Chapter 5.3: Theater Studies from the Early Twentieth Century to Contemporary Debates

The Scientific Status of Interdisciplinary-Oriented Research

Chiara Maria Buglioni

The complexity of theory pales by comparison to the abundant wealth of theatrical experiments in our times. Many of these are having some success, whether research into space, body expression, rereadings of classics, or the fundamental relationship between actor and spectator. But beware those who proclaim the death of staging or history, the disappearance of theater, a return to the evidence of the text or the incontestable supremacy of the actor, for underlying such statements is often a rejection of reflection and meaning, a return to a critical obscurantism with sinister echoes. In these times of ideological uncertainty, as the humanist heritage is liquidated between two fire sales of concepts too soon shop-soiled, of hermeneutical gadgets and flashy postmodern devices, a process of historical and structural reflection seems ever more necessary to stave off the vertigo of theoretical relativism and aestheticism.¹

No other discipline within the humanities has had to struggle with its own interdisciplinary character as much as theater research in Europe. The fathers of the new-born scholarship Theaterwissenschaft were mainly concerned with distinguishing theater from other forms of art and with asserting its right as an independent field of enquiry. The need to define a specific methodological approach, however, was not taken into account. This initial lack in the creation of the scientific discipline has influenced the controversial development of theater studies and has caused frequent identity crises.

The new challenge within theater studies is called the integrated approach.² From the mid-80s, under the condition of postmodernity, which reflects the collapse of categories and the blurring of traditional genres, theater research has pursued the analysis of every aspect and form of the theatrical medium, rejecting the conventional boundaries highly specialized scholarship has imposed since the foundation of the discipline. What is more, the focus of the discipline has witnessed a gradual shift from theater, an aesthetic object, but also an audience-
based activity and an institution, to all kinds of cultural and social performances, to be read as a semiotic process. This way, theater scholars are called on to share the knowledge of many fields of enquiry and to discover the potential points of contact theatrical events have with other disciplines. Nonetheless, such interdisciplinary-oriented research tends to superficiality rather than to scientific enterprises through the cooperation with other fields; ultimately, it is willing to analyze every small pseudo-theatrical incident in daily life, without carrying any contribution to the history of the humanities, rather than to limit its object and to display the contents and results of its investigations in a systematic way. The theoretical quarrels among opposing factions such as hermeneutical scholars, historians, semioticians, poststructuralist thinkers and performance practitioners have now been sublimated into an all-embracing methodology, in a sometimes confusing multitude of definitions, practices and procedures that makes theater lovers wonder why theater studies fears to deal with theater art. Theater scholars are constantly repeating that theater studies is not an omnichrespective cultural scholarship, else no precise, specific questions could be raised, discussed and solved. However, they all flinch from delimiting the boundaries of their discipline: since an exhaustive definition of aesthetic experience is hard to find, the difference between artistic performance and nonartistic performance seems to be inexistent. If it is true that all the humanities are interwoven, the nature and substance of a single scholarship can nevertheless be endangered by a denial of its particular object of investigation and of its own methodology, which should build its own framework for research instead of resorting to predetermined categories.

This essay questions the assumption that a certain methodological polytheism – of heterogeneous tools and skills – is the proper answer to the scientific status of theater studies and that the eclectic nature of the discipline corresponds to its strength. Through an historical overview of theater studies as interdisciplinary-oriented research, the article aims at demonstrating how the self-imposed lack of definitions and methodological stances, as well as the irresistible urge to assess the discipline within the mainstream of other humanities and social sciences, is just a way to avoid fundamental issues. It is hence necessary to clarify the author’s position with respect to the object ‘theater’. The point of departure is not the classical, Eurocentric concept of theater as performance of dramatic texts, but as theatrical performance, live art, communicative event in which the aleatory component is always mediated by the performer(‘s) choice – the so-called ‘planned uncertainty’ –, by the audience’s expectations and the relative stability of theatrical contexts. As Willmar Sauter rightly asserts, the artistic level is one of the constituent elements of theatrical performance: ‘The artistic level of communication is built on coded actions, and each theatrical genre has a specific set of expressive strategies’. The subject matter of theater studies should be therefore
its relation to the aesthetic and the performance as art form and as social/cultural behavior: the discipline should rediscover the aesthetic properties of theater and make them an integral part of its enquiry.

A young discipline fighting for independence and recognition

The autonomous status of theater research was undermined at the very beginning of its career, when the pathfinders of the German Theaterwissenschaft called for the recognition of a theatrical art to be analyzed separately from literary studies, but ignored to distinguish their work in terms of methodology. Curiously, the German name contains the word ‘science’, which linked the newborn academic subject to a broad cultural process through which Dilthey’s Geisteswissenschaften tried to attain the same scientific status of the natural sciences. Wilhelmine Germany was characterized by two connected trends: on the one hand, the relationship between society and theater changed, since the latter lost its educational role; on the other hand, new disciplines found their way into the highly conservative university system – for example, archeology, the history of art, and musicology. In the fervid shift toward modernity, some scholars focused their attention on the fin-de-siècle theatrical revolution. The demand for performances was increasing and, consequently, the number of public and private houses tripled after the passing of the trade laws in 1869, which had allowed public establishments to open without legal restrictions. As for drama and staging, the first moves toward a director’s theater were to be seen at the Meiningen Court Theater or in the work of other pioneers such as Richard Wagner, Max Reinhardt and Georg Fuchs, who arrested the so-called literalization of theater. New avant-garde movements likewise tried to overcome the impasse of a standardized theater by experimenting with stage effects and illusions, space and audience involvement: this was the period of Edward Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia. The public at large grew increasingly interested in theater, and, partly as a result, theater criticism grew out of the field of literary criticism. Another relevant circumstance is the appearance of theater societies (Gesellschaften) and theater associations (Vereine) which both allowed the staging of innovative theatrical forms in close circuits and helped the establishment of theater departments in the German universities.5

In 1900 Max Herrmann (1865–1942) delivered the first lectures and tutorials in Theaterwissenschaft at the University of Berlin, and nine years later Arthur Kutscher (1878–1960) did the same in Munich. The universities of Kiel and Cologne followed in 1918 and 1920 respectively, under the aegis of the literary historian Eugen Wolff (1863–1929) at the former and Carl Niessen (1890–1969) at the latter. In 1923 Herrmann was able to establish his ‘Theaterwissenschaftliches
Institut an der Universität Berlin', but Kutscher never did witness the realization of his dream; the department of Theaterwissenschaft, in fact, was established at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität only in 1974. The main concern of these scholars was to prove that the art of theater could not be reduced to a mere manifestation of the dramatic text. As an object composed of different elements, it needed an independent discipline. Herrmann’s first observation refers to the spatial dynamics of theater. In order to interpret theater, which is primarily a spatial art, scholars have to know in detail about both the actual theatrical space and the way it is used and transformed by theatrical practitioners. Placed precisely within its space, a drama can be fully translated into mimic, gestural communication, and proxemic action. Literary studies cannot grasp the phenomenon of theater because its tools are simply insufficient – they are limited, that is, to abstract speculations. When, in 1919, Herrmann outlined the essential subjects to be taught in the new department of theater studies, he expounded his idea of theater as a spatial art to be studied from a practical point of view. The syllabus follows three strands: theater history, theater aesthetic and theater legislation. Beside a general study of the art of theater as well as a study of dramatics, staging, acting, costumes, lighting and sets, theater students must have practical notions (for example, about theater administration or censorship) and must apply their knowledge through exercises. For this reason, a small revolving stage is placed inside the institute. As far as the question of method is concerned, Herrmann has to deal with the transience of theatrical performance. In this respect, although theater studies is to be subtracted from the hegemony of history and literary studies, these disciplines can all the same supply scholars with the tools needed to work out the problems connected with an evanescent performance; what is more, the historical methodology was the only one acknowledged in the early twentieth century for scholarly pursuits. Max Herrmann provided the first systematic approach to theater history by supplying us with a model called ‘reconstruction’. As a theater historian, the creator of Theaterwissenschaft in Berlin applies strategies developed by archeology to document single elements of a mise-en-scène, rather than a whole, unique performance. The final goal is to understand the practice and staging of a particular form of theater, such as the theater of the Meistersingers of Nuremberg, and to place it within the wider context of German theater: ‘Theater studies is the vital lesson from the past connected to the teachings of contemporary theater.’

Granted that Herrmann’s field of interest is not the historical past tout court, but the relationship between the conditions of previous performances and those of modern theater, all the same he avoids studying contemporary forms of theater. At Munich University, on the contrary, Kutscher arouses his students’ curiosity in extremely contemporary manifestations of theater by organizing evening debates and performances with famous playwrights and artists. He reinforces
the dichotomy of theory and practice in theater studies as he prompts students to experiment on the stage and with dramatic texts. However, he, too, does not deal systematically with contemporary performances: the literary drama is always analyzed with the tools of poetics, since Kutscher’s main concern is the diachronic enquiry into theatrical expression. He tries to explain the interrelation of complex and primitive modes of performance by identifying their original source: mime. This is the way through which human bodies express themselves. It is innate in human beings, but theater studies must limit its attention to the deliberate, noninstinctive use of the body as a means of expression. This way of controlling and showing ‘tensions, emotions and life-nexuses’ can be subsumed under the concept ‘play’. The play instinct is the basic instinct of mankind, since it combines the use of the imagination with an awareness of one’s own strengths. Starting from the speculations of Hermann Reich and Hugo Dinger, Kutscher argues that theatrical art differs from literature in its mimic character. Theater, he says, communicates above all through space and movement. Kutscher develops a theory of mime whose aim is to explain why literary studies are unable to define theater. Carl Niessen reelaborates this theory, trying to stress the importance of mimesis – as representational instinct – has for the definition of mime, but he shares Kutscher’s scope: the desire to demonstrate that theater comes from instincts which transcend culture and time, rather than from dramatic forms linked to ritual acts. Herrmann and Kutscher have a different idea of theater and, consequently, a different methodological approach. The Munich scholar overlooks the need for a specific set of working methods, so much so that he claims:

The term Theaterwissenschaft or, at the beginning, Theaterwissenschaften, was coined by myself, since I was convinced that theater, as the object of a discipline within the Humanities, grants and requires method of its own. What kind of method should that be? [...] Mime must be the core of theater studies. [...] Its method comprises everything that belongs to science as such and that can be grasped with scientific tools.

What emerges from this tautological phrase is the impossibility of detaching theater studies from philological and historical principles in the academic context, the so-called ‘science’. Kutscher considers the risks of such a mixing-up of methods, but he wants to enrich theatrical analyses with reflections coming from other fields. He is the first theater scholar to consider anthropology and ethnology as important aids for the newborn discipline, to open up the scholarship to other branches of knowledge. Since social sciences were underestimated in the German university system at that time, he didn’t dare get rid of the study of literature and history.
Max Herrmann and Artur Kutscher, as well as Carl Niessen, overlooked the actual dilemma of *Theaterwissenschaft*, namely the relationship of its many-sided object of study with extremely different factors and domains. The pioneers of German theater research were, in fact, the first scholars to favor the subdivision of the discipline, through the application of methods borrowed from other fields or through the claim that theater research actually needs no specific methodology. Even if they challenged the traditional approach to the theatrical phenomenon based on the textual study, they were unable to choose between historical, literary-critical, and anthropological analyses.

**Approaches to theater studies:**

**Relationships to the other humanities**

Although the path-breaking discipline defined itself through the epistemological ‘passage from the object-dramatic text to the object-performance’, it is clear that its founders could not overcome the conflict with literary studies. Herrmann and Kutscher had a philological curriculum, as they had both qualified as professors of German literature. What is more, they were convinced of the supremacy of the poetic text within the theatrical performance. Herrmann defended any playwrights’ work against a director’s free interpretation of the text – he believed the author’s intention should always be preserved in the way the text was staged – and Kutscher described the main property of drama as ‘ennobled’ mime, because it masters the poetic text on a mimic basis. Lastly, the inner quality of theater history must be borne in mind, as it is based on actual documentary records, and thus on texts. Herrmann himself believed the art of theater could speak directly to the present through its sources, and these sources are, first and foremost, literary ones. Drama-based theater studies takes as its legitimation this original commitment to the written text, and as a result hermeneutical analyses and philological speculation on texts dominated the discipline till the late 1960s. As a ‘method of interpreting text and performance’, hermeneutics attempts to seek out the relationship between the theatrical work and the outside world, thereby falling within the area of dramatic criticism. However, what must be underlined here is that Herrmann’s and Kutscher’s different approaches to the theater, combined with a similar kind of uncertainty about methodology, led to two parallel approaches to theater studies.

On the one hand, the positivist foundations of the discipline influenced theater historians, who had to struggle first with ‘vulgar positivism’ and then with its ‘more subtle reappearance’: the former includes the methodological assumption that it is possible to achieve the objective reconstruction of truths based
on facts, while residual positivism is based on the belief that facts can remain neutral and analyses can be impartial. On the other hand, the theory of theater as mime survived because theories of cultural evolution tried to place cultural events on evolutionary ladders and origin theories explained how the legitimate theater (fifth-century Attic tragedy and comedy) had derived from a ‘Primal Ritual’. The common element of hermeneutical, historical and evolutionary-anthropological perspectives is, then, the search for unprovable signs that Richard Schechner deplores in older approaches to the theater.21 According to him, these ‘vertical’ theoretical approaches force theater into a literary context in which it does not belong. The opposite development of theater studies, a development that explores ‘horizontal relationships’, can be seen in semiotics and performance studies. Despite the fact that these fields of enquiry – which are not simply a discipline, nor properly a method (as Keir Elam would say22) – are linked to different concepts of theater, it is possible to unite them in an attempt to work on all the phenomena involved in performance with a unified set of approaches. After an initial period, characterized by the textual analyses of theatrical performances (the 1970s to the early 1980s), theater semioticians are now engaged in ordering inputs from various fields of investigation in a meta-disciplinary frame by using semiotic principles. The main object of study is therefore the ‘theatrical relationship’ during the creative process (hence the relationship between playwright and director, director and actors, etc.) and in its result (the relationship between performance and spectator). The poles of this relationship are the actor and the spectator, ‘which are conceived as interdependent entities, but also as active subjects, provided with a relative mutual autonomy’.23 This definition emphasizes the spectator-response as a partial, creative independence with respect to the performance, and aims at denying the deconstructive claim for boundless spectator’s autonomy. Semiotics has been linked to reception theories or corrected by phenomenological reflections about direct experiential aspects of the performance. Problems concerning taxonomy and methods are, however, far from being solved. Critiques of theater semiotics have always involved the process of transferring linguistic terms and metaphors to theater – which is a polyphonic system, not merely a verbal phenomenon – and the oversystematization of its concepts. As far as phenomenological theater theories is concerned, they also express the needless attempt to define theater:

[A]ny specialized vocabulary or set of terms does not exhaust the phenomenon it is intended to describe (performance, theater, art), but simply ‘fixes’ it from one possible angle of intentionality or expressiveness; for the phenomenon is always nameless and multiform before a vocabulary traps it in one of its manifestations. [...] We can only seek the essential nature of performability, not a taxonomy of performable objects or behaviors.24
On the other side of theatrical investigation, cultural studies and avant-garde artistic practices have favored, in the US, the emergence of performance studies. Taking important tools from social sciences in the late 1960s and from ethnology and anthropology in the early 1970s, the father of performance theory and poetics, Richard Schechner, declares that theater belongs among ‘public performance activities of humans’, along with ritual, play, games, sports, dance and music. With the word ‘performance’ Schechner limits Erwin Goffman’s idea of a mode of behavior that qualifies any human activity and coins the classical definition: ‘a performance is an activity done by an individual or group in the presence of and for another individual or group’. The field of performance studies immediately defines itself in opposition to the American theatrical theory – which was at its foundation concerned with drama; however, its development has followed the traces of the different approaches to theater studies in existence in the 1940s: the Midwestern and Northwestern traditions entailed an oral interpretation- and communication-oriented approach to theater studies as a part of the broader School of Speech, while on the East Coast scholars focused on theater as a physical event and stressed the importance of the material conditions of each performance. After Schechner, performance research at New York University aims at developing an interdisciplinary faculty, by stressing the fundamental role of dialogue with specialists from different disciplines and cultures.

In 1992, Schechner reformulates the theory he has been developing for decades and declares a paradigm shift from theater – or written drama – to performance. In so doing, the performance practitioner and theorist follows two rationales: ‘Theater Studies lacked the scope to engage with increasingly “performative” as well as “intercultural” Western societies, or performances beyond; and it addressed a redundant form’. Meanwhile, Phillip Zarrilli’s definition of performance as ‘an arena for the constant process of negotiating experiences and meanings that constitute culture’ clearly emphasizes the pragmatic interest of his – and others’ – performance theory as well as his intercultural perspective. Theater studies has become one element of the new paradigm of performance. On the whole, in performance studies attention is shifted away from the traditional aesthetic to the universal, intercultural basis for the relationship between social and aesthetic drama. Through an arbitrary metaphorical gesture, performance studies has claimed epistemological superiority over theater studies, ignoring the fact that theater is also an aesthetic, artistic object of enquiry and pursuing the wider democratic scope of including identities marginalized by so-called highbrow culture, with its canonical texts and institutional contexts. If we think of Jon McKenzie’s recent statements, in which he argues that the twenty-first century is the very ‘age of global performance’, thus an age in which everything is performance, in which every human activity is dominated
by a ‘formation of power and knowledge’,31 and in which performances largely contribute to the process of globalization, the absence of interest for artistic and theatrical performance is evident. According to McKenzie, cultural specialists should analyze not only the discursive discipline of performance studies and its respective colegitimating object of study (cultural performance), but also the paradigms of performance management and techno-performance with their objects (organizational performance and technological performance), in order to embrace, understand, and use performance as a tool to transform society. Jill Dolan rightly evokes a model of exchange between theater and other disciplines, ‘rather than one in which the performative evacuates theater studies’.32 In Geographies of Learning, Dolan tries to cross the gulf between theory and practice, so that, in Chapter 4, she argues for a new alignment of the objects of investigation and for a new methodology that can transform theater studies into a lively discipline. She proposes ‘borrowing back’ concepts and metaphors historically developed by theater studies which have been lifted by other disciplines in recent times. The idea is certainly suggestive, but no explanations have been offered to show how precise methodological characteristics could structure this process of reappropriation and retranslation. An interesting aspect is the theoretical affinity Marvin Carlson sees between Jill Dolan’s studies and Erika Fischer-Lichte’s continental perspective on the field of theater and performance research.33

Again in Germany, the discussion about performance studies has been received in the late 1980s and is directly connected with Fischer-Lichte’s later work. As she herself recalls, the focus of her interest quite spontaneously shifted to ‘the performative aspect of theater performances and other cultural performances’34 in an epoch marked by the new metaphor ‘culture as performance’. Her attempt to connect the performance studies discourse to the birth of theater studies in Germany and to present the contemporary evolution of the discipline as already foreseen and theorized in Max Herrmann’s concept of theater unravels the desire to remark Germany’s hegemonic position in the field of theater/performance studies, against the so-called ‘US/UK PS empire’.35 There is no doubt that Herrmann understood theater ‘as an event, as festive play and, therefore, as performative art’,36 nonetheless he was exclusively interested in events or performances which allowed particular aesthetic experience and which were broadly considered works of art. His research interest was not ‘any kind of cultural performance’, as Fischer-Lichte now defines the object of enquiry of theater studies.37 Rightly enough, Carlson observes that Fischer-Lichte draws her examples almost exclusively from what might be called the artistic tradition of theater and performance art, instead of ranging broadly through other examples of social and cultural performance as an American theorist might do,38 an aspect that
shows the divergence between her approach based on the aesthetic side of live art and the will to place German theater studies at the core of the Anglo-Saxon performance studies debate.39

If theater studies has been questioned at theoretical and methodological level by gender theories, cultural studies, postcolonial analyses, and communication models, there is a need for the discipline to take up a position with respect to its research aims and the procedures of other fields. The attempt to redefine itself must not be blamed as an old-fashioned urge to categorize knowledge and to preclude any historical and cultural development of the discipline.

Epilogue

From the time of its foundations in Germany, the main concern of theater studies has been to organize the tools and methods deriving from historical, semiotic, anthropological and other areas of scholarship. The multimedia theatrical phenomenon, in the way it works out in practice, and in terms of its determining factors, meanings and response is the actual object of enquiry, but the existence of so many theater concepts and borrowed tools makes the scholars’ path perilous. Even though theater as an overall reality can only be analyzed by privileging single perspectives – in terms of spatial art, expressive art, dramatic art, communicative art, performative art, representational art and so on – the essence of theater is left aside. In the preface to his new ‘theatrology’ in 1988, De Marinis warned theater experts that interdisciplinary eclecticism constantly endangers the efforts of theater scholars, forcing them to use concepts that are imprecise and foreign to the field in a somewhat confused fashion.40 Twenty-four years later, in 2012, Andreas Kotte concludes his reference book Theaterwissenschaft in a similar way. In the epilogue he asserts: ‘Creating new theater concepts is legitimate from a scientific point of view, but acknowledging many of them the same validity brings the charge of relativism’.41 At the present time, conferring scientific status on theater studies, as an autonomous Human Science, is still extremely problematic and the discipline unity is constantly threatened by its scholars’ uncertainty about descriptive research goals and methods. A fusion of theories and approaches could be reached through the claim of the peculiarity of theater studies: its analysis of theater as a performative artistic event. Only the clear, courageous definition of its subject matter and of its own investigative framework would ensure the survival of theater studies as an academic discipline.
Notes

2 Thus ‘the incorporation of intercultural and interdisciplinary perspectives on drama, music theatre, dance, puppet theatre and performance art’ (Christopher Balme, Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Studies [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008], xii).
3 For an emblematic example, see Erika Fischer-Lichte, Theaterwissenschaft (Tübingen, Basel: A. Franke Verlag, 2010), 248.
5 On the role that the ‚Gesellschaft der Freunde und Förderer des theaterwissenschaftlichen Instituts an der Universität Berlin’, the ‚Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte, E.V.’ and the ‚Vereinigung künstlerischer Bühnenvorstände, E.V.’ played for the new-born theater department in Berlin, see Bruno Satori-Neumann (ed.), Theaterwissenschaftliche Blätter. Fachorgan für die Wissenschaft, Kunst, Technik und Kultur des Theaters (Besanò-Verlagsgesellschaft m. b. H., Berlin, 15. März 1925 – Heft Nr. 1), 4. In Munich, consider the connection between ‚Neuer Verein’ and the topics of Kutscher’s seminars.
6 On the development of theater departments in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, see Helmar Klier, ‚Theaterwissenschaft und Universität’, in Klier (ed.), Theaterwissenschaft im deutschsprachigen Raum (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981), 327-343.
7 Satori-Neumann, Theaterwissenschaftliche Blätter, 5.
8 In the introduction to his Forschungen zur deutschen Theatergeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance (Berlin: Weidmann, 1914), Herrmann states clearly that the tools to investigate the materials connected to a particular form of theater and to re-create its whole structure are the ones used by historical and philological criticism.
9 See Stefan Corsen, Max Herrmann und die Anfänge der Theaterwissenschaft (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1998), for an insightful analysis of Max Herrmann’s approach to theater studies.
10 Max Herrmann, ‚Über die Aufgaben eines theaterwissenschaftlichen Institutes’ (transcription of Herrmann’s lecture held on June 27, 1920), Theaterwissenschaft im deutschsprachigen Raum (1981), 18. All translations in this article are my own, unless otherwise stated.
11 A quick look at the scientific publications from the so-called ‚Herrmann’s school’ should be enough to exclude any direct interest in contemporary theatrical forms or in cultural performances. See Satori-Neumann, Theaterwissenschaftliche Blätter (Zum 14. Mai 1925 – Heft Nr. 5), 72-84.
12 Artur Kutscher, Die Elemente des Theaters (Düsseldorf: Pflugschar Verlag, 1932), 8.
13 ‘The character of mime distinguishes any dramatic art from literature’, Ibid., 118.

‘The incompatibility of methods and the risk of confusing them are clear. By no means can theater studies be reduced to the field of German philology’, *Ibid.*, 198.

Carl Niessen developed this idea even further and regarded theater studies as a branch of cultural history.


See Corssen, *Max Herrmann*, 162.


De Marinis, *Capire il teatro*, 10.


In the essay ‘Selective Inattention’ (1976), Schechner drew upon Victor Turner’s model of the ‘social drama’ sketched in *Schism and Continuity*, 2nd ed. (New York: PAJ Publications, 1992). The two had also cooperated on a workshop with The Performance Group, exploring the same relationship.


It must be noticed here that the only Performance Studies International conference held in Europe was at Mainz University in March 2001. On that occasion the ‘Zentrum für Performance Studien’ in Germany was founded; the European-leading role of Germany in the field of performance studies has therefore been institutionalized.

De Marinis, Capire il teatro, 9.
