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The term *declamation* derives from the Latin *declamatio*, which is derived from the verb *declamare*, «composto di *clamare* ‘gridare’ e *de-* intensivo» as Giacomo Devoto’s *Dizionario Etimologico* informs us (Devoto 1968, p. 117). Thus, the word’s etymology points to speaking aloud or very loudly, implying a collective audience in a public environment.

However, mainly thanks to Marcus Fabius Quintilian’s work, the *Institutio Oratoria*, the term took on a meaning pertinent to oratory. For the author, this work had to lay the foundations of a sizeable pedagogical project intended for young people who intended to apply themselves to developing the art of speaking in public. Its pedagogical references are, of course, to Aristotle and, in particular, to Cicero’s *De Oratore*, of which the section dealing with the rhetoric of public speaking is explicitly mentioned: *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, *pronuntiatio sive actio*. Cicero speaks of how to pronounce or deliver the speech, without however resorting to the term *declamatio*; Quintilian however, does, and names a chapter of his treatise *De utilitate et ratione declamandi* (Quintilian, 2.10, p. 262). This is his definition of *declamation*: «[...] declamation, since it is the image of judicial processes and deliberative debates, must imitate the truth; and since it contains something demonstrative, it must take on a certain formal splendor. This is exactly what the actors of comedies, who do not use everyday speech, do, as using common speech would not be art. Nor do they stray too far from naturalness, because affectation would ruin the imitation of actual life. Instead, they embellish current language with the ornaments of the theatre» (Quintilian, 2.10, p. 267).

As can be seen, the term *declamation* has a plurality of meanings and pragmatic referents that make it polysemic: ranging from the forensic to the theatrical, the ambiguity derives from the multiplicity of contexts in which the word is employed. Quintilian himself was aware of this, stating that «the manner of declaiming (*pronuntiatio*) is generally called *actio*. However, the first sense seems to take its meaning from the voice, the second from gesture since Cicero refers to the *actio* as both “a kind of language” and “a kind of eloquence of the body”. Cicero himself assigns it two parts, which are also of the manner of declamation, that is, the voice and the gesture: hence one can use either appellation indifferently» (Quintilian, 11.3, p. 553). Quintilian thus connects the two different meanings into a single term, *declamatio* (here translated into Italian as «maniera di declamare»), which will continue to include both the vocal and gestural components of oratory over the following centuries.

Both Pietro Fanfani’s *Dizionario della lingua italiana* (1855) and the recent GRADIT identify the first use of the term with the meaning of «rhetorical exercise» in Iacopo da Cessole (14th century). The first use of the current meaning of the term, i.e. as a «way of declaiming», is attributed to the patriot and writer from Campania, Matteo Angelo Galdi in 1798. The term spread throughout Italy during the 18th century: the *Vocabolario della Crusca* also included it in its fourth edition (1729-1738), *albeit* in the sense of φωνασκία [*phonaskia*] («rhetorical exercise»); only in the 5th edition (1811-1923) did the term appear with the following meaning: «The act of declaiming; and more commonly used for the art, and the manner, of declaiming, or acting. Lat. Declamatio».

But the word *declamation* is also characterized by a further semantic ambiguity, this time of a connotative nature. The *Dizionario della lingua italiana* by Niccolò Tommaseo and Bernardo Bellini, lists, as its first meaning, the original meaning of *declamation*: «Azione, Abito, Artificio del declamare; e Cosa declamata. Facevasi dagli oratori per esercizio, ma quando l’arte andava scadendo. Proponevansi temi finti». As a second meaning, they indicate: «L’arte del recitare, ben detta dagli ant. *Azione*, ha preso quest’altro sciagurato titolo; e c’è de’ *Maestri di declamazione*. E veramente gli attori declamano perché gridano; e i cantanti declamano perché *Urlar li fa l’orchestra come cani*». On the other hand, even in TLIO the first meaning attributed to the verb *declamare* is «parlare o scrivere con enfasi eccessiva» («to speak or write with excessive emphasis»), the first documentation taken from the vulgarization of

Ovid's 14th century *Ars Amatoria*. Finally, in the GDLI (*Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*) the meaning of *declamation* is «il declamare; l'arte di declamare, il modo di declamare; recitazione misurata, ritmica, a voce sonora e modulata» («to declaim; the art of declaiming, the way of declaiming; measured, rhythmic, sonorous and modulated acting») and the first example is taken from that Galdi already quoted by Fanfani: «Che diremo della declamazione e dell'arte di rappresentare? Confesso ingenuamente che bisogna molto studiar questa parte integrante del teatro» («What are we to say about declamation and the art of representing? I confess naively that this integral part of the theatre must be studied a lot»).

In *A new English dictionary*, under the lemma *Declamation*, the definition is: «The action or art of declaiming; the repeating or uttering of a speech, etc. with studied intonation and gesture» (Murray 1897, p. 98). In French, as certified in the TLF, we read: «Exercice d'éloquence en présence d'un public sur des lieux communs, en usage dans les écoles de rhéteurs» («Exercise in eloquence in the presence of an audience in communal places, used in rhetoric schools») and «Par analogie Art de réciter devant un public un texte de manière expressive» («By analogy Art of reciting a text to the public in an expressive manner»), the latter definition is accompanied by a quotation taken from Madame de Staël dating back to 1785.

Because of the intensification of the debate surrounding the art of acting, the term *declamation*, in its theatrical meaning, had its widest diffusion in Europe in the 18th century. For Claude-Joseph Dorat, author of the treatise *La déclamation théâtrale*, the term includes all aspects of acting, both vocal and corporeal; there were close, sometimes osmotic, relationships between Italian and French theatre, as evidenced by the personality of Luigi Riccoboni, aka Lelio, author of the treatise *Dell'Arte rappresentativa. Capitoli sei*, a work written in verse form that preceded the developments of the subsequent theatrical treatise. These were the years in which new theoretical observations on theatre emerged: in France, two opposing theories, that of Remond de Saint-Albine, author of *Le comédien*, aimed at enhancing sensitivity as an interpretative key (the so-called “emotionalist” theory), and that of Denis Diderot – author of the *Paradoxe sur le comédien* (composed around 1770 but published in 1830), which argued that the actor should recreate emotion intellectually and convey it through posture and inflexions (the so-called “anti-emotionalist” theory).

In Italy, the historical and social nucleus at the origin of the production of manuals intended for acting was, according to the theory in the time, known as the “Jacobean theatre”: because of the important pedagogical function attributed to theatre, trapped as it was between the amateurism of the salons and the Commedia dell'Arte, one of the most frequent issues in the debates among intellectuals, in particular during the early years of Napoleonic domination, was the need to draw up a new statute for the theatre in order go beyond the fluidity it was subjected to. In the Cisalpine Republic, one of the most committed theorists to this need was Francesco Saverio Salvi from the south, who wrote a manual on declamation published posthumously by his nephew Alfonso in 1878. He had spent a lifetime working on it, and it was probably almost completed between 1796 and 1798 when he read it to Carlo Botta and Talma. A recurring theme in the documents and publications produced in the context of this debate is the reference to a pedagogical role (civil, moral and political) of the theatre, according to the experiences of revolutionary France; so much so that in 1797 a Commission for Public Education responsible performances and patriotic festivals was set up in the Cisalpine Republic. The final decades of the 18th century were also those in which the impulse to reform the public school, in line with the Enlightenment ideal of the dissemination of knowledge, was affirmed throughout the peninsula; this was a process that had already begun in previous decades, both as result of the spread of the ideals of the Enlightenment, and the removal of the Jesuits, who had monopolised the education in cities such as Parma, Modena, and Naples. A shared pedagogical approach merged the theatrical declamation manuals of the early 19th century with the school manuals produced in this period. This integration, in particular, took concrete form in language teaching, which occupied an essential part in the training of actors and speakers; while public schools were to train the new citizen linguistically, actors

had the task of outlining a model of orality that could also be reproduced in other areas of public life.

That the terms *to declaim*, and *declamation* were, by the first half of the nineteenth century, also part of Italian theatre in the is clear from the title of many treatises. Here are some examples: *Studio sull'arte della declamazione teatrale* of Francesco Righetti; *Discorso sull'arte di recitare e di declamare* of Enrico Franceschi; *Lezioni di declamazione e d'arte teatrale* of Antonio Morrocchesi; *Della declamazione italiana estesa anche alla parte che riguarda l'oratore* of Gaetano Suzzara; *Della declamazione* of Francesco Saverio Salfi. The authors of the treaties came from different linguistic and regional areas; they were not necessarily actors or team leaders: Franceschi was a lawyer, author of tragedies and part of the Accademia dei Filodrammatici in Milan; Salfi spent most of his life engaged in Italian patriotic affairs, being, among other things, Secretary of the provisional government of the Neapolitan Republic.

The presence of Antonio Morrocchesi, interpreter of Alfieri's works dearest to Alfieri himself, in this shortlist reveals that the intended recipients of the declamatory norms were the actors who recited the tragedies, which were consistently included in the repertoire of the Italian theatre companies. While the vitality and popularity of tragedy were exhausted only by the end of the century, its language, in a society in search of values and models such as Italy during the first decades of the 19th century, provided the public a high register for political, forensic, and ecclesiastical oratory, i.e. an Italian intended for public orality for the nation in finding its identity.

The treatises of the first half of the 19th century differed significantly in scope. However, referring more or less voluntarily to Cicero's lesson concerning the distinction between *pronuntiatio* and *actio*, these treatises dedicated their guidelines, in almost equal parts, to verbal and gestural language, which all the authors considered strictly connected and equally necessary for the success of a theatrical performance. In the treatise of Morrocchesi, for example, the Index contains several lessons relating to vocality: «Lezione della Voce», «Lezione dell'Articolazione», «Lezione della Pronunzia», «Lezione delle Pause», «Lezione dei Tuoni» etc., but also many others dedicated to gestures: «Lezione della Fisionomia», «Lezione della Scena muta», «Lezione dei Gestii», «Compostezza e passo», «Modo di venire, di stare e di partir dalla Scena» etc.; (Morrocchesi 1832, pp. 367-68); there are also forty lithographs illustrating an actor's miming in pronouncing certain lines. The authoritative antecedent which inspired Morrocchesi was Engel's *Ideen zu einer Mimik*, published in Italy in 1820 under the title *Lettere intorno alla mimica* in the translation of Giovanni Rasori and which also contained an extensive set of iconographs. Following the anti-emotionalist positions expressed by Lessing in the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, Engel established an analogy between the role of the actor and that of the poet, seeing both as interpreters rather than passive reproducers of nature. However, the problem that immediately arose was the lack of a glossary, a nomenclature to name and therefore codifying the wide variety of gestures: «Le denominazioni che abbiamo, valgono soltanto a significare, colpa la povertà del linguaggio, alcune classi più generali; ma le specie e le varietà abbisognano ancora d'un osservatore intendente che ne crei proprio dal nulla la nomenclatura» («because of the poverty of language the verbal labels we have are only valid to show some more general classes; but the species and varieties still need an observer intent on creating the nomenclature from scratch») (Engel 1820, p. 47). Engel's distinction between two major gestural categories, that of *counterfeit* or imitative gestures of ordinary gestures and that of *expressive* gestures with representative value of the moods interpreted on the stage, was to remain the starting point for subsequent treatises on theatrical gesture.

One example is Serafino Torelli's *Trattato dell'arte scenica* (1866) which also contained a conspicuous iconographic set and in which the author offered the experience of one who had a long-standing familiarity with theatrical scenes. Before this treatise, he had published an *Analisi generale della mimica* in 1843 in which he divided mimicry into three broad categories, «rappresentativa» («representative»), «contraffacente» («counterfeit») and «pantomimica» («pantomimic»); the first concerns tragedy, the other comedy, while the third pertains to dance. Precisely because of the extent and complexity of the material, the

author reiterates the need to establish a terminology of the art of gesturing in order to unequivocally define single gestures and facilitate their memorisation. Thus the project for a dictionary of gestures was launched. This project was to be developed in the later and more extensive work of Torelli himself and which was to give rise in the following decades to other treaties intended for the study of actors' gestures, the most famous being Alamanno Morelli's *Prontuario delle pose sceniche* (Morelli 1854).

Terminological discrepancies are also present in the parts of the treaties concerning indications related to verbal language, due, in part, to the fact that the grammars of the time were not concerned with standardising orality. The manuals neither dealt with grammatical or lexical problems, since acting always starts from a pre-existing written text followed by recited speech; it is the suprasegmental aspect of theatrical orality that becomes the subject of the treaties and, in particular, the rules for regulating the actor's voice, and phenomena and problems dealing with accent and intonational aspects relating to the statement of the text.

Inspired by phonatory physiology, Lorenzo Camilli introduced the definition of the voice in his *Istituzioni sulla rappresentativa* from a technical perspective. He described it as «un suono prodotto dalle vibrazioni che riceve l'aria, mercè gli organi vocali, uscendo dal polmone alla laringe» («a sound produced by vibrations that receive air through the vocal organs, leaving the lung to the larynx»); he precisely defines the voice's parameters in «qualità (metallo): tono grave (di petto), tono acuto (di testa)» e «quantità (volume): grado alto, medio, basso» («quality [metal]: low pitch [chest], high pitch [head]» and «quantity [volume]: high, medium, low grade») (Camilli 1835, I, pp. 67-71). Morrocchesi sets aside ample space for discussion for this entry. After examining the best known scientific theories of the time concerning the formation of the human voice, he presents his thoughts (which were already close to linguistic considerations) on the subject: «[...] la voce generalmente parlando è quel suono che si forma nella gola e nella bocca per un meccanismo d'istromenti propri a produrla; le voci poi articolate sono quelle, che essendo riunite insieme formano come un piccolo sistema di suoni: tali sono le voci, che esprimono le lettere alfabetiche, di cui molte unite insieme formano le parole» («[...] generally the voice is that sound that is formed in the throat and mouth by a mechanism of instruments needed to produce it; voices thus articulated are those which, being joined, form like a small system of sounds: such are the voices, which express the alphabetic letters, of which many united form the words»). (Morrocchesi 1832, p. 34).

The treatment of stress, covering syllable, sentence, and so-called emphatic stress, covers phenomena modern linguistics has kept distinct. Emanuele Bidera writes: «Ogni parola ha il suo accento, poichè ogni parola è composta di articolazioni, cioè, è un'azione di cui questo accento forma il punto di appoggio; egli, secondo la legge convenzionale delle parole, è situato ora nella prima vocale con cui incomincia la parola, or dopo la seconda o terza sillaba; ma sempre sulla vocale, egli quasi forma l'ipomocleo della leva di primo, secondo e terzo genere» («Each word has its stress since each word is composed of articulations, that is, it is an action of which this stress forms the point of support; according to the conventional law of words, it is now in the first vowel with which the word begins, or after the second or third syllable; but always on the vowel, it almost forms the hypomocleus of the lever of the first, second and third genus») (Bidera 1828, I, p. 20). Finally, some authors also refer to local and regional stress, a problem obviously felt at the time, especially on stage, because of the different geographical origins of the actors and the linguistic diversity of the different audiences belonging to the various Italian regions within which their companies travelled. Gaetano Suzzara writes: «[...] avvisiamo lo studente di non affettare la buona pronuncia ed il buon accento, che in tanti nostri provinciali paesi con altrettanta corrotta varietà si fanno ascoltare. Egli dovrà procurare di attenersi a quella dolce favella, che in alcune parti della Toscana così piacevolmente si ode, in ispecialità poi quando vi si unisce un po' di accento romano» («[...] we advise the student not to slice up good pronunciation and good stress, similar to the much corrupted varieties heard in many of our provincial villages. The student will have to try to stick to that sweet pronunciation, which in some parts of

Tuscany can be heard so pleasantly, especially when a little Roman accent is added to it» (Suzzara 1844, p. 44).

The melodic structure of language is one theme to which the examined treatises often return and which they dedicate great importance to. Here too, significant terminological anarchy reigned: to indicate phenomena related to the melodic structure, terms taken from musical and rhetorical lexicons («tuono», «modulazione», «enfasi» [«thunder», «modulation», «emphasis»]) were generally used.

There were, above all, two authors – Emanuele Bidera and Lorenzo Camilli – who focused on the relationship between intonation and the syntactic-grammatical structure of sentences. Bidera lists the various parts of the sentence and the phrase, showing, for example, how the tone («tuono») of the principal proposition should be higher, that of the incidental («incidente») lower, and that of the subordinate «finisca sempre con una sospensione di voce, per far conoscere che il periodo non è terminato» («always ends with a suspension of voice, to let people know that the period has not ended») (Bidera 1828, I, p. 108). Camilli refers to intonation with the term «modulation» and defines it as: «Consiste nell'inflessione della voce, e nel suo vario colorito, mercé le variazioni del suono, del tuono, e degl'intervalli, che usiamo parlando naturalmente» («It consists in the voice's inflection, and in its various 'hues', through the variations of sound, tone, and intervals which we use when speaking naturally») (Camilli 1835, I, p. 98). Also this author distinguishes between main, subordinate and incident propositions, affirming the need to raise or lower the voice by one tone; he defines the descending intonation as «cadence», «siccome comunemente suol farsi nel termine di ogn'intera proposizione, e nel finir di parlare» («as it is commonly done in the term of each whole proposition, and in finishing speaking»); suspensive intonation as «suspension», «come naturalmente fassi allorché favellando non sia terminata la concepita proposizione» («as naturally I did when the conceived proposition did not end») (Camilli 1835, I, pp. 105-6).

According to the treatises' authors, pauses also played a fundamental role in the melodic scanning of what is said. According to Bidera «ogni azione fisica richiedendo un riposo breve o lungo, una pausa tra questa e l'azione che le succede, così le pause ed i riposi sono indispensabili a quest'arte, e diventano mezzi di *sintassi*» («every physical action requiring a short or long rest, a pause between it and the action that follows to it, so breaks and rests are indispensable to this art, and become a means of syntax») (Bidera 1828, I, p. 113). However, the writer notes how conventional punctuation is inadequate to provide the actor with helpful information for declamation and expresses hopes for use of a system of graphic notations, prefiguring prosodic punctuation, over and above that of syntactic notations.

Then there are treaties outlining the particular type of relationship between punctuation and oral realisation to define and stabilise what we would today define as the relationship between intonation and manner of utterance. Gaetano Bazzi reviewed the various punctuation marks and suggested oral execution methods, making each of them correspond to pauses of different durations. Regarding the question mark, he distinguished various types: «I punti interrogativi sono di varie sorte, e denotano ciò che dev'essere pronunziato con voce più alta, eccettuati i casi d'un mistero, ne' quali la voce sarà di un tono cauto bensì, ma un poco più elevato» («Question marks are of various kinds, and indicate that which must be pronounced in a higher voice, except in cases of a mystery, in which case the voice will be of a cautious tone on, but a little higher»). He also distinguished various types of question, concluding: «Questi punti interrogativi hanno un suono rispettivo a ciascuno, familiare per pratica al buon recitante; ma confuso ed abusato dall'accademico» («These question marks have a respective sound to each, familiar in practice to the good reciter; but confused and abused by the academician») (Bazzi 1845, pp. 51-54).

Ultimately, declamation aims to persuade and involve the spectator by conveying the linguistic act's sense towards a perlocution effect. In theatrical theories, this was called the *mozione degli affetti* – to involve emotionally, trigger vivid feelings. The *mozione degli affetti* concerned all the treaties' recipients, not only actors but orators too, whether lay or ecclesiastical. In the vast area covered by the *mozione degli affetti*, intonation's primary

function is to express the speaker's moods. The norms dictated by the writers of the manuals always tended, necessarily, to connect orality with mimicry and gestures: «[...] il linguaggio di azione (*actio*) precede sempre il linguaggio parlato, o per meglio dire l'accompagna; e il linguaggio parlato serba quei tuoni di cui è capace l'organo vocale contratto già per l'espressione mimica» («[...] the language of action (*actio*) always precedes that of spoken language, or, better, accompanies it; and the spoken language stores those thunder of which the vocal organ is capable and for which it is already contracted for mimic expression») (Bidera 1828, II, p. 29). And Suzzara maintains that «ben esprimere» means «manifestare le proprie sensazioni in sulla scena con ogni possibile chiarezza ed energia. Per chiarezza abbisogna tutto ciò che debbesi opportunamente prestare dalla voce, dalla pronuncia e dal buon ritmo declamatorio; e per l'energia, qualunque sorte di gesticolazione assieme collo stesso declamatore» («manifesting one's feelings on the scene with all clarity and energy. For clarity, it needs everything that should be suitably provided by the voice, pronunciation and good declamatory rhythm; and for energy, any gesticulation accompanying the declamator») (Suzzara 1844, p. 92).

The oral language discipline even attempted a graphic representation representing the vocal varieties for the actor. In one of his *Lezioni*, Antonio Morrocchesi, recalling a musical score, created a series of graphic signs that marked the melodic line to be inserted into the dramatic text. The graphic signs corresponded to indications marking correct declamation: il Sostegno («the Support») «I sostegni di ogni recitazione o lettura, tengono il luogo delle virgole, ma non consunano egualmente» («The supports of every recitation or reading, keep the place of the commas, but do not equally resonate»); gli Interrogativi falsi («false Questions») «[...] purchè se ne faccia uso con aggiustatezza e moderazione, danno grazia, e riposo inoltre al recitante, ed avendo un suono pressoché eguale all' interrogativo accettato, sensibilmente distinguonsi nella recitazione dall'enfasi, dal sostegno, e dall'appoggiatura forte coll'intonazione di gola [...]» («[...] provided they are used appropriately and with and moderation, convey grace, and pause to the reciter as well, and, having a sound almost equal to the accepted question, appreciably distinguishing themselves in the recitation from emphasis, support, and strong support with throat intonation [...]»); le Linee superiori e le Linee inferiori («the upper lines and the lower lines») «Delle linee superiori ce ne serviamo per sovrapporre, con parsimonia però, a quelle parole che esprimono le cose più terribili delle umane vicende; e delle linee inferiori, per contrassegnare quei sentimenti che vanno pronunziati senza alcun riposo, o variazione di tuono» («We use the upper lines to overlap, but sparingly, with those words that express the most terrible things of human affairs; and of the lower lines, to mark those feelings which must be pronounced without any rest, or tone variation»); l'Appoggiatura forte («the Strong support») «L'appoggiatura forte precede di poco costantemente il punto d'ogni membro del periodo, e perciò altrimenti si chiama virgola finale» («Constant strong support slightly precedes the point of each member of the period, and is therefore is otherwise called the final comma») (Morrocchesi 1832, p. 71).

Since there was no shared lexicon of theatrical declamation, the great Alfierian interpreter tried to create a visual notation system intended for the actor.

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