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Conceptualizing Early Modern Metropolitan Space in Giovan Battista della Porta's Comedy *Tabernaria* (1616). The Osteria del Cerriglio in Naples

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Abstract: This contribution examines a particular instance in which two different ways of perceiving metropolitan space in 17th century Naples (*espace véçu* and *espace conçu*) become imbricated in the mode of comedy. *Tabernaria* stages not merely the place of the Osteria del Cerriglio, a historic urban site; through a characteristic *mise en abîme*, this scenic re-creation is doubled or mirrored in a theatrical place which only pretends to be the *Cerriglio*. Likewise, and again typical for this narrative strategy, the staged play itself is doubled by the ruse enacted by some of the personae for (or rather: against) other *personae* onstage. The audiences may then enjoy this oblique representation of a very real metropolitan space and its labyrinthine pitfalls, from a safe distance.

Keywords: Naples, theater and space, *espace véçu*, *espace conçu*, Baratta map

Introduction

Tabernaria is the last of the thirteen comedies written by Giovan Battista della Porta. His comedies have been described as exercises in Counter-Reformation ideology: indeed, his plots are usually over before night falls, and (even against the will of the protagonists) they end with marriage, the only alternative being death or emigration: transgression occurs only on the surface, as *sogno*, or momentary disturbances in an otherwise static social order (Rak 1990: 409-10). Instead of by horseplay, most of Porta's comedies are structured by providential intervention, even if the happy ends are always the result of natural causes, usually the timely return of a member of the family that was missing for decades and hence believed dead (Beecher and Ferraro 2000: 25, 30). *Tabernaria* is no exception to this rule. Printed only once – posthumously, in 1616 – it ranks arguably among della Porta's mature, but certainly not greatest literary achievements.

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Even so, the many different languages and linguistic registers staged by this comedy – Latin, Sicilian, Neapolitan, Venetian, Piedmontese, Spanish, and even a few words of German – have attracted the attention of della Porta scholars[2]. As most of the *personae* onstage are less polyglot than della Porta's prospective readers or spectators, the confusions and ambiguities created by the various idioms account for a large part of the comic energy released by the *Tabernaria*. *Tabernaria's* cosmopolitan multilingualism makes for a characteristic comedic tension: even though the personae usually seek to communicate most basic needs (food, drink, shelter for the night, sexual gratification)[3], they often fail to make themselves understood. Indeed, the countless *malintesi* (in many instances false friends, homonyms) may point to the degree in which language itself remains inherently dysfunctional – and to the idea that, by extension, these misunderstandings might perform the contingency and conventionality of communication in the metropolitan environment of Naples. In analogous ways, *Tabernaria* also disrupts amazingly many of the actors' comedic identities: some of them appear disguised, pretend to be somebody else, have doubts as to who they are, or are ignorant of their true identity. *Tabernaria's* linguistic and dramaturgical suspense reflect della Porta's decidedly mannerist taste for creating scenically metalepsis.

What has so far escaped the attention of critics is that these linguistic misunderstandings and mistaken identities of the personae are also reflected in the notion of theatrical *place* in *Tabernaria*. The comedy is staged in and around the *Osteria del Cerriglio*, a historical place, located in the center of Naples, just beneath *Santa Maria la Nova* in the tiny and narrow *vicolo* still bearing its name. In fact, the *Cerriglio* was a legendary Neapolitan inn/hostel of ill repute. Apparently equipped with at least one convenient back door, it was a hangout for crooks, disbanded mercenaries, and prostitutes; hence, even by Neapolitan standards, at times at least, it was a rather precarious place to visit. The *Cerriglio* also became an outright literary *topos*, a place widely associated with lavish food and wine. To give just a few examples, the *Cerriglio* also appears in other comedies by della Porta: in *Lo astrologo* (publ. 1606) where some confidence men plan to meet after their coup for a lavish dinner:

2 Clubb (1964: 242-249); Cirillo (1990); Cirillo-Sirri (2007). On della Porta's stage plays as being on the verge between spoken word and literary genre, see Sirri (1990: 492), who emphasizes that Porta's plays have to be actually performed, and for instance accompanied by gestures on stage, whereas the theatre of Aretino and Bruno was a literary and bookish affair (Sirri 1990: 495-505). On della Porta's comedies that were sometimes ostensibly published without his consent see della Porta (2000: 159, nn. 3 and 4).

3 *Tabernaria* III, 9, della Porta (2000-2003: 4, 319): «Lardone. Lo star senza mangiare importa la vita, che è più dell'onore: si può vivere senza l'onore, ma non senza mangiare. Da questo mondo non se ne ave altro se non quanto ne tiri con i denti».

> Tra queste due ore tu, Gramigna, porta le robbe al Molo, piglia una fregata e caricala di tutte le robbe. Poi, va' al Cerriglio e fa' apparecchiar questi animali bene e questi liquori preziosi; porta la Bevilona all'osteria, ché, dopo alzati ben i fiaschi, possiamo godere il trionfo delle nostre furbarie. Poi, di notte imbarcaremoci per Roma con tutto il bottino» (*Lo Astrologo*, della Porta 2000-2003: 3, 365).

The *Cerriglio* appears again once again in della Porta's *La furiosa* (1609). Similarly, Giordano Bruno's *Candelaio* (1582) stages a burlesque anecdote told by a crook about bill-dodging in the *Cerriglio*. Giulio Cesare Cortese, author of *Lo Cerriglio 'ncantato* (1628), also met there with his Neapolitan Academy, the *Schirchiate de lo Mandracchio e Mprovesante de lo Cerriglio*[4].

Yet, and to complicate things further, *Tabernaria* stages not merely the *Cerriglio*, but also a house that becomes masked (*travestito*, della Porta 2000-2003: 4, 306-7) or transmuted (*trasmutato*, della Porta 2000-2003: 4, 315) as tavern. My claim is that, as an extraordinary onstage-doubling of an urban site, the *Cerriglio* is actually an extension of the linguistic and other factual *malintesi*. The following analysis will therefore encompass the literary and comic potentials that emerge from the intertwining of built architectures (which characterize the *Cerriglio* as *locus communis*, as *topos*) and their doublings, with the many linguistic misunderstandings that della Porta's *Tabernaria* rehearses.

Synopsis

To sum up as briefly as possible the most important parts of *Tabernaria's* topical, intricate plot: there is the conventional pair of young *innamorati* (Giacomino and Altilia); the girl is poor and hence Giacoco, her lover's father, is against the marriage. To complicate the affair further, one Antifilo is also madly in love with the girl; yet Altilia dislikes Antifilo. An occasion for the romantic couple to meet presents itself when Altilia journeys with her father (a topical schoolmaster) through Naples on their way to Rome, while Giacoco has gone to Posillipo to harvest the grapes.

This is the moment when Cappio, Giacoco's witty servant, thinks up a ruse to divert Altilia and her pedantic father from their planned overnight stay in Naples in the *Cerriglio*: Cappio rearranges Giacoco's house so that

4 *Furiosa*, della Porta (2000-2003: 4, 118-20), again for associations with lavish food; *Candelaio* III, 8, in Bruno (2013: 130-32, food and bill-dodging). On the Osteria del Cerriglio, see Imbriani (1875: 71-73); Di Giacomo (1899: 87-89); Spampanato (1923: 92, nn. 2-4); Croce (1941: 247-249) for examples of the Cerriglio in Spanish literary world, *chorrilleros* signifying deserters, disbanded soldiers' culture; and Croce (1941: 257) for an incident dating back to 1547, in which eighteen Spanish soldiers were massacred there; see also the precious collection of loci by Sabbatino (1993: 29-36, 58-59, 65).

it seems to be that tavern. With the help of Lardone (the father's servant), Cappio manages to convince the schoolmaster that his daughter is safe in this place, and that he may leave to fetch his baggage. This is the occasion for Giacomino to bed Altilia, while Cappio sleeps with Lima, the girl's witty Nurse. Yet Antifilo has gotten wind of the maneuver, and runs to Posillipo, where he alerts the populace, crying that the Turks are raiding the coast. Giacoco hurries back home, where he is completely perplexed to see that where his house used to be, there now seems to be an inn. The disguised Cappio mimics so perfectly the pidgin-Italian of the German host of the *Cerriglio* that he persuades Giacoco into believing that his house has somehow moved further down the street. Reappearing as Cappio, Giacoco's witty servant covers his master's head (ostensibly to protect the old man from the cold wind of the night) and leads Giacoco circling through dark alleyways back to his own house. In the meantime, the tavern is restored to its former state. Upon Giacoco's return, the schoolmaster is back too and wants to see his daughter. Altilia and Lima had already been rushed to the real *Cerriglio*, where the real German inn-keeper, bribed by Giacomino, takes the women to a bedroom. The host tells the schoolmaster, who arrives shortly later, that the women have been in their chamber all evening waiting for him. Antifilo, who is aware of these machinations, arrives too late to disturb this ruse together with his father Limforo, a wealthy citizen. In a series of digressions during which Giacomino's friend Pseudonomo pretends to be Limforo, Altilia turns out to be Limforo's daughter. The family had been broken up during the period of the "last plague", and the schoolmaster had been only the benevolent foster-father of the child that Lima had brought with her. Under these circumstances, Altilia has become a suitable match for Giacomino; whereas Antifilo recognizes that his love for Altilia was in fact, an affection between siblings[5].

Magmatic space

Tabernaria's comic effects extend from linguistic disguises and the personae's masked faces to the versatility of place – «la casa travestita a Osteria» (della Porta 2000-2003: 4, 306-7). The doubled *Cerriglio* is actually an extension of the linguistic and other factual *malintesi*. Spectacularly (in the true sense of the word), *Tabernaria* stages this urban landmark twice as a "real" inn, where the action transpires in the place evoked onstage, thus creating a characteristic *mise en abîme* between space/place and the actors'

5 This happy ending neither convincingly glosses over Anitfilo's incestuous desire, nor can explain why Altilia hated her suitor as much as she did. On incest as a topic on della Porta's stage, see Poulsen (2010).

narrative. As if that were not sufficient, *Tabernaria* creates – in a truly mannerist move – another staged but illusory image of the *Cerriglio*, in effect an illusory mirror image of the real place[6]. To investigate this further, we must turn to a close reading of some of the scenes set in the doubled image of the *Cerriglio*; indeed, these particular transactions and translations of urban space onto the stage deserve a close reading. Cappio tells his master that he is out of his mind, that this is the tavern, not Giacoco's house, which, he says, is a bit farther away:

> Cappio: E voi stimate che questa sia casa vostra? Voi sete fuor di cervello: questa è l'osteria del Cerriglio, e la vostra casa è un pezzo lontano di qua (*Tabernaria* III, 4, della Porta 2000-2003: 4, 309).

In the previous scene, Cappio had appeared linguistically (and presumably otherwise) disguised as the German host of the *Cerriglio*, whereas his master Giacoco speaks in his usual Neapoletan:

> Giacoco: [...] O casa mia bella! Ma sto tanto forasciuto ca me pare na taverna. O quante sausiccie, fecatelli, scartapelle [masserizuole] e marcangegne [atrezzi]! Me fanno cannagola e stare a cannapierto[7].
> Cappio: Bone vecchie, volere alloggiare a nostre ostelerie, ca te faremo scazzare [forse: scaccatiare, cioè il grido delle galline quando han fatto l'uovo].
> Giacomo. Ste vrache [calzoni] salate! Io non aggio voglia de bevere né de mangiare. Sto mirando se chesta è la casa mia.
> Cappio: Avete prese scambie: cheste stare mi ostelerie, no vostre case.
> Giacoco: O ca io no so io, o chessa non è la casa mia; io no sto chiù n'chisto munno, sto dintro a n'autro munno; [....] Forse quarche Cionciamauriello [diavolo burlesco], o chillo che pozza squagliare diavolescamente m'avessero fatto deventare la casa mia chiù lontana? Se fosse carnelevale, diceria ca s'è ammascarata e s'ha pigliata na mascara de taverna. Fuorze sto todisco è pazzo o so pazzo io o semo pazzi tutti due (*Tabernaria* III, 3, della Porta 2000-2003: 4, 306-7).

Giacoco first describes what he (and, accordingly, the audience) sees onstage[8]: sausages, meat, kitchen utensils and other tools. Then, he starts to wonder whether this can really be his house. Cappio answers to the negative. Giacoco fears either having lost his identity («io no so io»), or that he has arrived in another world – a conclusion he later extends to his interlocutor, opining

6 It is tempting to relate this to della Porta's experiments with mirrors that create illusory images; on which, see Reeves (2008: 72-80); Kodera (2016).

7 I am inserting Italian translations of some Neapolitan words.

8 Clubb (1964: 248) argues persuasively that «in the absence of written stage directions, it can only be supposed that the set combined a street scene with some suggestion of an interior facing the street, an arrangement frequent in the *commedia dell'arte*».

that they both must have lost their minds, or that they must have changed roles, as he subsequently surmises «Olá, casa mia è deventata Cerriglio, o lo Cerriglio è deventato la casa mia; o io so diventato lo tavernaro dello Cerriglio, o lo tavernaro dello Cerriglio è deventato me. Chesta è cosa proprio da crepare e ridere; mai m'è accaduto cosa ntutto lo tiempo della vita mia commo chesta d'oie» (*Tabernaria* III, 7, 315). Giacoco concludes by saying that the house has been made over as a tavern, as though it were carnival. This metaphor is repeated later by the schoolmaster: «Pedante: Io venendo in Napoli per ospitare al Cerriglio, vostro figlio [...] ha posto una maschera a questa casa e ne fece un xenodochio» (*Tabernaria* IV, 6, 333). Giacoco's fear of losing his identity and consequently his mind is of course a convenient – and in della Porta's day, a rather common – theatrical effect; indeed, such references to the *personae's* versatility constitute effective, carnivalesque sources of laughter for the audiences[9]. In *Tabernaria*, this comical effect is released even more effectively when it appears in the reversed mirror of Cappio's act. His master does not recognize the servant, who has successfully assumed another identity. So far, the scene – an efficient "theatergram", to use George Luise Clubb's (1986) terminology – reflects many characteristic aspects of della Porta's mannerist comedies: a series of ruses that are staged as plays within a play. These dramaturgical effects amuse audiences because they are in the know regarding various ruses played onstage. The spectators may laugh at the dupes who become lost, seduced, abducted, or betrayed of their possessions by wives, daughters, or sons. In 16th century Italian comedies, usually situated in urban environments, such effects are commonly enacted in the mode of metalepsis.

My claim is that we can also be more specific: that the equivocations and the comic effects that *Tabernaria* generates from the confusion of urban places reflect a specific perception of the early modern metropolitan space of Naples, as distinct from mere urban space in general. In this connection, Giacoco also suspects that some joking devil or somebody who can "melt like a devil" (obviously some sinister urban alchemist) has moved his house farther away. Urban space appears here as magmatic – a metaphor that is, perhaps, not as grotesque for Naples as for other cities, which are not exposed to the powers of volcanism[10]. I started wondering how and to which extent these oblique constructions of imaginary places on della Porta's stage reflect and comment on perceptions of such magmatic space. In my view, the displacement of particular urban places refers to and comments on the perception of the early modern

9 *La fantesca* IV, 8-9, della Porta (2000-2003: 2, 185-9). In della Porta's *Astrologo* II, 2, della Porta (2000-2003: 3, 347) this fear of the loss of identity is played out in the context of a magical transmutation of the face.

10 Capaccio ([1607] 1652: 109-110), is a good example for the ambiguity and perplexity of contemporary authors in the face of these contradictory powers of volcanism in general.

metropolitan area of Naples[11]. This leads me to suggest that the audience of *Tabernaria* was witness to the production of a metropolitan space in a specific phase of the development of the metropolitan area of Naples: a period in which abstract space started to compete with lived perceptions of space.

The Metropolis as Labyrinth

Here, a few general remarks on the perception of urban geography and the relationship of space to place are in order[12]. To our senses (and consequently to our individual memories), a metropolitan area housing several hundred thousand inhabitants inevitably appears fragmented into various places – places that are in turn related to one another, if only due to the simple fact that we remember them all as belonging to that metropolitan space. More than rural areas or small towns, I conceive of metropolitan space as being invisible in its entirety. Late 16th-and early 17th century Naples was a perfect example of such a metropolitan space. With its approximately 250,000 inhabitants living in one densely overpopulated area, Naples was not merely the largest town by far on the southern Italian peninsula: together with Paris and Istanbul, it was one of the three biggest cities in the whole of Europe[13], and these cities were far larger than any other medieval or early modern town had ever been. Thus, for the first time after the fall of the Roman Empire, European men and women finally began once more to share the experience of life in metropolitan areas[14].

But what constitutes "specific experiences" of metropolitan space? Both in della Porta's time and today, any metropolis will – at least at certain times – appear to us as a daunting labyrinth. In our direct unmapped experience "from the ground", a metropolis falls into a set of (more or less) distinct places. These places become related to each other by our memories and itineraries through them. The image of urban geography in our minds –

11 Still, it was not completely uncommon that built structures, for instance large fountains, were moved in contemporary Naples, as Fehrenbach (2020) has demonstrated. Festive events, such as triumphant entries of monarchs, were other instances in which the city-scapes became temporarily altered.

12 The distinction between place and space is developed in observations by De Certeau (1980: 1, 175-227), who distinguishes *espace* and *lieu* and differentiates between *map* and *tour*. De Certeau's remarks, originally made in the context of late 20th century New York, are here applied to the early modern Naples.

13 Bacco ([1616] 1991: 129) lists a total population of Naples of 267.973, which made the *città Partenopea* one of the largest European cities of the time. See also Marino 1982 226; and G. Musto in Bacco ([1616] 1991: XLIX-LI).

14 Musto, in Bacco ([1616] 1991: LI), accordingly says: «Long before the industrial revolution and the modern state wrought the same situation in the north of Europe, Naples had quickly begun to take the shape and character of a modern city».

one of lived space (*espace véçu*), which is different form the conceptual space (*espace conçu*) provided by of maps[15] – underlies our individual perception as it conceives the city as a set of places that are interrelated. One example: the series of images stored in an urban dweller's memory while he proceeds from dwelling to workplace – in our case, the way from Giacoco's house to Posillipo and back. This collection of partial images of metropolitan space varies from individual to individual, but of course urban dwellers who live or work next to each other will, to a certain degree (depending on their cultural, educational, and social backgrounds) share perceptions of the city more than others living in other parts of a metropolis, who will have either divergent or completely different perceptions. As Maurice Halbwachs noted long ago in his seminal book (1950: 130-167), it is this variety of individual perceptions of urban places, buildings, and streets that shape the individual's sense of his or her own continuity in an ever-changing world. Proximity thus creates shared metropolitan experiences. Accordingly, specifically experienced places from the same neighborhood will be more readily perceived as belonging together; conversely, consideration of two places far away from each other would impart a more comprehensive, wide-angled image of the urban space, e.g. a series of images of buildings and streets passed on the way from one place to another – especially if that space is traversed by foot (Lefebvre [1974] 2000: 39-43). More readily than an image of just one neighborhood, such a series of images will remind us of the social, economic, and political contradictions inherent in all metropolitan areas. From today's perspective, this is even more true of the Early Modern European metropolis, with its entirely fragmented geography of ex-territorial spaces comprising sometimes rigorously segregated areas. Apart from the Venetian ghetto, in Naples, for instance, many monasteries and districts had local administration and even jurisdiction (Muto 2013: 35-61). In Early Modern Naples, the so-called *Seggi* (seats) fulfilled this function of zoning, thus segregating and governing various distinct city-spaces (Capaccio 1634: 695-96; D'Agostino 1972: 110-120). Tanja Michalsky (2016) has recently pointed out the importance of such immediately perceptible spatial relationships and the keen sense of place in 16th and 17th century guide books to Naples. In general, Michalsky's findings emphasize that these texts do not structure their descriptions of Naples according to a mapmaker's, bird's-eye view of the entire metropolitan space; instead, their descriptions are based inside the centers of lived, immediately perceptible spaces, such as the loggias of the *Seggi*, their churches, convents, or palazzi – into which the biographies of persons are inscribed, for instance in the form of graves in churches[16].

15 I am taking up the distinction between *espace conçu* and *espace véçu* from Lefebvre ([1974] 2000: 39-43) to apply it to early modern Naples.

16 Michalsky (2016: 118-124), argues that these guide books are ordered via specific structures

If we now return to *Tabernaria*, the following passage shows how Giacoco tries to orient himself in front of his "disguised house", in the urban geography of his neighborhood as *espace véçu*:

> [...] lassame arrecordare meglio. Chesta è la casa de Coviello Cìcula, appriesso la casa de Cola Pèrtola, la terza è d'Aniello Sùvaro, la quarta è de Colambruoso e Iacovo dello Caso, appriesso veneno chelle caranfole [cellule] e catafuorchi [stanzuccie], appriesso stava la casa mia: [...] Ma se fosse pazzo, come forria venuto da Posilipo fino a Napole e non errare la via? (*Tabernaria* III, 3, della Porta 2000-2003: 4 306-7).

Giacoco locates his house by recalling the names of the proprietors of the four neighboring houses and by the position of some adjacent miserly quarters. Giacoco also contends that he cannot totally have lost his mind, since he traversed the entire distance across town from Posillipo, finding his way without problems. Here the order of metropolitan geography unfolds as *espace véçu* in exactly the manner outlined above. From this quotation, it becomes clear why Giacoco fears to have lost his identity as he finds the place of his house transformed. His name and identity seem to be tied closely to the specific site of his own building *in relation to* where the owners of the neighboring houses are located. *Tabernaria* provides us with a further, more grotesque example for this mode of orientation in *espace véçu*, when blindfolded Giacoco is lead around alleyways while behind his back the false tavern is simultaneously transformed back into his house. Giacoco asks Cappio where they are:

> Giacoco. [...] Mò dove siamo?
> Cappio. Ad Antuono speziale.
> Giacoco. Chillo che fa le cure co lo schizzariello [siringa per fare iniezioni]?
> Cappio. Signorsì.
> Giacoco. Zitto zitto, ca non ce senta; ca l'autro iuorno me venne a fare la cura e me mpizzai lo cannello tanto forte ca m'appe a sparafundare, e poi fece lo vrodo tanto caudo [caldo] che me scaudai tutto lo codarino [intestino retto degli animali da macello]; e però non lo vuozzi pagare. E mò dove simmo?

which refer to the local social networks of Naples. Taking Pietro De Stefano's *Descrittione de i luoghi sacri della città di Napoli* (1560) as one example, Michalsky shows that this author describes the position of churches and chapels both in relation to each other and in relation to their importance. Accordingly, the text is organized along fictitious itineraries through the city's urban space and its churches (121). Michalsky argues that this method of presentation can be employed towards an astonishingly exact mapping of the spatial and social relations that informed the city of Naples (107). Thus, Di Stefano's descriptions of single monuments and their reciprocal spatial relationships are intended to represent individual biographies according to their positions in social hierarchy, patronage, and lineage, which in turn reciprocally construct the metropolitan space (121).

> Cappio. A mastro Argallo che fa li brachieri.
> Giacoco. Passamo a largo, ca m'aggio fatto fare lo vrachiere mio e non l'aggio pagato ncora. Ma quanno arrivarimmo, ca songo allancato [trafelato]?
> Cappio. Anzi non sète a meza via, e volete esser gionto?
> Giacoco. Me fae botare ntorno ntorno, come botasse lo filatorio o commo a mulo ca bota lo centimmolo.
> Cappio. Perché vi meno per strade accortatoie.
> Giacoco. Quanno arrivarimmo alli solachianielli [raffazzonatori di scarpe]?
> Cappio. Or ci siamo.
> Giacoco. Arrássate [rimarrete lontano] dalla poteca de Giangilormo Spiccicaraso, ca m'ave arrapezzate le scarpe e le devo dare cinco tornisi, e mò me vole accosare [accusare] (*Tabernaria* III, 3, della Porta 2000-2003: 4, 309-10).

This passage functions like a tiny kaleidoscope of individual urban memory as derived from the perception of *espace véçu*: The apothecary and his painful enemas, the tailor of breeches, the cobbler, and again the proprietors of the houses next to Giacoco's are mentioned by name. It turns out that Giacoco has debts with all of them – thus comically seeking as much to avoid them as to make his way home. Naturally, mention of the druggist and his hurtful enema syringes becomes especially comic when we consider that they represent the inverse effects of the *Cerriglio's* topicality for food and drink. As he recalls the places they pass by, the shops and the debts he has incurred there, blindfolded Giacoco produces – *appunto*! – per se the invisible metropolitan space of Naples onstage from memory. I think we may conclude from his language, his sense of orientation, the way he organizes his memory – and, with it, identity – that Giacoco's persona embodies Neapolitan *espace véçu*.

Inversions: the Bed-Trick

It is especially amusing that of all people, Giacoco is deceived as to the location of his house in the metropolis. Yet this comic moment also conversely indicates the extent to which the early modern metropolitan space of Naples was actually perceived as a rather insecure labyrinth: in this context, the audience's hilarious detachment is also integral to their amusement. After all, many Italian comedies of the 16th century are rehearsing quite stereotyped sets of errors in time and place; the dupe remains unaware that he is at the wrong place in the wrong time until after he has fallen into a trap constructed for him by some trickster, usually a witty servant. With *Tabernaria*, I would suggest we view the theatergram of the double *Cerriglio* as an effective inversion of an earlier, often repeated plot-line in Italian comedy – the story of the bed-trick: here, a would-be adulterous husband believes he will meet the object of his ardent desire in a bed-chamber, which is pitch-

dark; but in reality, his wife is waiting there. The duped husband is double-crossed because he believes he is in the right place (a dark room with a bed in it) for enjoying extra-conjugal pleasures – but in truth is in the wrong place, and in for trouble. This rather daft and unlikely plot (how could a husband fail to recognize his own wife while bedding her?) was so popular that audiences apparently had a laugh at it for at least the better part of the 16th century[17].

If we look at the bed-trick story in the context of an individual's urban experience, it represents the fear of pitfalls (perhaps literally) in the labyrinthine metropolitan geography – wrong address, righteous wife, with the audience's laughter a way of exorcising what is perhaps the ultimate patriarchal fear: not that the man catches his wife in an act of infidelity, but that she has been furtively *displaced* from her husband's bed, somehow *transported* to some other place in the urban labyrinth, causing the (unfaithful) husband's shame. The spectators' laughter might well be taken as an index of the audiences' anxiety of getting lost in the maze of the metropolis. Taken together, the phantasms of chaos and order presented in the structure of many Italian 16th century comedies converge in the figure of the witty servant; in *Tabernaria*, this is Cappio. He is the persona onstage who directs the other actors to different places, and is thus responsible for creating the plot. As the impersonation of a stage director *ante litteram*, a *Cicerone*, the witty servant leads his *audiences* safely through the labyrinth (whereas the play's actual personae lose their way). This persona – temporarily and farcically – breaches the gap between metropolitan maze and master plan, through fiction onstage. He *transports* not only the other personae onstage but also the audience, albeit in different modes; thus, he is connecting the space of the stage and the space of the auditorium. As we have seen in the above quote, he produces the very metropolitan space while dexterously moving within it.

Mapped Naples

It is now high time to turn our attention on how, to an ever-increasing extent, *espace conçu* in the form of abstract city maps became available to early modern Neapolitans; the space they envisioned, one surmises, must have entered into complex relationships with older perceptions of *espace véçu* for

17 This is a plot of ancient Indian origins, which was well known in Italy at least since Boccacio's *Decameron*; Doninger (2000). On the bed-trick in Bruno's *Candelaio* (Kodera 2009). For its uses in other comedies, throughout 16th century Italy, see for instance Bibbiena (1513), *Calandria* (v, 5-9); Antonio Francesco Grazzini (1540), *Il frate* (iii, 1 and 5); Giovan Maria Cecchi (1550), *L'assiuolo* (v, 2); for editions, English translations of, and introductions to these comedies, see the edition in *Renaissance Comedy* 2009, 2.

the metropolitan area. Indeed, for its laughing audiences, *Tabernaria* unfolds such a cartographic perspective on Naples, reassuring its spectators that they watch from a – secure – distance in space.

Maps, with their mathematically structured space, do indeed supply an image of the metropolis as a whole, also interacting or intersecting with our perceptions[18]. And yet most maps hardly visualize distinct places as experienced through the senses "from the ground", instead tending to use non-representational methods (albeit not exclusively) to visualize space. This representational strategy is not necessarily more "objective" than direct sensual perception; indeed, maps often are purposefully distorted. For instance, most printed contemporary maps show streets and places enlarged in proportion to the area occupied by buildings, in order to facilitate our moving from one place to another[19]. Accordingly, even today our individual memories of the metropolis tend to be more strongly conditioned by direct references to single places and to particular perceptions of these places than by the abstract, objective and mathematical dimensions of urban space.

Della Porta and his contemporaries did not have access to this kind of modern map. They perhaps had seen the Lafery type of map that was widely copied in the 16th century – a schematic bird's-eye map of Naples. Yet there was also another type of map: the Baratta map, which was created during the early 17th century (see Fig. 1 below)[20].

18 I am referring to the terminology in the seminal essay by Panofsky (1927: 258-330).

19 This aspect is, for instance, manifest in the cartographic strategy of today's underground transport maps, where the actual space of a metropolis is not represented in accordance with a fixed scale, but rather a scheme that allows us to navigate in its environment.

20 For an introduction to the topic of city maps of Naples, De Seta (1981, 1991).

Fig. 1: Alessandro Baratta, *Fidelissimae urbis neapolitanae cum omnibus viis accurata et nova delineatio aedita in lucem*, [1629] 1670.

The Baratta map conveys an impression of Naples *in toto* which della Porta and his contemporaries might well have shared, blending or overlaying their immediate street experiences in the metropolis with, for instance, the view visible sailing from or to the island of Ischia. The Baratta map subtly incorporates the visual genre of a city *veduta* into a ground map; both the immediate everyday experience from the street, and the panoramic view of the city (as for instance from a boat) complement and confirm each other as they delineate the territory of Naples. It is as though all Naples were a stage decoration celebrating the power of the metropolis[21]. As Valerio has pointed out, this *mise en scène* was actually a highly conscious and politically negotiated decision. For in spite of the fact that the makers of the Baratta map were perfectly capable of producing very accurate projections, they accorded significantly more space to the *palazzi* in the center of town than to more marginal roads, lowly buildings, and the outskirts (Valerio 2013: 77-78). Accordingly, the Baratta map forges a fascinating compromise between the immediate sensual experience of urban space and a synoptic view of the space of the entire town as a gigantic stage. Even though it is slightly anachronistic, I chose this scenic representation of Naples because it neatly interlocks with the comic plot of *Tabernaria*.

If we locate on the Baratta map the four specific Neapolitan places that are (a) mentioned onstage, and (b) have a function in the development of *Tabernaria's* plot, we obtain a rather amazing result. Following the time axis of the play, these four locations are: Posillipo (on Baratta's map left of the stage, i.e. Giacoco's destination); *Cerriglio*, center-stage right; the *Vicaria*, to the right (this is the dreaded largest prison and the seat of the police who come to Giacoco's house searching for Altilia)[22]; and, finally on the back of the stage, the *lazaretto* a San Gennaro, today the Ospedale di San Gennaro. This last place is not only visually in the background, but also remote in time, because it was there that during the period of the "last Plague" Limforo and Antifilo were quarantined, and thus became separated from Altilia:

> Sappiate ch'essendo assediata Napoli da' francesi sotto il general monsieur de Leutrecche, una crudelissima peste assaltò il suo essercito, Napoli e quasi

21 For a similar way to represent Naples verbally, see Capaccio (1634). Capaccio's outlook on the metropolis is very similar in scope and intention to the Baratta map, employing a literary frame for texts where a Neapolitan nobleman discusses his city with a foreigner, their conversation set in a *palazzo* overlooking the entire town. On that author, see Nigro 1975; Siebenmorgen 2009.

22 Della Porta (2000-2003: 4 IV, 6, 332): «Limoforo. Poiché il Regente ci ha favorito nella giustizia e ordinato che si cerchi la casa di Giacoco, e ritrovandovisi Altilia e la balia, si menino a casa nostra, e Giacomino in Vicaria; se avanzarete di diligenza in esseguir questo mandato, noi avanzaremo nel premio di quel che vi si deve».

> tutto il Regno. I signori del governo, per remediare alla commune ruina, strassinavano gli appestati su un carro dalle proprie case ad un lazzaretto a San Gennaro, poco lontano da Napoli, dove si governavano, e morendo si seppellivano in una grotta quivi appresso. Ritrovandosi impestato Limoforo suo padre e Cleria sua madre e Antifilo suo fratello, furo anch'essi come gli altri portati in quel loco (della Porta 2000-2003: IV, 2, 326).

We may surmise that the Neapolitan audiences of *Tabernaria* would also have been aware of the location of these places – probably quite as they are represented in the *espace conçu* of the Baratta map. Here they constitute cardinal points delineating the perimeter of the metropolitan area. It is an overlay of two concurring perceptions of the metropolitan space.

This characteristic imbrication of Giacoco's *espace veçu* and *Tabernaria's* larger plot line as *espace conçu* also structures the play's temporal axis, first moving from Posillipo to the *Cerriglio*, then Vicaria, and finally to the place evoked in the background. The plot's counter-clockwise movement is interestingly paralleled by turning narrative time backwards, affording the peripety that provides for a happy ending. Actually, *Tabernaria* as a whole is also situated in a rather remote past: the date of the plague separating Altilia from her family is identified onstage with one general "Lautrecche", i.e. Lautrek, or Odet de Foix (c. 1484-1528) who – in the summer of 1528, during his command of the siege of Naples – severed the city's water supplies, leading to the outbreak of the plague. The French army, together with their ruthless commander, quickly fell victim to the disease[23]. Thus, the time of *Tabernaria's* action must be situated sometime during the 1540s, as Altilia and Antifilo must be in their (more or less) late teens. This sets the comedy at a safe historical distance, even for early 17th century audiences: *Tabernaria* ultimately creates a nostalgic image of the metropolis remote in time, with allusions to horrors that have long passed, but no references to living people or the very real fear of being bested by the metropolitan labyrinth – or the attendant competition between two forms of perceiving and ordering metropolitan space.

Tabernaria has (at least) another fascinating loop and space in stock: in one of the countless idiosyncrasies of Neapolitan history, the remains of Odet de Foix were buried with great pomp in the mid-16th century in Santa Maria la Nova – that is, just around the corner from the *Cerriglio*[24]. Returning from the rear of Naples' panoramic stage and from its remoteness in time, the evocation of «il general monsieur de Leutrecche» is located back in the center of town, the place also of the *Cerriglio*. Even if we cannot definite-

23 Capaccio (1634: 444-445); d'Amat (1978: 14, col. 218).

24 Annibale Caccavello crafted the monument with an epitaph by Paolo Giovio (Capaccio 1634: 445, 886; Croce 1941: 284).

ly locate Giacoco's house on the Baratta map, from *Tabernaria's* plot-line it clearly cannot be far away from the *Cerriglio*. Indeed, Cappio tells his master that his home is farther down the road – vague enough, yet if one considers that *Via del Cerriglio* is a tiny crescent, this distance must be short. Blindfolded Giacoco, as he passes all the shops where he is indebted, is aware that he is being led in circles; the layout of the surrounding streets makes this perfectly possible. On the stage of *Tabernaria* the *Cerriglio* is an uneasy site in the center of the metropolis: it may be mistaken even by street-wise people for another building nearby – and in an extended sense with itself, since it of course constitutes the stage itself. In such ways the comedy subtly imposes the *espace conçu* of metropolitan Naples on *espace véçu*, with the double *Cerriglio* onstage functioning both as master trope and *topos*. With the *Cerriglio* and its curious double, Giacoco's house, masked as *Cerriglio*, *Tabernaria* recreates the *osteria* as the double focal point of this – elliptic – synopsis. This characteristically mannerist "viewing together" from a safe distance affords a hilarious experience of labyrinthine metropolitan space.

Such a mannerist mode allows for the audiences to be simultaneously present (in their laughter) and distant. In order to enhance this effect, *Tabernaria* goes to amazing lengths by creating oblique representations of the imbrications between theatrical and metropolitan space, of *espace conçu* and *espace véçu* in its nostalgic rendering of Naples: an image of a long-ago time when urban space had not yet grown so vast. Yet this image is also coupled with the reassuring gesture that today, in a new age, everything is in order and place – just as on the Baratta map. The *Tabernaria* is a celebration of the potential of the mannerist stage for creating metamorphic illusions, where some personae are "illuded" just as in della Porta's experiments, whereas others – the laughing or stupefied audiences – are in the know, transported from the dreary realities of Naples to a world of (illusory) control.

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