Empire around the 1st century BCE and reached its peak of popularity during the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. Mithraic iconography included symbolic representations of the cosmos, zodiac signs, and scenes related to the mythology of Mithras. The symbolism was often rich and complex, reflecting the esoteric nature of the mystery cult.

39 AG, box „Glyptotheque History,“ document no 18.491-V-2-1950 of December 19, 1950. „A ruling of the city of Zagreb's People's Committee separated the Gypsotheca and placed it within the competence of the YASA,“ 1950.

40 The exhibition *Gold and Silver of Zadar* was shown in the atrium of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1951. Cf: Krleža, „Gold and Silver of Zadar.“

41 Kostrenčić, Novak (ed.), YASA Chronicle for 1956, 1956, 104.

42 See also in: Paškvan, Guide to the historical collection of the Glyptotheque.

43 The catalogue presents a selection of items from the holdings of the Glyptotheque. Cf. Novak, Montani. *Skulptura i arhitektonska ornamentika Hrvatske i Dalmacije*.

44 Montani, *Juraj Dalmatinac i njegov krug*.

45 The concept and set-up were devised by Radovan Ivančević.

from St. Francis in Zadar. The Gypsotheca also took over the moulds for the Casket of St. Simeon in Zadar, cast in silver for the exhibition, and a copy was cast in plaster as well, the collection thus being enriched with a very important monument. In 1956, Glyptotheque preparators Gabrijel Medved and Boris Sakač made castings of forty monuments of culture and history in Šibenik, Korčula, Orebić and Senj.⁴¹ The collection of plaster casts of the sculptural and architectural heritage lasted several years, often under challenging circumstances. One important problem was where to accommodate the collection. The institution had worked closely together on casting with the Bihać Society, which stopped working after the war, its moveable and immovable assets being transferred to the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts. Later, the Bihać Collection was transferred to the then Museum of Croatian Antiquities, today the Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments. Before the transfer occurred, in collaboration with the Glyptotheque and for the purpose of the holdings, many medieval monuments were cast, the collection being supplemented and brought together in a single place. The collection was set up several times, first upon its entry into the factory buildings, when it had a study character because of the given space, for the exhibits exceeded the capacity and size of the factory premises in size and quantity. Then, in 1953,⁴² the collection acquired a permanent display, which, through modifications over the years, has retained its chronological and linear character but is also a testimony to the spirit of the times and the needs of the milieu for such a collection, accessible to the general public; it may match up with similar collections of casts of historical monuments throughout Europe. In 1956, the casts from the Archaeological Museum in Pula were collected; in 1958, from the Archaeological Museum in Zadar and the Archaeological Museum in Split, while in 1959, the casts from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb were added. In addition, during the preparations for the exhibition *Art of the Early Middle Ages* in 1957, the holdings were enlarged again with pre-Romanesque or Early Romanesque objects that were cast in Kotor, Dubrovnik, Komolec, Koločep, Janjina, Žrnovo, Starigrad. To mark the centenary of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, an exhibition entitled *Sculpture and Architectural Decoration of Croatia and Dalmatia* was put on in 1966, when a catalogue was also printed.⁴³

Casting in the field was continued, and the next big project was the preparation for an exhibition of casts of the work of Giorgio da Sebenico, held in the Art Pavilion in 1967⁴⁴ and later in 1976 to mark the 5th century of his death and finally once again in 2001 when the Šibenik Cathedral was placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.⁴⁵ (Fig. 8) The history of the collection of national sculptural heritage reflects the spirit of the time in which it was formed, the time, that is, when heritage was used to confirm the national continuity of Croatian history.

THE COLLECTIONS OF THE CROATIAN
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS GLYPTOTHEQUE
FROM THE ASPECTS OF THEORETICAL
INTERPRETATION OF AND RESEARCH INTO THE
HISTORY OF CULTURE AND ART

The collections of the Glyptothèque of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts have an important role in the research of cultural and art history. According to Igor Fisković, casts „enable us to concentrate when in front of the exhibited artworks. One has to look at them also as documentary material that sometimes requires to be extracted from its own different reality and deprived of its original materiality.”⁴⁶ According to the concept of authenticity raised by M. Jones, casts have a lasting history, recorded from the moment they are created, including a whole sequence of later events in which they are damaged, repaired and subsequently restored and so on.⁴⁷ Casts have their own history, and their theoretical interpretation is influenced not only by their original makers and the people who commissioned them but by all those who later on came into contact with them.⁴⁸ Rudolf Arnheim⁴⁹ points out that a cast is a „reproduction and one has to treat a reproduction like a work if it conveys the essential properties of the work.”⁵⁰ Discussing the topic of original and copy in various arts, Arnheim concludes „when we rid ourselves of the binary manner of thinking that proclaims a certain unit to either be or not be a given work of art, we realise that works of art are events that come in the course of time. Their appearances change according to the manner of their survival in the spirit of the following generation. At the same time, they can keep an essential part of their nature for the preservation of identity.”⁵¹

Plaster casts often have an important role in the restoration, conservation, and preservation of historical strata, for they tell of the appearance of a sculpture in a given period. This can be seen before or after restoration operations, during which some parts of the original sculptures are removed or modified. Scholarly interpretation must be cognizant of the time individual moulds and casts were made. Casts can reveal a huge amount of information and details that have been preserved, unlike the original. Casts are also important while artworks are being reconstructed — in cases when fragments of a sculpture are in different places, the restoration of integrity is possible only with the help of casts. Very often, the originals are exposed to the influence of weather conditions and various external factors. Numerous monuments throughout history have been devastated, such as stećak cemeteries, where the monuments have often been displaced, ruined or used as secondary material. There are numerous public monuments, the parts of which, or even whole units, have in some historical period been re-carved or taken down for some reason or other. Hence, the safekeeping of casts and moulds of key monuments is of great importance for the preservation of national sculptural heritage. A plaster cast that is in condition as good as or better than the original can be of use in scholarly research, for details can be seen that might, in some cases, be of crucial importance for



Fig. / Sl. 8 Exhibition of casts of the work of Giorgio da Sebenico, Art Pavilion, Zagreb, 1967, Photographic archive of Glyptothèque / Izložba odljeva djela Jurja Dalmatinca, Umjetnički paviljon, Zagreb, 1967., Fotografski arhiv Gliptoteke



Fig. / Sl. 9 Restoration and reconstruction of Radovan's Portal in Trogir, comparison of Eve's face in the original and the cast in the Glyptothèque. Photographic archive of Glyptothèque / Restauracija i rekonstrukcija Radovanova portala u Trogiru, usporedba Evina lica u originalu i onog lijevanog u Gliptoteci. Fotografski arhiv Gipsoteke

the understanding and assessment of a monument. In some cases, the historical and artistic layers of a cast are better than those in the original. They can then be used for comparison during restoration and reconstruction more directly than photographs or documentation. (Fig. 9)

CONCLUSION

Today, the casts of national heritage from Dalmatia in the collections of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptothèque are of historical significance, for they represent a segment of the social context of the time in which they originally belonged. Casts are often the only clue to sculptures that have been lost or destroyed. The importance of casts is manifested during paradigm shifts, when they become artistic objects in themselves and a testimony of a given time, as R. Arnheim has pointed out. The purpose and importance of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptothèque, the only museum institution in the country to collect plaster casts, is pointed up by the European context to which it historically belongs. Throughout Europe, national heritage was defined at the beginning of the 19th century, being informed by Romanticism. It was then that numerous national collections of casts featuring sculptures of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were formed.

Museums were then confirmed as encyclopaedic and universal, their purpose being to develop the national identity and culture. It is in the spirit of these ideas, that this paper has presented the formation of the collection of the Glyptothèque, today's Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Glyptothèque, in which an important body of national monuments from the region of Dalmatia is collected.

46

Fisković, „George of Dalmatia and his circle”, 157–163.

47

Jones, Fake? *The Art of Deception*, 14.

48

Payne, „Casting a new Canon: Collecting and treating casts of Greek and Roman sculpture, 1850–1939”, 31

49

Rudolf Arnheim (1904–2007) was a German-American film and fine art theorist and author of a number of books on the theory and psychology of visual art, the best known of which is *Art and Visual Perception*, 1954.

50

Arnheim, „Copying”, 279.

51

Ibid., 281.

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AG: Archive of the CASA Glyptothèque, Zagreb, the folder History of Museum, 1937.

AG: Archive of the CASA Glyptothèque, Personal Records box, 1941–1950.

AG: Archive of the CASA Glyptothèque, box „Glyptothèque History,” 1950.

AG, Archive of the CASA Glyptothèque, box, L'Art médiéval yougoslave (AMY), 1950.

AG: Archive of the CASA Glyptothèque, Zagreb, historical collection, 1952.

FAA: The Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Fine Art Archive, collections of the Society for the Erection of a Monument to King Tomislav, box 8, 1939.

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/ NEOBJAVLJENI ARHIVSKI IZVORI

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