**The Stylistic and Architectonic Dialogisms of Chef’s Work**

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**Abstract**

Our purpose is to explore how two under appreciated and hardly ever studied Bakhtinian dialogisms of stylistics and architectonics can help retheorize the relationship between chef’s work and the sociomaterialism and socioeconomics of diverse cuisines. Our research is about the values in the chef work, stylistic dialogism of designing dishes out of organic matter, and the more encompassing architectonic dialogism of how ethics, aesthetic, and cognitive discourses of the whole system of high cuisine changes our experiences of the sensemaking of food we eat. We conclude that an ecological approach to business modeling and strategy of chef work in the haute cuisine industry can bring about more balance with health and well being of humans, and perhaps an posthumanist understanding of what all the species of the planet need to sustain and survive.

**Introduction**

Does occupational success and performance affect creativity in organizations that deal with food preparation, and if so how? We base our study on material-discursive practices in the haute cuisine industry. We argue that through the performativity of practice, certain cooking approaches become sensible to chefs and their stakeholders are also part of architectonic discourse. At the stylistic level, chef’s enact modes of stylistic acts and deeds of cuisine innovation and creativity using plant, animal, and other organic matter to delight the sensemaking organs:

* + - Eyes that see the food and beverage
    - Ears that hear the crunch of delicacies
    - Nose to smell each delight
    - Tongue to taste each bite
    - Tactile touch of the edibles

Not just sensemaking of our embodied sense organs, but a sensegiving and sensebreaking consciousness of a dining experience. We will explore how chef’s work uses various stylistic of crafting food dishes out of organic materials (plants, animals, micro-biotics) and doing a way of storytelling that is different from our earlier work on Bakhtin chronotopic dialogisms and fast foodways (Haley & Boje, 2014; Boje, Haley, & Saylors, 2016).

Chef’s creativity is not linear or merely psychology of creative sensemaking. Rather the very stylistics are dialogical, holistic, and change consumer’s sensemaking experience. We will suggest that the social and the material are interactive, entangled in he sociomaterial stylistics of chef work. Our study therefore provides insight into “the paradoxical character of sensemaking” when its proght into the ontology of strategy and practice (Sandberg & Tsoukas, 2005). We also extend to ways chefs have non-human partners (plants, animals for food ways) but also use technologies and various toolds in their stylistic works of art.

**Stylistics goes beyond sensemaking**. Chefs are using ‘stylistic dialogism’ innovations and creativity in a craft to delight customer’s material experience, manipulating embodied sensemaking (along with sensegiving & sensebreaking). This, however, is not all there is to chef’s work. There is an ontological turn, a sociomaterialism turn, we are making in our inquiry. Our research question: how does chef’s “actually performed act or deed and the stylistic dialogized sociomaterial product” have as well, important, as yet unexplored, “ontological roots” in several discourses called, architectonic dialogism (Bakhtin, 1993: 54). His other book (Bakhtin, 1990) defines architectonic dialogism as the interanimation of three discourses: cognitive, aesthetic, and ethical. In short we take chef and cusine industry beyond polyphonic communication, and the chronotopic, into two under-studied dialogisms, stylistics and architectonics.

**How does this relate to business strategy and to business modeling?** In this inquiry, we establish ways stylistic and architectonic dialogisms are interacting with the present moment of “economic materialism” (Bakhtin, 1993: 55), more accurately the sociomaterialism takes an economic and strategic turn when we look into chef’s, cuisine, food industry supply chains, and their business modeling. Why? Because the chef’s performed act and deed of cuisine stylistics has penetrated inside the product (dishes, dining experience, restaurants, etc.). In other words, the sociomaterial of stylistics and the socioeconomic value chaining of architectonic together manipulate the consumers and food critics embodied sensemaking experiences.

We will assert that visible stylistic design attributes of the chef’s food-products, such as color, shape, or texture, allow a wider context of architectonic system producers to *explain* what their products do and how best to use them, to *excite* consumers in a way that generates sales, and to *extend* the basic functionalities of their products by highlighting their symbolic  
meanings. We then theorize that the relevance of these three uses varies in the context  
of technological evolution such that affecting products’ design-related attributes is a  
more central stylistic and architectonic organizing process in which product technologies emerge and as they mature, suggesting a U-shaped relationship between technological evolution  
and design. We also elaborate the moderators of this relationship: the frequency of  
successive product introductions, the social dynamics affecting consumption, the  
users’ level of technological knowledge, and the volume of discourse attending to  
design. Thus, the article offers a holistic theory for understanding the strategic use of  
design in the context of technological production and, as such, advances recent work  
positioning design as a primary strategic challenge.”

Our study contributes new understanding of the sociomaterial (Barad, 2003, 2007, 2008) and socioeconomic (Bonnet, Savall A.,;Savall H., Zardet, 2018) acts and deeds of chefs in their industry. Chef’s innovations and cuisine products are answerable to the domain of culture. Chefs and cuisine energize biological sensemaking that have this strange economic impact on civilization. The whole wealth of foodways culture of haute, nouvelle, and other sorts of cuisine is more than mere acts of embodied sensemaking. The brute Being of sensemaking subjectivity is actually changed by the performed aesthetic act and deed of chefs and workers, suppliers, and some food science working with food chemistry, in organizational and interorganizational complex adaptive systems, where much more than mere “elementary simplicity of the motive” of chef, consumer, and critic are involved (Bakhtin, 1993: 55).

Figure 1(withheld till publication in journal) summarizes the kinds of cuisines we are studying: the contemporary classical, inventive eclectic, and progressive avant guard. We will explore the stylistic dialogism within the encompassing architectonic dialogism.

What chefs conjure in the kitchen is done in a place, in a time, with mattering of tools, technologies, and materials. In once-occurrent worlds of cuisine,, and “what is answerable does not dissolve in what is specialize (politics)” of food critics or Micheline Star rating schemes (IBID. p. 56). Such a theory would reduce chef work and cuisine ways to mere technical and instrumental action, thereby missing the interplay of Bakhtin’s two kinds of answerability: the special answerability of the bystander (e.g. the critic, the spectator), and the moral answerability of the one our intervenes with an act or deed in the once-occurrent event of Being (Jorgensen, Svane, & Boje, in review). In other words, the chef, the critic, the vendors, then entire supply chain, including the growers of food, are all active participants and therefore “wholly answerable” (IBID. p. 56). To put it more simply, chef work is part of a large complex adaptive system that does not separate ontological ‘Being’ from the doing or the embodied sensemaking subjectivity of experience. In short , we take an ontological approach in our inquiry (Boje, 20191, 2019b; Heidegger, 1923/1988/1999; Heidegger, 1927/1962).

**Figure 2: Examples of the three cuisines (image not available until journal article published)**

We therefore oppose any theory reducing chef work that is just about sensemaking biologically (or chef’s psychology traits), or just about the socioeconomic business modeling. We contribute a stylistics and an architectonic understanding of foodways that extends to terrestrial ethics, and to an ecological approach to business modeling (Boje & Jorgensen, 2020, Boje & Rana, 2020). Our second contribution is exploring relationship of the two under-studied dialogisms: stylistics and architectonics and their Being-in-the world of chef’s and cuisine. We comprehend the life of the chef in the larger context of once-occurrent stylistic choices, and the moral answerability of food ways and supply chains, on a planet with ecological limits, entering into the whole architectonic system of interanimating discourses of ethics (even moral answerability), aesthetics (the stylistics, in particular), and cognition (sensemaking, sensegiving, & sensebreaking). We refer the reader to recent work in how business modeling is making an ecological, even a terrestrial ethics turn (see Boje, 2019; Boje & Jorgensen, 2020; Boje and Rana, 2020) and become part of socially responsible capitalism (Savall, Péron, Zardet, & Bonnet, 2017). A socially and ecologically responsible business modeling includes the trees, the sky, the plants, the water cycle, the nutrients and carbon cycle of the Earth, what Latour (2017) calls the critical zone where life exists. Chefs use terrestrial critical zone materials in what Bakhtin (p. 59) calls “the light of value”, in emotional-volitional attunement to the reigning aestehtic, cognitive, and ethical discourse interanimation. There are higher, above values to fast food, and lower, below ways of doing these cuisines that raises health and well being concerns. There are traditions fraterh back in time and nearer to now, and there are prospective sensemaking attempts to get to the ought areas of planetary food that feeds all species not just human kind (Barad, 2003, 207, 2008).

In prior work, we have done observations and interviews with fourteen Michelin starred chefs in Europe. This includes 1, 2 and 3 starred chefs. We analyzed videos of these chefs, and did the archival analysis of media accounts of these chefs. Finally we have done industry insider interviews. What we propose next is a method for assessing values.

**Method** The chef’s unique world is “permeated in its entirety with the emotional-volitional tones of affirmed validity of values” (Bakhtin, 1993: 56). We propose a starting point of the investigation is the values Bakhtin calls, ‘emotional-volitional. The chef’s unique participation is in a world of values, that the architectonic dialogism produces in its three interanimating discourses, the cognitive and aesthetic, with the ethical (the “concrete ought” p. 57). The uniqueness of Being that transform the values and is affirmed by wider cultural and economic context of values (feelings, desires, mood-attunements, & thought-judgments) is correlated with actually answerable acts and deeds of in the unique place in Being of “performing consciousness” of the “architectonic whole” a world encompassing the chef and creative cuisine products that issue forth in the dialogized marketplace that is manifold in its complexity and answerability (IBID, p. 57).

**Blaze Up the Light of Value** In sum, each actual unique place of once-occurrent historical acts and deeds of chef’s work is a sociomaterial as well as a socioeconomic, and not just a biological sensemaking subjectivity. In exploring the values of stylistic and architectonic dialogism, we are concerned with the actual lived experience of of participants, their world as actually and answerably experienced. In its unique whole. We are not studying anything like universal categories, but instead focus on “systematic unity” of their actually “experienced world” (Bakhtin, 1993; 578). We are looking at the flesh and blood fo values, in the acts and deeds of these cuisines in their once-occurrent Being, in the ongoing event of Being a chef, actualizing produces in the market place.

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