DIDASCALIA, STAGE DIRECTIONS

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Ancient Theatre.

For ancient theatre, the term *didascalia* [διδασκαλία] is an expression of technical language: it can indicate the staging of a drama (*e. g.* in *IG* I^3 969 = *SEG* 23.102: Εὐριπίδης ἐδίδασκε, or in the *hypothesis* to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, Mette 1977, p. 153, fr. 4: ἐδιδάχθη τὸ δρᾶμα) and, if in the plural (*didascaliai* [διδασκαλίαι]), the catalogues of dramatic and choral performances in chronological order. Stage instructions, which in modern theatre provide indications regarding the staging and appear alongside the texts, are rare for tragedy and when they are present (*parepigraphai*) they are doubtful (Taplin 1977, pp. 121-32; Di Benedetto-Medda 2002, pp. 7 e 193-98).

Before becoming an expression proper to the technical theatrical language, the term *didascalia*, like the other derivatives of the verb *didaskein* [διδάσκειν], belongs to the sphere of teaching and instructing. For example, in Pindar (*Pythian*, 4.102) it is found with this meaning. Here Jason states that he will remain faithful to the teaching of the centaur Chiron, and then in the *Cyropaedia* (Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 8.7.24), in relation to the past as the best source of instruction. Thus, the nominal form *didaskalos* [διδάσκαλος] defines the teacher, in the extended sense the one who teaches or, with a more specific meaning, also the one who teaches a *techne*.

Why the term *didascalia* took on a specific meaning in the theatrical sphere from a more generic notion of teaching/instruction, is uncertain. One reason could be found in the paideutic function performed by dramaturgical poetry, especially Attic poetry, towards the audience: the poet as *didaskalos* would have appeared in the role of moral and civic educator; consequently, the contents of his works would have had a similar purpose. However, the most probable explanation is that the verb was originally used in the sense of "coaching", "instructing" the chorus: the chorus was, in fact, of fundamental importance in ancient drama, and it was the *didaskalos*, initially coinciding with the poet himself, who instructed it (Demosthenes, *Against Meidias*, 58; Aristophanes, *Acharnians*, v. 628; *Peace*, vv. 737-38). In this sense, *didaskalos* referred not only to drama but also to other types of performance in which the chorus was present, such as the dithyramb; since dithyrambs, tragedies, comedies, and satirical dramas implied the instruction of a chorus and its performance, the same term came to encompass all the dramas that each poet presented in public competitions.

The official records of these performances, compiled at the instigation of the archons organising the festivals, must have been kept in the city archives (Pickard-Cambridge 1968, p. 70; Sickinger 1999, pp. 41-47) and were most probably the main source for the epigraphic inscriptions that have survived. Aristotle composed a work entitled Διδασκαλίαι of which only a few fragments are preserved (Gigon 1987, pp. 548-58, no. 137, frr. 415-62), in a single book (Diogenes Laërtius, 5.26), in which historical information about stage performances and dithyrambs was collected (Harpocration, s.v. Διδασκαλία; schol. ad Aristoph. *Aves*, 1379). The Stagirite also wrote the Νῖκαι Διονυσιακαὶ ἀστικαὶ καὶ Ληναϊκαί [*Victories at the City Dionysia and the Lenaea*] (Diogenes Laërtius 5.26; Gigon 1987, pp. 547-48, no. 135; see also Koerte 1906, pp. 391-98) and the Περὶ τραγωδιῶν [*On the Tragedies*] (Gigon 1987, p. 548, no. 136). It seems certain that he had to draw on state archives to gather the materials, since their editing could not have been done without extensive research.

With this meaning, the plural *didascaliai* is used to designate the chronological lists, inscribed on stone, of both choral and dramatic performances (particularly the latter) that took place in Athens each year on the occasion of the City Dionysia and the Lenaea. Pickard Cambridge thought the title of the Aristotelian writing derived from the official

terminology of the Dionysia (Pickard Cambridge 1968, p. 71). These lists provide essential support for the definition of both organisational dynamics and Attic theatrical practice, offering insight into the history of dramatic competitions and the relative chronology of poets and actors from the early 5th century to the 2nd century BC.

The earliest is *IG* II^2 2318 (Millis - Olson 2012, pp. 5-58), the so-called *Fasti*, which lists the yearly winners in the choral and dramatic performances at the City Dionysia: the tribes, in the case of the dithyrambic competitions, the poets together with the *choregoi* (i.e., those who financed a chorus at their own expense, in the case of the dramatic contests). The first mention concerns the year 473-472 BC and goes up to 347 BC and beyond. It comprises thirteen white marble fragments, many of them from the Acropolis area of Athens, perhaps to be connected with an initiative of Lycurgus or his son Habron (Tracy 2015, p. 559).

Properly known as *Didascaliai/Didascaliae* are the fragments, *IG* II^2 2319-2323a, *SEG* 26.203 (= Agora I 7151, Camp 1971, pp. 302-7, no. 8), found on the southern slopes of the Acropolis in Athens, near the theatre of Dionysus; fragment *IG* II^2 2319 is lost, but is known thanks to the copy made by Michel Fourmont. These fragments were part of a longer inscription in which the dramas staged at the City Dionysia and the Lenaea were recorded, including revivals of the old dramas, a practice that seems to have become common from the time of Theodotus' archontate (386 BC) for tragedy (*IG* II^2 2318, VIII, lines 201-3), and Theophrastus' archontate (339 BC) for comedy (*IG* II^2 2318, XII, lines 316-18). The plays are catalogued year by year; each year is introduced by the name of the eponymous archon, the magistrate who gave the year its name. Although they are often published as separate inscriptions according to their content (tragedies, *IG* II^2 2320, comedies, *IG* II^2 2323a, at the City Dionysia; comedies, *IG* II^2 2319 I, 2321, tragedies, *IG* II^2 2319 II, Agora I 7151 at the Lenaea), they form a homogeneous whole (Tracy 2015, pp. 560-66), to which later fragments are added, constituting a more recent continuation (*IG* II^2 2323 and 2322).

For the City's Dionysia, performances of old non-competing tragedies and comedies precede dramas by contemporary authors. Next to the drama is the name of the author and the name of the leading actor. Neither the *choregos* nor the *agonothetes,* i.e. an elected magistrate charged with bearing the expense of the competition, who replaced the former from the end of the 4th century BC, appear. The years in which no contests took place are cited with the formula ἐπὶ τοῦ δεῖνα οὐκ ἐγένετο (*epì toû deîna ouk egéneto*) (Millis - Olson 2012, p. 59).

Even if their precariousness does not allow for a definitive position, one should recall the fragments *SEG* 26.208 (Meritt 1938, pp. 116-18, nr. 22 = Agora I 2972 + I 982), in grey marble, which only report competitions between actors, perhaps in relation to a new competition between ancient dramas (Summa 2008, pp. 479-96) or in reference to annual competitive events «with the winner in each genre allowed to put on the play he had chosen at the Dionysia» (Millis - Olson 2012, pp. 123-24; Tracy 2015, pp. 576-77), and *IG* II^2 2324, which, although inscribed on a marble similar to that of the *Didascaliae*, refers only to actors in the surviving parts.

The so-called *Victors Lists* (*IG* II^2 2325 A-H), on the other hand, lists the names of the actors and poets in chronological order, distinguishing by dramatic genre and according to festivals, City Dionysia and Lenaea, and giving for each the number of victories achieved. The inscription, on white marble, found on the southern slopes of the Acropolis, must have been on the inside of an architrave. Reisch's hypothesis (Reisch 1907, pp. 289-315) to consider the so-called *Didascaliae* and the *Victor Lists* as part of a single hexagonal building seems to be contradicted by structural considerations (Millis - Olson 2012, pp. 137-38).

However, the relationship between the *Inscriptiones Graecae* II^2 2318-25 and Aristotelian writings is unclear; many of the inscriptions date from the period after the philosopher's death in 322 BC and it cannot be excluded that for some of these, the most recent, compilers may have used the philosopher's texts (Tracy 2015, p. 558). The Aristotelian treatise constituted a valuable source of information for later generations of Alexandrian

scholars who dealt with dramas and festivals, for the later scholars of the dramas, and for the *hypotheseis*, short summaries of the plot or contents of a work, in this case theatre, or scholarly introductions to it (Dubischar 2015, pp. 573-81; for the papyrus *hypotheseis* of tragedies and comedies, Rossum-Steenbeek 1998, pp. 1-52); after Aristotle, Caristius of Pergamum, active in the second half of the 2nd century BC, wrote a book entitled Περί διδασκαλιῶν (Athenaeus, *The Sophists at Dinner*, 6.235e; *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, IV, p. 359, 17, online version, https://www.dfhg-project.org/DFHG/index.php?volume=Volumen%20quartum#urn:lofts:fhg.4.carystius_pergamenus). In all likelihood, Aristotelian writings were also the basis for two important catalogues, *Lists of those who distinguished themselves in all branches of learning and their writings*, for the information about dramatic contests, and *Table and register of playwrights, arranged chronologically from the beginning*, of which Callimachus was author or editor (Pfeiffer 1949, pp. 344-50, frr. 429-56; Blum 1991, pp. 124-42).

Information on performances at the rural Dionysia is rarer (e.g., for Piraeus, *IG* II^2 1496; for Eleusis, *IG* II^2 1186 and *IG* II^2 3100; for Ikarion, *IG* II^2 1178 and *IG* II^2 3099, Zimmermann 1997, col. 539). Some indications of dramatic and choral competitions can also be deduced from the inscriptions engraved in honour of the victorious *choregoi*, although not exactly *didascaliae*.

Although lacking the chronological order that marks Athenian inscriptions, fragments of *didaskaliai* have also survived outside of Athens: an example is the catalogue of winners in the dramatic agonies at the *Romaia*, at Magnesia on the Maeander, partly datable to the second half of the 2nd century BC and the beginning of the 1st century BC (*Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*^{3} 1079). Generally known as *The Roman Fragments* are the parts of an inscription (*IG* XIV 1097, 1098, 1098A = *IGUR* 216, 215 and 218), originally placed, perhaps, in the area of the Campus Martius (Moretti 1968, p. 184; Ghiron-Bistagne 1976, p. 30, footnote 2), in which the names of comic poets were listed in order of appearance, regardless of party or classification.

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[ALEXIA LATINI]

Modern Theatre.

In the world of theatre, the term 'Stage directions' refer to everything external to the dialogical or monological core of the text, *i.e.*, outside the material intended for acting and considered as the structural center of the theatrical work. As 'accessory', in a theatrical text, the stage directions today stand out graphically from the rest, thanks to the different font, different locations on the page, or other graphic devices and editorial conventions that have developed over several years.
«Dalancour Mio zio è solo. Se volesse ascoltarmi... (*a parte*, *ed estremamente confuso*)».
This example, from Carlo Goldoni's work of 1771, *Il burbero benefico*: I, 10, illustrates the secondary nature of stage directions concerning the recited text. It is highlighted by the separate emblematic wording *a parte*, used to indicate lines the actor does not address to the other actors, but with whom he involves the audience in his thoughts or intentions. In this sense, stage directions are both text and context, born in the written dimension but living in concrete reality, beyond the time and space of the staging itself.

Etymology of the term and occurrences in lexicography.
The origin of the word *didascalia* can be traced back to classical Greece and specifically to διδασκαλία. The first meaning given in the Rocci dictionary and the *GI* is 'instruction'; it has many uses and meanings in Greek ('proof', 'catalog of representations', 'drama'), all attributable to the verb διδάσκω, which means 'to teach', but also 'to represent', 'to stage', in Plato (*Protagoras*, 327d) and Aristophanes (*Frogs*, 1026). The noun διδάσκαλος means 'teacher' but also 'producer', a meaning that lexicographic sources attribute to an example taken from the Aristophanic comedy *Birds* (912): Οὔκ, ἀλλὰ πάντες ἐσμὲν οἱ διδάσκαλοι / Μουσάων θεράποντες ὀτρηροί, | κατὰ τὸν Ὅμηρον, [POET:] "No, but the fact is all we poets are the assiduous slaves of the Muses, according to Homer" (transl. E. O'Neill). Commenting on οἱ διδάσκαλοι in this passage Del Corno (1987, p. 254) observes that διδάσκαλος is a person who trains a choir in the performance of a dithyramb or a drama. However, since this task was mostly carried out by the poet himself, here it is synonymous with *poet*. It is worth noting the absence of the term in the Latin world. In fact *IL* confirms two entries tracing back to the Greek διδασκαλικός: the borrowed Greek term absorbed by the first declension *didascalice* ('the didactic genre') and the related adjective *didascalicus* ('didascalico'), both traced back respectively to the grammarian Diomedes and the Latin poet D. Magnus Ausonius, both active in the 4th cent. AD. It is difficult, based on these data, to establish whether an entry corresponding to the Italian *didascalia* existed in the Latin

world, assuming that the playwrights made use of similar textual or paratextual forms, but, in this sense, and starting from the *didascalia* entry in the Italian-Latin part of the dictionary of *IL,* some results are obtained: the first consideration given is *didascalia-ae* (grecism, technical term), followed by a paraphrasis corresponding to the meaning analyzed here, *ad docendam fabulam adnotationes* ('warnings of the author for the scene'). A verification in the Dizionario del Badellino of the Italian entry *didascalia*, suggests the Latin translation *scaenica institutio*, while for the summary (*i.e.* the introduction of acts or scenes), the term *periocha* is reported, dating back to the Greek of Ausonius. The *didascalia-ae* is lemmatized as an entry into the *TLL*, where it is generically defined as *index dramatis*, with reference to Plautus and Terentius and without further investigation; it would, therefore, seem that the meaning of term *didascalia* investigated here only entered late Latin, with translations from Greek, and that it became institutionalized in an even later period, that is when, after the long period of the decline of Latinity, theatre began its new chapter in the medieval phase.
The definition given in the *ES* (pp. 654-62) for the entry *didascalia* is fundamental in this regard: «in theatre practice, it is any indication the author or others make to the text of a drama to indicate the manner and procedure of its setting and scenic action to the interpreters».
It is defined by Battaglia in the *GDLI* as 'indication given by author or screenwriter', with reference to Carducci of the *Prose giovanili* (1851-1860); the *DELI* cites the academic from Crusca, Anton Maria Salvini, who, in 1728, defined *didascalia* as an 'indication added to the text of a play' and the same chronological reference is found in *GRADIT*. Going back in time, at least on a conceptual level, one can refer to Aristotle's *Poetics*, the undisputed main treatise on dramatic art and, in particular, on tragedy, accepting the suggestion of the *GI* that cites the expression ἄνευ διδασκαλίας (*Poet.* 1456 b 5) under the entry διδασκαλία and translates it as 'without clarification': this is in the passage dealing with *thought* and *elocution*, in which Aristotle alludes to the fact that the actor, through his actions, must know how to manifest feelings with no training, while «some effects must be clear without explanation, whereas others are produced in the speeches by the speaker and are because of the speeches» (ibid.) Ludovico Castelvetro translated the Aristotelian text in 1570 and reworked the passage in question with «senza pruova porta per parole e in forma di insegnamento» thus referring to those elements that must be revealed in the "favola", unlike those that are revealed in the "sentenzia" by those who speak «in forma di pruova o insegnamento» (Castelvetro 1978).

Characteristics of the dramaturgical stage directions.
Theatrical stage directions intended as portions of text external to the actual dramatic content (the recited text) seem to originate from the practice of transcribing dramaturgical works to preserve mostly technical information necessary for reuse in productions of the works themselves. Only over time, thanks to the playwright's awareness of the importance and literary value of his work, was it felt necessary to accurately keep, and, with time, improve the stage directions in the texts.
From a textual point of view, a drama comprises two essential parts, the basic text, which is the recited part, made up of monologues or dialogues, of everything that is spectacularized and staged, and the auxiliary text, the stage directions, which participate in the creation of the dramatic action, like a microcosm to which the voice of the characters adds nothing and which cannot in any case (or almost) be verbally revealed to the spectators (Gegìc 2008, p. 25). Stage directions can be implicit, as evidenced by Pfister 1991, pp. 15-16 (*implicit stage-directions in the primary text*): «the performative nature of dramatic speech ensures that the dramatic situation is constituted in the speech-act, and this then sends out several implicit signals to the audience that help to make the dramatic situation more concrete»; this is the specific case of the Greek classics, in which the scenic indications are not expressed graphically and structurally in the body of the text, but can be seen as indications incorporated in the verses (Gegìc 2008, p. 37), formulas that made details of the scene or characters explicit through the acting itself.

The contents of the stage directions relate to everything that must not be communicated with the dramatic performance itself: non-verbal material that concerns the paralinguistic sphere, the spatial, temporal context, gestures, facial and bodily mimicry. These contents will be variously evoked by the reader of the dramatic text and staged by directors and performers, based on choices to faithfully respect the indications of the stage directions, or significantly deviate from them.
Stage directions belong to the dramatic context or the context of the theatrical show (Gegìc 2008, p. 81). These are indications «written for the actor», «for the optical-acoustic context», «for the preparation of the show» (Pfister 1991, p. 15); these indications become one with the primary text at the moment of staging, when they reach the public, thus determining effects such as suspense and catharsis which have been widely discussed in semiotic treatises.
From a technical point of view (therefore on a pragmatic level), playwrights distinguish between open and closed stage directions: the first is a suggestion prepared in the script, which, while giving some indication regarding the interpretation or setting-up of the performance, nevertheless allows various interpretations; the second is typical of «precisely directed texts» (Gegìc 2008, pp. 48-49) and demands total respect for the indications provided. Typical of the first type is the simultaneity of verbal and non-verbal codes, so the indication intervenes only to qualify the tone and attitude to be linked to the recited lines. An example from Goldoni's work of 1763 *Il ventaglio*, II, 4:
«Barone: Sapete voi bene chi sono?
Conte: Oh collega amatissimo... (*con premura*)»
This stage direction can be said to be "open" in so far as it does not indicate actions but intervenes in the way in which the line is delivered, underlining the character's reverent attitude, which is already evident from the context and words.
On the contrary, the closed stage directions contain indications on the character to whom the communication is addressed, on the actions that the interpreter must do by pronouncing it, etc. Here is an example taken from another 1752 comedy by Goldoni *La locandiera*, I, 13:
«Cavaliere: Bisogna che ne provveda. Se vi degnate di questa... (*Al Marchese*)
Marchese: (*prende la cioccolata*, *e si mette a berla senza complimenti*, *seguitando poi a discorrere e bere*, *come segue*): Questo mio fattore, come io vi diceva... (*Beve*)».

Types of stage directions.
The auxiliary text can be traced back today to fairly standardized categories, differently used by the various authors according to their compositional choices. Generally, according to the proposal of Mingioni 2013, we can distinguish:
dramatis personae, 'people of drama', a form of introductory stage direction that presents and lists all the characters of the play;
indications of the different parts of the drama (prologue and the like), the beginning of the act (single or multiple), as well as the individual scenes;
introductory stage directions for acts and scenes, with indications regarding the entry or exit of characters (depending on their formulation, these contextualize the setting and atmosphere of the dramatic moment at various levels);
stage directions interspersed with the recited text, distinguished by different spellings or by appropriate diacritical signals (the so-called *aside* and the word *exit* are also part of the internal indications, to signal thoughts expressed aloud and scene exits).
Stage directions in the recited text itself. From a textual and pragmatic point of view are more interesting. Given their ability to influence the scenic representation, these indications also determine its outcome. For this typology further distinctions can be made between:
'metalinguistic' stage directions, which indicate the way to pronounce a joke (*with care*, *kindly*, etc.);
'proxemic' stage directions, which perform a deictic function, indicating the person being addressed by a character (*Al Marquis*, in the Goldonian *La Locandiera*);

'extralinguistic' stage directions, which will shed light on environmental aspects or abstract details (Felice Romani, booklet of *Norma* by Bellini, I, 3: *La luna splende in tutta la sua luce*);
'referential' stage directions, which specify specific objects or concrete data:
Il tavolino a cui stanno seduti i due che giuocano è vicino al proscenio, mentre invece il camino in fondo alla scena. Olivero è presso il camino. (Giuseppe Giacosa, *Una partita a scacchi*);
'narrative' stage directions, wide-ranging, which on occasion completely cancel the essence of a written indication for representation:
Nell'aia, sull'imbrunire. A destra la capanna dei mietitori, a sinistra una gran bica; mucchi di covoni e di attrezzi rurali sparsi qua e là. In fondo l'ampia distesa della pianura carica di messe, già velata dalla sera, e il corso del fiume, tra i giunchi e le canne palustri. Si odono passare in lontananza delle voci, delle canzoni stracche; il tintinnio dei campanacci delle mandrie che scendono ad abbeverare, e di tanto in tanto l'uggiolare dei cani, sparsi per la campagna, sulla quale scorrono delle folate di scirocco, con un fruscio largo di biade mature. Negli intervalli di silenzio sembra sorgere e diffondersi il mormorio delle acque e il trillare dei grilli, incessante. La luna incomincia a levarsi, accesa – sbiancandosi man mano, in un alone afoso (Giovanni Verga, *La lupa*).
The maximum extent of interference between the auxiliary and basic text occurs when stage direction goes beyond its accessory dimension and, with significant effects, also fulfills the function of the primary text. This can be found in a certain type of theatre, which, as evidenced by Segre 1974: 253, focuses on the referential function transcending the poetic one. The most famous case is Samuel Beckett's *Acte sans paroles I*, in which, given the absence of speech, the language of gesture *is* the protagonist of staging based solely and necessarily, on stage direction:
Coup de sifflet en haut. Il ne bouge pas. La carafe descend encore, se balance autour de son visage. Il ne bouge pas. La carafe remonte et disparaît dans les cintres. La branche de l'arbre se relève, les palmes se rouvrent, l'ombre revient. Coup de sifflet en haut. Il ne bouge pas. L'arbre remonte et disparait dans les cintres. Il regarde ses mains. Rideau. (*Acte sans Parole* I, 1957).

History of the theatrical stage direction.
With the birth of vernacular languages, stage direction appeared in the lauds, a specific medieval text written to spread Christian doctrine among the less educated sections of the population. These were produced by the plebeian class in contrast to ecclesiastical hymns and were characterized by less solemn tones, lively rhythms and themes, distant from the high spheres of the Church whose corruption they meant to denounce. Studied, among others, by D'Ancona 1891 and De Bartholomaeis 1942, the lauds originated in the area of Perugia with the brotherhood of the *Disciplinati di Gesù Cristo* (Monaci 1872), established in 1258 by the hermit Ranieri Fasani. From there the genre successfully spread throughout the rest of the territory precisely because it contained a mixture of both basic and auxiliary texts, initially mostly introductory stage directions required to contextualize the time and space of the narrative; in Florence, the genre of *lauds* was perfected and transformed in the mid-fifteenth century into sacred representations, which were derived from primitive dramatic performance and subsequently expanded and enhanced by contributions from important artists and authors from the literary culture who got involved with it (D'Ancona 1891, II, p. 217). Thus, from collective and anonymous work, there was a move to individual work (De Bartholomaeis 1942, II, p. 231) and high-ranking names (among them are Feo Belcari, Lorenzo de 'Medici, Antonio, and Bernardo Pucci). From Belcari's *Abramo e Isacco*, composed in 1440 (taken from the De Bartholomaeis 1942 edition):
Abram, alzando gli occhi al cielo, dice questa stanza e al quinto verso benedice Isaac, e ai dua ultimi versi piglia colla man sinistra Isaac per li capelli, e nella man destra tiene il coltello e dice.
This genre enjoyed some popularity during the Renaissance, even outside the Florentine area, but wound up as merely external spectacle with increasingly repetitive and empty contents (Lunari 2007, p. 175). The starting point for a renewal of structure, subject matter, and style was offered by the classical texts, which were rediscovered with the onset of humanism. This separation from religious themes and purposes marked the birth of modern theatre. The discovery of the Plautus' comedies in 1429 and Aelius Donatus's comments to

Terentius in 1433 meant an about-turn in the natural evolution of what drama had been until then. Introducing Aristotelian dogmas inaugurated the comedic genre based on personal exchanges, mockery, and equivocations, and which was to experience consolidation and further renewal during the Renaissance. On a textual level, the works conceived during the Renaissance period do not dedicate too much space for stage directions. In fact, this auxiliary element is set aside in favor of focusing on the character and expressive register of the actors to whom an increasingly central role is attributed. In Niccolò Machiavelli's *Mandragola*, a comedy that can be dated to 1518, the dialogic fabric flows with no stage direction interruptions which, at the opening of acts and scenes and outside the basic text itself, are limited to *dramatis personae*, providing no further indications. However, implicit stage directions came back into usage, and all the technical-pragmatic indications were transferred into the dialogical form and transformed into verbal material to facilitate the understanding of the dramatic dynamic:

«Nicia: Or sia, al nome dell'Agnol santo! Andiamo. Ma dove sta egli?

Ligurio: Sta in su questa piazza, in quell'uscio che voi vedete al dirimpetto a noi». (II, 1)

The recited dialogue provides a spatial indication, thereby satisfying not only the information requested by the character necessary for the plot, but also the unspoken request of the readers, who are thus allowed to infer sufficient data to imagine the spatial arrangement of the stage.

This tendency towards the abolition of the auxiliary text and the massive use of implicit stage directions is even more striking in Pietro l'Aretino's 1525 play, *La cortigiana*:

«Erculano: A' fratelli la vo' rendere! Ve' che ci l'ho colta, la ribalda! Povero a me, forse ch'io li lascio mancare niente de la mia povertà? S'io dovessi agirare tutta la notte, so' per trovarla e segarli le vene de la gola. Oh, oh, oh! M'ha lasciati i soi panni a piè del letto e non ho potuto accorgermene a ora che la non sia uscita da casa con i miei vestimenti in dosso! Ma tu fuggirai come omo e io te seguiterò come donna; e voglio ire de qua, anzi de qui; sarà meglio a fare la via per Borgo Vecchio... anco da Santo Spirito...; credo che da Campo Santo mi darà in le mani. Ma sarà di qua giù, perch'ella è uscita per la porta dietro». (V, 5).

In Italy the gap between literary theatre and material theatre, theatrical *text* and *performance*, widened from the second half of the 16th century; staging was now much more important than in the past and the goal was no longer to construct a model. By disconnecting itself from the figure of the patron and the court theatre began to lose its aesthetic purpose and focused more on the concrete aspect of the performance. This transformation also brought about the fragmentation of genres, which were no longer limited comedy and tragedy, but now included new "modern" categories such as tragicomedy, pastoral drama, satire, etc. as well; all this was connected to an important sociological modification, i.e., the birth of paid theatre. In leaving the courts, drama became an object of consumption for the general public, which, by paying to attend, demanded a product that fascinated and satisfied it, and, being influenced by popularity ratings and commercial potential, imposed a choice on the part of the 'supplier'.

The new direction in theatre reached culmination in the middle of the 17th century and was to remain in vogue until the work of Goldoni: it is the Commedia dell'Arte, otherwise called the Commedia dell'Improvviso (*Comedy of the unexpected*), in so far as it was based on improvisation by comedy professionals who impersonate characters and stick to *canovacci* (plot outlines). The *canovacci*, or the scenario, as the basic text of the *commedie di mestieri* is called, is a professionally written text, entirely (or almost entirely) devoid of any dialogical dimension and structured as a narrative outline in which the plot is roughly illustrated, but with some added descriptions of the scenes and characters. It's writing intended for practical use (Testaverde 2007). It serves as a repertoire and inspiration for further elaborations and functions as a guiding thread for both those staging the spectacle and those interpreting it: the scripts are essentially stage directions, in the sense that they "instructively" provide everything concretely needed for the performance. They are the cradle in which a terminology is born that will later have vitality even beyond this form of theatrical writing.

Just think about terms like "part", "exit", "away", which are used to signal the exits from the scene of one or more characters, indications here expressed in a single descriptive flow, whose structure might seem properly narrative if it weren't for the technical details prevailing over the plot, which is only roughly sketched out.
Among these details, which are only hinted at, is a wealth of material references to objects needed for the performance, the 'robbe', as they were called, which are not merely listed but complement each other and are characterized by further details with an abundant use of adjectives (*a beautiful suitcase*, *a beautiful garment for the Lord*, *extravagant clothes*, etc.), amplifying the descriptive character of the draft-text. Thus, an auxiliary text renounces the basic text, exchanging its subordinate role with it and constraining those who work on the basis of the *canovacci* to respect specific gestures and movements, while leaving interpretation with some margin of freedom.
Useful to understanding this type of text is *Il teatro delle favole representative* of Flaminio Scala, an actor of the company of the Gelosi and subsequently main comedian: it is a collection of fifty *canovacci* of the Commedia dell'Arte (the only consistent one, published in 1611) and contains a comprehensive collection of the repertoire material for comedic professionals. According to Tessari 1969, p. 115 *Il teatro delle favole* shows to Scala's desire to go beyond the pure necessity of typical indications of the playwright-director by conferring a measure of literariness to material which, until then, had a merely practical support function. As can be understood from the examples taken from the first *canovaccio* inserted in the work (consulted in Scala 1976), entitled *Li duo vecchio gemelli*, the plan included a topic, the list of characters, and that of the *'robbe'* and reference to the setting, followed by the first act that begins like this:
«Orazio: *Vien leggendo una lettera*, *e*, *mentre legge*, *batte a casa*; *in quello* Pedrolino: *Vestito con feltro e stivali*, *dicendo a Orazio come Flavio vuole andare in villa*. *Orazio*: *che v'è altro da fare*»»
In another *canovaccio* taken from the collection, entitled *Flavio tradito*, dialogue is minimal:
«Orazio-Franceschina: *stanno a sentire come Graziano si dispera e fra sé dice*: "Questa è lettera di mia figlia, ma non posso immaginarmi a chi ella scriva". Orazio: *subito dice a Graziano*: "Signore a me la scrive" *e* Franceschina *dice*: "Et io l'ho portata". Orazio: *dice a Graziano come Isabella è di lui innamorata e gliela chiede per moglie*. Graziano *li dà buone parole*. Orazio *via*. Graziano *sgrida Franceschina*, *la ingiuria e la scaccia di casa*, *dapoi chiama Isabella*». (II)
Here the parts have been inverted: the basic text being the scenario, while the inserted lines, which do not have any real consistency, and appear interspersed on the page and without autonomy with vis-à-vis the stage directions, are auxiliary. Ove time the meticulous description of the aesthetic, gestural and tonal details of the *canovaccio* gradually influences high literary theatrical texts intended for publication. It is in this phase that the habit of the writing stage directions in italics next to the characters' lines and «the validation of the external stage direction system» (Riccò 2008, p. 209), becomes established.
From the 18th century onwards, the legacy of the Commedia dell'Arte made itself felt in writing for the theatre. Diversified into genres and finalities, the theatrical literature that developed from this era had become dominant in a series of structural paradigms and editorial conventions consolidated through the press. Aware of the potential of stage directions, playwrights used them, not only as a technical apparatus but also as valuable literary texts. The first prominent example from the Italian panorama was Carlo Goldoni. Having been schooled in the cultural climate of the Enlightenment, Goldoni merged the applicable elements of the Commedia dell'Arte and post-seventeenth-century baroque theatrical production with experiences based on the European model, which included Elizabethan (Marlowe and Shakespeare) and French (with Molière, Corneille and Racine) experiences. He introduced an entire series of technical, linguistic and thematic innovations that were to create a novel way of doing theatre, and which influenced all future dramatic productions.
Goldoni's stage directions can be analyzed for their linguistic profile and literary value through their graphic and stylistic distance from the basic text. In this regard Folena 1983, pp. 94-95 had noticed an artistic development of captions»:

«Truff.: Arecordeve che ho perso del tempo assae, e mi me fazzo pagar un tanto all'ora col relogio alla man (*prende il baule, aiutato dal gondoliere, e ponendovi sopra altre coserelle che sono nella gondola, portano tutto nella locanda*)» (*L'uomo di mondo* I, 2, 1757 ed. Paperini).
The cited example is from a comedy where the basic text in Venetian dialect and the auxiliary text Italian. It clearly shows the author distinguishing between the two levels by ascribing a functional character to the second that cannot be applied to the dialectal context: this is the voice of the author that does not mix those of his characters and which communicates directly to his readers, beyond the spatiotemporal limitations of the stage.
This dichotomy between the recited language and that of the stage directions is progressively overcome in Neoclassicism and the tragic theatre of full Romanticism, when the style and language of the basic recited text and stage directions tend to conform to a single expressive register, made up of high resonance and emphasis typical of the tragedy; from Silvio Pellico, *Ester d'Engaddi*:
«Eufemio: (*si turba, e poi passa a subitanea allegrezza*) Oh gioia! Al prence di Salerno preda/ ir negò Ludovica: ella ancor m'ama! (I, 3)
Ludovica: (*tali parole la irritano: ella vorrebbe tosto punire il reo, ma lo sdegno è combattuto dalla pietà*) Posso io? Che fo? [...] (III, 6)».
The tendency to magniloquence that also penetrated the auxiliary text reached its pinnacle with D'Annunzio and his decadent theatre which used stage directions to amplify an already grandiose writing. Here is an example from *Più che l'amore* of 1907:
«Virginio: [...] forse parlavo di lei quando credevo di parlare delle sorgenti… *S'interrompe; e pronunzia, a voce più bassa, con un'espressione d'infinita tenerezza, il nome che sembra diffondergli dalle labbra su per tutta la faccia la sua qualità luminosa.* Maria! *L'amico, seduto, con la fronte poggiata alla mano, pareva celare il suo turbamento. Ora si protende con ansia a interrogare.*
Corrado: Eri felice? Sei felice?» (ep. I).
While dramaturgical writing follows the evolutionary course of literary currents, of society, and language, it has, nevertheless, produced its well-defined physiognomy and autonomy, regardless of genres and themes, and has, in a certain sense, achieved this mainly because of the use of stage directions. Playwrights know fully that stage directions allow them to express themselves and reveal, not only essential scene requirements but also the beauty, charm, and excellence of their thoughts, evaluations, and intentions; in the Italian panorama, though not only there, Luigi Pirandello undoubtedly makes up such a model, as highlighted by Bartolucci 1973, Pagliai 1994 and Salsano 2005: the contributions cited highlight the instrumental function of the stage directions which Pirandello needed to create, along with the dialogues, effects of significant spectacular and literary impact. In Pirandellian works, the two textual parts interpenetrate and support each other, through interaction systems that specialize as the compositional technique develops. Indeed, it is not possible to consider Pirandello's stage directions as mere additions or of negligible importance and consequently skip reading them. The stage directions are so decisive for content and understanding of the text, that attention to the stage directions is both necessary and obligatory. Pirandello himself explicitly declares this in the *Six Characters in Search of an Author*:
«Suggeritore: [...] (*al Capocomico*) Debbo leggere anche la didascalia?
Capocomico: Ma sì! Sì! Gliel'ho detto cento volte!»

Studies on stage directions.
Stage directions are studied in semiotics, technique, language, and world dramaturgical literature; for western theatre, some of the many studies in French, which have addressed the theme of the stage direction from all angles, are certainly worth mentioning. Some interesting contributions were offered during a conference on stage direction organized in Tunis in 2006 and whose documents are collected in Calas *et al.* 2007. In the publisher's synopsis one reads: «Les didascalies, "textes à ne pas dire", sont des éléments constitutifs de l'écriture théâtrale: formulant, au moins, certaines des conditions d'exercice du dialogue dramatique, elles sont susceptibles de se transformer, à la représentation, en paralinguistiques

messages (visuels, sonores ou kinésiques)» (*The didascalies, "texts not to say", are constitutive elements of theatrical writing: formulating, at least, some conditions for the exercise of dramatic dialogue, they are likely to be transformed, at the performance, into paralinguistic messages [visual, sound or kinesic]*); the contributions of this volume are all aimed at celebrating the textual and literary value of the stage direction, 'reconsecrating' some fundamental previous studies, including those of some French scholars such as Issacharoff 1981 and Issacharoff 1989. Both authors investigate the concept of "didascalecture", *i.e.* the legibility of stage directions and distinguish, through various examples taken from the American, English and French theatre of the 19th and 20th centuries, three types of stage direction: extratextual, autonomous and strictly technical. External and autonomous stage directions concern the contextualization of the story, or the characterizations of the characters and their attitude on stage, and in this sense can also be used with silent reading. In contrast, the latter, strictly technical stage directions, are considered "illegible" as these are intended only for practical use when setting up a performance.

From the French-speaking area, the book by Gallèpe 1998 is worth mentioning as well: even though it focuses on the French national theatre, it highlights the importance of the stage direction text at a general level, underlining its versatility and diversity of forms in various theatrical genres and eras.

The last suggestion in chronological order, still from the French, concerns the impressive work of Lochert 2009, an exemplary comparative study of the French, Spanish, and Italian stage direction apparatuses. The editor's synopsis of the text highlights the decisive role of the stage directions that «participent en effet au développement d'une mise en page propre au théâtre, avec l'argument, la lista des personnages et la division en actes et en scènes. Elles possesses a veritable usefulness in the economy of dialogue, the efficacy of the reposant, the practice of the brièveté and the relative rareté. Invitant à put in relation pratiques scéniques et pratiques éditoriales, les didascalies jettent un éclairage original aussi bien sur la fabrique de la représentation que sur les modalités de la lecture et consentent ainsi de renouveler le questionnement sur des sujets aussi essentiacle la participation sens de la pièce, the affirmation de la figure de l'Auteur et les mécanismes propres à la lecture du théâtre».

Regarding the Spanish area, the article of Schmidhuber de la Mora 2001, offers a typology of the various stage directions and their history in Spanish and Spanish-American theatre. There is also a recent work by Golopentia-Martinez 2010, dealing with the theme of reading a play which «se define como incompleta, insuficiente y subordinada», which is to say, «lectura operativa que posibilita o instaura una nueva forma de actividad, al constituir su aprendizaje previo indispensable» (Golopentia-Martinez 2010, p. 19).

In the Italian panorama, many works have dealt with stage directions from the point of view of a literary analysis of the theatrical text: among these Bartolucci 1973 offers an interesting study path of the authors indicated in the subtitle of his book, who use stage directions with particularly successful original results, and proposes an interpretation of stage directions which can be extended, by comparison, to other playwrights. The author underlines how in these writers, «the stage direction is above all an ideological, moral and stylistic meaning», an imposition for the actor on how «to see the world and the theatre» (Bartolucci 1973, p. 7). This definition highlights the evolution of stage direction from a subordinate condition in theatrical texts, to one of equality, and even higher in the most innovative style games.

Other fundamental ideas are offered by the work of Pagliai 1994, who offers a critical-literary analysis of stage directions between the 19th and 20th centuries which focusses on the historical moment in which «the divorce between dramaturgy and entertainment» is said to have taken place, i.e. the authors' awareness of the urgency of including elements in their texts that allow for the preservation of "the need to be represented, without spectacular rewriting which would degrade such elements to a subordinate role" (Pagliai 1994 I, pp. 13-14). The author starts from the assumption that in this historical phase, and increasingly so today, playwrights put the text on an equal footing, if not indeed above, stage performance, hoping, thereby, to leave their cultural imprint and *Weltanschauung* on it. This

assigns a key role to stage directions, that of the "cantuccio" of Manzoni in which the author can express himself by providing «indicazioni indispensabili all'intelligenza del fatto [...] accanto alle trascrizioni delle vive voci dei suoi personaggi» (De Roberto 1976, *Pref.* 11-12).
The fundamental work of Gegìc 2008, produced in the Serbo-Croatian area, offers a systematic characterization of theatrical stage directions as textual types; the Croatian Darko Lukìc, professor of the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb and prefacer of the text, underlines how Gegìc's research represents, not only a "rare approach to the problem of the stage direction in the extensive analysis of language and scenic expression" and, in fact, to the field of non-fiction in theatre, but also in linguistic studies. This work is the only one available in Italy, which places this textual aspect, from a primarily technical point of view, at the center of the discussion.
The study of Mingioni 2013 is based mainly Gegìc's text. It starts from the definition of the different types of theatrical stage directions and follows their linguistic history through the different literary periods, dedicating an extensive formal, lexical and syntactic analysis to the stage directions used by Carlo Goldoni in the various comedies and in particular in *Il ventaglio*.
De Min's 2013 almost contemporaneous study deals with the literary value of stage directions mainly expressed in 20th century theatre and the role of the author who, through stage directions, finds a narrative dimension in which to express and reveal himself.

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