The Meaning of *Wagashi* as a Reflection of Japanese Cultural Values in the Drama Entitled *Watashitachiwa Douka Shiteiru*

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ABSTRACT

The culture of eating (shoku bunka) in Japan has become known to the world community today. These include sweet cakes known in Japanese as *wagashi*, which are usually served at the same time as the tea ceremony (chanoyu). *Wagashi* has various types, and is made based on the conditions and philosophy contained in the maker itself. In the drama *watashitachiwa douka shiteiru* the characters who make *wagashi* convey the meaning and background of making the *wagashi*. From the meaning and background of making this *wagashi* there are Japanese cultural values contained in it. As a result, 18 *wagashi* data have their respective values. The most aesthetic values found are 10 data, social values are 6 data, loyalty values are 5 data, responsibility values are 3 data, loyalty/trust value and creativity value are 2 data. From the discussion, it can be concluded that from the whole *wagashi* made almost all refer to the beauty of the manufacture. In addition, the philosophical strength of the reason and purpose of making is also very pronounced in its manufacture.

Keywords: *Wagashi*, Japanese cultural values, Drama.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning a language cannot be separated from the socio-cultural inherent in a particular area. The socio-cultural or social culture of the people in the region affects the use of words to the style of language used. Therefore, when they want to learn a particular language, it will be easier and more helpful if the learner also knows the culture of that community.

The Japanese are known for their culture that respects hereditary traditions. Even today's traditional Japanese culture is still embedded in everyday life. One of the popular cultures in Japan and even famous in the world is eating culture, or in Japanese, it is known as *Shoku Bunka*. *Shoku Bunka* or eating culture in Japan is closely related to the social, cultural, and historical values of the food served [1, pp. 273]. Of them, for example, in a tea ceremony or *chanoyu*, there is a cake or a typical Japanese snack called *wagashi*. *Wagashi* is a combination of two words *wa* (和) which means things about Japan while Kashi means sweet cake or sweet candy [2, pp. 3]. Then Tsuji said that the origin of the word *kashi* (菓子) itself comes from a word that refers to fruit, namely *kajitsu* (果実), and means seeds or seeds that are absorbed from the Chinese language when which the Nara era, cakes or sweets entered Japan as "Chinese fruit" [3, pp. 326]. So, the word *wagashi* can be summed up as confectionery cakes or traditional Japanese sweets/candies.

*Wagashi* can describe a reflection of the conditions, activities, and culture of the Japanese people. These cultural models can be made explicit by the expression [4]. One way of expressing it is by using *wagashi*, which seems to be able to "talk" to convey meaning to those who enjoy it. Various types and kinds of *wagashi* have their philosophy of the meaning of manufacture. The meaning of making *wagashi* also has traditional cultural values in it.

Cultural values contained in *wagashi* can be seen from values such as respect for human dignity, basic rights, private property rights, patriotism, loyalty to one's wife or husband, religiosity, sacrifice, giving help, cooperation, individuality, equality, social, privacy, democracy, and others [5, pp. 56]. Then the classification of other cultural values includes social values, religious values, aesthetic values, responsibility values,
educational/knowledge values, creativity values, loyalty/trust values [6].

This research on the values contained in Wagashi is taken in a Japanese drama entitled watashitachiwa douka shiteiru by Natsumi Ando, on the grounds that the drama it describes and clearly tells the Japanese culture about making wagashi. This drama is popular in Japan, aired on the NTV channel from August 20, 2020, to September 30, 2020. This television drama is adapted to the small screen from a comic/manga with the same title and author.

2. METHODS

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. Qualitative research is used because it is based on a phenomenological thinking strategy that is flexible and open by emphasizing inductive analysis which places research data not as a means of proof but as a basic capital for understanding [7, pp. 47]. Then, the strategic steps used are data provision, data analysis, and presentation of data analysis results [8, pp. 5]. The data from this study were obtained from the wagashi contained in the Japanese drama watashitachiwa douka shiteiru by Natsumi Ando. Wagashi data are classified as related to traditional cultural values that exist in Japanese society. Then each wagashi is analyzed and discussed based on the meaning and philosophy contained in it.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the classification results, it was found that there were 18 wagashi data from the drama Watashitachiwa douka shiteiru with various Japanese cultural values in it. The following Table 1 details below.

Table 1. Details of the wagashi and the cultural values it contains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Wagashi</th>
<th>Cultural Values</th>
<th>The Amount of Cultural Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>めじろ/ Mejiro</td>
<td>Aesthetic value, creativity value</td>
<td>10 data of Aesthetic Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>淡墨桜 / Usuzumizakura</td>
<td>Loyalty value and trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>葉桜/ Hazakura</td>
<td>Loyalty value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>新月/ Shingetsu</td>
<td>Aesthetic value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>白藤/ Shirafuji</td>
<td>Social value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>光月最中/ Kougetsu-monaka</td>
<td>Social value, aesthetic value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>落とし文/ Otoshibumi</td>
<td>Loyalty value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>はさみ / Hasami-giku</td>
<td>Aesthetic value, creativity value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>笹の葉/ Sasanoyō</td>
<td>Social value, responsibility value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>しまやのわらび餅 / Shimaya warabi-mochi</td>
<td>Social value, responsibility value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>葛桜/ Kuzu-zakura</td>
<td>Loyalty value and trust.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>蜻 / Hotaru</td>
<td>Responsibility value and Loyalty value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>夕顔/ Yuugao</td>
<td>Aesthetic Value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>空明 / Kuumei</td>
<td>Aesthetic value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>明月/ Meigetsu</td>
<td>Aesthetic value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>冬暖/ Fuyutataka</td>
<td>Social value, aesthetic value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>つばき餅/ Tsubaki-mochi</td>
<td>Aesthetic value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>桜の羊羹/ Sakura no yakan</td>
<td>aesthetic value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the Table 1 above, it can be seen that from 18 data on cultural values that are mostly depicted from wagashi, namely related to aesthetic values, it has the most data with 10 data, this is because the dominant wagashi making is based on the shape and beauty of the cake itself, thus making people who enjoy it can feel balance and happiness. In addition, the value of loyalty is found quite a lot with 6 data, this illustrates that the making of wagashi is also associated with the loyalty of married couples to describe the longevity and happiness of marriage. Then the social value found 6 data that illustrates that the making of wagashi is based on things related to the relationship between people, both good and bad relationships. Next is the value of responsibility with 3 data, depicted from making wagashi which shows one's responsibility for something decided or determined, also related to work. Furthermore, the value of loyalty/trust and the value of creativity are each with 2 data, this illustrates the relationship between wagashi making and manufacturing techniques to the philosophy behind the function of making wagashi. For more details, an explanation of each wagashi is described in the following discussion.

3.1. Wagashi Mejiro

![Figure 1 Wagashi Mejiro.](image1)

This wagashi is in the shape of a Mejiro bird. This bird nicknamed is the 'Golden Soprano' because it has a very beautiful voice, Nao the character who made this wagashi, made the wagashi shaped like a 'Mejiro' bird because he was inspired by the beautiful and clear voice of his customers. The aesthetic value of making this wagashi as shown in the picture, that Nao the maker thought about in detail so that it looks like the original. The value of creativity can also be seen from this wagashi. Because of the inspiration that Nao got, so he made his own cake or wagashi.

3.2. Wagashi Usuzumizakura

![Figure 2 Wagashi Usuzumizakura.](image2)

This wagashi was made by Tsubaki during a wagashi competition, a gift for Mayu's wedding. Pale cherry blossoms are special cherry blossoms that change color before they bloom and fall. Dark pink when budding, light pink when blooming, and before fall will turn a faded color. Like a wedding that is celebrated once in a lifetime, of course, the usual sakura is not quite right. Must use the only correct option. From the explanation of the philosophical meaning of wagashi, it can be seen that the value of loyalty and trust given to lovers who get married, it hoped that the marriage will last and be done once in a lifetime.

3.3. Wagashi Hazakura

![Figure 3 Wagashi Hazakura.](image3)

This wagashi was made by Nao during a wagashi competition, a gift for Mayu's wedding. Usually what is famous about Sakura is the pink color that radiates when it blooms. However, the spring storm that hit made the flowers that looked beautiful at first fall from each other. Soon after, the thick leaves and fresh green season came. Thus, although the days passed, both the bride and groom will always be together forever and always overflowing with happiness. As well as wagashi usuzumizakura, the value of loyalty to married couples is drawn from the philosophical meaning of wagashi maker. Even though it is difficult for the bride and groom to go through, they are expected to continue happily in their married life.
3.4. Wagashi Shingetsu

This wagashi was made by the character Nao when he came to Kogetsuan by bringing gifts according to Tsubaki’s request. The gift that Nao brought was a black yokan as shown in the picture, which was named Shingetsu. The beauty of the full moon at night is undeniable. By making it in a yokan, it will magnify the golden light that is in it. However, on a moonless night, there is the only starlight that is much more beautiful. Flowers unite their scents, and night reveals its essence. From this yokan, there is a desire to taste its delicacy. It means ‘beautiful without the moon’, although the know-nothing special Kogetsuan this wagashi will still look beautiful. From here, it can be seen the aesthetic value in making this wagashi which is described philosophically in a state of the night on a full moon. Imagine the beauty while enjoying this wagashi.

3.5. Wagashi Shirafuji

This wagashi is similar to a wisteria flower. It was ordered by Shirafujiya at Kogetsuan a long time ago. Wisteria flower has the meaning of prosperity for descendants, describing Shirafujiya who has protected the shop and his family. From this philosophical meaning, it can be seen that social values are related to prosperity and happiness in life.

3.6. Wagashi Kougetsu Monaka

The Wagashi Kougetsu Monaka made by the character Nao, which was ordered by Shirafujiya, tastes like fresh sweets, where there was no monaka in Kogetsuan. Eating this wagashi combined with tea makes it delicious and pleasing to the heart. From the philosophy of this manufacture, it can be seen that the aesthetic elements of shape and beauty are taken from the conditions of ancient kougetsuan, and its social values, as illustrated by Nao’s friendly attitude towards Shirafujiya, who waits patiently for his wagashi order.

3.7. Wagashi Otoshibumi

On Father’s Day, Tsubaki and Nao serve wagashi ‘otoshibumi’ during a tea ceremony at the Samidare residence. The color looks soft and charming. The small details on it describe the egg. When the eggs hatch, the leaves protect the hatched chicks from enemies. It is as if feeling the love from parents. For Tsubaki, it was Kogetsuan’s wagashi, the love given to him by his father. His father always taught Tsubaki not to waste red beans or a spoonful of sugar. Because it will make sweets served at tea ceremonies, celebratory wagashi, and souvenirs that will spread throughout the world. Even though Tsubaki often fails and gets scolded, she feels love. From the context and meaning of making this wagashi, it can be seen that the value of loyalty can be seen from the love of children towards their father by
making this wagashi. Wagashi is described as a form of love.

3.8. Wagashi Hasamigiku

Figure 8 Wagashi Hasamigiku.

This wagashi made by Tsubaki was sold at the event 2 years ago. The beautiful and attractive appearance with delicious taste makes this wagashi sells well. From here you can see the aesthetic value, the character Tsubaki makes Hasamigiku details beautifully so that people who see it want to eat it. In addition, the value of creativity is shown by Tsubaki who thinks about what form of wagashi can sell well. It is from Tsubaki’s creation that the beautiful and inviting Hasamigiku wagashi is formed.

3.9. Wagashi Sasonoyo

Figure 9 Wagashi Sasonoyo.

Kyoko tries to prevent Nao's warabi-mochi from being sold during Tanabata week, so she orders Mr. Tomioka to make wagashi in the shape of bamboo leaves. This wagashi was named Sasonoyo. This shows the social value of the competition between Kyoko and Nao in selling wagashi during tanabata. The value of responsibility is also shown from Mr. Tomioka's attitude of trying to be responsible after being given the task of making wagashi compete with Nao’s.

3.10. Wagashi Shimaya Warabi-Mochi

Figure 10 Wagashi Warabimochi.

This wagashi is made by Nao which is sold during Tanabata Week. Shimaya is the name of the shop that makes warabi-mochi, which is delicious and soft like eating water. Shimaya's signature warabi-mochi is protected with monaka to make it more popular when sold. The way to eat it is combined with extra roasted kinoko to create the right taste. Just like wagashi sasonoyo, the social value of making this wagashi is seen when the real Nao doesn't want to compete with Kyoko when selling this wagashi during tanabata. But in the end, they compete and from the value of responsibility, Nao is responsible for the decisions in making this wagashi.

3.11. Wagashi Kuzuzakura

Figure 11 Wagashi Kuzuzakura.

Kuzu-zakura became sakura because of the leaf. When Tsubaki first met Nao, Nao made a wagashi in the shape of a cherry leaf for the wedding and wished the bride and groom continued happiness. Tsubaki thinks that her family is complicated, so she considers family as enemies. Meanwhile, according to Tsubaki, Nao is special. Nao considered cherry blossoms to be precious, so he made this wagashi with a leaf base. From here, the value of loyalty and trust in making wagashi is seen when Nao hopes that the philosophy of his wagashi will make Tsubaki happier in her marriage.
3.12. Wagashi Hotaru

Figure 12 Wagashi Hotaru.

Hotaru-wagashi was made by Nao for Sojuro (master of Kogetsuan) as an example of the wagashi to be served during the evening tea ceremony. This wagashi depicts a firefly which in Japanese is called Hotaru. Nao keeps her pregnancy a secret from Tsubaki, because there is a fear in Nao that if her true identity is known to Tsubaki, it will only hurt Tsubaki. Hotaru-wagashi reminded the events of that night when Tsubaki said that she and Nao would always be together with the fireflies that stopped right above Nao's ring finger. Nao considers the fireflies to be the most beautiful ring in the world and will always shine in his heart. From the meaning of this wagashi there is a form of the value of Nao's responsibility and loyalty who wants to continue with Tsubaki under any conditions.

3.13. Wagashi Yuugao

Figure 13 Wagashi Yuugao.

This wagashi is made by Tsubaki and served during the evening tea ceremony. The shadow that Tsubaki carved on Yuuga-wagashi made the yellows look radiant guests who enjoyed this wagashi could feel the bright moonlight in the sky at night. From this wagashi can be seen the aesthetic value, beauty in form and philosophy. This beauty makes people not only enjoy the taste but the beauty and pleasure in eating this wagashi.

3.14. Wagashi Kuumei

Figure 14 Wagashi Kuumi.

This wagashi was made by Tsubaki during the selection meeting at the Samidare pavilion. Usually, people do not look directly at the rising moon, people prefer to see the reflection of the moon from a puddle as if the moon was floating in the water. Just like wagashi yugao, aesthetic value can be seen from the philosophical meaning of this wagashi. Tsubaki thought of the beauty that one who would eat this wagashi could enjoy.

3.15. Wagashi Meigetsu

Figure 15 Wagashi Meigetsu.

This wagashi was made by Tsubaki during the selection meeting at the Samidare pavilion. The bright shining moon that shone in the sky and no clouds expressed Nao's unmistakable feelings. The black honey in it flows in the sky where the moon rises, the moon seems to float. The flower inside looks like a star. Just like wagashi yugao and wagashi kuumei, Tsubaki thought of the high aesthetic value of making this wagashi, as shown in the picture. Tsubaki wants people to enjoy the taste and beauty of this wagashi.
3.16. Wagashi Fuyuatataka

Figure 16 Wagashi Fuyuatataka.

Wagashi was made by Nao, for the determination of Kogetsuan’s heir at night. Yuzu skin soaked in syrup and inside filled with paste is a combination with a very charming result. When you eat it, you will feel the warm sensation of the yuzu skin that melts in your mouth and the soothing aroma. From the philosophical meaning of making wagashi, there are social and aesthetic values. Social value can be seen from Nao’s hope for good relations between people for existence in Kogetsuan.

3.17. Wagashi Tsubakimochi

Figure 17 Wagashi Tsubakimochi.

Wagashi was made by Tsubaki for the determination of Kogetsuan’s heir at night. In Genji’s story, it is explained that tsubaki-mochi is the first sweet made, domyoji-mochi that is among camellia leaves. When you eat wagashi, besides tasting its deliciousness, it also reminds you of a precious memory that you have shared. The value that can be seen from this wagashi is aesthetic value, seen from the details of the shape that Tsubaki thinks of as a marker of precious memories that once happened.

3.18. Wagashi Sakura no yokan

Figure 18 Wagashi Sakura no yokan.

Nao makes this wagashi inspired by the book of his mother. This is the first time Nao has made wagashi in red, a sign that the trauma is gone, as the truth has been revealed that his mother is innocent of the murder that took place 15 years ago. The value of basic human rights is reflected in this wagashi, which can be seen from the philosophy of making this wagashi by Nao, who is grateful that his mother is free from murder charges. Then the aesthetic value can be seen from the beautiful shape of the color determination with its philosophical meaning.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion found, it can be concluded that the making of wagashi cannot be separated from the aesthetic value that is formed from its philosophical meaning. This is evidenced by the aesthetic value that is most often depicted from the data on the meaning of wagashi obtained with 10 data. Furthermore, it can also be concluded that the values contained in the meaning of wagashi are all related to the conditions, meaning, and purpose of making the wagashi, which can also show the specificity of making wagashi in certain events.

Suggestions from the results of this research are that this research can be used as a basis for further research from diction and the use of language style or cultural stylistics in the drama watashitachiwa douka shiteiru associated with existing cultural values, by combining diction, cultural stylistics can help Japanese language learners can better understand not just culture but the meaning of the language contained in the conversation in the drama.

REFERENCES


