



Dokumenty minionych czasów są podobne do szarady. Jak dziś zapomnieliśmy już, jaki jest mechanizm jej rozwiązywania, tak i one stwarzają więcej pytań, niż potrafimy udzielić odpowiedzi. Studenci teatrologii zapytani, kim była Isadora Duncan, odpowiadają, że kochanką Craiga. Nie podejrzewają nawet, że istniały kiedyś szarady. Wydaje się niestety, że wydawca listów Craiga i Isadory Duncan też nie zdawał sobie z tego sprawy.

**SOME REMARKS IN CONNECTION WITH FRANCIS STEEGMULLER'S BOOK
„YOUR ISADORA”**

The above discussion of the book concerns itself mainly with the period when Isadora Duncan performed in Warsaw. Also, some of the issues revolving round her contacts with Stanislavsky are touched upon. In other words, it deals with a relatively small part of the book. Even this is enough, however, to point to its major shortcoming. Mr. Steegmuller reprints Isadora Duncan's correspondence, interspersed with his commentary, but has taken insufficient care to check and verify the circumstances in which the letters were written and to which they refer.

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To give just one example, Mr. Steegmuller says in note 1 on p. 171 that „it is not clear when Craig had been in Warsaw” and goes on to refer to circumstantial evidence to hazard a guess as to just when the visit might have taken place. Sources available in Poland (e.g. the long interview with Isadora Duncan published in «Kurier Warszawski») and Craig's correspondence with the Polish theatre director Leon Schiller (its extensive fragments have been published in English) would have made it perfectly clear to him that Craig had indeed visited Poland, and precisely when. Also, that he was there chiefly as Duncan's manager. It was with his help that Duncan's misunderstandings with Aleksander Rajchman, the director of the Warsaw Philharmonic, regarding her contract, were cleared up. Detailed information on this subject is available in the Craig collection in Paris, which includes also his correspondence with Rajchman.

Warsaw sources make it possible to correct inaccuracies, add missing information and, in most cases at least, correctly date the letters (showing, incidentally, that they are sometimes printed in the wrong order).

Below is a list of corrections (and supplementary information) which could have been introduced into the book had sources available in Poland been consulted by the author:

CD 106 — date: December 18, 1906

CD 117 — date: December 19, 1906

CD 109 — It might be added that the audience must have become aware of Duncan's message to the „Governor General of Warsaw”, i.e. Georgi Skalon, the highest Russian official in the Russian-ruled part of the country, asking him to leave the theatre; the next morning, the papers felt obliged to ascribe her behaviour to a tooth-ache.

CD 111 — date: December 27, 1906. Craig was in Warsaw between December 22 and 26, 1906

CD 112 — the letter was most probably written on December 28, 1906

CD 113 — date: December 29, 1906. Duncan's performances in Łódź, though previously advertised, never actually took place. The local papers explained that this was due to Duncan's ill health.

CD 114 — date: December 30, 1906

CD 115 — date: January 1, 1907, after the performance. That was when Duncan first danced to „Chopin on orchestra”.

CD 116 — date: January 1, 1907. In his note to this letter, Mr. Steegmuller says that Aleksander Rajchman was „the Warsaw theatrical agent.” In fact, he was the director of the Warsaw Philharmonic.

CD 117 — date: December 29, 1906

CD 118 — date: December 31, 1906, in the night.

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- CD 119 — date: January 1, 1907, in the morning.
- CD 120 — date: January 2, 1907
- CD 121 — date: January 5 or 6, 1907
- CD 123 — date: January 2 or 9, 1907
- CD 124 — date: January 10, 1907
- CD 209 — date: November 10, 1907
- CD 218 — this was most probably written in mid-March 1908. A comment preceding this letter mentions that Duncan had „danced with the children” in Warsaw, among other places. In 1908 Isadora Duncan danced in Warsaw only once, and for the last time ever, on April 10 — without the children. Her mention of Stanislavsky would indicate that she must have written the letter in March: she sent a telegram to him on March 17, 1908, after her return to Berlin.

A study of Russian sources (which incidentally contradict some of Craig's later notes and comments) would have made it possible to provide more extensive and accurate information on Isadora Duncan's stay in Russia, particularly in 1908 and 1909. This refers particularly to Stanislavsky's correspondence, since published, and to Duncan's letters and telegrams to him, preserved in the Moscow Art Theatre's files.

In general terms, the book creates the impression that Mr. Steegmuller had decided to leave out everything that did not pertain directly to its protagonists. In doing so, however, he not only left out the broader context against which the correspondence should be seen, but also removed all art from the book. And after all, Craig and Duncan, in addition to telling the story of their love, offer rare evidence of their own effort to fashion their own lives as works of art.

Translated by Karol Jakubowicz