

ТЕОРИЯ И ИСТОРИЯ ХОРЕОГРАФИЧЕСКОГО ИСКУССТВА

УДК 793

ОТЧЕТ О СОСТОЯНИИ ОЦИФРОВКИ И ДОСТУПНОСТИ МАТЕРИАЛОВ КОЛЛЕКЦИИ Н. Г. СЕРГЕЕВА В ГАРВАРДЕ (на английском языке)

*Водзицкий М.*¹

¹ Калифорнийский университет, Эванс холл, 995, Беркли, США.

В статье дан отчет о сегодняшнем состоянии оцифровки и доступности материалов коллекции Н. Г. Сергеева в Гарвардской библиотеке (на английском языке). Представлены сведения о количестве и процентном соотношении к общему числу единиц хранения, доступных в режиме онлайн как для основного массива электронных документов коллекции (MS Thr 245), так и для отдельных категорий документов: хореографических нотаций, клавиров, репетиторов, оркестровых партитур). Определена динамика, отмечены некоторые тревожащие тенденции процесса оцифровки, названы факторы, затрудняющие доступ балетной общественности к информации о реальном состоянии дел и прогрессе оцифровки коллекции.

Ключевые слова: коллекция Н. Сергеева в Гарварде (Гарвардская коллекция), оцифровка, хореографические нотации, репетиторы, статистика доступности материалов.

A REPORT ON THE STATE OF DIGITALIZATION AND ACCESSIBILITY OF MATERIALS OF THE HARVARD N. G. SERGEYEV COLLECTION

*Wodzicki M.*¹

¹ 995 Evans Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-3840, USA.

The article is a report on the current state of the digitalization and accessibility of materials of the N. G. Sergeyev collection at Harvard Library. The number of accessible units, what percentage they form of the total, the page count of

the accessible units, and of the total, are given for the main body of the collection, (MS Thr 245), and for several categories of the materials, like choreographic notations, piano reductions, répétiteurs, orchestral scores. The dynamics of the process is determined and some worrying characteristics are noted. The factors preventing the ballet community from gaining information about the actual state and progress of the digitalization of the Collection are named.

Keywords: N. G. Sergeyev Collection at Harvard, digitalization, choreographic notations, répétiteurs, materials accessibility statistics.

Introduction

At Harvard Library today there are two groups of documents associated with the former principal régisseur of the Imperial Theaters in Saint-Petersburg, N. G. Sergeyev¹. The first one, received in February 1967, is divided between call numbers MS Thr 186 and MS Thr 187. Call number MS Thr 186, containing exclusively materials related to «Swan Lake», consists of 14 units. Call number MS Thr 187, containing exclusively materials related to «Don Quixotte», counts 2 units.

The second group of documents, received in November 1969, was assigned a single call number MS Thr 245. It is divided into 290 units and contains material on at least 37 ballets and 29 opera divertissements. A third of those 290 units contains choreographic notations.² Included are also ground plans, mise-en-scène, mime, synopses, printed programs, piano reductions, répétiteurs, full and orchestral parts scores, handwritten and printed. Finally, a certain number of costume and set designs, photographs, and a photo album. The units are numbered from 1 to 287. In the Accession Record *69M-85, unit 206 is listed as “omitted from series” while four additional units are inserted into the sequence. This explains the discrepancy. For short, I will be referring to this massive collection of documents, MS Thr 245, as *the Collection*.

For the community of ballet scholars, choreographers, students, the Collection represents enormous interest. For the majority of them visiting Boston and studying the materials in situ is out of question, digitalization is therefore the only route to make the Collection accessible.

Today, the digitalization process at Harvard Library is handled centrally. The materials after having been photocopied are added to the so called *Digital Reposi-*

¹ A substantial portion of these documents, and all the most important ones, were taken away from Petrograd when N. G. Sergeyev was leaving Russia in 1918.

² Stepanov's system of choreographic notation, developed at the end of the 19th Century by the artist of Mariinsky Theater, Vladimir Stepanov (1866–1896), was used to record whole ballets as well as ballet numbers.

tory. The digitized images at the Repository are then linked to the online catalog of the Collection, the latter being the only “public” entry point to the images. If the responsible staff member fails to carry out this step, or if she removes or hides the links to the digitized images, the latter are not accessible to the outside world. The online patrons, in most cases, will not even know that the material in question has been digitized. The material is accessible exclusively to a narrow circle of those who were given the URL address of the digitized images. The described mechanism resulting in digitized materials being withheld from open access and available only to the “narrow circle”, indeed occurred.

To sum up, the online catalog of the Collection is the place where the online patron can find out which materials have been digitized and get access to them. The catalog home page of the Collection [1] shows in one of the tabs the current number of digitized materials. As of May 12, the number given was 74. The reader must bear in mind that this is not the number of digitized units but the number of rather arbitrarily assigned, so called, “digital objects”. The home page of the Collection fails to warn the patron about this important distinction. Many of those 74 separate “digital materials” point to the same sequence of digital images. The only difference being the image selected as the preview starting point.

Earlier, when the digitalization process was handled by the branch of Harvard Library where the Collection is stored, it was possible for the digitized material not to be added to Digital Repository at all.

Below, the term “*accessible*” will be used in the sense that the corresponding material has been digitized and the link to the digital images is provided by the online catalog of the Collection.

Materials of the collection by category

The digitalization of the branch of Houghton Library materials where the Collection is stored began in 2005. Fifteen years later, in spite of tremendous interest in the ballet community worldwide, only 53 units, out of the total 290 are accessible. This makes 18.3 % of the total.

The article reflects the data as they were on May 12, 2020. Two days after the online publication of the preliminary version of this report [2], one previously inaccessible unit, MS Thr 245 (45), was made “accessible”, more than a year after it was added to Digital Repository. Simultaneously, the direct link to the digital images of another previously inaccessible unit, MS Thr 245 (268), was communicated in the Internet [3], a year and a half after that unit was added to the Digital Repository.

Certain units of the Collection contain material of more than one category. They may, for example, contain Stepanov choreographic notations and a violin répétiteur, or a violin répétiteur and a piano reduction. One is advised to keep this in mind

when looking at the numbers given below.

Out of the total of 290 units:

98 contain choreographic notations

28 accessible = 28.6 % of the total

45 contain piano reductions

8 accessible = 17.8 %

21 contain répétiteurs

5 accessible = 23.8 %

92 contain orchestral scores

12 accessible = 13.0 %

The page count of the materials of the collection

I was able to determine the page count for 272 units. I have no information on the page count of 18 units. One is advised to keep in mind that the grand totals and the percentages are based on those 272 units for which I was able to determine their page count.

The page count for 272 units:

22357 the grand total

983 accessible = 35.7 % of the total

Note that 18.3% of units contribute 35.7% of the total number of pages. This is due to the fact that certain units, namely the orchestral parts scores, can be huge. Two units alone, MS Thr (31) and MS Thr 245 (32), contribute a staggering number of 3566 pages (!) This amounts to 45% of the total number of accessible pages. Each of these two units provides orchestral parts scores for «Paquita». If you remove such disproportionate orchestral score units from the count of accessible pages, the percentages drop dramatically.

The page count by category

Below, for each category, I provide the total page count for the units containing material of that category.

4407 choreographic notations

1758 accessible = 9.9 %

2358 piano reductions

814 accessible = 34.5 %

1929 répétiteurs

1129 accessible = 58.5 %

14658 orchestral scores

4855 accessible = 33.1 %

Comment. I have no information regarding the page count of at least 2 répétiteurs. If I had that information, the percentage of accessible pages in the répétiteur category would be likely much lower.

Materials of the collection for select works

Here, I provide data for a few select ballets whose stage reconstructions have been in the public spotlight. For each ballet, I take into account all units that contain material related to that work.

“Giselle”

12 units

2 accessible

1938 pages total

131 accessible = 6.8 %

Comment. Only 14 pages of notations are accessible. I have no page count information for 2 units.

“Sleeping Beauty”

12 units

2 accessible

808 pages

218 accessible = 27.0 %

Comment. I have no page count information for 1 unit.

“La Bayadère”

13 units

1 accessible

1331 pages

314 accessible = 23.6 %

Comment. The only accessible unit for «La Bayadère» is the microfilm of a violin répétiteur. No notations accessible. The data includes the «Rêve du Radjah» materials.

The dynamics of the process of making. The materials accessible

The online catalog of the Collection provides not a hint about when a given unit has been digitized, when it was added to Digital Repository or, most importantly, when it was made accessible to online patrons. It does not provide any information about recent additions, does not give the total page count, nor does provide the page count for each unit of the Collection. The task of determining the actual page count of the non-accessible units is too difficult to be expected that it can be solved by a patron.

I consider these multiple failings to be the key factors why the ballet community for years has had only the dimmest idea about the actual state and progress of the digitalization of the Collection. If it had, I have absolutely no doubt that questions about the erratic aspects of the digitalization process and making the digitized materials accessible, would have been put forward years ago.

As it is, 36 out of 53 currently accessible units belong to a single, initial, block of digitalizations. The first 6 units of that block became accessible in the second half of 2009 and certainly not later than the beginning of 2010. These 6 units relate to the work of Yuri Burlaka at the time when he was directing the ballet troupe of Bolshoi, more precisely, to his production of «Esmeralda» (December 2009). As many as 31 units of the initial block of digitalizations were accessible by 2012-13.

To the initial block of digitalizations we owe:

18 out of 28 accessible units containing notations

6 out of 8 accessible units containing piano reductions

4 out of 5 accessible units containing répétiteurs

10 out of 12 accessible units containing orchestral scores

In terms of the page count, the initial block contributed:

6665 out of 7983 accessible pages = 83.5 %

5902 were accessible by 2012-13 = 73.9 %

Over the last 7 years only 22 units became accessible. They make 9.3 % of the total page count of the Collection. Of these 22 units, 9 belong to a single digitalization order related to a planned production of “Koniok-Gorbunok”.

Unless Harvard Library initiates the digitalization itself, it is up to an external patron to order it. As far as I know, all accessible materials of the Collection were digitized in response to such an external order. The Standard Order is at the cost of 1 US dollar per page and is accompanied by certain conditions that the ordering party must accept. One of those conditions is that the ordering party pays for a digitalization of the complete document, even if it needs a few pages. For the whole range of units this makes the order costly. Another condition — the ordered material will become accessible online to all. If for whatever reasons the ordering

party does not want the materials to be accessible to others there is a special order route. That will cost the ordering party at least 8-15 times more per page, however.

Copying the Collection materials began in 1997-98. Digitalization at the branch of Harvard Library where the Collection is stored began in 2005. The earliest accessible materials, however, are from the end of 2009. Were none of the materials of the Collection digitized during four previous years? If they were, why none of them are accessible?

The results of this report raise several issues:

1) Were none of the materials digitized on the orders of the well known ballet reconstructionist S. G. Vikharev and his associates? If there were, why they are not accessible?

2) Why not all the materials of the Collection that are digitized by a standard order, become accessible?

3) What is the reason that the majority of the materials necessary for the productions of «Sleeping Beauty», «La Bayadère», «Giselle» — by A. O. Ratmansky, the choreographer who has been very active using documents from the N. G. Sergeyev Harvard Collection — are not accessible? We are talking about thousands of pages and dozens of units.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of individuals provided information that helped me in my investigation: my thanks are due especially to those ballet professionals and scholars who have been monitoring the Collection from the beginning, to those who have been contributing with their own orders, and those who shared with me the vital data on the digitalization orders and their chronology. Also members of the Harvard Library personnel assisted me in obtaining certain data like, e.g., the page count of inaccessible units.

ЛИТЕРАТУРА / REFERENCES

1. Nikolai Sergeev dance notations and music scores for ballets. URL: <https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/3185> (consulted on : 29.05.2020).
2. Imperial Russian Ballet and more / Русский Императорский Балет и не только. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ImperialRussianBallet/> (consulted on : 29.05.2020).
3. Digital images of MS Thr 245 (268). URL: <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL.HOUGH:38092792> (consulted on : 29.05.2020).

СВЕДЕНИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ

Водзицкий М. — штатный профессор, dura.europos@berkeley.edu

INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wodzicki M. — tenured professor, dura.europos@berkeley.edu