

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 which when 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 shiteru* 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 *Watashitachi wa 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

No.	<i>Wagashi</i>	Cultural Values	The Amount of Cultural Values
1.	めじろ/ <i>Mejiro</i>	Aesthetic value, creativity value	10 data of Aesthetic Value
2.	淡墨桜/ <i>Usuzumizakura</i>	Loyalty value and trust	
3.	葉桜/ <i>Hazakura</i>	Loyalty value	
4.	新月/ <i>Shingetsu</i>	Aesthetic value	6 data of social value
5.	白藤/ <i>Shirafuji</i>	Social value	
6.	光月最中/ <i>Kougetsu-monaka</i>	Social value, aesthetic value	5 data of loyalty value
7.	落とし文/ <i>Otoshibumi</i>	Loyalty value	
8.	はさみ/ <i>Hasami-giku</i>	Aesthetic value, creativity value	3 data of responsibility value
9.	笹の葉/ <i>Sasanoyō</i>	Social value, responsibility value	
10.	しまやのわらび餅/ <i>Shimaya warabi-mochi</i>	Social value, responsibility value	2 data of loyalty value/trust
11.	葛桜/ <i>Kuzu-zakura</i>	Loyalty value and trust.	
12.	蛍/ <i>Hotaru</i>	Responsibility value and Loyalty value	2 data of creativity value
13.	夕顔/ <i>Yuugao</i>	Aesthetic Value	
14.	空明/ <i>Kuumei</i>	Aesthetic value	2 data of creativity value
15.	明月/ <i>Meigetsu</i>	Aesthetic value	
16.	冬暖/ <i>Fuyuatataka</i>	Social value, aesthetic value	2 data of creativity value
17.	つばき餅/ <i>Tsubaki-mochi</i>	Aesthetic value	
18.	桜の羊羹/ <i>Sakura no yokan</i>	aesthetic value	

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.

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.

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.

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



Figure 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



Figure 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



Figure 6 Wagashi 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



Figure 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*

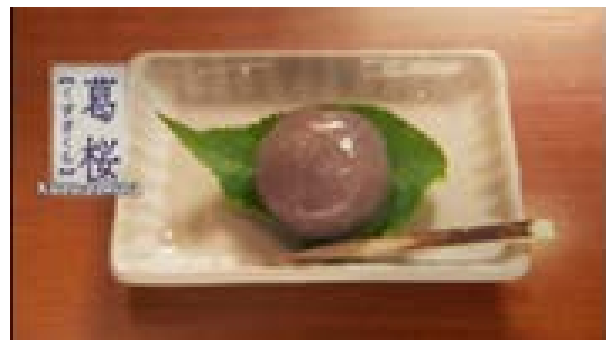


Figure 11 *Wagashi Kuzuzakura*.

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 Kuumei.

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 yuugao*, 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 yuugao* 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.

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