THE KITCHEN IN PAIN: (UN)MAKING *MACBETH* IN THE 'WRONG' SPACE, DYS-LOCATING EMOTION-RELATED METAPHORS

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Abstract: *This paper examines Peter Moffat and Mark Brozel's film* Macbeth *(BBC One, 2005) from the perspective of 'culinary'/'digestive' thought and passion metaphors, which appear to undergird its setting of the action in a restaurant kitchen. My approach draws on cognitive theories of metaphor such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's and Earl Mac Cormac's, on the one hand, and on neurocognitive studies of the cortical control of anger, vengeful thoughts and action, and appetite, on the other, to suggest the 'inevitability' that modern reinterpretations dis/dys-locate a revenge tragedy such as Shakespeare's to the kitchen. The BBC* Macbeth *is studied, moreover, in relation to two short films, Martha Rosler's feminist parody* Semiotics of the Kitchen *(1975) and Enrico Giori's revenge film noir parody* The Last Supper *(2016), for their shared dys-location of vengeful thoughts to the kitchen as the 'natural' space for concocting revenge.*

Keywords: Macbeth *(Peter Moffat and Mark Brozel, BBC One, 2005);* Semiotics of the Kitchen *(Martha Rosler, 1975);* The Last Supper *(Enrico Giori, 2016); kitchen; metaphor; space; agency*

One Flew over the BBC *ShakespeaRe-told Macbeth*

In November 2005 BBC One released *ShakespeaRe-told*, a TV mini-series "based on"[1] four of the Bard's plays,[2] in a project aimed to make Shakespeare "our contemporary" (in Jan Kott's famous phrase) through rewriting. Like its *Canterbury Tales* forerunner (BBC One, 2003), the overall *ShakespeaRe-told* project does more than (re)invent characters and update names or occupations[3] for the modern viewer and specifically for TV format (Kidnie 120–1). Scriptwriter Peter Moffat and director Mark Brozel's *Macbeth*, for instance, knifes its way up to an authoritative take on 'the Scottish play' by emphasising blood rather than power and converting illegitimate desire into legitimate claim. Yet, it also rewrites Shakespeare's play from royal and 'national' to

[1] Film's caption.
[2] *Much Ado about Nothing* (aired on 7 Nov. 2005), *Macbeth* (14 Nov. 2005), *The Taming of the Shrew* (21 Nov. 2005) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (28 Nov. 2005).
[3] E.g. in *Macbeth*'s case, Macduff becomes Peter Macduff (Richard Armitage), the head waiter, while the three witches are "bin men" (as they introduce themselves).

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quasi-universal in ambit through re-metaphorising[4] the (restaurant) kitchen as the space where foul thoughts of revenge can be nursed and nourished until one is ready for action. It is precisely the literal *dislocation* to the kitchen of emotion-related 'culinary' metaphors like "to nurse vengeful thoughts" or "hunger for revenge," as well as their bloody outcome – their *dys-location* – through cold-blood murder, which concerns me here in relation to the 2005 BBC *Macbeth*. I use *dys-location*[5] to indicate the emerging sense of a painful and/or vexing relationship with the locale, whether or not it becomes apparent in relation to (viz., in the wake of) a physical *dislocation* and whether or not the experiencer of dys-location coincides with that of dislocation.[6]

Moffat's *Macbeth* is Shakespeare-attuned in subtle ways. In the play's final speech, Malcolm calls the dead (and beheaded) Macbeth a "butcher" (*Macbeth* 5.8.69; Calbi 35–6). Furthermore, food/feasting/preying imagery features centrally in the text (Calbi 22; de Sousa 173–6). Shakespeare's *Macbeth* can be regarded as a play about the will to power, political rivalry, and dissolution of bonds and moral values in the seemingly endless revenge spiral, which feasting or preying serve symbolically. Notwithstanding, the proverbial "revenge is a dish best served cold" couldn't but ask for Moffat's (and other scriptwriters') kitchen and, broadly, culinary isotopy as the *cultural topos* for *Macbeth*'s events. Both the English language and Euro-American culture at large celebrate 'culinary' revenge metaphors. Or so Thane Rosenbaum's shortlist (83–4) indicates: "[Revenge] is sweeter far than flowing honey" (Achilles in *The Iliad*, 18.109); "I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him" and "If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge" (Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, 1.3.41, 3.1.45–6); "Sweet is revenge[7] – especially to women" (Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, Canto I, CXXIV); "Revenge is sweet and not fattening" (Alfred Hitchcock). In everyday speech, "I want to taste my revenge" or "I won't be satisfied until I have my revenge" phrases "satisfaction … in the same way as the alleviation of hunger" (Rosenbaum 83). Like some

[4] I use the verb *metaphorise* as Mac Cormac does, to name the use of metaphor as itself a category of speech act, whose meaning is "generate[d] out of [the metaphor's] semantic anomaly" (Mac Cormac 175). By re-turning to the literal kitchen the early cultural metaphorisation of vengeful thoughts as something "nursed" in the mind, Moffat metaphorises the kitchen as the laboratory for concocting and performing revenge.

[5] My construal (and spelling) of "dislocation" as "dys-location" is indebted to Drew Leder's phenomenological analysis of the *dys-appearance* of the body within the coenesthetic field, i.e., the *painful* recovery of corporeal *self-awareness* – normally subdued to "focal disappearance" – in cases of physical effort, age- or illness-related somatic changes and dysfunctions, and affective disturbance and mental distress (see Leder 83–92).

[6] The locale itself may cause such painful awareness of its presence, for instance due to its (ab)use as a space for inflicting psychosomatic pain. My analysis draws on Elaine Scarry's (chap. 1, esp. 47–8), which recalls Leder's corporeal dys-appearance.

[7] Likewise, *süße Rache* ("sweet revenge") is part of the German phrase *an jemandem (süße) Rache nehmen* ("to take sweet revenge on someone"), still in everyday use.

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other of the play's film adaptations, the 2005 BBC *Macbeth* opens up for discussion larger issues than adaptation, on the one hand, and regicide or even the cycle of revenge, on the other, such as, I suggest, the general cognitive appraisal of revenge as literally nourishment-related.

The 2005 BBC *Macbeth* is set in the kitchen of a high-class Glaswegian restaurant, where the eponymous character, Joe Macbeth (James McAvoy), is the young chef dedicated to his work and to mentoring his novice co-workers, and his wife, Ella (Keeley Hawes), works as the maître d'hôtel. Joe is on friendly terms with celebrity-chef Duncan Docherty (Vincent Regan), the restaurant's owner but no longer acting chef; Joe's drinking pal and confidant, however, is fellow chef Billy Banquo (Joseph Millson). Whilst Joe fosters camaraderie through singing, kitchen hierarchy makes him (as well as Billy) be acknowledged with a choral "(Yes) chef." All this starts to crumble when the restaurant gets its third Michelin star thanks to Joe. Joe beams at the thought of becoming the owner's successor, yet Duncan appoints his son, Malcolm (Toby Kebbell), to that position, to Joe's chagrin. Goaded by Ella, Joe will pick up a kitchen knife to clear his path to the restaurant ownership predicted by the three bin men.

The reason for murdering Duncan begs attention. Shakespeare's protagonist is driven to regicide by the witches' prophecy of royal ascension and subsequently by his ambitious wife. He cannot complain, though, about the rewards for his bravery: currently honoured as Thane of Glamis (*Macbeth* 1.3.49), Macbeth, the witches prophesy, will soon be made Thane of Cawdor (1.3.50). By contrast, in Moffat's script Duncan Docherty's successional decision has all but thwarted Joe Macbeth's hopes for deserved career advancement. Joe cannot forgo full acknowledgement and rewarding of his professional merits, and starts nursing vengeful thoughts against his employer in response to what he and Ella perceive as crass injustice. Whilst the offence does not jeopardise life and limb, it nonetheless seals Duncan's fate. The avenger, moreover, is a milk-drinking chef[8] who produces his kitchen's offal-based cuisine by chopping up animal carcasses and entrails – deemed respect! – not for sustenance but for conspicuous consumption. Paradox complete.

Moffat's rewriting is startlingly ingenious indeed. To demote a king to a celebrity-chef may not be to everyone's taste; nor may be murdering the ungrateful king-cum-chef virtually in the kitchen with an ordinary kitchen knife. Yet, to create a *Macbeth*-based script consistently centred on one (literal and metaphorical) topos – the kitchen and its activities – may sound Aristotelian enough to be intellectually quite palatable to many.

[8] Macbeth is "too full o' the milk of human kindness" (*Macbeth* 1.5.15) in nature (1.5.14), Lady Macbeth fears, viz., insufficiently determined to act as a man – and thus effeminate, a suckling baby. By contrast, Joe boasts eating sparrows as a child.

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Joe may not be Shakespeare's knight in shining armour on the battlefield, but shining he is, from the metallic shine of the restaurant kitchen with its utensils – Macbeth's modern armour – to his metaphorical shine as a chef. In relocating Macbeth from the battleground and castle to the restaurant kitchen, the film dis-/dys-locates Shakespeare's protagonist spatially, agentively and culturally. His half-glamorous and half-domestic position conjures the ghost of the kitchen in European culture: the kitchen of late medieval biblical drama, the space of noise and non-spirituality deemed the worldly antechamber of hell, which northern artists relished painting;[9] the witch's kitchen in Goethe's *Faust I*, the hearth (Goethe 82) cum laboratory of the witch and her demonic familiars, the apes; or, not overtly demonised, the kitchen of the social underlings featured in the compositional spaces of Dutch still life and genre painting. What these ghosts share in common is a continuum of (dis)acknowledgment of agency vis-à-vis gender: women (or disempowered/feminised men) populate the kitchen and keep its activities going to ensure everyone's sustenance – especially of those having the leisure and the education to demonise this venue in the first place.

Metaphor: the cognitive fundamentals

Certain European languages link metaphorically thoughts of revenge – and of similar passions – to nourishment, which implicitly *naturalises* revenge, i.e., renders it a 'normal' response. So does English in *to nurse revenge* or *to nurse a grudge*;[10] French in *nourrir une soif* (or *un désir* / *des idées*) *de vengeance*; Italian in *nutrire rancore*; or Romanian in *a nutri gânduri de răzbunare*.[11]

[9] E.g. Pieter Huys' *The Descent into Limbo* (1547–77, Compton Verney, Warwickshire), Jan Mandyn's *Last Judgement* (*c*. 1550, Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Mass.), and *The Harrowing of Hell* (private collection) by a follower of Jan Mandyn.

[10] The *Oxford English Dictionary*, which lists a word's senses chronologically, relates the primary senses of *to nurse* (*OED*, s.v. "nurse, v") to "nurture and care," with the gender-specific "to breastfeed" (sense 3, attested *c*. 1425) rather marginalised, preceding "to help through an illness" (4a), socially female-related, and "to try to cure or alleviate (an illness, etc.) or heal (an injury) by taking care of oneself" (4b). Pride of place enjoy the tacitly female-related "to rear or bring up; to nurture" (sense 1a, *c*. 1300) and the metaphorical "to foster, tend, cherish, or take care of (a thing); to promote the growth or development of" (2a, *c*. 1400). The sense which concerns me, "to harbour, nurture, or foster (a feeling, desire, grievance, etc.) within oneself" (2b), is attested in 1567. However, the noun *nurse* ("wet nurse; nursemaid, governess; foster mother") is earliest attested *c*. 1295 and with reference to the Virgin Mary, earliest *c*. 1390 (*MED*, s.v. "norĭce").

[11] The Romanian *a nutri* (metaphorical "to nurse") derives from the same Latin *nutrire* as does the Old French *norrir*/*nourrir*, the etymon – via Middle English – of *nourish*. The primary senses of *nourish* (*OED*, s.v. "nourish") concern respectively "nurture" (I) and "nourishment or sustenance" (II), both attested *c*. 1300; further senses concern "thoughts or emotions" (III), such as "to promote or foster (a feeling, habit, condition, state of things, etc.) in or among persons" (10a) and "to foster, cherish, or nurse (a feeling, thought, etc.) in one's heart or mind, typically over a long period of time" (10b). (Earliest attested in 1522, sense 10b ranges from

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German is somewhat more restrained in this respect: *auf Rache sinnen* ("to plot revenge") is an 'intellectual' operation rather than an 'alimentary' one. In fact, one may *nurse*, *nourish* or, more comprehensively, *harbour*[12] a variety of feelings and passions from hope to doubt and from fear, suspicion, ambition or secret plans (including vengeful thoughts) to grudge, e.g. in French *nourrir la haine / l'orgueil* but also *nourrir l'espérance / l'espoir / la passion / la reverie*[13] or in Romanian *a nutri dragoste / nădejdea* (respectively "to feel love" and "to nourish hope").

For medievalists, the scholastic legacy of Latin and of medieval monastic contemplative practices is apparent in the cognate 'digestive' metaphor sans overt violence *to ruminate on/over an idea*.[14] However, the metaphorical concept as studied nowadays by the psychology of rumination refers not to ideas in general but rather to *depressive rumination*, *angry rumination* or *vengeful rumination*.[15]

Psychoanalysts Tomas Böhm and Suzanne Kaplan argue that "revenge is perceived as *natural* in certain cultures and situations": it is "ego-syntonic" or "ego-near" (5). The Judaeo-Christian Bible provides the paradigmatic transcultural *norm*alisation – and exaltation (Akhtar 160) – of revenge through the Torah's *lex talionis* (Exod 21.23–25; Deut 19.21) and the Christian God's

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negative to neutral and positive references.) The *OED* relegates breastfeeding to a marginal position – chronologically – in the definition of both *nourish* (obsolete sense; attested *c*. 1382) and, surprisingly, of its Latin etymon, *nutrire*. By contrast, the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* mentions "to suckle" first and all other nurturing activities second for both *nutrio* and *nutrico* (*OLD*, s.v. "nūtrīcō"; "nūtriō"); metaphorically, *nutrio* (but not *nutrico*) concerns fostering a feeling or condition (sense 4), e.g. *nutrire inuidiam*. *Nutrico* derives from and *nutrio* is referred to the noun *nutrix*, "a child's nurse (esp. a wet-nurse)," etymologically comparable to the Sanskrit *snāuti*, "emits fluid, esp. milk" (*OLD*, s.v. "nūtrix").

[12] Used figuratively, *to harbour* means "to entertain within the breast; to cherish privately; to indulge"; now it usually refers to evil thoughts or designs (*OED*, s.v. "harbour / harbor, v", sense 4): to harbour suspicions / political ambitions / a grudge.

[13] One may also speak of *nourishing* one's intellect, imagination or soul (*nourrir l'âme / l'esprit / l'intelligence / l'imagination*); the figurative uses of *nourrir* evolved in the sixteenth century (Rey, s.v. "nourrir").

[14] Earliest attested in English in 1533, the metaphorical sense of *ruminate* ("to revolve, turn over repeatedly in the mind; to meditate deeply upon," 1a) precedes in the *OED* (s.v. "ruminate") the literal sense (3), attested in 1579. However, for the corresponding Middle English verb *cheuen* the literal sense is recorded as early as *c*. 1175 for animals and *c*. 1200 for humans, and the metaphorical sense *c*. 1175 (*MED*, s.v. "cheuen v.(1)").

The corresponding French, Italian and Romanian collocations are *ruminer une idée*, *ruminare un'idea* and *a rumega la ceva / a rumega o idee,* respectively.

[15] As the "repetitious focusing on the negative things in one's life," rumination "results in the psychological distress experienced after interpersonal stresses being sustained for longer periods" and "can foster aggression in response to perceived insults" (Barber et al. 255).

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"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord" (Rom 12.19, NRSV).[16] Not only does "the individual or the group see[] [revenge] as being so near the inherent way of thinking and behaving that it is not questioned" (Böhm, Kaplan 5). Euro-American culture is awash with texts, drama and films centred on violence and revenge – often an escalating "revenge spiral" (Böhm, Kaplan 33–5) – which can "serve as a catharsis or as a way of releasing one's own feelings vicariously" whilst also eliciting a dangerous "fascination with psychopaths, serial killers, and monsters who want to take over the world" (7). In a sense, Moffat's *Macbeth* (re)creates not only a revenge tragedy, but the context for experiencing cathartic revenge by aesthetic and metaphorical proxy.

In *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have famously argued against trivialising metaphors as merely "a device of the poetic imagination" and a "rhetorical flourish" (3). They contend, instead, that "[o]ur ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (3). If "human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical" (6), viz., "metaphorically structured and defined" (6), then metaphors are primarily *cognitive* tools in linguistic garb. Furthermore, metaphorical linguistic expressions can be used "to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of our activities" (7). Lakoff and Johnson's seminal theory has inspired other theorists to engage with metaphors as cognitive tools whereby individuals understand themselves within culture and the social: "Metaphor exists at its deepest level of explanation as a knowledge process that through a linguistic expression manifests itself in culture" (Mac Cormac 161).[17]

Lakoff and Johnson's and Earl Mac Cormac's metaphor theories provide the framework within which I analyse the overall metaphoric burden

[16] The translation preserves the ambivalence of Middle English *vengeance* (*MED*, s.v. "venǧeaunce"), which denotes (rightful) *retribution* (sense 1.a) and (vicious) *revenge* ("infliction of retributive injury," 1.a) or *vindictiveness* (sense 2), even *evil, harm, destruction* (sense 3); so do the corresponding Latin verb (*vindico*) and noun (*vindicta*) (*OLD*, s.v. "uindicō"; "uindicta"). If the act of vengeance "deconstructs the antithesis which fixes the meanings of good and evil, right and wrong" (Belsey 115), such deconstruction, I contend, inheres in the two-pronged development of the notion in Latin and Middle English. For the early modern dissimulation (and normalisation) of vengeance as socially wholesome retribution, see Emily King's analysis of *civil vengeance*; King's coinage names "retribution in the guise of civility" through "revenge's integration into the social fabric," viz., "government, law, and religion as well as noninstitutional discourse" (4).

[17] Mac Cormac's *A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor* distinguishes, for the sake of heuristic clarity rather than to suggest that they are mutually exclusive (128), amongst "three explanatory levels relevant to metaphor: (1) a surface level in which metaphors appear in linguistic form, (2) a deeper level of linguistic explanation, and (3) the deepest level of cognitive activity" (127). Mac Cormac unifies the three levels by regarding metaphor as an evolutionary knowledge process which mediates between mind and culture.

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of Moffat's transposition of *Macbeth*'s setting and protagonist into the kitchen. I start from the theoretical premise that "[t]he mental formation of metaphors constructs a linguistic bridge from the embodied mind to culture" (Mac Cormac 127) and, conversely, that 'solidified' metaphors shape one's mind. A certain class of metaphors, *ontological metaphors*, with its various subclasses – (a) "the mind is an entity" (Lakoff, Johnson 27–8), (b) container metaphors (29–32) and (c) personification (33–4) –, can also shed light on my topic. They could provide, I argue, a conceptual frame for the metaphorical construal of the mind as an 'organism' or 'organ' capable of ruminating over a particular idea or of nursing vengeful thoughts. Indeed, Lakoff and Johnson also address here the subclass of "ideas are food" metaphors (46–8), e.g. "food for thought." What makes ontological metaphors compelling is that they "are so natural and so pervasive in our thought that they are usually taken as self-evident, direct descriptions of mental phenomena" (Lakoff, Johnson 28).

'Culinary'/'digestive' passion metaphors in European culture, I contend, offer a cognitive map of a 'primal scene'. Metaphorisation of this sort *fuses* the 'organic' alimentary world[18] (and, subsequently, alimentary incorporation) with the world of self–other relations turned 'sour' but especially quasi-palpable, virtually an 'aliment' to be 'digested' cognitively prior to attempting remediation. In what follows I will briefly review recent neurocognitive studies of the cortical control of anger and appetite to suggest how revenge could have been conceptualised as *in-corporated*, i.e., embodied through construal in relation to one's own body – which bears on my discussion of Moffat's *Macbeth*.

Aggressive appetites: the cortical fundamentals

Discussing *orientational metaphors*, Lakoff and Johnson argue: "no metaphor can ever be comprehended or even adequately represented independently of its experiential basis" (19). My review of the neurocognitive literature concerns two issues: (a) the experiential trigger of actually nursing vengeful thoughts and (b) the cortical (and subcortical) control of both appetite, on the one hand, and anger and aggression, on the other.

According to Böhm and Kaplan, "thoughts of revenge have their basis in a *traumatic event* built up by *external violations* and our *internal vulnerability*" (19, original emphasis). When "our sense of self-esteem is hurt and our integrity is threatened" through "hav[ing] been put in an inferior position in some humiliating way," the anger thus awakened may elicit "[t]houghts and fantasies about revenge" (19). Humiliation, as we shall see, is precisely what Moffat's Macbeth avoids to confront until his wife prompts him

[18] Itself intelligible through conceptualisation in relation to the social, hence my scare quotes.

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to by means of further humiliation. Seething Joe may be, but his vengeful thoughts become apparent only when he kills Duncan.

As regards the regulation of eating behaviour, brain fMRI studies suggest three interrelated neural networks responsible for it: "the homeostatic network, regulated via the gut–brain axis; the appetitive network, which includes reward-related pathways; and higher level cognitive processes" (Makaronidis, Batterham 2).[19] Neuroimaging studies have identified the various cortical and limbic formations involved in modulating appetitive cravings (Heinitz et al.), with the prefrontal cortex (PFC)[20] pivotal for "the control of appetite regulation" (Gluck et al. 380).[21] Yet, the PFC is also "involved in high-order executive function, regulation of limbic reward regions, and the inhibition of impulsive behaviors" (Gluck et al. 380). Specifically, the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC) is primarily responsible for both higher cognitive functioning[22] and "*cognitive control* over *eating*/*emotions*," alongside motor planning (Gluck et al. 381); "[l]ack of integration in the reward and cognitive centers of the DLPFC may explain impulsive behavior, often tied to overeating and obesity" (381). Furthermore, the "DLPFC is also integrated with the mesolimbic mesocortical dopamine systems, the reward regions of the brain," to the effect that "reward cues arise solely from the DLPFC" and "[d]opamine projections in [all] these areas … are important in executing reward-motivated behavior" (Gluck et al. 381).

Studies conducted by psychologist Eddie Harmon-Jones ("Anger and the Behavioral Approach System") and his associates (Harmon-Jones, Sigelman; Harmon-Jones et al.; Harmon-Jones, Peterson) have yielded conclusive evidence regarding the association of insult-related relative left-prefrontal activation with experienced anger and also with aggression (see also Denson esp. 196). Anger "is associated with activity in the left frontal cortex, a brain region involved in approach motivation" whereby an individual is goaded to react to external stimuli by confronting them rather than withdrawing, viz., fight rather than flight (Harmon-Jones, Peterson 1381).

In brief, not only does the PFC ensure cognitive control over eating and integrate cognition and reward; it also controls the integration of emotions (e.g. anger) and response to emotion-producing stimuli (e.g. anger-triggered aggressiveness). Ironically, the prefrontal cortex "can't distinguish between food and justice – each sustains life, both are equally anticipated and subject to the same cravings" (Rosenbaum 84). Not (food) cravings or overeating concerns me vis-à-vis Moffat's *Macbeth*, but the left-prefrontal cortical

[19] For details, see Hinton et al. (1411); Makaronidis, Batterham (2); and Heinitz et al. (1347).
[20] A useful visual-textual introduction to the prefrontal cortex regions and their roles is the 3D Brain interactive model available at BrainFacts.org.
[21] See also DelParigi et al. (440) and Heinitz et al. (1347).
[22] E.g. reward evaluation, maintenance of working memory and attention.

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interconnection of absent appetite control and unchecked impulsivity as also a likely neural trigger of 'culinary' revenge metaphors in European culture, calques notwithstanding. The 'appetite' for vengefulness which such metaphors encapsulate associates culinary appetite with anger as well as aggressiveness as natural drives.

The kitchen dis-/dys-location of revenge in the BBC *Shakespeare Retold Macbeth*

I do not wish thereby to suggest Moffat's deliberate decision of metaphorical re-interpretation of Shakespeare through the kitchen setting of the BBC *Macbeth*. Whether or not Moffat had worked out his kitchen adaptation of *Macbeth* by tapping into metaphors like "to nurse revenge" is unknown to me and ultimately immaterial. Had he not, this would only prove the metaphor's cultural force despite its ossification. In speaking of its force, I am drawing on Mac Cormac's (159–62) interpretation of metaphors as speech acts (as defined by Austen). As a speech act, a metaphor has (i) a locutionary (or declarative) force whereby it conveys information – the metaphor's semantic meaning (159); (ii) an illocutionary (or performative) force whereby it performs actions – it stimulates emotions and produces intellectual perplexity in its audience, thus "destroy[ing] [the audience's] complacency in the use of language" (159), as well as creating a sense of cognitive intimacy between its producer and its audience (160–2); and (iii) a perlocutionary force, which concerns how the receivers actually react (160). In Moffat's *Macbeth*, at locutionary level the implicit *to nurse revenge* links revenge more generally to nourishment, an act fundamentally tied to the kitchen as *the* locale for food preparation. The dead metaphor's illocutionary force is refreshed by prompting the audience to regard the kitchen-related rationale for chef Joe Macbeth entertaining vengeful thoughts – hence also the irony of the latter collocation in connection with Ella as maître d' responsible for entertaining (viz., welcoming) the restaurant patrons. If the spectators react intellectually or emotionally to the unpalatable association of vengeful thoughts (and consequent murder) with the kitchen and with its Michelin-winning offal menu for conspicuous consumption, ultimately gratuitous waste of power,[23] the perlocutionary force has been fully operative.

There is a foreboding scene in the BBC *Macbeth*: Joe demonstrates the carving of meat – a pig head, shown in extreme close up (*Macbeth* 00:04:01/08–00:06:25). In this "kitchen tutorial" (Wray 262) for Jonny Boy (Gregory Chisholm), "Bandana-Boy," viz., Malcolm, and James (uncredited), Joe also lectures the three kitchen novices on respecting the animal they cook by not wasting anything:

[23] The chef's creative power; the patrons' purchasing power and social capital; Duncan's abused power which, usurped, generates a spiral of power abuse; yet also, metaphorically, the animals' vital force.

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> Joe Macbeth: All right, Jonny, Bandana-boy, over here! James, you as well. All right, first rule in a kitchen? Respect. See this animal? This animal was noble, highly intelligent, feeling, and it died for us. Never forget that. Okay, first off with the ears. Then we're going to cut down the front of the face. Be careful with your hands. Then get under the skin and pull the skin away with your hands more than you cut with your knife. Okay, turn it back around and get your cleaver, and that releases everything. Ears, cheek, tongue, brain. No waste. That, in a word, is respect.
> Jonny, Malcolm, James: Right, Chef.
> Joe: Anybody can make it in a kitchen if they've got the guts and the passion. It's not what their background is or their history. All right, Jonny Boy?
> Jonny: Thanks, Chef. (*Macbeth* 00:04:53–00:06:09)

More than the script, the images of "cleav[ing] in two, dissect[ing] and arrang[ing]" the pig head (Wray 262) offer a graphic picture of what the various knives (cleaver included) are good for in the professional kitchen and how deftly Joe handles them. No surprise later Ella praises her husband as "a knifeman," if in the context of pressing him to murder Duncan.

The BBC production pieces together a reasonable murder motive (Duncan's nepotism overriding pragmatic advancement of the better one), reasonable availability of the criminal weapon (the kitchen knife for carving meat), a politically correct workplace discourse (hard work, dedication, talent and due recognition of one's worth, as well as an environmentally correct, if logically dubious, moral respect for one's object of labour), and a psychologically reasonable space to 'hatch' a murder plot (the 'backstage' kitchen, invisible to the restaurant patrons). *Macbeth* thus becomes the perfect film noir.

Yet, the space of the kitchen is comparable topographically – on a hierarchical scale of public 'visibility' – to Freud's 'underground' unconscious. What vengeful dreams may seethe in the kitchen unconscious? The cook as a knife-wielding person in the 2005 BBC *Macbeth* – as a chef and a murder agent or mastermind – is, I argue, cognate with the protagonist of Martha Rosler's *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975). A performance recorded in short film format, *Semiotics of the Kitchen* is a parodic drama of revenge or at least an artistic take on feminist consciousness-raising which re-/dis-locates agency to the kitchen. I do not wish to claim any direct or advertent filiation of the kitchen-revenge imagery of Moffat and Brozel's *Macbeth* from Rosler's feminist performance. Nor can the steamy glamour of being the head chef in an upmarket restaurant, in the former, compare with the domestic drudgery of

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an unnamed – the quintessential – housewife, in the latter. Nevertheless, the two works are comparable insofar as both connect the kitchen and kitchen-circumscribed agency with revolt against injustice and subsequent actual or proffered revenge by means of kitchen implements.

Martha Rosler's *Semiotics of the Kitchen*

Rosler inventively reviews the alphabet mostly by deploying kitchen implements and demonstrating (possibilities for) their use in seemingly structuralist terms. Yet *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (henceforth *SK*) actually deconstructs patriarchal assumptions and carves a (domestic) space for female agency, if revengeful in immediate intent and parodic in means.

Rosler as the housewife-cook persona first dons an apron; whilst buttoning it and tying its belt, she utters its name to start running through the alphabet (*SK* 00:52–01:13). Subsequently she picks up one utensil at a time, names it – going through the alphabet from *B* to *T* – and mimics using it,[24] often in unexpected ways, dismissive and theatricalised,[25] but especially menacing and violent.[26] For the final letters, the artist picks up the fork and knife (the former in her right hand), raises them in the air and starts to form letters with her arms and upper body whilst uttering the letter names: *U* – *V* – *W* – *X* – *Y* (05:35–05:52). Her body becomes the very utensil for demonstrating the alphabet and, as reviewers point out,[27] for showing that the patriarchal "letter in the unconscious"[28] is etched onto the body, which reifies woman/women as one further utensil for feeding *man*kind (*sic*). (Women are thus dys-located to the kitchen by patriarchal fiat; nonetheless, the Symbolic risks being ladled out as emptiness when women dys-appear in the kitchen.) Subsequently, with the knife held in her left hand (and her right hand resting on the table, still clutching the fork), Rosler cuts the air in the shape of Z (05:53–05:59); the Zorro-signature of revenge ends in a relaxed crossed-arms

[24] *Bowl* (*SK* 01:16–01:22); *dish* (01:36–01:45); surprisingly, given the utensil's potential, *egg beater* (01:51–02:07).

[25] *Ladle* (*SK* 03:26–03:40); *measuring implements* (03:41–03:59); *spoon* (05:03–05:17).

[26] *Chopper* (*SK* 01:25–01:35); *fork* (02:19–02:23); *grater* (02:24–02:33); *hamburger press* (02:35–02:48); *ice pick* (02:51–03:00); *juicer* (03:02–03:07); *knife* (03:10–03:21); *nut cracker* (04:00–04:12); *opener* (04:13–04:25); *pan* (04:26–04:34); *quart bottle* (04:36–04:48); *rolling pin* (04:51–05:01); *tenderiser* (05:18–05:32).

[27] See "Martha Rosler, *Semiotics of the Kitchen*."

[28] For Lacan, "it is the whole structure of language that psychoanalytic experience discovers in the unconscious" (413), for "language, with its structure, exists prior to each subject's entry into it at a certain moment in his [*sic*] mental development" (413). Thus, the unconscious conceived as language "is the Other's discourse (with a capital O)" (436) – "[t]he radical heteronomy" posited by Freud "gaping within man" [*sic*] (436). Accordingly, construing the unconscious as language/discourse, I contend, works differently along gender lines: in women's case, it metaphorises their psyche's colonisation by patriarchal culture as the fundamental Other.

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posture (06:00–06:09), punctuated only by a half playful and half dismissive shrug (06:04–06:05).

An uncanny primer for kitchen beginners, complete with a mnemonic algorithm? A hijacked TV cookery show? For Rosler, *Semiotics of the Kitchen* works such that "[a]n anti-Julia Child replaces the domesticated 'meaning' of tools with a lexicon of rage and frustration" (qtd. in "Martha Rosler"). By championing the role of women as domestic cooks, Julia Child, the iconic American cook of *The French Chef* cookery show (1963–1973), had endorsed the patriarchal stereotype of the (kitchen-)committed suburban housewife. Not only does the feminist artist's parody debunk the myth of the woman happy to slave away in the kitchen for her family. It also metaphorically attacks – often through straightforward gestures – the invisible fe/male supporters of "the woman's place is in the kitchen" cliché, elided with the female audience of cookery shows. Thus,

> As she [Rosler] proceeds through the alphabet, rendering eggbeaters, forks, hamburger presses, and rolling pins as weapons, it becomes clear, as she finishes in a Zorro gesture with raised knives [*sic*; actually only one knife], that the semiotics of the kitchen signify [*sic*] containment, fury, aggression, resentment, and potential revenge. The semiotics of the kitchen has nothing to do with cooking. (Brundson 111)

Objectifying women as *of* (not just *in*) the kitchen, the cliché articulates patriarchy's sociopolitical and ideological aggressiveness. Having a female persona aggressively demonstrate what *can* be done with (and about) kitchen utensils, Rosler turns the tables on the myth on which patriarchy rests passively expectant to see women docile in their place – in the kitchen. Indeed, already with the introduction of the bowl Rosler's gestures entail more often than not slamming the implement down on the table, wielding it menacingly or jabbing it into the air to convey by sound and gesture the barely contained fury of the woman whom patriarchy consigns to menial chores and confines to the kitchen as her steamy empire. All this is performed as Rosler maintains a deadpan face and voice. She may look robotic (and dehumanised) in her expression and especially movements, but what drives her demonstration is not so.

The Last Supper: A dys-location of Rosler's *Semiotics of the Kitchen*?

Unsurprisingly, Rosler's bitter parody has inspired various parodies, some of which are available on YouTube. One in particular – by Enrico Giori, copyrighted March 2016 – deserves attention in relation to the kitchen-brewed revolt which *Semiotics of the Kitchen* shares with the 2005 BBC *Macbeth*. Entitled *The Last Supper*, the black and white short film "portrays the revenge

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of a homemaker on her husband" (Giori): a quasi-invisible woman prepares an unpalatable pudding for her equally invisible husband – his last (and lonely) supper through her 'betrayal'. With Rosler's *Semiotics* in mind, Giori makes his protagonist's betrayal bear little resemblance to Judas's in the textual and iconographic Last Supper the film evokes. Giori acknowledges that his piece "draws upon stylistic aspects of Martha Rosler's 1975 'Semiotics of the Kitchen' and Lady Gaga's music video 'Telephone'" (released in 2010). The other intertextual echoes acknowledged are the sound from the "1950 public domain movie 'D.O.A.'[29] and a personal re-adaptation of [the] 1953 instructional film 'Marriage is a Partnership'" (Giori). He must have been unfamiliar with Peter Greenaway's film *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (1989), where the abused wife avenges herself on her husband by forcing him, at gunpoint, to eat from the cooked cadaver of her lover (murdered by her husband and his henchmen) before shooting him dead. In *The Last Supper*, "[t]he presence of the husband is only suggested, and the woman is stripped of all that makes her unique" (Giori) – they are stereotyped as Husband and Wife; her recipe, however, is unique … à la Lady Gaga. Here is my transcript of the film:

> (*Music – the opening bars – from* D.O.A. *In comes a woman – head not shown; wedding ring visible – in a black dress, with a tray full of cleaning products, which she places on the kitchen table next to a plate. She starts chopping a dirty sponge. Female voice-over:*) In the kitchen … (*silence*) I can't turn back. Took a lot of courage to get this far. Who knows what'll happen after this, I wonder. (*She pours liquid from a black bottle over the chopped sponge in the dish.*) A lot has happened in the last year, our first year of marriage. (*She pours liquid from a white bottle.*) Gee, we had a good start! I remember coming home from a wonderful honeymoon. (*She grates white soap.*) Ha! I was so lucky. The house was taken care of: Bill's mother owned a two-family house; she lived upstairs and we moved in downstairs. (*She puts on the white rubber gloves, then adds penne pasta from a tiny glass bowl and mixes the ingredients up.*) Bill had a really good job. He worked in the same store as my Daddy. (*She sprays glass cleaning liquid over the pudding.*) But Daddy didn't introduce us, though. We met at Suzy and Pete's wedding. (*She removes her gloves.*) I'll never forgive Daddy (*she places the dish into the oven without oven mitts*) for not telling me about Bill. (*Music. She removes the dish from the oven.*) We got to know each other a lot in our two years of our engagement. We loved each other in

[29] Rudolph Maté's *film* noir *D.O.A.* ("Dead on Arrival") features a man who learns from the doctors he has been poisoned lethally and, during the last days left, investigates who did it and why.

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> a way that stood the test of … well… I guess two years' time at least … Hmm… (*Music rises to a crescendo.*) That's [unintelligible word]. (*She grates more soap over the baked penne.*) And here we are in our home – in the place that's supposed to be our home – on our first anniversary... (*she picks up the dish*) cooking his last supper… (*Music. She leaves the kitchen to place the dish where her husband will sit. Close-up of the table, with the dish to the left, a bottle of Italian wine in the middle ground left and an as yet empty glass of wine centre-right. He – in a black suit – comes and sits down, not revealed by the camera; his right hand takes the fork. Voice-over:*) Enjoy your dinner, darling! (*As soon as he tastes the pudding he drops his fork and the screen goes black; her stiletto heels are heard departing.*) (Giori, *Last Supper*)

The Last Supper is more than a bleak pastiche of the deadpan Rosler parody and the vibrant Lady Gaga music video. In style, it echoes Rosler (with an extra pinch of suspense inspired by Maté); as regards meal contents, Lady Gaga; in feminist scope, both. However, the reason for vengeance in *The Last Supper* remains as undisclosed as the couple's faces – yet quite likely it bears on the patriarchal 'eternal feminine' qua kitchen servitude, hence the film's indebtedness to *Semiotics of the Kitchen*.

Conclusion

Shot thirty years after *Semiotics of the Kitchen*, the BBC *Macbeth* evokes it, perhaps unwittingly, in their shared concern with (in)justice, albeit with a jarring difference. Joe's is the drama of a professionally emasculated man – appositely set in the restaurant kitchen, for a modicum of social visibility and acclaim as befits agentive masculinity. Rosler's, by contrast, is the drama of the always already disempowered woman, confined to her domestic kitchen and lacking any social visibility until she revolts. 'Rosler' in the kitchen is but an empty slot to fill in the particular name of the 'generic' housewife – for Martha Rosler, an impersonation of one powerful domestic stereotype, as Cindy Sherman would also impersonate, in various guises, in her *Untitled Film Stills* (1977–1980, MoMA) shortly afterwards. Giori's *The Last Supper* continues the deconstructive aggression of Rosler's feminist 'primer' in film noir visual terms (also through black and white shooting), leaving the title's (ir)religious allusion to betrayal open: is it the wife's, the husband's or patriarchy's?

Betrayal – alongside revenge – is the common thread throughout all three works, and betrayal is rarely one person's alone. Society too betrays individuals, not least through the dissemination of engrained metaphors which due to their familiarity may either blind us to their deadly content or seem to legitimate our least palatable thoughts and actions. Shall one ascribe hunger

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for revenge and aggressive action thereupon – or 'culinary' revenge metaphors articulating them – exclusively to the prefrontal cortex and to the metaphors' cognitive ambit?

But, then, who knows the mysterious ways of the mind vis-à-vis the illocutionary and perlocutionary force of metaphors, not dissimilar from the treacherous powers of wine and inebriation? Or, as Lady Macbeth has it, when planning to imbibe Duncan with wine to render him the easier victim,

> *Will I with wine and wassail [toasts] so convince [overcome]*
> *That memory, the warder [guard] of the brain,*
> *Shall be a fume [vapour], and the receipt [receptacle] of reason*
> *A limbeck [alembic] only.* (*Macbeth* 1.7.64–67)

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