

*Abstract*

Lorenzo Mango, *Preliminary notes for the creation of the history of the theatre of the twentieth century*

When talking about the history of the theatre of the twentieth century it is important to consider many things. It is necessary to define some elements of method that touch some other main issues. First of all it is required to look back to another century that is just behind us and that still involves us. Choosing a perspective means that history builds up an identity, not only a sequence of events. Following this main stream, many other effects are caused. The starting point is the date of the beginning of the twentieth century. Here comes a multiple hypothesis, it is a beginning with three faces that are not to consider as alternatives but they suggest that the problem is the historiography itself and not the need of finding a specific date. The same thing happens for a second option of method, choosing a reconstruction coming from a chronological order or, as this essay aims to highlight, talking about the twentieth century in its first half, considering the most important themes such as direction, avantgarde, acting and dramaturgy. There are other problems, for instance how to create an index of these themes in a volume, what will be first and why? Then another challenge arrives when talking about the history of acting of the twentieth century, that is something different from the actors story.

The main issue is to limit the study cases, either geographically (how can we cope with globalisation?) either from a methodological point of view, considering the wider and wider performing field from the Performance Studies that lead to a paradoxical result, which is to define something indefinable. The article focuses on providing some important questions of method that are necessary tools for a historiographical work in order to consider a history of the theatre of the twentieth century.