

CULINARY INTEGRATION AND SWEET IMAGINATION

THE CASE OF JAPANESE CONFECTIONERY UNDER GLOBALISATION

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ABSTRACT

The Japanese food boom in recent years makes Japanese cuisine one of the most popular food around the world. There are also many academic studies on different aspects of Japanese food culture, among which, culinary globalisation is one of the popular discussed topics in recent years. Japanese traditional confectionery or *wagashi*, as one part of Japanese cuisine, has also gone global. In this thesis, I will discuss how *wagashi* goes global by investigating a case study of a *wagashi* company in Taiwan called Toukaya. *Wagashi*'s exquisite appearances represent the changing seasons. Toukaya makes adjustments and innovations on *wagashi* designs and uses local ingredients to make *wagashi*, which makes the traditional confections more appealing to local people and also shows more possibilities and flexibilities for *wagashi* under the trend of globalisation.

Keywords: Food culture, globalisation, localisation, Japanese cuisine (*washoku*), Japanese confectionery (*wagashi*)

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PART I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Purposes

Japanese popular culture (such as music, animation, television (TV)-dramas), and Japanese traditional culture (such as tea ceremony and Japanese religions) have been widely discussed in diverse ways by scholars around the world. In recent years, Japanese food culture has also drawn many scholars' attention such as Rath and Assmann (2010), Harada (2011), Farrer (2015), Bestor (2000), Cwiertka (2006), Wu (2015) and Imai (2010; 2015). Following the world's recognition of Japanese cuisine and the high popularity of consuming Japanese food in the world, scholars have also recently discussed Japanese cuisine and its globalisation. My main research subject of this thesis is focused on a particular part of Japanese cuisine, namely Japanese confectionery or *wagashi* (和菓子). So far, *wagashi* has been discussed in some aspects such as its history (Yabu, 2015), its developments with tea ceremonies (Konishi, 2004), its cultural symbols related to local culture and traditional events (Konishi, 2004; Rath, 2014). However, I have not seen any research focusing on *wagashi* in relation to globalisation. I first realised the phenomenon of *wagashi* had gone global when I opened a random magazine on a shelf in a convenience store in Sweden and saw a couple of pages about how to make *wagashi* at home. After doing some research on *wagashi*, I found very few articles or books discussing *wagashi* in English and none of these articles related to globalisation. I would like to approach this topic for the very first time and discuss how *wagashi* has gone global. Besides looking into some big *wagashi* companies that promote *wagashi* outside of Japan, I have chosen a specific case study of promoting *wagashi* in Taiwan, namely a *wagashi* company called Toukaya, and investigated how it brought *wagashi* to Taiwan and how it promotes *wagashi* to the local people.

1.2 Studies of Food Globalisation

Food exchange is not a recent phenomenon (Farrer, 2015; Phillips, 2006). Food has travelled across different regions and nations since centuries ago, but not until the 1970s and 1980s have the relationship between food and globalisation started to be studied in an academic way (Phillips, 2006, p.38). Sidney Mintz's study of sugar in 1985 was one of the very first studies that showed the relationship between food and the global economy, imperialism, sociality, identity, industrialisation, etc. However, the later studies of globalisation and culture were seldom centred on food (Phillips, 2006, p.38), and James Farrer stresses that Mintz's study of sugar ignored an alternative regional centre of globalisation, namely Asia, but has an Atlantic bias (Farrer, 2015, p.3).

Anthropologist Kim Kwang-Ok argues that the previous studies of food, ‘like other subfields of material culture, have been focused on the so-called authentic culinary methods, forms, and meanings of a particular “national” or “ethnic” cuisine or dish, produced and consumed in its supposedly “original” social place’ (Kim, 2015, p.1). However, time seems to have changed. Food has followed the globalisation flow and started to travel around the world. Kim stresses, ‘the boundaries of authenticity and originality are blurred and multiplied’ (ibid.), and ‘the image, meaning, value, or identity of a nation or an ethnic group is competed over, negotiated, and compromised through the rediscovery, regeneration, remaking, and even invention of cuisine and dishes’ (ibid.). The most popular trend in food studies, according to Kim, may be the study of the nutritional and medicinal purposes of food. However, food is not just something ‘good to eat’ but also something ‘good to think’ because food can play a role ‘as a mechanism to materialize modes of thought and to express a group’s identity, cultural system, or social classificatory system’ (ibid., pp.1-2).

In recent years, studies focusing on particular cuisines and globalisation are drawing attention from scholars in anthropology, economics, politics and other academic fields. For example, the book, *The Globalization of Chinese Food*, edited by David Wu and Sidney Cheung (2002), gives an angle from many anthropologists, and discusses Chinese food in different parts of the world, focusing on how Chinese food has been introduced, maintained, and adapted according to different lifestyles and tastes. In the book, not only has Chinese food overseas been studied but also Chinese food in China that has been influenced by social changes and foreign culture. Published in 2015, Farrer’s book is one of the newest academic essay collections of Asian cuisines surrounding the keyword of ‘globalisation’. This book not only focuses on Chinese food but also other Asian cuisines that have travelled both within and outside of Asia in the age of globalisation. This book aims to answer these following questions: what is Asian cuisine? How do Asian cuisines travel? What is the meaning of the globalisation of Asian cuisines? Farrer stresses that cuisine is a symbolic social practice and communication ‘within a field of social relationships that define what is edible, how it’s cooked, and what constitutes good tastes, or a *culinary field*’, and in the age of food globalisation, ‘culinary fields in the contemporary era have become increasingly transnational in their social and economic organization’ (Farrer, 2015, pp.4-8). Edited by anthropologist Kim Kwang-Ok (2015), the book *Re-orienting Cuisine: East Asian Foodways in the Twenty-first Century* provides different ways of looking at food in its transnational and cross-boundary movements such as the relations

between food producers and consumers, markets of imagination and food practice in particular social and historical conditions.

According to scholar Lynne Phillips, there are three distinct but often interrelated approaches to understand the modern globalisation of food: ‘the international circulation of food products as commodities, the transnational expansion of food-based corporations, and the global governance of food and food issues’ (Phillips, 2006, p. 38). Food as a commodity is focused on models of international trade and their implications for agricultural food systems, standardised planting, food production for exportation that involves labour relations, and concerns about the loss of plant diversity and food insecurities in rural places. Anthropologists often stressed the commodities of food globalisation with cultural and historical contexts (ibid., pp.38-40). The food-related transnational corporations (TNCs) have global investments and control how the food is grown, processed, distributed, and purchased (ibid., p.40). Studies of TNCs often look at their attempts at searching for cheaper labours and new markets, strategies to develop standardised yet flexible production systems in different places, and also the localising practices to suit the local eating habits (such as McDonald’s and KFC), as well as the influences of these practices on local eating patterns, including health-related issues (ibid., pp.40-42). The third approach of studying food globalisation is to examine how international organisations and institutions such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO) mobilise and govern food within and beyond nation-states, suggesting that those international organisations and institutions not only set up international trade agreements and arrange investments for TNCs, but also help set up standards for agricultural land use, food quality, food safety, food patents, and help improve food producers’ working environment and incomes (ibid., pp.42-43).

There is a theoretical shift in the study of food from focusing on food production to food consumption and ‘this recent shift attends to the important process of culture-making as a central component of globalization’ (ibid., p. 46). ‘Food has been, and continues to be, central to the production of a global imaginary’ (ibid., p.43). It is because ‘the idea of globalization has been nourished through food, particularly with the mobility of people and of ideas about cuisine and nutrition’ (ibid., p.37). Food, under the globalisation trend, has been and is still often associated with a particular place and group of people, presenting the images of the local culture and identity. Moreover, the flow of food ideas and knowledge, and the mobility of people help create, reinforce, and challenge the process of food globalisation (ibid., pp. 43-45). For instance, the idea that farmers who produce the food should understand the global market

and food producing technology to improve the business, and food images and ideas portrayed by mass media, product advertising, and also tourist industries about what to eat and how to eat, as well as food shortage problems, have helped shape a global imaginary (ibid., pp.43-45). Food travels with people and when people travel to different places, they bring their culinary culture from one place to another, presenting, reproducing, and expanding the ideas about food and food systems. During the process, how to cook the food, what to use and how to make the food taste better is involved in the food producing and consuming practices. People who travel play an important role in food globalisation, as do mass media and food policies.

1.3 Contemporary Japanese Food Consumption in Taiwan

My thesis focuses on Japanese confectionary and is centred on a case study of a Japanese confectionary company in Taiwan. It is important to have a general view of Japanese food in Taiwan and how the Taiwanese consume Japanese food (as well as other aspects of Japanese culture, of which food is an important part). During my visit to Taiwan in 2017, I saw hundreds of Japanese restaurants and cafés from small streets to luxurious department stores. Although there are many other foreign food restaurants as well, Japanese, or Japanese-style restaurants, may be one of the most popular ones.

In chapter 6 of Kim Kwang-Ok's book, David Wu investigates Japanese foodways in Taiwan. Taiwan's historical relation with Japan has had a great influence on Taiwanese food culture and people's eating habits. David Wu stresses that the consuming of Japanese food in Taiwan is a phenomenon of Japanese cultural nostalgia for Japanese colonialism and global imagination of Japanese capitalism (Wu, 2015). The popularity of Japanese food in Taiwan is not a recent phenomenon but dates back to Japanese colonial rule from 1895 to 1945 (ibid.). The Japanese introduced new agricultural industries such as sugar and tea planting to Taiwan and also brought new food culture to Taiwan. During the Japanese colonial period, many Japanese restaurants (*ryōriya*) opened in Taiwan and served 'high' class and expensive cuisines including Japanese, Taiwanese, and Western cuisines to the Japanese colonial elites and elite Taiwanese businessmen (ibid., pp.110-111). David Wu states that those Japanese restaurants helped create 'a class differentiation on the island between Japanese cuisine and Taiwanese no-cuisine (or low cuisine) in the traditional food industry and among consumers' and 'a class distinction among Taiwanese people on the basis of one's social, economic, and educational standing' (ibid., p.111). When Harada mentions Japanese cuisine in its colonial periods in

Taiwan and Korea, he also stresses that in the colonies, the culture of the suzerain was always thought to have a higher value (Harada, 2011, p.247).

After World War II, Taiwan's new government KMT (Kuomintang), which moved from mainland China after World War II, launched a series of policies, aiming to 're-educate' the Taiwanese to become Chinese. They forbade the import and consumption of Japanese cultural products such as films and music, meanwhile promoting Taiwan as an 'authentic cultural China' by using Chinese cultural products (Wu, 2015, p.112). After 1990, when it became clear that KMT's 'de-Japanisation' project had failed, a new wave of Japanese cultural consumption among young people, especially focusing on popular culture in all kinds of forms including manga, music, fashion, modern Japanese restaurant food, etc. appeared in Taiwan (Iwabuchi, 2002a, p.121; Wu, 2015, p.112). This new generation of Japanese cultural consumers became known as *harizu* (哈日族), which means young people who adore things Japanese (Iwabuchi, 2002a, p.124) or fanatic fans of Japanese culture (Wu, 2015, p.121). The liberalisation movement, the removal of the ban on broadcasting TV programs and music in the Japanese language in the early 1990s, as well as the development of mass media technologies and the entertainment industry in Taiwan helped develop the recent popularity of Japanese culture in Taiwan (Iwabuchi, 2002b). The media also focused on Japan, (in fact, as I have noticed, until now, Taiwanese mass media still pay a lot of attention to Japanese culture and promote Japanese products) which has attracted the young generation to travel to Japan (Wu, 2015, pp.112-113). The new popularity of consuming Japanese culture also brought different Japanese restaurants and also new types of Japanese eateries into Taiwan. In addition to the new modern restaurants followed the opening of Japanese department chain stores such as Sogo and Mitsukoshi, *izakaya* (Japanese traditional bar), *shokudō* (cafeteria), and Japanese style bakeries can also be seen in Taiwan (ibid., p.113).

In contrast to the generation who grew up and received Japanese education under the Japanese colonial period, the younger generation who follow the Japanese culture in Taiwan may not even speak Japanese or have any particular feeling of longing for Japanese culture. Instead, the popularity of Japanese culture among young people in modern Taiwan, as Iwabuchi concludes, '...is no longer just dreams, images, and yearnings of influence, but a lived reality—that is, the material conditions in which they live—the mediated reference for self-transformation has changed for some Taiwanese young people from the abstract to the practical, something within reach' (Iwabuchi, 2002a, p.155). Iwabuchi's focus on Japanese popular culture (especially TV dramas) in Taiwan shows that the young consumers in Taiwan find

Japanese TV dramas more attractive than American ones due to the ‘cultural and bodily similarity and textural subtlety’, and ‘under globalizing forces, the sense of cultural similarity and resonance in the region are newly articulated’, reflecting ‘an emerging sense of sharing the same temporality based upon the narrowing economic gap, simultaneous circulation of information, abundance of global commodities, and common experience of urbanization’ (ibid., p.21). In other words, Japan is seen as a highly modernised country, and the contemporary consumption of Japanese cultural products in Taiwan can be considered as simulating Japan’s path of modernity and synchronising its continuous developments in order to not let Taiwan ‘be left behind’ by Japan in the rapidly growing globalisation trend.

To turn the focus back to Japanese cuisine in Taiwan, the popularity of Japanese food is not only because of the great influence of Japanese food culture on the local food culture since the colonial period. Going to Japanese cafés and restaurants in the highly modernised department stores and buying imported Japanese ingredients from the Japanese supermarkets also marks a distinction from buying local food in the traditional wet markets in Taiwan, creating an imagined consumption of the ‘modern Japanese culture’. As David Wu stresses, this contemporary phenomenon of consuming Japanese food for distinction ‘can be understood in connection with a continued cultural imagination of Japan, and has a significant impact on the island ethnic differentiation and social class formation’ (2015, p.123).

1.4 Research Methods

My research focuses on Japanese confections in Taiwan, and my purpose is to examine how Japanese confections have been brought into Taiwan, what innovations have been made and how local people are adapting Japanese confections. Ethnography has been my main research strategy for this thesis. Eating is one of the most important activities in our daily life. How people eat, what people eat and why people eat in such ways represent a certain group of people’s culture, history, thinking, experiences, etc. Food can also reflect a place’s economic changes, religious beliefs, and social change. I chose ethnography as my research strategy because it has ability to ‘illuminate locally relevant understandings and ways of operating’ and it allows me to ‘experience events, behaviours, interactions, and conversations that are the manifestations of society and culture in action’ (Murchison, 2010, pp.12-13).

Books and articles about Japanese culinary culture as well as cultural globalisation are my main academic references. The books and articles give me the historical knowledge about

Japanese cuisine and how Japanese cuisine went global. I also include Emily Wu's self-written book (2014) about her story with *wagashi* and her *wagashi* business in Taiwan. *Wagashi* is part of Japanese cuisine, and theoretical perspectives of Japanese cuisine can be applied to Japanese confections. For an even broader view, academic references of globalisation give me a wider range of theoretical perspectives. Historical knowledge of *wagashi*, as well as Taiwanese culinary history, are also important parts of my thesis. Books and articles of such topics are also included in my reading list.

The research project of Japanese confections in Taiwan is my original research. In addition to examining several cases of *wagashi* business companies and individual *wagashi* artisans who promote *wagashi* around the world, I have specifically investigated the case of Toukaya, a *wagashi* company in Taiwan. I went to Taiwan in March 2017 and stayed in Taiwan for three weeks to do my fieldwork. The most important part of my field research was to attend Toukaya's experience course in Taipei (the capital city of Taiwan) to observe and experience how the founder, Emily Wu promotes *wagashi* in Taiwan in her 'Taiwanese ways'. During the experience course, I observed the students who came to the course, the class setting and also had conversations with Emily Wu and other students. During my three weeks of fieldwork, I also travelled around Taiwan and visited other cities such as Kaohsiung, Taichung, and Hualien. I went to different night markets in Taiwan to see the 'Japanese food' among the street food that is more or less modified to suit the local market. Since there are many Japanese-style cafés and bakeries in Taiwan, I also visited some of them as well as local bakeries where they sell 'Japanese-style' confections in order to see how the local people consume Japanese sweets.

Toukaya and Emily Wu have attracted the mass media's attention in recent years. Emily Wu has been interviewed by local news media and also has been invited to radio stations and different TV shows to talk about how she went to Japan to learn *wagashi* and then brought *wagashi* back to Taiwan. Since social media is also an important platform for Toukaya to share events and information, I have also followed Toukaya's activities on social media and have had personal communication with Emily Wu through Facebook four to five times after I returned from Taiwan.

1.5 Thesis Structure

As mentioned, *wagashi* is a seldom-discussed academic topic, especially in relation to globalisation. I firstly bring up the topic of a broader and more general topic of the

‘globalisation of Japanese cuisine’ and discuss how some scholars define Japanese cuisine. In Part III, I will focus on my main topic of Japanese confectionery (*wagashi*) and introduce what *wagashi* is and its history before discussing the contemporary *wagashi* promoted globally by giving some examples of *wagashi* companies and also some individual artisans. In the fourth part of the thesis, I will investigate a particular case study of promoting *wagashi* in Taiwan and discuss how the *wagashi* artisan, Emily Wu, brought *wagashi* into Taiwan and how she promotes *wagashi* to suit the local culture and consumption habits. Before I present the general conclusion of this thesis, I will also discuss what distinguishes *wagashi* from other confectionery in the age of globalisation based on the case studies.

PART II Japanese Cuisine and Globalisation

2.1 Washoku

Japanese cuisine is also called *washoku* (和食), adopted from Japanese. The first character ‘*wa*’ refers to Japan and the Japanese and also has the meanings of peace and harmony. The second character ‘*shoku*’ means food, meal or eat. According to Harada, ‘*washoku*’ is a term that has a blurred definition (Harada, 2011, p.15). From a narrower view, whatever the main dish is, as long as it includes a bowl of rice, a bowl of miso soup and vegetable pickles, the whole set can be called ‘*washoku*’ if we define Japanese cuisine by the form it presents. Hamburger meat with radish mousse and soy sauce can also be called ‘*wafū ryōri*’ (Japanese style cuisine) if we define Japanese cuisine by its taste (ibid.). From a broader view, the term ‘*washoku*’ was popularised after the Meiji period with the purpose of distinguishing Japanese cuisine from both Western and Chinese cuisines (Harada, 2011, p.16; Walravens and Niehaus, 2017, pp.5-6). However, many dishes that are thought to be Japanese cuisine are actually from foreign cuisines (Cwierka, 2006, p.8; Harada, 2011, pp.14-16), for example, *tonkatsu*, *tempura*, *ramen* and *castella* cake (a kind of Japanese sponge cake). Harada and Cwierka both emphasise that Japanese cuisine is not self-developed (Cwierka, 2006, p.9; Harada, 2011, p.19). ‘*Washoku*’ is not ‘there’ at the beginning, its development has involved creation, adjustment, adoption, and innovation. Japanese cuisine is developed by absorbing culinary culture from different regions and different countries, making this part of its own by combining, adjusting, and reforming the cuisine along with its culinary technology (Harada, 2011). ‘It is certainly true that modern Japanese cuisine is particularly abundant in foreign borrowings, especially from China, Korea, Europe and the United States. However, there is probably no cuisine that at one

time or another has not relied on foreign borrowings' (Cwiertka, 2006, p.9). The process of cuisine development never stops and will not stop. As Harada stresses, due to the development and propagation of technology, as well as the expansion of trading circles, the way of cooking, the ingredients and the eating habits will change by time even within the same place and environment (Harada, 2011, pp.16-17).

2.2 Washoku Goes Global

Thanks to the developments in internet technology, transportation technology and mass media, different cultures are communicating, and globalisation processes are happening all the time. The fast-developing technology not only provides us a faster speed for food transportation and better food storage techniques, making people around the world be able to access the ingredients from different regions, but also provides culinary information through internet news, social media, and mass media in every corner of the world, as long as the internet is available. Discussing cultural globalisation helps us better understand how a culture travels and how different cultures communicate, how conflicts, adjustments and combinations occur during the process, and how a new kind of culture comes to shape under the trend of globalisation. I found the topic of culinary globalisation very interesting because firstly, consuming food is the most basic need in our life but at the same time, it is very personal and unpredictable. Secondly, culinary globalisation is a cultural development that affects our daily life imperceptibly while we are consuming food and it is still a very new topic to be discussed in academia, which opens up different perspectives and angles for scholars to discuss.

Nowadays, Japanese cuisine is one of the major global culinary genres; in almost every country, one can easily find Japanese sushi restaurants or ramen places. Japanese food is widely considered as healthy and tasty, and it is getting more and more popular. In 2013, *washoku* was also recognised by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage. According to Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, during the 3-year period from 2013 to 2015, restaurants that were registered as Japanese restaurants overseas increased by about 60% (*The Japan Times*, 2016), which is a very significant number showing that Japanese food is gaining global popularity. Japanese cuisine has gone global and '*washoku* and globalisation' is one of the new topics nowadays when scholars (such as Farrer, 2015) discuss Japanese food.

The Japanese culinary globalisation process is similar to other types of cultural globalisation such as Japanese music, animations, movies, and manga that involves cultural

conflicts, communications, adjustments, adaptations, adoptions, and innovations. The progress of a cuisine's development contains two important steps, according to Harada (2011, pp.249-253). The first step is conflict, including cultural, social, economic, and political conflicts. The second step is to choose, to accept or to reject. What we know about Japanese cuisine and the dishes we enjoy nowadays are historical cultural products that are still changing while we are consuming the products, no matter where in the world. When a cuisine travels to another culture (regions/countries), it goes through the process of conflict to adjustment and localisation before it settles down and later either becomes an exotic cuisine that is more or less localised or becomes part of the local cuisine that can only be found in this particular culture. Many dishes that are currently consumed in people's daily life in Japan that are thought to be Japanese cuisine but actually have origins from foreign cuisines, for instance, *tonkatsu*, *tempura*, *ramen* and *castella* cake. These dishes are nowadays widely accepted as 'Japanese cuisine' because firstly those dishes cannot be seen in other cuisines. Secondly, those dishes are already Japanese and have become products of Japanese history.

Nowadays, when *washoku* has gone global, the development of Japanese cuisine continues in a broader way. Tsuji Yoshiki, the president of the Tsuji Culinary Institute, divides contemporary globalised *washoku* into three categories. The first one is called 'Gimmick *Washoku*'. This kind of cuisine, according to Tsuji, has 'Japanese cuisine-like' ('*washoku-ppoi* (和食っぽい)') ingredients and appearances but has been totally (*kanzen ni* (完全に)) modified to suit local people's tastes, for example, California rolls (a sushi roll that is rolled inside out and contains cucumber, crab surimi meat and avocado). However, in Japanese people's eyes, it is not 'authentic'. Some kinds of 'gimmick *washoku*' might be a 'gimmick' at the beginning, but as time passes, the tastes have been accepted by Japanese people such as *onigiri* (rice balls) with mayonnaise flavour fillings that can be easily bought in convenience stores in Japan. The second category is called 'Hybrid *Washoku*', which was created in foreign cuisines (not Japanese cuisine) and does not have a Japanese food appearance. However, it is cooked with essential Japanese culinary technology. The third category is 'Progressive *Washoku*'. It uses Japanese ingredients and is cooked in an essential Japanese culinary way but at the same time, the dish has been innovated by using new ingredients and new ways of cooking (Tsuji, 2013, pp.46-52).

2.3 Culinary Soft Power, 'Authenticity' and Symbolism of Food

The term 'soft power' was first coined by American political scientist Joseph Nye in the late 1980s. Soft power, unlike hard power that uses military force and economic power to force others to do things to get what one wants, uses 'a different type of currency (not force, not money) to engender cooperation – an attraction to shared values and the justness and duty of contributing to the achievement of those values' (Nye, 2004, p.7). Food can also serve as a country's 'soft power'; according to Farrer, 'culinary soft power' 'can be defined as the acknowledged attractiveness and appeal of food culture that adheres to a nation, region or locality' (Farrer, 2015, p.10). Japan provides a very good example of setting up culinary policies and organisations to promote Japanese food in and outside of Japan. Examples include 'food education' ('*shokuiku* (食育)'), also known as 'nutrition policy' (Assmann, 2015, p.168), and the 'Japanese restaurant certification system' introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) (Farrer, 2015, p.11). Some of the policies promote Japanese food culture as forms of 'soft power industries' and emphasise spreading 'authentic' Japanese food and, at the same time, encourage not only Japanese people but also non-Japanese people to become the promoters (Farrer, 2015, pp.10-11). The 'Japanese restaurant certification system' became known as the 'sushi police incident' (Farrar, 2015, p.11; Tsuji, 2013, pp.46-47). The purpose of the system was to spread authentic Japanese cuisine by certifying restaurants outside of Japan. However, this kind of system has been criticised both inside and outside of Japan 'as a clumsy attempt by the government to define culinary authenticity' (Farrer, 2015, p.11). Tsuji stresses that 'sushi police' were meant to control the 'Japanese food' outside of Japan that uses spices and seasoning, which is absolutely seen to be 'not Japanese' by Japanese people (Tsuji, 2013, pp.46-47). He criticises that Japanese people have been too narrow-minded when it comes to Japanese cuisine. Tsuji also states that he is concerned about the future of Japanese cuisine inside Japan in the phenomenon of globalisation where the rest of the world is challenging the boundary of *washoku*, innovating *washoku* to make it more creative, and opening up more possibilities in the Japanese culinary world (Tsuji, 2013, p.53).

Imai argues that many Japanese chefs are still claiming the place-based 'authenticity' of Japanese food (the original place where the dish is from) and also promoting the concept of 'umami' (defined as the fifth basic taste along with sour, sweet, bitter, and salty, and is provided by glutamate, or 5'-ribonucleotides) as the essence of Japanese cuisine. She also criticises the narratives of Japanese media, which only aim to increase the national income without thinking much about the future of the culinary globalisation (Imai, 2015).

Firstly, the word ‘authenticity’ refers to the meaning of origin, truth and sometimes tradition when it relates to culture. It comes with a historical background that shows its origin and trueness. As a basic human need, food is consumed by everyone no matter where, when, and how. Culinary ‘authenticity’ is an often-discussed topic among food scholars. The difference between food and other non-food objects is that food goes to the body and the preferences of the tastes, textures, smells, etc. are very individual based on different historical background, education, ages and even gender. Because of this, defining the ‘authenticity’ of food is complicated because no matter from which angle we discuss it, from the origins of the ingredients to the cooking methods or the taste (appearances, smell, etc.), we need to relate the food to the background of the food producers and food consumers’ personal experience (historical, social and cultural). In her article, ‘Nobu and After: Westernized Japanese Food and Globalization’, Imai stresses that,

ethnic foods are supposed to have their origins in different regions of the world, use different ingredients, and be prepared by different people, all of which strengthens the sense of authenticity. In acknowledging that there are many kinds of ethnic foods, we show a strong feeling or consensus about the definition of our mainstream food, located in our ‘home’ place; for instance, while Japanese food in Japan is not ethnic, in America it falls into the category of ethnic food. In fact, the process of figuring out the authenticity of other food cultures could be seen as a process similar to that by which we recognize the identity of others and also our own. (2010, p.11)

Anyone could have contributed to the changing of the food and the invention/reinvention of the food. Therefore, for people with different background, “authenticity” of the same kind of food may differ. Based on places, the ‘authenticity’ of certain cuisine can also be different. To put it simply, if the ‘authenticity’ of a cuisine or dish has to be discussed, there should not be only one single ‘authenticity’ in the world, but multiple. As anthropologist Kim argues:

When discussing foodways, therefore, the concept of authenticity does not seem particularly useful. Searching for authenticity can be a futile endeavor. (...) What is needed, in this regard, is to find a way to approach and understand food as a genre of cultural history by trying to illuminate the process by which a certain food acquires a particular position and definition over history, rather than approaching it as a stationary cultural item that is unchanging over time and space. (2015, p.3)

In the article, ‘The Soft Power of Food: A Diplomacy of Hamburgers and Sushi’, Reynold argues the following:

Food can be symbolised in many ways: a sterile product, or an item of consumption that has historical and cultural symbolism to name but two. The latter of these two symbolic conceptualisations (the cultural-symbolic definition of food), is the primary understanding of food when it is used as an issue to carry an actor’s soft power. It is this symbolism (and values) attached to the food—more than the food itself—that enables soft food-power to be successful. (2012, p.49)

Reynolds also implied that the symbolic nature of food culture including the norms, messages and preferences of food is rather controlled by the society and individuals than by government. Therefore, when exporting food culture, it is hard to keep the purity of the cultural and ideological messages of the food. In order to make soft food-power effective, the symbolism and cultural message attached to the food must be kept (ibid.).

The ‘authenticity’ of the cuisine has various definitions for people with different cultural and social backgrounds. Thus, in what way the food is cooked, where the ingredients are from and whether some other ingredients are added to make it taste better or have a better texture are all related to the background of how the cuisine travels into the place and how the local people perceive the cuisine’s physical factors such as taste and smell, as well as its cultural and social meanings. A cuisine has to be consumed by people in order to express its meanings of being an ethnic food. Physical (e.g. taste) or psychological factors (e.g. religious belief) can stop an ethnic food from getting into a new social group. When a cuisine is able to settle down in another place and culture, the most important factor is the cuisine is accepted by the local people (Ashkenazi and Jacob, 2000, p.186). I would like to suggest, that standardising the ‘authenticity’ of the cuisine and setting up rules of how it should look, how it should taste and how it should be prepared is only narrowing down the possibilities of the cuisine and limiting the culinary cultural meanings. Instead, we should emphasise the cultural values and the symbols of the ethnic cuisine when promoting the cuisine under the globalisation trend to find its culinary position and cultural purpose in accordance with various local culinary habits and social roles.

2.4 Japanese Food in Popular Culture

Food policies help promote cuisines, and food-centred popular culture also introduces food culture to the world and attracts global consumers. Popular culture can strengthen a country's soft power, as many scholars such as Joseph Nye (2004) and Iwabuchi Koichi (2015) have pointed out. Japan is one of the biggest popular culture exporting countries. Many Japanese animation, manga, music, video games and TV shows have been translated into different languages and consumed around the world and have made many consumers attracted to Japanese culture. Asia is the biggest market for Japanese culture consumption. Due to its geographical location and historical background with Japan, Taiwan has become a big Japanese popular culture importing and reproducing place. Japanese food has been a popular theme in Japanese popular culture. There are many Japanese manga, animations, TV dramas, and TV programs that focus mainly on Japanese food, which has attracted a large audience and helped promote Japanese food widely around the world, creating a phenomenon of imaginary cultural consumption of Japan. The first *wagashi* I got to know is *dorayaki*, thanks to the popular animation Doraemon I had been watching on TVB Jade, a Hong Kong TV channel that was accessible in Mainland China when I was still a child. Doraemon is a cat robot from the 22nd century who loves *dorayaki* so much that it falls for traps with this confection all the time. I always wondered why Doraemon is crazy about this confection and it was not until the first time I went to Hong Kong that I was finally able to buy *dorayaki* in Hong Kong's biggest Japanese snack chain and fulfilled my imagination of this 'mysterious' sweet. Food in popular culture can affect consumers' thoughts about food and consumption behaviour. It can even change one's life by producing the ideological images of food to encourage one to follow his/her culinary dreams such as Taiwanese *wagashi* artisan, Emily Wu, who became attracted to *wagashi* for the very first time when watching a Japanese TV show called TV Champion. As Fabio Parasecoli, professor of Food Studies at New York University stresses in his book, *Bite Me: Food in Popular Culture*, 'pop culture constitutes a major repository of visual elements, ideas, practices, and discourses that influence our relationship with the body, with food consumption, and, of course, with the whole system ensuring that we get what we need on a daily basis, with all its social and political ramifications' (2008, p.3).

PART III WAGASHI AND GLOBALISATION

3.1 Japanese Traditional Confectionery (*Wagashi*)

In this section, I will introduce what *wagashi* is, its classifications, history, and characteristics, drawing on books by Yabu (2015), Konishi (2004) and Emily Wu (2014). *Wagashi* refers to Japanese traditional confectionery. The first character ‘*wa*’, refers to something Japanese, like other ‘*wa*’ in *wa-shoku* (和食, Japanese food), *wa-fuku* (和服, traditional Japanese clothes), and *wa-shi* (和紙, Japanese paper). ‘*Wa*’ also carries the meaning of peace and harmony. The second character, ‘*gashi*’, is modified from ‘*kashi*’, which means confectionery. It was not until the Meiji period that Japanese confectionery was named ‘*wa*’-*gashi* to distinguish it from sweets from other countries (Yabu, 2015, p.32). *Wagashi* nowadays are colourful, appealing to the eyes, and crafted in different exquisite styles. Different kinds of *wagashi* are consumed on different occasions. Some of them are consumed at seasonal events, tea ceremonies and traditional rituals. Some of the *wagashi* such as *senbei* (煎餅, rice crackers) and *daifuku mochi* (大福餅, round glutinous rice cake stuffed with a sweet filling such as *azuki* bean paste) can be consumed on a daily basis. However, in different seasons, different seasonal ingredients may be added.

3.2 Classifications of *Wagashi*

Wagashi can be divided into different kinds depending on moisture contents, usages, manufacturing methods and seasonal events. With regard to the moisture contents, *wagashi* can be divided into three kinds (Wu, 2014, pp.26-32; Yabu, 2015, pp.150-151): *namagashi* (fresh confectionery with a moisture content of 30% or more), *hannamagashi* (half-dry confectionery), and *higashi* (dry confectionery).

In the category of *namagashi*, there are *asanamagashi* (朝生菓子) and *jōnamagashi* (上生菓子). *Asanamagashi* literally means *wagashi* made in the morning, and it is supposed to be consumed within the same day. It is usually for daily use and more affordable compared to *jōnamagashi* (Yabu, 2015, pp.128-129). *Jōnamagashi* can be translated as ‘high-grade fresh confectionery’. It is usually hand-crafted into different shapes upon customers’ requests by using white bean paste (known as *nerikiri* or *konashi*) that can be dyed using food colours, emphasising the seasonal natural beauties such as flowers (see figure 1) and birds (see figure 2). *Jōnamagashi* is often used for more formal events such as a tea ceremony. The host of the

tea ceremony discusses with the *wagashi* artisan about what to make, and the artisan makes the *wagashi* that suits the season and the purpose (Konishi, 2005, pp.195-196). *Wagashi* can be used for different purposes and occasions. Based on usage, *wagashi* can be divided into several categories, such as *kōgeigashi* (*wagashi* for exhibition to show the craftsman’s skills), *chasekigashi* (*wagashi* for a tea ceremony) and *hikigashi* (*wagashi* for ceremonies or rituals). *Wagashi* can be made by handcrafting (such as most of the *namagashi*), steaming (such as *manjū*), frying, baking, pressing into wooden forms of different shapes and patterns (such as a kind of *higashi* called *rakugan*) or solidifying by using a kind of vegetable gelatine called *kanten*, such as *yōkan* (see figure 3). In different seasons, there are different representative *wagashi*, for example, *sakura-mochi* (see figure 4) for spring, *ohagi* for autumn and *hanabiramochi* for New Year. The most basic ingredients for *wagashi* are rice flour, bean paste and sugar. Seasonal ingredients such as cherry blossom, *yuzu* fruit (Japanese citrus) and other ingredients such as food colours and green tea powder will also be used for seasoning and colouring to further enhance the seasonal expressions.



*Figure 1: Toukaya’s jōnamagashi for Mother’s Day: Carnation
(source: Toukaya website)*

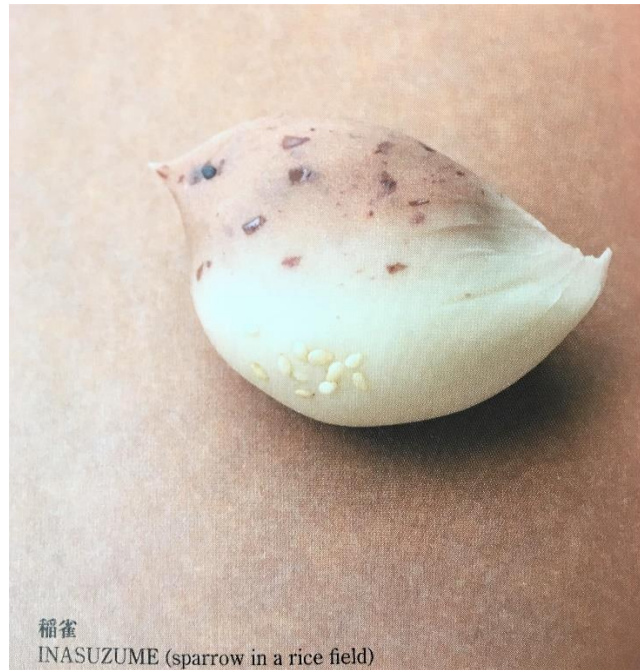


Figure 2: Jōnamagashi: Inasuzume (sparrow in a rice field)
(source: Yabu, 2015, p.85)



Figure 3: Yōkan (source: Yabu, 2015, p.61)



Figure 4: *Sakura mochi* (source: Yabu, 2015, p.7)

3.3 The History of *Wagashi*

Like other types of Japanese traditional culture, *wagashi* had a long history before it was shaped into what we see nowadays. Chinese culture and Western culture have had a great impact on *wagashi*'s development (Tsuji, 2013, p.172; Yabu, 2015, pp.32-33). Japanese close attention to the five senses of food and the sense of nature have shaped *wagashi* from natural fruits and nuts in ancient times to today's edible art.

According to Yabu (2015, pp.20-29), the origin of *wagashi* was only '*kashi*', which simply referred to nuts and fruits. In ancient Japan, the *kashi* was consumed as a sweet while grains and meat from the animals in mountains and water were the main sources of energy. During the reign of Emperor Suinin (29 BC-70 AD), the Emperor ordered his servant Tajima Mori to go to the so-called 'Eternal Land' (Southwest China) to bring back a kind of fragrant fruit. Although Emperor Suinin died before Tajima returned to Japan with a kind of orange called *tachibana* (橘), Tajima Mori has been worshipped as a 'God of Sweets' to this day. Japan's 8th-century mission to China during the Tang Dynasty brought Chinese confectionery to Japan, where it was called '*tōgashi*' ('Tang confectionery'). It is made with rice flour or

wheat flour and different kinds of beans and is usually fried in oil or boiled in water. Tang confectionery was served to the upper class and also used as offerings to Buddhist and Shintoist deities. Many of the Tang confectionery can still be seen in some Buddhist temples and Shintō shrines in Japan nowadays. At that time, sugar was not available in Japan, so sweetener extracted from other ingredients such as sweet arrowroot (called *amazura*) was used for sweetening the confectionery. According to the legend, at the beginning of the Kamakura period (1185-1333), the Japanese Buddhist priest, Myōan Eisai, brought back green tea seeds from China and started planting tea trees in Japan. The custom of drinking tea was established and the technology of making *wagashi* also advanced. In the Muromachi period (1336-1573), people started to eat between-meals at tea ceremonies. In the between-meals, snacks called ‘*tenshin* (点心)’ such as *yōkan* and *manjū* were served. *Yōkan* in China was made from gelatine derived from boiling sheep, but Japanese Buddhist priests did not eat meat, thus, *azuki* beans became the replacement.

In the middle of 16th century, Portuguese explorers travelled by ship and arrived in Tanegashima Island, south of the Kagoshima Prefecture, and began to trade with Japanese. This historical period is known as the Nanban trade period; ‘Nanban’ means Southern barbarian. The arrival of the Europeans not only brought matchlock guns, Christianity, arts and other culture and technology but also sweets and a great amount of sugar into Japan (Wu, 2014, pp.20-21; Yabu, 2015, pp.29-30). The sweets were called *nanbangashi* (Southern barbarian sweets) and were mostly made from wheat, egg, dairy and sugar. The arrival of sugar in Japan brought a major development in the history of *wagashi*. At that time, sugar was still a very luxury ingredient and only the elites could enjoy the *wagashi* made of sugar. These types of *nanbangashi*, for example, *castella* sponge cake and a kind of sugar candy called *konpeitō*, are still considered traditional Japanese sweets and are enjoyed by people to date (Wu, 2014, pp.20-21; Yabu, 2015, pp.29-30). By the 16th century, following the development of the Japanese tea ceremony, a new kind of *wagashi* served with a bitter tea called *matcha* (抹茶) became popular and customary among the nobles. That was when *wagashi* started to be carefully designed to appeal to the guests in a tea ceremony and to show the host’s intention and sincerity (Konishi, 2004, pp.176-177; Wu, 2014, p.21).

In the Edo period, a time of political stability and economic growth, the technology of making sugar advanced and more people could enjoy sweets made of sugar. When the capital of Japan was moved from Kyoto to Edo (nowadays Tokyo), a new kind of *namagashi* called *jōgashi* (high-grade confectionery) was created to compete with *kyōkashi* (Kyoto

confectionery). The artisans of the two kinds of confectionery kept their own styles while competing with each other, which significantly developed *wagashi* techniques and designs (Wu, 2014, p.22; Yabu, 2015, pp.30-31). *Wagashi* created during the Edo period was as exquisite as this confectionery today (Nagasawa and Sometani, 2007, p.151; Yabu, 2015, pp.30-31).

During the Meiji Restoration, Western culture flowed into Japan. Before then, *wagashi* was actually only called ‘*kashi*’, but in order to distinguish Japanese sweets from Western sweets, ‘*wa* (和)’ and ‘*yō* (洋)’ were attached in front of ‘*kasha*’. *Wa-gashi* stands for Japanese confectionery and *yō-gashi* stands for Western confectionery (Yabu, 2015, p.32). The Meiji Restoration brought in new machinery technology that further advanced the development of Japanese confectionery (ibid.). At the beginning of the Showa period, sugar was rationed by the government. There was a limit to the amount of sugar that could be used to make *wagashi*, and the production of *wagashi* went down. Not until more than two decades after World War II, when the control of sugar was abolished, was the confectionery industry revived and developed rapidly until today (Wu, 2014, p.24; Yabu, 2015, p.33).

Throughout history, *wagashi* has changed just like other Japanese food and it has become more colourful and appealing to the eyes. *Wagashi* is made into different shapes and patterns to reflect the seasonal motifs, a tradition that continues to date. Not only have the Japanese traditional seasonal events been presented in *wagashi* designs, some Western cultural elements such as Christmas and Valentine’s Day can also be seen in some *wagashi* craftsmen’s designs in Japan, for example, Tsugio Itami (*wagashi* craftsman in Matsue History Museum) and Junichi Mitsubori (a third-generation *wagashi* artisan of a traditional Japanese sweets store). *Wagashi* not only represent the seasons by the appearances but also by the tastes. Except for the three basic ingredients (rice flour, sugar, and bean paste), seasonal ingredients like *sakura* (cherry blossom), *kaki* (persimmon), *yuzu*, etc. are used in making *wagashi* in Japan.

3.4 Natural Symbolism, Seasonal Motifs, and the Art of Five Senses

Japan’s geographical features not only brings natural disasters such as earthquakes and typhoons to Japan but also provides distinct seasons with beautiful natural sceneries. Cherry blossoms in spring and red maple leaves in autumn have attracted people in Japan and tourists from around the world to appreciate the natural beauty. Japanese people are often considered to ‘live in harmony with nature, which frequently is contrasted with the quest to “conquer nature” allegedly found among Westerners’ (Kalland and Asquith, 1997, p.2). Japanese people

are also often thought to have a ‘love of nature (ibid., p.1), and ‘nature and Japanese culture are considered to be closely related’ (Rots, 2013, p.106). For instance, the expression of natural symbolism appears in seasonal events such as *hanami* (flower viewing), Japanese gardens, tea ceremonies, Japanese flower arrangements, Japanese cuisine, and even modern high-tech products. ‘This occupation with nature is seen as rooted in an innate aesthetic sense of the beautiful, existing since ancient times’ (Kalland and Asquith, 1997, p.2). Japanese religions, such as Shintō also has a close relation with aesthetic appreciation of nature: ‘the *kami* (divinity) is believed to have taken abode in natural features that give people a feeling of awe of spirituality, such as the sun and moon, rocks, streams, old trees, caves, flowers, animals and people of special character or standing’ (ibid.). The expression of natural symbolism in Japanese culture is noted, but in reality, Japan also faces environmental issues caused by industrialisation like many other countries; this is contrary to the notion of ‘living in harmony with nature’. As Kalland and Asquith stress, ‘the nature cherished by most Japanese is not nature in its original state but in its idealized state’ (1997, p.16). Taking the flower arrangement as an example, the flowers are cut off and rearranged to present the idealised ‘natural beauty’. In *wagashi* designs, only the ‘pretty sides’ of the seasonal natural symbolism, rather than the ‘ugly or terrifying sides’ of nature, are perfectly presented. Even if the Japanese people may appreciate the idealised form of nature more than the original form, the natural symbolism presented in Japanese culture is essential to characterise this culture from all others.

Natural symbolism and seasonal motifs are two of the most essential elements of *wagashi* designs. *Wagashi* are crafted into different shapes that represent the seasonal natural changes and seasonal events, expressing the sensitivity and emotions towards the natural world. Moreover, *wagashi* also emphasises the harmony between human senses and ingredients that nature has to offer, and thus is considered as an ‘art of five senses’ (*gokan no geijutsu* (五感の芸術)) (Konishi, 2004, p.12; Yabu, 2015, p.71). *Wagashi* are made into different shapes and flavours that appeal to the five senses – sight, taste, smell, touch and hearing (Yabu, 2015, pp.71-79). Sight is the first sense that appeals to the *wagashi* consumers. The shapes and the colours represent the symbols of the seasons, which can be natural changing symbols like flowers and leaves, seasonal events, or seasonal landscapes. For example, *wagashi* that is crafted into the shape of *sakura* (cherry blossom) with a pinkish colour represents the season of spring, a jellied *wagashi* called *mizu-yōkan* that has colourful dots made of bean doughs and is decorated with small gold flakes evokes mid-summer night fireworks, and a maple-leaf-shaped *namagashi* with colours that fade from yellow to orange recalls the beautiful autumn.

Wagashi usually do not have a very strong taste and smell because the basic ingredients are simple, natural and have very mild flavours and scents. However, seasonal ingredients such as cherry blossom and other natural ingredients such as *matcha* (green tea powder) can also be used to highlight the taste and smell but not be too strong to stand out from other senses. In the case of consuming *namagashi* for instance, the sense of touch is the feeling of the texture when the consumer takes up the *wagashi* with his/her hand, cuts it with a *kuromoji* (a wooden knife for eating *wagashi*) and when the *wagashi* melts in the mouth. The sense of hearing may be considered as the sound when we eat the confectionery; however, except for consuming confection like *senbei*, which makes an audible sound, most of the *namagashi* are so soft they barely make a sound. The sense of hearing has another connection with the names of *wagashi* (Yabu, 2015, p.74). The name of *wagashi* is called *kamei* (菓銘). *Kamei* can be a natural symbol or a natural landscape that is easily associated with the appearances of the *wagashi*, such as *momiji* (red maple leaf) and Fuji Mountain. There are also many *kamei*, however, these come from Japanese poems (*tanka* and *haiku*). To hear the historical background of how *kamei* is made while appreciating the *wagashi* through its appearance, texture, taste, and smell gives the consumer further imaginations of what the *wagashi* symbolises, which is also one of the important parts of *wagashi* consumption.

Generally, natural symbolism, seasonal motifs, and the harmony of the five senses are the most essential elements of *wagashi* that make Japanese traditional confectionery ‘Japanese’. Therefore, I would like to suggest that these most important elements shall be essentially emphasised during the process of *wagashi* globalisation, and I will present different cases of promoting *wagashi* in the world to analyse the process and further explain my argument.

3.5 *Wagashi* Goes Global

Japanese cuisine has been well-known around the world for decades. As a part of Japanese cuisine, *wagashi* is following the globalisation trend. However, it is not until recently that the progress seemed to advance and *wagashi* gained global attention as ‘Japanese Edible Art’ as well as an alternative to the more widely accepted Western confectionery. Similar to other Japanese food, the progress of *wagashi* globalisation involves adjustments, innovations, and creativity, which can be seen in many cases. I would like to present some confectionery companies and artisans that promote *wagashi* around the world in different ways.

A Japanese *wagashi* confectionery named Minamoto Kitchoan (源吉兆庵) has stores not only in Japan but also in the United States (New York, Los Angeles, Hawaii, etc.), Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the UK (London). In March 2016, I visited one of their stores in the SOGO Department Store (one of the biggest Japanese department store chains) in Hong Kong. It was located in the underground food hall of the department store among many other Japanese, Chinese, and Western food stores and counters. Models of the products were displayed inside showcases (the food models were very well made, and I was not sure some of them were models or the actual real products). I could see there was Minamoto Kitchoan's signature product called '*fukuwatashi senbei*' with different flavours, jellied sweets with fruit inside such as cherry, *yōkan*, castella cake in the original flavour and *matcha* flavour as well as different kinds of *mochi* (glutinous rice cakes). The *fukuwatashi senbei* is not the traditional Japanese *senbei* that is made from rice, but it is a Western-style sandwich cookie with a buttery cream filling.

One of the sellers told me that the confectionery was made and packed in Japan then shipped to Hong Kong. I also found that Minamoto Kitchoan has different online stores for different countries (the countries/regions where there are Minamoto Kitchoan branch stores). Except for the regular (classic) products such as *dorayaki* (the *dorayaki* is called 'Tsuya' in this confectionery company), *matcha senbei*, *matcha mochi* and *white peach mochi*, there are some other special sweets sold in different countries. For example, there is a *mochi* with mango flavour sold by Thailand's online store, a chocolate ganache cream sandwich with cocoa flavour pancake called 'Shokoramikasa' is found at Singapore's online store, and gift sets for Chinese New Year can be found at the UK online store (I would guess it is due to the great number of Chinese immigrants in the UK who make up the majority of the customers). In 2017 at the Ala Moana Center in Honolulu, United States, Minamoto Kitchoan displayed a work of *kōgeigashi* that won the Honorary President Award at the 27th National Confectionery Exposition held in Japan. This edible art took four artisans one year to accomplish (Goshi, 2017).

Toraya (虎屋) is one of the oldest Japanese confectionery companies, established over 480 years ago, and is also one of the Japanese confectionery companies that run boutiques overseas. In addition to about 80 shops in Japan, Toraya's first overseas store opened in Paris in 1980 and the second store was located in New York. The second store closed down in 2003, but the one in Paris welcomes its 38th anniversary this year. The most famous signature product of Toraya is *yōkan*. In the special feature called 'Another Side of Japan: Snacks and Sweets' in

the web magazine *Niponica*, published in 2014, there was an interview with Kurokawa Mitsuhiro, the 17th in the line of owners of Toraya Confectionery, and Aoki Sadaharu, a well-known Japanese pastry chef in Paris at the time. Kurokawa said that traditional *yōkan* comes in a block, the colour is dark, and it is hard to guess what it would taste like. Therefore, it took years to gain some local *yōkan* fans by using more familiar ingredients to Westerners and cutting it into smaller pieces instead of selling the whole block (Kurokawa, cited in *Niponica*, 2014). In order to make the local customers get used to the taste and texture of *wagashi*, Toraya produced a special kind of *wagashi* called ‘Spécialités de Toraya Paris’ for the store in Paris. The special series of confectionery includes *yōkan* with figs cooked in wine, *yōkan* that is served only in summer with four red fruits (blackcurrants, raspberries, blueberries, and currants), *yōkan* with bitter chocolate, *azuki* beans and apricot sponge cake, and French King cake (Galette des Rois) with *azuki* bean paste and *yuzu* citrus that is sold only in the first three weeks of January.

Another example of a creative *wagashi* store has its office in Japan, but the artisans promote their concept of *wagashi* overseas as well. They are the Japanese pastry chefs, Motohiro Inaba and Rio Asano, who once worked at the Toraya branch store in New York. Having more than 20 years’ *wagashi* making experience, they decided to make *wagashi* more playful while keeping the traditional *wagashi* making skills. They founded their workshop called ‘Wagashi Asobi’, literally, ‘playing with *wagashi*’, in Tokyo in 2011. The store only sells two kinds of their original *wagashi*: One is *higashi* (dry confectionery), called *rakugan*, using ‘new’ ingredients, which are natural herbs including rosemary, chamomile, hibiscus, etc. for colouring and flavouring; the other kind of *wagashi* is dried fruit *yōkan* (see figure 5) that shows their creative way of playing with *wagashi*. In addition to traditional ingredients of *yōkan* such as *azuki* bean and sugar, the *wagashi* chefs add dried figs, strawberries, walnuts and rum, placing them in certain positions so that when the *yōkan* is sliced into thin slices, an abstract painting-like pattern appears on the cross-section. The idea of this *yōkan* came to them after their friend asked them to make a kind of *yōkan* that would go well with bread. According to the online article written by Matsuno in 2015, Inaba and Asano have conducted demonstrations across Japan and also went to Paris a week after the Easter holidays for demonstrations and to make a chick-shaped *suama* (寿甘), a kind of Japanese sweet made of non-glutinous rice flour and sugar. They used ingredients that are familiar in France, such as raspberry and marmalade, to flavour the confections and told the audience that the ‘chicks’ were hatched from the Easter eggs. The artisans stressed that it was the message of appreciating

the natural beauty hidden behind the *wagashi* that they would like to show the world. This chick-shaped *suama* can be adapted to any country using the local food culture (Inaba and Asano, cited in Matsuno, 2015).



Figure 5: *Wagashi Asobi's dried fruit yōkan* (source: *Wagashi Asobi website*)

These three cases share one similarity of *wagashi* promotion to the world, which is making *wagashi* attractive by combining local cultural elements to create familiarity for the local people. When a cuisine travels into new places, adjustments, combinations with local culture and even innovations are more or less necessary in order to make local people accept the food. This phenomenon can be seen in many big fast food chains as well, for example, McDonald's. McDonald's in China has rice as an alternative to bread. In Germany, McDonald's sells beer and in Japan, a burger with teriyaki sauce is sold. Ashkenazi and Jacob stress in the book, *The Essence of Japanese Cuisine: An Essay on Food and Culture*, that 'the degree to which a food is likely to enter into the repertoire is dependent on public acceptance, and that in turn is dependent on the tension between familiarity with at least *some* of the characteristics of the food concerned, and newness in other dimensions of the same food' (2000, p.186).

Business organisations and *wagashi* artisans are not the only ones who help promote *wagashi* around the world. Japanese popular culture has certainly contributed to this process. Food-centred manga appeared in Japan a few decades ago and nowadays, food has become one of the most popular themes in Japanese TV programs, dramas, movies, and other Japanese popular culture. Compared to other Japanese food such as ramen and sushi, *wagashi* is still a

very new topic in Japanese popular culture. However, in recent Japanese popular culture, Japanese sweets have become the ‘main character’ and attract an audience from different countries.

A popular TV show, *TV Champion* (TV チャンピオン), is a competition show where people complete tasks and compete with each other to finally be crowned as the champion. This popular show has a focus on culinary skills such as ramen, sushi and *wagashi*, and has been broadcasted on channels in both Taiwan and Hong Kong. Actually, the Taiwanese *wagashi* artisan Emily Wu, the case of whom I will analyse in the next part of this thesis, became attracted to the beautiful *wagashi* when she was watching the *wagashi* episode of *TV Champion*. She decided to quit her job as a graphic designer, went to Japan and learned to make *wagashi*.

Andō Natsu is a TV series based on the manga *Andō Natsu – Edo Wagashi Shokunin Monogatari* (あんどーなつ-江戸和菓子職人物語) that tells a story about a 20-year-old girl who has graduated from a Western confectionery school and dreams of becoming a pastry chef. After being turned down by a Western confectionery store, she decides to work part-time in a long established *wagashi* store in Asakusa, Tokyo, while searching for her dream job. During the time she is working in the *wagashi* store, she gets to know about *wagashi* and falls in love with the beautiful traditional confectionery, so she decides to become a *wagashi* chef instead and starts to learn to make *wagashi* from the head pastry chef in the store. In this TV drama, each *wagashi* that appears in the show is associated with a story related to the *wagashi* store and the people around it, emphasising the importance of *wagashi* in the traditional festivals and Japanese people’s life events.

In 2017, Netflix released a new Japanese TV series called *Kantaro* (The Sweet Tooth Salaryman), adapted from a popular manga series focused on sweets in Tokyo. Kantaro is an ordinary salaryman but also an extreme sweets lover who writes blogs about sweets. He tries to accomplish his tasks as fast as he can so that he has time left to go and enjoy sweets without being suspected. The lines in the show are mostly the inner voice of Kantaro, describing how the sweets are made, how much he desires to eat the sweets, and the tastes and textures are like, and his extremely emotional reactions when he puts the sweet in his mouth. Each sweet in this episode is portrayed exaggeratedly using spotlights and slow-motion, which makes the sweet almost too dreamlike to be real. However, every episode is actually named after a sweet that features in a real-life restaurant, café or confectionery store in Tokyo. The subtitles are not only

available in Japanese and English, but also in German, Finnish and Swedish. In addition, Japanese TV programs such as NHK's programs *Japanology* that tend to promote Japanese culture for foreign people in English also include *wagashi* as a subject.

Mass media enables culinary information to travel around the world. The internet-based rapidly growing social media tools in recent years have also helped transmit culinary information not only from the public angles but also from an individual perspective. Every time we open social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, we see many pictures uploaded by friends, public figures, or groups we are following. Food pictures may be one of the most commonly seen pictures. People share their culinary experiences and creations on social media, expressing their personal culinary point of views and ideas to others. As a Japanese edible art, *wagashi*'s exquisite designs make itself very photogenic and the pictures of *wagashi* caught many people's eyes globally. Many *wagashi* artisans and confectionery companies have their own social media pages nowadays and upload pictures of their designs and products to share with their followers. One of most recognised Japanese *wagashi* artisans, Junichi Mitsubori, has attracted attention both from mass media and individual persons in recent years and also published a bilingual (Japanese and English) book *Kado: New Art of Wagashi*. Mitsubori creates his own *wagashi* crafting style, which he calls 'Ichika-ryū' (一菓流) and founded his own *wagashi* school, 'Kadō Ichika-Ryū', (菓道 一菓流) in 2016. Mitsubori has performed *wagashi* crafting at Sydney Opera House in Australia and exhibited his arts at the Salon du Chocolat in Paris. Mitsubori first gained recognition after he won 'TV Champion R' on TV Tokyo's competition programs. However, it was not until Mitsubori started his daily picture project called 'Ichinichi Ichika' ('Wagashi of the Day') on Instagram in 2015 that his popularity grew. This Instagram project aims to use his arts to attract a younger audience (Smith, 2018). As of May 2018, he has amassed more than 27,000 followers on Instagram.

Generally, even if *wagashi* is still not as widely recognised as other Japanese food, it has already started gaining popularity globally. The developments of transportation technologies and food preservation technologies allow people in different countries to be able to enjoy *wagashi* outside of Japan. During this process, as we have seen in many cases, adjustments and innovations are made to suit the local mainstream culinary habits. Japanese confectionery has become one new theme in Japanese popular culture and attracted consumers to appreciate the traditional edible art and to promote *wagashi* to the world. Recently developed social media tools provide a stage for individual *wagashi* artisans to express their ideas of

wagashi designs, making visual appreciations of *wagashi* available globally from a more diverse and personal perspective.

PART IV *Wagashi* in Taiwan: A Case Study of Toukaya

4.1 Toukaya: An Online *Wagashi* Store

During my visit to Taiwan, I found many Japanese style bakeries and cafés. Among the various products, *matcha* green tea flavour seems to be the most popular, and there are also Japanese cafés that mostly sell only *matcha* flavoured desserts. *Wagashi*, however, is not as commonly found in stores as are other Japanese-style sweets; I only saw some Japanese department store chains selling *wagashi* in their food halls. In 2006, an internet-based Japanese confectionery store appeared in Taiwan. This, coupled with many pictures of exquisitely designed *jōnamagashi*, started to catch both Taiwanese media and people's attention. This internet-based store is the *wagashi* company Toukaya (唐和家), established by a Taiwanese pastry chef and businesswoman Emily Wu.

Emily went to Japan, learned to make *wagashi*, and brought what she learned back to Taiwan. She does not sell *wagashi* in a physical store, but she sells the confectionery via an online store and ships the frozen *wagashi* using a home delivery service. How to pack the products so that the fragile confections would not be mashed or destroyed, and how to keep the texture of *wagashi* moist and soft after defrosting were two big challenges she faced at the very beginning of her online business. I first found this case interesting thanks to the mass media and social media, and later when I learned that Emily Wu also conducts *wagashi* experience courses for those who are interested in trying to make *wagashi*. I decided to go to Taiwan to attend her course and to find out how she conveys *wagashi* to the local people. In this part of the thesis, I will investigate this particular case of promoting *wagashi* outside of Japan and see what adjustments and innovations Toukaya has made in *wagashi* designs and tastes. Based on my fieldwork experience in Taiwan and my conversations with Emily, I will also discuss how Emily promotes Japanese confectionery in her 'Taiwanese way'.

4.2 Creating Cultural Familiarity and Challenging Culinary Boundaries

In her first book published in 2014, Emily Wu states that the name of her confectionery, 'Toukaya (唐和家)', has a deep meaning. 'Tou' ('唐') stands for the Tang Dynasty – a period

during which a magnificent ancient civilisation was created; ‘*Ka*’ (‘和’, which is also a name for Japan and Japanese) is to respect the Yamato people’s (大和民族, a Japanese ethnic group) protection of the traditional culture and the lasting charms of the Japanese culture; ‘*Ya*’ (‘家’) means ‘home’. As we have seen in the history of *wagashi* presented earlier, Tang Confectionery had a great influence on *wagashi* development at the very beginning. According to Emily Wu, the name ‘Toukaya’ is the expressions of the praise of the ancestors’ wisdom and the grandeur of ancient civilisation, the respect of Japan’s preservation of the traditional culture, and her desire to bring Japanese confectionery back to her homeland, Taiwan, and carry on the tradition without the limitation of regional restrictions (Wu, 2014, p.154).

Emily introduced *wagashi* to Taiwan not just by bringing back the traditional confectionery, but by making adjustments. She has made innovations of the traditional *wagashi* from Japan by combining local ingredients as well as local cultural elements, thus, localised *wagashi*. For example, she designed a series of *wagashi* that can be used for Taiwanese festivals (or Chinese festivals), such as mid-autumn festival and Chinese New Year. Emily also created original *wagashi* series designs inspired by Chinese traditional cultural elements. For instance, *wagashi* inspired by the classical Chinese novel, Romance of the Three Kingdoms (a historical tales of the tripartite division of China between the states of Su, Shu and Wei, which has also become very popular in Japan) (see figure 6) and *wagashi* for Buddhist and Taoist rituals (see figure 7).



Figure 6: Toukaya's Three Kingdom wagashi (source: Toukaya website)



Figure 7: Toukaya's wagashi for a Buddhist ritual (source: Toukaya website)

Besides designing a *wagashi* series that represent local tradition and seasonal events, Emily has also explored local ingredients that could be used for making *wagashi*. She has visited different places in Taiwan to find the best ingredients to make the confections, for instance, the organic black tea from the Sun Moon Lake (the most famous lake in Taiwan), roselle from Taitung, and Taiwan Kaohsiung No. 9 adzuki-bean are used to make *mizu-yōkan* (a thick jellied confection); Tai Nong (Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute) No. 57 sweet potatoes are used to make the sweet fillings (Wu, 2014, pp.222-223).

The basic ingredients of *wagashi* are rice flour, *azuki* beans and sugar, which are actually commonly used ingredients in Taiwanese sweets. However, eating habits and consuming patterns in Taiwan affect how *wagashi* is made in Taiwan. Emily said that at the very beginning of her business in Taiwan, most of the Taiwanese people who tried her *wagashi* said it was way too sweet. The reason *wagashi* is usually very sweet is that *wagashi* is served with a bitter tea called *matcha* in Japanese tea ceremonies. Nowadays, people care more about their health and try to eat less sugar, and people in Taiwan usually do not eat the *wagashi* with the bitter *matcha* tea, so Emily lowered the amount of sugar by 30% to suit the eating habits of the Taiwanese people (personal communication, March 2017).

As I have discussed, the local people's acceptance of the food is the most important thing when introducing a new food into a new place. One important and common way to make the local people accept the new food is to create culinary familiarity by adjusting the tastes and using local ingredients. In order for the Taiwanese people to accept *wagashi*, Emily adjusted the sugar amount to suit the local taste, used local ingredients and adopted the local traditional cultural elements to create cultural familiarity when introducing *wagashi* in Taiwan.

Traditionally, *wagashi* is served with tea. However, on Toukaya's online store, there is a recommendation of how to consume *wagashi* under every product description which says, 'we recommend you to make a cup of tea or a cup of coffee'. Interestingly, Emily uses coffee to flavour the fillings for certain products and also to make coffee *mizu-yōkan*. During my conversation with Emily Wu through Facebook, I asked her if there is any limitation or boundary to the ingredients she would use to make *wagashi*. She answered: 'As long as it is natural ingredients with mild tastes and smells, it can be included in my category. The smell of coffee is like *matcha* tea, so I included in my products. However, natural ingredients that contain strong smells such as onion and garlic are not suitable to flavour *wagashi*.' (personal communication, February 2018)

I previously discussed the characteristics of *wagashi*, and among those characteristics, the balance of the five is one of the essential elements that define *wagashi* as ‘Japanese’. Each sense should not be over presented to cover other senses. Thus, when choosing a new ingredient for *wagashi* making, the taste and smell of the ingredient are very important because too strong a taste or smell will affect the balance of the five senses. According to Emily, the ingredients she chooses to make her *wagashi* should be natural and mild. Being natural, as discussed, is one of the important elements of traditional Japanese culture. However, not all natural ingredients are suitable to make *wagashi*. The ingredient should also be mild, in other words, not strong nor threatening (for other senses).

In addition to adjusting the taste to suit the local eating habits and adopting local ingredients and traditional cultural elements to create familiarity for the local consumer, creativity is also very important to keep the Toukaya business going. According to Emily, Taiwanese people easily get bored with old things and have a strong affinity for novelty, so she needs to keep innovating and creating new *wagashi* products to satisfy the customers (Wu, 2014, p.202). So far, Toukaya has more than 100 products and many of them are made by using ‘new’ ingredients and ideas (Wu, 2014).

4.3 Using Mass Media and Social Media as Tools to Promote *Wagashi*

Toukaya has attracted media attention since 2006. Since then, Emily Wu has been conducting demonstrations of *wagashi* crafting on different TV shows and attends talk shows and radio programs introducing *wagashi* around Taiwan. Mass media from outside of Taiwan have also interviewed Emily, for example, Hong Kong’s Dim Sum TV that is broadcasted in Hong Kong and Macau. Emily wrote two books. One was published in 2014, called *Rou Mei De Li Liang: Wu Hui Jing He Guo Zi* (揉美的力量：吳蕙菁和菓子) (The Power of Kneading: Emily Wu’s *Wagashi*), in which she first introduced *wagashi* in general, then turned to her own experience of learning *wagashi* in Japan and how she established Toukaya Confectionery. The second book was just published last year (2017) and is called *He Guo Zi Sheng Jing* (和菓子聖經) (*Wagashi Bible*). Unlike the first book, she unfolds her recipes and *wagashi* crafting techniques step by step to the world through more than 1600 pictures. Emily’s frequent attendance at mass media events has increased Toukaya’s exposure and attracted customers including business companies who purchase ‘high-grade’ *wagashi* to service VIPs and religious groups who order *wagashi* as offerings to the deities.

Toukaya has its own Facebook page where Toukaya's product news, promotions, and experience course information is uploaded nearly every day. Toukaya has started to use the recently developed function on Facebook, Live Video Streaming, to broadcast live on Facebook when Emily attends events, talking about *wagashi* and teaching *wagashi* crafting. The live function on Facebook provides a platform for Toukaya to connect followers with the ongoing events and also allow for Q&A time between Emily and the followers. After Emily's second book was published, Toukaya set up a private group named '和菓子聖經' (*Wagashi Bible*) on Facebook. People who buy the book are invited to join and share their thoughts, ideas, and *wagashi* making experiences as well as ask questions about the book. Emily also gives some advice to the members to improve their skills. So far, the group has more than 900 members. The members are not only from Taiwan but also from other East Asian countries such as Malaysia and Japan.

Toukaya makes good use of social media to promote its *wagashi* products and update Toukaya's social events. Live streaming makes Toukaya's customers and people who are interested in *wagashi* able to communicate with the company and the *wagashi* chef instantly. The private Facebook group also provides a platform for people in and outside of Taiwan who are trying to make *wagashi* according to Emily's book to share experiences with other members and get advice from Emily. From what many members wrote on the page after they had been invited to join the group and when Emily comments or replies to them, I could sense the excitement and encouragement from the members. This private group, from my personal observation and point of view, creates a sense of intimacy between the members and the *wagashi* celebrity because they feel they have personal contact with her.

4.4 Conducting *Wagashi* Experience Courses Along with Other Japanese Culture Experiences

Emily makes Japanese confectionery 'Taiwanese' by adjusting tastes, using local ingredients, and combining with local cultural elements. Toukaya, like other Japanese confectionery companies I mentioned earlier, brings *wagashi* to Taiwan by selling *wagashi*. However, in order to let more people know about *wagashi*, Emily has been conducting *wagashi* experience courses all around Taiwan. I asked Emily what the most challenging aspect of promoting *wagashi* in Taiwan is when conducting the experience course. She answered, 'The most difficult thing is that Taiwanese people do not know about *wagashi*, so I have to continually

open the experience courses for people who are interested in knowing about *wagashi* and go around Taiwan to tell them and teach them.’ (personal communication, March 2017).

Emily was firstly invited to be the guest lecturer by the Vocational Training Center (VTC) in Taipei in 2007 to teach students who were searching for re-employment to make more easily-made Japanese confections such as *daiifuku*, *dorayaki* and *manjū*, the ingredients of which are easier to access, and students can start up their own bakeries after graduation. After a few years of teaching experience at the VTC, she extended her teaching courses and started the experience courses with groups of between 40 and 60 students at the Beitou Museum. The Beitou Museum is a Japanese-style house established during the Japanese colonial period which later became a museum with cultural artefacts and also a teaching institute of the Japanese *urasenke* (裏千家) tea ceremony. Surrounded by a Japanese traditional atmosphere, Emily has started to wear a *kimono* (a traditional Japanese garment) every time she teaches courses. She also travels around to different places in Taiwan, teaching *wagashi* in schools, and conducts weekday courses which are small-sized groups with around 6-10 people held in her workshop in an apartment building. Her experience courses not only focus on crafting *wagashi* but also include other Japanese traditional cultural experiences such as *furoshiki* (風呂敷), traditional Japanese wrapping clothes for carrying goods and also gift wrapping, Japanese calligraphy, and *kimono* wearing; she even invites tea masters to give lectures on the tea ceremony. The contents of the *wagashi* experience course change according to the period of the year, and seasonal *wagashi* are usually taught. Now, I would like to share the details of my *wagashi* experience course at Toukaya, which I attended in March 2017.

4.5 Toukaya’s *Wagashi* Experience Course

It was a Thursday night, 30 March 2017, when I attended Emily’s *wagashi* experience course in Taipei. I signed up for the course one month before I travelled to Taiwan and paid the course fee online. The experience course requires at least six students to sign up and I received a confirmation email three days before the course started, stating that the course was going to be held as planned.

Emily’s studio is located in an apartment building. It is not like a usual store located in a department building or in a shopping street. It is a workshop that has been remodelled from an apartment that has a hallway where we can hang clothes and change shoes, a living room with a table, on top of which is a Chinese tea set for daily use, and there is also a toilet and a

kitchen. When I entered the studio after changing my shoes, I saw a glass showcase displaying miniature-sized Toukaya *wagashi* creations. I asked Emily if they were plastic food models and she said they were actually made from real *wagashi*. She made the *wagashi* in smaller sizes than the usual ones and blushed the *wagashi* with nail polish. ‘They will still get dried out and get cracks, so from time to time I have to remake them.’ Behind the showcase, it was a Japanese style open room with around 4 square meters tatami. There was another showcase on the opposite corner where Emily placed her creation of *kōgeigashi*. The room we were going to have the experience course in was right behind the Japanese-style open room. When I entered the course room, I saw Emily Wu and her three assistants preparing for the course. Emily was wearing a dark blue *kimono* with a colourful dots pattern. The other three assistants were wearing *samue* (Japanese Buddhist monk working clothes that have now become casual work wear in Japan) and *bandana* (kerchief) around their heads.

There were supposed to be six students that night including me, but two of the students could not come and those who came were all females ranging in ages from their 20s to 50s. Emily told me they have had some students from both Western and East Asian countries attend the experience course. However, due to her lack of English skills, the students who do not understand Chinese or Japanese are required to come with a companion who can translate for them.

There were two long tables in the room for students and a TV screen which Emily would use for showing power-point slides during the course. In front of the TV, there was also a long table on which Emily’s books, different kinds of *furoshiki*, Toukaya’s products called *higashi* (dry confectionery), and also other *wagashi* related products were placed. In front of each student’s seat were some papers, a pamphlet of Toukaya, and a *furoshiki* cloth along with two rings that would be used as handles for one of the bags we were going to make. We also got bean doughs in different colours, several tools for making *wagashi* and a paper box in which we would put our own finished *wagashi* after the course. The paper materials contained illustrations for six ways of wrapping *furoshiki* for different uses. In the Toukaya pamphlet (see figure 8), there was a short introduction about *jōnamakashi* and the pictures of Toukaya’s *wagashi* creations.



Figure 8: Toukaya pamphlet (photo by author)

I got a cup of tea (not *matcha* tea but brewed green tea) and a pumpkin *yōkan* on a small plate with a wooden knife (see figure 9) that is made for eating *wagashi*, called a *kuromoji*. We started with drinking tea and eating the pumpkin *yōkan* while waiting for other students to come. Meanwhile, Emily told us what the *yōkan* was made of while preparing the materials she was going to use for the course. During the tea time, Emily said that we should enjoy the *yōkan* by using the *kuromoji* to cut a small piece and put it in the mouth. ‘Many Taiwanese people are too rude when they eat *wagashi*. They take up the *wagashi* with fingers and take a big bite of it directly. It is very important to eat *wagashi* in a correct way by using the *kuromoji* to cut a small piece and put it in the mouth with the *kuromoji* knife.’



Figure 9: Pumpkin *yōkan* and *kuromoji* knife (photo by author)

The course started around 7pm with an introduction of *wagashi* including showing pictures of different kinds of *wagashi* and their history. Then, Emily started to tell us how she learned about *wagashi* in Tokyo, her experiences of the *wagashi* competition under her student period in Tokyo Seika Senmon Gakkō (東京製菓学校, Tokyo Confectionery School), and how she established Toukaya after she came back to Taiwan. It took around half an hour before we started to make the first *wagashi*.

We were going to make two kinds of *wagashi*, one was a yellow-white mizudori (waterfowl) and the other one was a pink rose. Emily explained the usages of every tool, then we cleaned our hands before we took up the doughs. Firstly, she asked us to take a small piece of each dough and put it in our mouth to try the texture and the taste. She said that it was the best condition of the dough before it was made into *wagashi*. The fillings in different colours had different tastes. For example, the green one for the waterfowl was *matcha* flavoured and the yellow one for the rose was sweet potato flavoured. When I tasted it, I got surprised that it was not as sweet as the Japanese confections I tried in Japan. Emily told us that she lowered 30% of the amount of sugar to suit the tastes of Taiwanese people. She said she could not lower the sugar content more because the texture, the tastes and the overall condition will not be as good when it is delivered to the customers. ‘Sugar is a natural preservative, and confection is supposed to be sweet otherwise there is no meaning of eating confections’, she laughed.

We didn’t actually make the doughs from scratch but listened to Emily explain how to make the bean doughs and how to dye the doughs with food colours. We got the ready-made coloured doughs that we would use to learn how to combine and shape it into two kinds of *wagashi*- a yellow-white waterfowl and a pink rose using tools like cotton cloth, spoons, and wooden sticks. We followed her step-by-step, combining two colours of doughs, making the gradient of colours by swiping a finger between the two colours (see figure 10), and shaping the doughs and decorating the *wagashi* (see figure 11) using different tools. Emily walked by each student to check if the student was doing it in the right way. If the shape was not how it was supposed to be, she took over the doughs and showed the student again how to shape it in the correct way. She also taught us several tricks including how to hold the dough, so it is easier to move around and how to perfectly wrap the fillings inside the doughs without breaking it. The second kind of *wagashi* we made was a pink rose, and we followed the same routine as the first kind (see figure 12 and figure 13). The section of making *wagashi* was about 45 minutes, and after that, we started the next section- wrapping *furoshiki*.



Figure 10: Making the gradient of colours for the waterfowl (photo by author)



Figure 11: Adding the finishing touch to the waterfowl by using a black sesame seed to present the eye (photo by author)



Figure 12: Wrapping the filling inside the dough (photo by author)



Figure 13: Decorating the rose with a leaf made of bean dough (photo by author)

Emily first gave us a short description of *furoshiki* including what it is used for and how it is used. Then she asked us to look at the material we got and follow her step-by-step. We made a temporary shopping bag, a handbag with handles using those two handle rings we got and two other kinds of handbags. We also got two wine bottles and learned how to wrap one bottle with one *furoshiki* and also to wrap two bottles in one *furoshiki*. We took pictures of every bag we made and also group pictures with Emily. The *furoshiki* section took around 40 minutes.

The experience course was actually finished after the *furoshiki* section. After the course, all the students took a turn taking pictures with Emily on the tatami floor, handed Emily's book to her to sign and those students who had not bought the book yet purchased the book on the spot to have it signed. The assistants showed us the related products on the long table and said we could purchase those products if we wanted. Every student seemed to have purchased something before leaving. During the whole experience course, Emily's three assistants took pictures from time to time. The next day, I saw the pictures were uploaded to 'highlights of *wagashi* experience courses' on Toukaya's official website and also shared to Toukaya's Facebook page.

It was a very interesting *wagashi* experience course. During the course, I saw how Emily teaches *wagashi* in Taiwan in her 'Taiwanese way' of emphasising her enthusiasm for preserving traditional Japanese culture and her flexibility of combining local cultural elements to promote the traditional sweets. She emphasises the 'authenticity' of her teaching by creating a Japanese atmosphere, teaching Japanese eating manners and using the Japanese language during the course. Her studio is a mixture of ordinary Chinese interior design and traditional Japanese indoor elements such as tatami and *noren* (a traditional Japanese curtain that is hung on walls, outside of stores and between rooms), which reminds the students that they have come here to undertake a Japanese cultural course. From what I have seen both in my experience course and the pictures shared in Toukaya's social media pages, Emily always wears a *kimono* (see figure 14) when she conducts *wagashi* experience courses and her assistants are also wearing Japanese working clothes (*samue*). When we were having the tea time before the course started, she taught us the 'correct' way of consuming *wagashi*, stressing that eating *wagashi* should be elegant, and we should use the knife made for *wagashi* to cut a small bite each time. During the whole course, she uses not only Chinese but also Japanese words, and explains the Japanese words afterwards in Chinese. Every Toukaya experience course comes with another Japanese traditional culture experience section after *wagashi*

crafting, which shows her enthusiasm for promoting other aspects of traditional Japanese culture and, at the same time, embodies her own Japanese cultural education level. She also made jokes from time to time during the course, keeping the atmosphere in the classroom lively and relaxed to make the students think that making traditional Japanese confectionery does not have to be solemn, it is supposed to be fun and creative.



*Figure 14: Emily Wu conducting an experience course wearing a kimono
(photo provided by Toukaya)*

According to Emily (personal communication, March 2017), the number of students that have attended Emily's *wagashi* experience courses has reached over 6000 during a five-year period (also see the front cover page of Emily Wu's book, 2017). Not only do people in Taiwan attend Emily's course, but people from other countries have also attended. In terms of the high media exposure and the number of students, Toukaya can be seen as the most famous *wagashi* company in Taiwan, and Emily has also become an iconic *wagashi* promoting artisan and teacher in Taiwan.

4.6 *Wagashi* and Gender in Taiwan: The Case of Toukaya

What people choose to eat is not only related to their physical conditions, economic factors, and cultural backgrounds but also depends on the gender conceptions about who they are and how and what they ‘should’ or ‘are supposed’ to eat to express their identities. As Fischler stresses,

Food is central to our sense of identity. The way any given human group eats helps it assert its diversity, hierarchy and organisation, but also, at the same time, both its oneness and the otherness of whoever eats differently. Food is also central to individual identity, in that any given human individual is constructed, biologically, psychologically and socially by the foods he/she chooses to incorporate. (1988, p.275).

There is a gender difference where food consumption behaviours are concerned, and the differences are not only the result of gendered physiological needs but also psychological motivations (Wansink, Cheney and Chan, 2003, p.739). Moreover, food choice is also related to the gender relations and identities in the culture and society (Counihan, 1998. p.1).

Wansink, Cheney and Chan’s (2003) research on comfort food preferences depending on gender and age has shown that males and females make different food choices. Comfort food refers to food that makes one feel comfortable, relaxed, pleased and sometimes even nostalgic (Wansink, Cheney and Chan, 2003). The results of the research data show that men preferred warm and meal-like food such as steak and pizza, while women chose more snack-like and sweet food such as chocolate and ice cream (ibid.). Natalie Lo’s study about sweet consumption of young people in Hong Kong also shows that sweets are more likely to be consumed by females, and the colourful and exquisite cakes are associated with softness, cuteness and beauty, widely admitted as ‘girly’ products, which suggests that sweets are considered as a symbol of femininity (Lo, 2012). Thus, an edible sweet ‘has symbolic meanings which connote the consumer’s identities’ and the consumption of sweets is ‘constrained to the culturally constructed conceptions of femininity and masculinity’ (ibid.).

The mass media also portrays gender differences in food consumption. For example, women usually appear in chocolate commercials while beer commercials tend to be promoted by men. On TV dramas and movies, a female who has ‘positive images’ (e.g. is beautiful, elegant and fashionable) is often portrayed as consuming smaller portions of dishes or salad, which is generally considered to be ‘healthier’ and ‘slimming’, or having afternoon tea time and eating sweets with other female friends; males, on the other hand, are usually consuming

meats, bigger portions of food or drinking big glasses of beer to portray masculinity. This phenomenon of mass media using different genders to promote specific products creates ideological gender images for the consumers, affecting and shaping a gendered consumption for different food.

In Taiwan, sweets are also generally associated with femininity and sometimes are even provided exclusively for women. A famous Japanese ramen chain has recently opened a branch in Taiwan. A few months after its opening, the ramen place was on Taiwanese SET News. However, this time it was not because of its popularity and long queues but due to complaints by some customers who accused this ramen restaurant of ‘gender discrimination’. The restaurant provided free ice cream for its female customers but not for the male customers. The ramen restaurant said it was their business strategy to attract more female customers to come and eat ramen, and there was no element of gender discrimination (*SET News*, 2016). From this news, I see two interesting points. The first one is that more men go to eat ramen than women. The second one is this ramen restaurant uses dessert to attract more female customers in Taiwan.

There is a common saying, at least in many countries in East Asia, that I have heard: ‘women always have room in their stomach for desserts.’ *Wagashi*, as a kind of dessert with beautiful appearances, seems to have attracted more women than men in Toukaya’s case. According to Emily (personal communication, March 2018), among the 6000 students who have attended her *wagashi* experience courses, at least 5000 of them are female, which makes the percentage of female students over 83 %. I have also noticed that most of the people who have shared their *wagashi* making experiences on the private Facebook group I mentioned earlier are also females. Toukaya’s signature product is a kind of *jōnamagashi* called Kikuhime (菊姫) (see figure 15), which is crafted in the shape of a chrysanthemum and every petal (more than 100 petals) is cut carefully with scissors. Because of its complicated crafting process and exquisite appearance, according to Emily, many male customers purchase Kikuhime as gifts to please women (Wu, 2014, p.160). Toukaya’s Kikuhime and other *jōnamagashi* have also been served to important customers at new product release conferences of jewellery companies in Taiwan (*ibid.*), which, in a certain degree, connects Japanese sweets with jewellery to attract female customers.



Figure 15: Toukaya's wagashi 'Kikuhime' in a gift box (source: Toukaya website)

'Maleness and femaleness in all cultures are associated with specific foods and rules controlling their consumption' (Counihan, 1998, p.7). Consuming sweets, as some research and studies have shown, can be considered as a gendered practice and sweets' cultural symbolism conveys the consumers' cultural identities of being feminine. In Toukaya's case, I have also seen a clear gendered consumption of *wagashi*. Emily's *wagashi* has attracted more female customers than male customers. The general gender differences of food consumption habits due to biological desires, the ideological food consumption behaviours portrayed by the media that 'women like sweet and beautiful things', and the tension of showing one's identity through food choices has helped shaped this phenomenon.

4.7 Consuming Imagined 'High' Culture in Taiwan

During my visits to Japan and Taiwan, I realised an interesting phenomenon. There are many Japanese-Western bakeries in Japan that use French names, while in Taiwan, there are many bakeries that use Japanese names. These bakeries use names that local people can probably not even pronounce or understand the meanings of. However, local people seem to be attracted to these 'different' but somewhat 'superior' names and associate the names with 'good quality' or even 'authenticity'. This business and cultural phenomenon can be seen as consuming imagined 'high' culture.

As I presented in Toukaya's case earlier, Emily has made innovations of her *wagashi* designs by combining local culture elements to appeal to the local people. When Emily and I were chatting through Facebook (February 2018), I asked her if she would call her creative *wagashi* that uses Taiwanese ingredients and Taiwanese cultural elements 'Taiwanese Style *Wagashi*' ('台式和菓子'). Emily said that the phrase 'Taiwanese style' usually gives the images of being crude and, borrowing her Chinese words, '*xiang tu* (鄉土)', which carries the meaning of being local and native but also plain and simple (the Japanese word is *jimi* (地味)). She also emphasised that she keeps making innovations of *wagashi*, trying different elements and ideas, however, still keeps traditional Japanese rules in her designs. In Taiwan, many Japanese style bakeries in Taiwan sell so-called natural-yeast bread and Japanese cafés sell macarons (a French confection) and other Japanese-Western style confections. Many of these bakeries claim that they use Japanese baking technologies, or they use certain ingredients imported from Japan as their 'selling points'. It is not hard to notice after years of observation from Taiwanese TV programmes and my visit to Taiwan that many Taiwanese people tend to adore Japanese culture, and as long as the products are claimed to be made in Japan, to be Japanese brands or anything related to Japan, most Taiwanese associate the products with being 'good quality', 'modern' and 'superior'.

David Wu gives an example of a Taiwanese bakery that was established during the Japanese colonial period. The bakery used to be famous for its traditional Taiwanese ceremonial cakes with the unique Taiwanese flavour of being both sweet and salty. During the 1970s, it also had the reputation of being the cake shop for social gift-giving among affluent ethnic Taiwanese who bought boxed Japanese *wagashi* and Japanese-style European pastries. After the 1980s, Japanese-style French cookies and chocolate candies replaced the traditional Taiwanese wedding cakes. David Wu criticises that current gift-box cookies sold to tourists at the airport to take back home from Taiwan 'have lost their ethnic distinctions in terms of taste and shape' (Wu, 2015, p.114). He continues to argue that the Japanese bakeries in Taiwan are 'strong examples of Japanese global capitalism, symbolize colonization and the commodification of "Japanized European culture" in Taiwan. ...once the bakery claims or is known to be Japanese, it commends exceptional admiration and prestige for customers' (Wu, 2015, pp.115-116).

2018 is the year of the dog in Chinese astrology, and Emily designed a dog-shaped *wagashi* (see figure 16) to represent the 2018 Chinese New Year and sold the *wagashi* during

the Chinese New Year's period. This dog-shaped *wagashi* looks like a Japanese Akita dog and is named after the famous dog in Japan known as Hachikō (the tale of Hachikō was also made into a famous film in 2009). Thus, it connects traditional Taiwanese events with contemporary Japanese culture to appeal to local consumers.



*Figure 16: Toukaya's dog-shaped wagashi for Chinese New Year, 2018
(source: Toukaya website)*

Consuming Japanese products could be considered as consuming 'higher' culture in Taiwan. As discussed at the beginning of this thesis, the contemporary popularity of consuming Japanese cultural products occurs for two important reasons. The first one is due to the social-historical relationship between Taiwan and Japan. Japanese culture shares a cultural similarity with Taiwanese culture and evokes nostalgic emotions for Taiwanese consumers. The second reason is consuming Japanese culture in contemporary Taiwan creates a sense of temporality of developments with Japan and a global imagination of Japanese modernity for consumers, shaping a phenomenon of consuming for 'distinction' that distinguishes one from a more traditional or maybe less modern lifestyle. In Toukaya's case, while Emily is creating different *wagashi* according to the local tradition, she still evokes the imagination by connecting Taiwan and Japan with her creating a Japanese atmosphere in the *wagashi* experience course and using contemporary Japanese cultural elements to name the *wagashi* made for Taiwanese/Chinese traditional events.

4.8 *Wagashi* Globalisation: One Concept, Different Presentations

As we have seen in Toukaya's case and other cases of introducing *wagashi* to different countries, all have made adjustments and innovations to suit the local culinary culture. Regarding these cases, I see some differences in the process in terms of tastes and textures. I would like to compare the cases of Toraya and Toukaya. Toukaya introduced *wagashi* to another Asian country while Toraya introduced Japanese confectionery to a Western country, and the challenges they face differed in some ways. Since in Taiwan, rice flour (including glutinous rice flour) and adzuki beans are commonly used in food and sweets, the tastes and the textures of *wagashi* are not the major problems to be accepted by Taiwanese people. In Toukaya's case, the amount of sugar needed to be reduced to suit the eating habits of Taiwanese people. On the other hand, in Toraya's case, introducing *wagashi* to Western countries where rice flour and adzuki beans are still new, the challenges of making local people accept *wagashi* focused on the tastes of *azuki* beans and the foreign textures of *wagashi*, which cannot be found in the French culinary culture.

As mentioned, Iwabuchi's study on Japanese popular culture (which especially focuses on Japanese TV dramas) in Taiwan shows that the cultural similarity and resonance is one of the important reasons the young consumers in Taiwan find Japanese TV dramas more attractive than American ones (Iwabuchi, 2002a). In terms of food culture, the culinary cultural similarity also affects the foodways of cuisine travelling across the region. The different challenges of promoting *wagashi* in the cases of Toukaya and Toraya is related to the different degrees of culinary cultural similarity with Japanese cuisine. Taiwan and Japan share many similarities in food culture, which makes Japanese cuisine easier to be accepted and adopted by the Taiwanese. Under the Japanese colonial period, Taiwanese cuisine was influenced by Japanese cuisine and, of course, Japan has also absorbed some ideas from Taiwanese cuisine. Confections also underwent a similar experience during the Japanese colonial period. Between 1895 and 1945 when Taiwan was under Japan's rule, a new ingredient – sweet potato, was used by a Japanese immigrant to make *wagashi*, as he missed the traditional Japanese confectionery and subsequently opened a *wagashi* store in Taiwan (UDN 聯合新聞網, 2017). He found the local sweet potato in Hualien City suitable to make *wagashi* and spent three years using local ingredients to create a confection called 'anko-imo'. The confection was sent back to Japan to present at the Confectionery Expo and became a tribute to several emperors. Nowadays, it is the most famous sweet in Hualien City (ibid.). The food cultures of Taiwan and Japan have influenced each other for a long time ago and shaped the proximity of food culture, making

Japanese food easier to transmit to Taiwan, especially in terms of tastes and textures. Unlike Toukaya in Taiwan, Toraya can be seen to have the bigger challenge of introducing *azuki* beans and the textures of *wagashi* to France.

Despite the different degrees of culinary cultural differences, not only these two confectioneries but other cases mentioned in this paper have made adjustments, innovations and compromises to accommodate different cultural elements in *wagashi* designs to suit the local culture and make *wagashi* more attractive to the local consumers. Some key elements, however, have continuously been carried on in this sweet culture under the processes of globalisation and localisation, which makes *wagashi* ‘Japanese’. The seasonal motifs, the balance of the five senses and messages of appreciating things presented in the confectionery distinguish *wagashi* from other kinds of confectionery. These key elements are also what makes *wagashi* flexible and diverse because it can be designed according to the local natural changing and seasonal events, presenting the different culture in the one shared concept.

In the progress of *wagashi* globalisation, we have seen different examples in this thesis of localising *wagashi* according to the local culinary culture to suit the local tastes and consumption habits. The phenomenon of food localisation under globalisation can be called ‘culinary glocalisation’. According to the Oxford Dictionary of New Words, the term ‘glocal’ and the process noun ‘glocalization’ are ‘formed by telescoping *global* and *local* to make a blend’ (*The Oxford Dictionary of New Words*, 1991, cited in Robertson, 1995, p.28). This idea is ‘modelled on Japanese *dochakuka* (derived from *dochaku* “living on one’s own land”), originally the agricultural principle of adapting one’s farming techniques to local conditions, but also adopted in Japanese business for *global localization*, a global outlook adapted to local conditions’ (ibid.). ‘Glocalisation’ is often used as a global business strategy to sell products to differentiated local and particular markets. For example, perhaps the most famous case, McDonald’s, sells different products in different regions to suit the local eating habits in order to sell more burgers and expand the business across the world. ‘Glocalisation’ is a term not only used in the business field but can also be applied to different study fields such as cultural studies, education, and media studies. Robertson argues that ‘the concept of globalization has involved the simultaneity and the interpenetration of what are conventionally called the global and the local, or – in more abstract vein – the universal and the particular’ (Robertson, 1995, p.30). To put it simply, the process of globalisation is not only about the global but also the local. The global and the local cannot be separated because the global involves many locals, and different locals create a whole global. In order to sell more products or ideas to different

places, making the local consumers accept the products or ideas and be willing to consume such products is what makes a global business successful. Thus, adjustments, adaptations and inventions/re-inventions are needed according to the local historical, social, cultural and all other kinds of forms' conditions when doing global business. Localisation, which creates diversities, sometimes may seem like a counterposed phenomenon to globalisation which compresses time and space in the world. However, it is rather a process and a result of globalisation. Thus, the term 'glocalization', as Robertson suggests, 'has the definite advantage of making concern with space as important as the focus upon temporal issues' and makes us better understand the relationship and interaction between world culture and the local culture (ibid., p.40).

I would suggest the glocalisation of food enriches rather than homogenises or heterogenises the world culinary diversity by sharing culinary cultural values. In the case of Toukaya, as well as other *wagashi* glocalisation cases presented in this paper, the concept of *wagashi* being seasonal and nature inspired, rather than its ingredients or tastes, is promoted and emphasised. In the age of food glocalisation, *wagashi* can be enjoyed by people in different places in somehow localised ways, which urges the developments of *wagashi*'s diversity and further deepens its cultural values by promoting and sharing its cultural messages around the world.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I discussed Japanese food globalisation and focused on traditional Japanese confectionery, namely *wagashi*. In order to discover how food travels under the globalisation trend, I investigated a particular case study of promoting *wagashi* in Taiwan. I described how Toukaya sells *wagashi* via an online shop, and how the owner and *wagashi* artisan, Emily Wu, promotes *wagashi* in Taiwan in her Taiwanese ways. Like many other *wagashi* companies and *wagashi* artisans that are promoting *wagashi* around the world, Toukaya brings *wagashi* to Taiwan by adjusting the tastes, adopting local culture to *wagashi* designs and creating 'new but local' kinds of *wagashi*. Emily creates 'familiarity' by combining local culture and ingredients in her *wagashi* designs and, at the same time, innovating and challenging the culinary boundaries. In order to let more people in Taiwan learn about *wagashi* culture, she also conducts *wagashi* experience courses combined with other Japanese cultural experiences. Toukaya also makes full use of mass media and social media to increase its exposure to attract

more customers, disseminate information and also create a platform for those who are interested in *wagashi* making and *wagashi* culture to communicate and share experiences.

In the trend of culinary globalisation, different culinary cultures are influenced by each other, and food producers use different ingredients and skills to challenge the culinary boundaries, attempting to find the cuisine's position in the culinary world. I would like to argue that in order to make *wagashi* go global, innovation and creativity are necessary in terms of designs and flavours according to the local culinary culture. However, at the same time, preserving the 'key elements' of this sweet culture is what distinguishes *wagashi* from other confectionery. What makes *wagashi* unique and Japanese, from the experiences of the confectionery companies and artisans presented in this paper who have tried and are still trying to introduce this sweet culture to the world, is the concept of appreciating the natural changes and seasonal events presented in *wagashi* designs and the balance of the five senses.

How a cuisine develops involves continuous discovering, adjusting and innovating. Travelling cuisines in the age of globalisation involve using different ingredients and adjusting tastes and consuming methods to suit the local culture and culinary habits. Many scholars have pointed out that whether the cuisine can settle down in a different culture depends on the local acceptance; therefore, localising the food helps cuisine travel. The progress of localisation happens together with globalisation, which enriches the culinary cultural diversity rather than homogenising or heterogenising the cultural values and symbols.

Lastly, this study of *wagashi* and globalisation may be the very first of its kind and there might have been some insufficient aspects or disadvantages in the research method. However, I am looking forward to seeing more studies on this topic and hope this thesis will help promote future studies within this field to research different perspectives.

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