

# Market *agencements* of Japanese food cultures



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**11es Journées de Recherches en Sciences Sociales : Lyon, 14-15 décembre 2017**

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## Abstract:

Modern capitalism has entered into the intangible (patrimonial) accumulation regime, which Orléan designated as the *cognitive turn* in the economy where what matters is not the fundamentals (utility, technological efficiency, material resources) but rather the images and representation (2008), that is, immaterial values such as authenticity, affectation, curiosity (Cochoy, 2011) and so forth. Foods and agriculture in Japan have also entered into this regime. Under this regime, foods and agriculture are faced with the digitalization of market exchange. The rating and ranking on social media and other online sources have expanded rapidly in recent years. These “valuemeters” (Latour & Lépinay, 2008) provide the data bases for market exchange, with food and agriculture also being inscribed in these data bases.

The digitalization of market exchange of food and agriculture influences the non-human products and human agencies at the same time. The most important is that food, farmers and artisans are valued from the visually esthetic point of view. The blogs and twitter set limits to the number of character, thus the beautiful pictures of products or authentic figures of farmers, artisans and agricultural landscapes surpass the narrative.

Food cultures are beginning to become the resource for developing food and agricultural production. Ichijo and Ranta (2016) argue the food culture as expression of everyday nationalism or gourmet-nationalism and neoliberalism. We think that food discourses are supported by material settings. These settings are agenced by plural *agencements* being framed each other. Faced with the critics of foreign countries, the French government has justified its foie gras production by referring to food culture. It is the same for Japanese as to whale meet. We show that food cultures do not exist in itself. And the cultural values do not exist in foods waiting for being revealed by the magic wand. There should be “valuation” activities to activate the agencies, attachment of them to goods, narratives, even nationalistic ones.

With this paper, we examine the way in which the Japanese food cultures are framed by digitalized market *agencement* (Callon, 2013) by referring to *washoku*, Traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese inscribed in the Presentative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO, the Japanese traditional confectionery *wagashi* (Morisaki, Suda, 2016), the authentic rural tourism (Savor Japan: Explore Regional Flavours). As for *wagashi*, the spread of ratings on social media creates various criteria of valuation for *wagashi* at both sides of *wagashi* shops and consumers. These ratings make artisans appear as artists, and their products as art on the Instagram.

**Key words:** market *agencement*, digitalization, valuation, food cultures, Japanese confectionery *wagashi*.

**JEL codes:** B5, Q1, Q18, Z1

# Market *agencements* of Japanese food cultures

## 1. Introduction

Modern capitalism has entered into the intangible (patrimonial) accumulation regime, which Orléan described as the *cognitive turn* in the economy where what matters is not the fundamentals (utility, technological efficiency, material resources) but rather the images and representation (2008), that is, immaterial values, such as authenticity, affectation, curiosity, and the like (Cochoy, 2011). Foods and agriculture in Japan have also entered into this regime. Under this regime, we are faced with the digitalization of market exchange. The rating and ranking on social media and other online sources have expanded rapidly in recent years. These “value meters” (Latour & Lépinay, 2008) provide the databases for market exchange, with food and agriculture also being inscribed in these data bases.

The digitalization of market exchange of food and agriculture influences simultaneously the non-human products and human agencies. It is important that food and agricultural landscapes are valued from the visually esthetic point of view. The blogs and twitter set limits to the number of characters; thus, the beautiful pictures of products or authentic representation of farmers, artisans, and agricultural landscapes surpass the narrative (*récit*).

In this paper, referring to the Japanese traditional confectionery *wagashi*, we examine the way in which the Japanese food cultures are framed by digitalized market *agencement* (Morisaki & Suda, 2016). *Wagashi* constitutes one category of the Japanese traditional food culture *Washoku*. Ichijo (2016) argued that the inscription of the Japanese traditional food *washoku* in UNESCO expresses everyday nationalism (gastronationalism) and neoliberalism. We think that the food discourses are framed not only by the (nationalistic?) cultural *agencement*, but also by the market *agencements*, even by the scientific *agencements*.

Japanese food cultures are used to promote the export of agricultural products or to develop the tourism by orienting foreign people into rural regions. We investigated the food cultures from the Market *Agencements* approach (Callon, 2013). There are many kinds of *agencements*, such as market *agencement*, political *agencement*, scientific *agencement*, and others. These *agencements* are framing each other. And one of these *agencements* could be locally dominant at specific places. Market *agencements* consist of a series of *dispositif* arrangements through the successive framing, that is, passivation of goods, activation of calculative agencies, adjustments of supply and demand, and setting prices to produce attachments of consumers to things (*vice versa*). According to Callon, market *agencement* makes sure that the consumers are attached to the goods in exchange of money payment. The market *agencement* frames the human and non-human entities (*actants*), and these *actants* are also framed by other *agencements*. Plural *agencements* are articulated at the local levels. The framing of market *agencement* orients the activities and makes these activities and objects marketable. However, the framing is always subject to overflows. Additionally, the market *agencement* always evolves and the innovations occur continuously.

The food cultures, as listed by UNESCO, are *dispositif* in the Foucauldian sense, which is an absolutely heterogenic whole comprising discourses, materials, scientific expressions, and political institutions, among others. To be authentic, food cultures must not be considered as merchandises. Yet, for food cultures to have the value, they must be valued through valuation activities recognized as successive operations to explain,

represent, and determine the value because the value is not contained in things in anticipation of being revealed by the magic wand (Callon, 2015). The value is always the result of a process of valuation activities. For Japanese food cultures to become merchandises, not only various actors, such as UNESCO, Japanese government, food specialists, and famous chefs, but also market intermediaries, especially private consulting companies (Cochoy, et al. 2016, Bessy et Chauvin, 2013), have to negotiate with each other to construct the markets.

## **2. Background and analytical framework of Research**

### **(1) Authenticity: Potential non-price competitiveness of Japanese food and agriculture**

Generally speaking, modern capitalism can be defined as an intangible (patrimonial) accumulation regime, that is, cognitive capitalism. This type of regime has its origin of accumulation in intangible value (e.g., quality of goods, authenticity) and emotional service work (e.g., care).

The food and agriculture sectors in Japan are no exception to this regime. Japanese traditional food culture (*washoku*) was listed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO) in 2013, and the Japanese government institutionalized a Geographical Indication Protection System in 2015 after a conflict between the Ministry of Economy and Industries (using approach similar to that of US commerce strategy as for GI) and the Ministry of Agriculture (using approach similar to that of the EU). Twenty-eight GI products are registered, including Kobe beef, in Japan, and the registered collective commercial brands account for 300 for foods and agricultural products. For example, there is French Association for defending the *Wagyu* race, but French farmers cannot use the name of Kobe Beef (*La France Agricole*, no.3690, 7, Avril, 2017, pp.58-59), as it is registered in Japanese GI system and reserved for the producers.

Leveraging the favorable image of the authenticity of Japanese foods and agricultural products, the Japanese government initiated a tourism strategy inside and outside Japan in the expectation that these tourists would become lovers of these products. As mentioned above, the Japanese government has recognized many types of intangible heritage and initiated a system to promote gastronomic tourism. Japanese agricultural products have been known for their quality in other countries. Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture established *Savor Japan (Sites Remarquables du Goût à la Japonaise)* in 2016 and certified 5 areas. These measures aim to invite foreigners to visit Japan and stay in rural areas, focusing on the theme of gastronomic tourism.

As we have shown (Morsaki & Suda, 2016), the Cool Japan Initiative of Japanese Government utilizes traditional and unique Japanese culture as an economic resource. Japan Brand Development Assistance Program of 2015 promotes the creative development of the Japanese traditional confectionery *wagashi* presented at the “Yokan Collection in Paris.”

### **(2) From branding the Nation to market agencing of Japanese food cultures**

As Brillat-Savarin wrote, “Dit-moi ce que tu mange, je te dirai que tu es, (Tell me what you eat, and I'll tell you what you are)” food is considered to be one of the important component of self-identity. Furthermore, Fischler wrote, “Because we are omnivores, incorporation is an act laden with

meaning. Because of the principle of incorporation, identification of foods is a key element in the construction of our identity. Finally, because identity and identification are of both vital and symbolic importance, man has “invented” cuisine” (1988, p.277). According to Ichijo (2016), the importance of food in constituting *the social* has been widely acknowledged, and she pointed out, “Despite, or maybe because of, the rapid advancement of globalization, we are now encountering not less but more manifestation of banal nationalism in food” (p.6). We think that it is impossible to analyze the *assemblage* and *dessemblage* of the self-, social, and national identities through food by the critical approach for nationalism without considering the markets.

As Ichijo noted, “national identity is not only experienced and performed by individuals through their food culture in their daily lives, but also engineered by a powerful apparatus called the nation-state” (p.10). According to Ichijo, it might be possible to consider the inscription of *washoku* on the UNESCO’s list and the institution of GIs by Japanese government as the expression of nationalism and neoliberalism. However, we may follow the sentences of Cochoy et al. (2016), and move beyond the classic dualism opposing the social or the national at large (with its networks, structures, and cultures, on the one hand) to the economy (with its markets, prices, and rational calculation, on the other). Cochoy et al. advanced the view that contemporary subjects live in a single yet multidimensional socioeconomic world in which the challenge is not to protect the society against the supposedly corrosive and “de-socializing” forces of markets. According to them, market settings should be regarded as an ongoing collective experiment in which the political and economic (or even techno-scientific) concerns are continuously articulated and revised. We think that *the social*, including culture and the nation, is always *agenced* by markets. The markets are embedding (not embedded in) the social (Cochoy, 2012).

DeSoucey (2010) defined the gastronationalism as a form of claims-making and a project of collective identity and as being responsive to and reflective of the political ramifications of connecting nationalist projects with food culture at local levels. It presumes that attacks (symbolic or otherwise) against a nation’s food practices are assaults on heritage and culture, not just on the food item itself. DeSoucey referred to the politics surrounding foie gras in France, but the same is the case with the whale meat in Japan.

Boltanski and Esquerre (2014) wrote about the obsession of identity (p.36), describing “authentic” houses situated in *les plus beaux villages de France*, and *terroir* (p.52). They pointed out that these objects and memorable places constitute not only the common heritage, but also the private goods, which can be transformed into money capital.

We recognize different forms of *everyday nationalisms* (Ichijo, 2016), such as gastronationalism or nationalism practiced through food, and as we mentioned above, these nationalisms are *agenced* by markets settings including human and non-human entities. We use the market *agencement* or *agencing* approach rather than branding the nation. Many kinds of *agencements* have been recognized, not only the *agencement* producing nationalism discourses, but also market *agencements*, scientific *agencements*, and so forth. These *agencements* frame each other and are hybridized (Callon, 2013). Market *agencement* approach has recently developed in the sectors of

agriculture and food (Le Velly, 2017).

To brand the nation or territories, branding consultants always intervene. In our case studies, we recognized several big consulting companies helping the local government develop the projects. Contrary to the research by Aronczyk (2013), we could not do the ethnography of the nation branding consultant companies. We often hear from the government officials that if the government instituted the policy to develop the local economy, only these consulting companies could benefit from these policies. When the subsidies for the projects disappear, then the projects also disappear.

“Performing the nation” is always agenced by the market agencement, especially for foreign market. We examine the way in which the market agencement frames the Japanese food culture by referring to the Japanese “authentic” foods, especially traditional confectionery *wagashi* and tourism.

### **(3) Valuing the authenticity**

How are the foods and tourism evaluated as “authentic”? The valuations studies approach, as well as Convention Theory and Actor-Network-Theory, are useful to answer this question. The valuation studies originated in the pragmatism of J. Dewey (*Theory of Valuation*, 1939). There, the word “value” comprises the emotional meanings (such as honoring, prizing) as well as cognitive ones, such as rating, as an act that involves comparison, which is explicit in monetary appraisals of goods (Dewey, 1939, pp.5-6, cited from Muniesa, 2012, p.26). The two-facedness of valuation is associated with fundamental thesis of economic theories. On the one hand, the Classical Economics designate the labor as the substance of values, while on the other hand, according to the Neo-Classical Economics, the value consists of the individual’s utility. As for Dewey,

“the value is “objective”, but it is such in an active or practical situation, not apart from it” (Dewey, 1915, p.516; Muniesa 2012, p.26).

Or,

“„in ordinary speech, the words “valuing” and “valuation” are verbally employed to designate both prizing in the sense of holding precious, dear and appraising in the sense of putting a value upon, assigning value to” (Dewey, 1939, p.5).

Stark (2011) showed that here, Dewey pointed out that valuation can also occur through prizing and appraising in addition to market pricing. Following Dewey, Muniesa (2012) rejected the opposing subjectivity and objectivity of values and emphasized the activity or performance of valuation rather than value of something in itself (Munieza, 2012, p.25). Thus, the valuation is the performance in the local and concrete situations.

Nowadays, the consumers’ ratings or ranking systems (“like”) on the internet web site supply the new data base and constitute “value meters” (Latour, Lepinay, 2009, p.16) that replace the price. Stark examined the capacity of a good not simply to be appraised but also to evoke a sense of amazement, to inspire, and to be an object that connects or conveys the user to a world of imagination (2011). Valuation activities concerning goods replace the price as metrology through modern social media (Instagram, twitter), influencing largely the evaluation of goods. The limited

numbers of characters written in these social media make the narratives or stories retreat behind the esthetic evaluation of goods. The visual, that is, photogenic evaluation surpasses the story of the goods.

As noted in Spooner's example of the oriental carpet, the authenticity is always negotiated between the producers, specialists, merchants, and consumers. Teil (2102) pointed out that the authenticity of *terroir* wines is not valued for their physical-chemical characteristics, as it was prior to the valuation, but negotiated by producers, merchants, critics (Parker point), and amateurs who show affection for the authenticity of wines.

Following these studies, we think that the authenticity of goods and services does not correspond to the physico-chemically formatted test. If there is a value in authenticity, it exists not in the objects prior to the valuation activities, but in the temporary results of these ongoing activities.

This study shows how the valuation activities of various actors, such as producers, consumers, consultants, governments (central and local), and so forth, construct the authenticity of foods and rural tourism. We think that the callonian *agencement* approach can be linked to the valuation studies. The *agencements* frame the valuation activities and the things and format them. Because the market *agencements* articulate with other *agencement*, cultural, scientific, political, and so forth, the valuation activities are framed in the local and concrete *agencements*. Various *agencements* frame the human and non-human *actants* simultaneously. So, the same activities and the same things are valued by heterogeneous framings. This is also the case with Japanese traditional cuisine *washoku*, since its cultural *agencement* (listed in UNESCO) articulates with market and even scientific *agencement* (longevity, health).

Callon (2017) utilized the notion of *agencement* in place of *dispositifs*, devices, assemblages, and so forth. The market *agencement* approach emerged from the studies of Deleuze. According to Deleuze (1986), Foucauldian *diagramme=abstract machine* allows the living entities to see and speak. The market *agencement* gives the forms to the specific collective activities and frames these activities and entities as marketable things. These framings are always subject to overflow, and these activities continue to deviate, to be reframed, and transformed. Thus, the market *agencement* always evolves. Callon (2017) insisted that no market *agencements* are without innovations. To prevent economic agents from turning to other market *agencements*, the market *agencement* has to ensure that they become attached to goods by co-profiling the goods, consumers, and producers, with co-profiling being defined as the successive deformation and reconfiguration of qualities of producers, consumers, and products (Callon, 2017). The market *agencement* is the process of the *assemblage* and *dessemblage* of network comprising human and non-human agencies, the *agencement* becomes stable only by the solidity of the linkage of these agencies. That is, alongside the *assemblage* and *dessemblage*, the qualities of products and the identities of agents are transformed to adjust to each other. The framing permits the coproduction of supply, demand, and products. The coproduction is the center of dynamics of the market. The framing is the *dispositif* that converts the activities to the strategic finality and formats the market transactions (Callon, 2017).

We think that the market *agencements* consist of material *dispositifs*, which format the things and

living entities, but also “valuation activities” of the agencies equipped with the material settings. These valuation activities lead to the “formulation of prices,” which links the specific conditions of transactions to the more general evaluations, the price becoming a variable qualifying the product and participating in its singularisation. These activities need the appropriate *dispositifs* to activate the competences and know-how of agents and organize the mobilization of tools, searching for the information and sophisticated calculation. These activities are at the center of the power relations (Callon, 2017).

In these days, the social media (Instagram, twitter) plays an important role in these agencements as material dispositifs. The digitalized market agencements format the valuation activities in the field of authentic foods and rural tourism.

### **3. Case study of Japanese authentic foods and rural tourism**

#### **(1) Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese**

Washoku was inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO on 4 December 2013. The description of washoku on the list is as follows.

“Washoku is a social practice based on a set of skills, knowledge, practice and traditions related to the production, processing, preparation and consumption of food. It is associated with an essential spirit of respect for nature that is closely related to the sustainable use of natural resources.”

As Ichijo pointed out, it is not a particular food item or cuisine itself but the traditional Japanese food culture that has been recognized as a part of common human heritage (Ichijo, 2016). The idea of applying for the inscription came from the initiative of cooking professionals of traditional Japanese cuisine *kaiseki*. However, after the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, the government set up the Working Group to prepare for the inscription in July 2011.

As is the same for *Repas Gastronomiques des Français*, because the three stars chefs initiated the inscription, *Repas Gastronomique des Français* is described as follows.

“A customary social practice for celebrating important moments in the lives of individuals and groups, such as birth, weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, achievements and reunions. It is a festival meal bringing people together for an occasion to enjoy the art of good eating and drinking.”

In both cases (Japanese and Français), the elements that have been inscribed in UNESCO are not particular food items or cuisine itself but the forms or types of dietary tradition.

However, UNESCO is subject to the international power politics, it safeguards the intangible cultural heritage by giving the forms to cultural elements rather than by including them in a hierarchy. Thus, washoku is not inscribed for its particular food items but for its forms (a set of skills, respect for nature,,). *Repas Gastronomiques des Français* is inscribed not for *haute cuisine* (of three stars chefs) but for its customary social practice, which is the type of *investments of form* (Thévenot, 1986).

However, after the inscription of washoku in the List of UNESCO, washoku is agenced by not only cultural agencement, but also market agencement. The Japanese government utilizes it as



nation branding and seeks to export Japanese agricultural produce as well as to increase the foreign tourists.

## **(2) The Japanese traditional confectionery *wagashi***

The quality of Japanese confectionery (cakes, chocolate, *wagashi*) is very high. Many Japanese have won the prizes at *Salon de Chocolat*. As we have mentioned in previous study (Morisaki, Suda, 2016), the Japanese confectionery *wagashi* is a traditional food culture in Japan. It has been developed based on the Japanese tea ceremony culture *sadou* and linked with the temples and shrines. The Japanese eat *wagashi* at family events or national holidays. An Internet opinion research (1,100 people, 15-69 years, 2017) conducted by the Japanese software company, *Just System*, shows that the artisans of *wagashi* is considered the least replaceable professions by AI (artificial intelligence), followed by *itamae* (*sushi* artisans).

The authentic *wagashi* is traditionally used at tea ceremony. However, the number of tea ceremony practitioners has decreased from 2.845 million people (1986) to 1.7 million (2011). On the other hand, usual customers and tourists buy the *wagashi*. They visit the old-established *wagashi* shop at Kyoto led by the Internet ranking site or Instagram, twitter. Many *wagashi* shops at Kyoto supply the information about their products using their Internet pages. Several shops, for example, *Kamesuehiro*, do not use the internet site to present their products. The owner of *Kamesuehiro* said that *Kyogashi* (authentic *wagashi* made at Kyoto) is not suitable for mass production, so he does not fill an order through the internet. From our interviews, we assumed that the tourists buy several *Kyogashi* take pictures, and upload them via Instagram before they eat them in hotel rooms. *Kyogashi* will not keep long.

The number of traditional clients, such as tea ceremony practitioners, have decreased, and the valuation of new customers has developed rapidly. The buyers of department stores are sensitive to the changes of valuation of *Kyogashi*. The chief of *wagashi* buyer of department *Takashimaya* at Kyoto, Mr. Yasui stated,

Ten years ago, the customers responded to the story of *wagashi* (old-established shop, skills, and so forth). The rising average age of customers is the big problems for department store. Nowadays, younger customers are moved by the beautifulness of *wagashi* on Instagram.

In recent years, the *wagashi* artisans made *wagashi* as edible art. Mr. Junnichi Mitsubori is the most famous artisan of *wagashi*. He participated at the *Salon du livre de Paris* and performed his *wagashi*-making in March 2017, and also participated in *Salon de Chocola* October 2017.

As Mr. Mitsubori said during our interview (August, 2017), many children want to be patisiers, but not *wagashi* artisans. Mitsubori wants to ameliorate the image of *wagashi* artisans. Since 2015, he has showed his works on Instagram as follows.



(©Junichi Mitsubori)

Mr. Mitsubori also organizes the seminar to make *wagashi* not only in Japan, but also abroad, in China, Vietnam, France, and other countries. For example, Mr. Mitsubori exhibited his *wagashi* making at Salon du Livre in Paris, 2017, and *Salon de Chocolat* in Paris, 2017. The participants made *wagashi* and uploaded their works on their own Facebook or Instagram. The participants shared their experiences with their friends. The consumers payed for their own experiences, not for *wagashi* itself.

Many foreign tourists visit the traditional *wagashi* shops, take the pictures, and upload them to their Facebook. Thus, the Japanese traditional confectionery *wagashi* is captured by the digitalization of market exchange.

Additionally, the *wagashi* making events are held in the presence of consumers at the department stores (photos as follows) in Tokyo. The *wagashi* made at such events is valued by ordinary consumers rather than the traditional tea practitioners. Their valuation depends on the affection and feeling (*kawaii*, cute).

The events held at the department stores are initiated by a buyer of the store. Six or seven local *wagashi* artisans participate in the event twice a year to illustrate the *wagashi* making. The buyer, that is, the project manager, plays an important role in the event and empowers the artisans. To get the reputation at Tokyo is an honor to the local people. A participant of long-established *wagashi* store in Yamagata prefecture (North of Japan) said that;

By participating in the events, our *wagashi* became famous, and it now sells well in Tokyo. One of our local clients told me, “When I went to Tokyo to have business negotiations, I bought your *wagashi* as souvenirs, I hid the presents in bags to make a cache of the local origin. But nowadays, I show your *wagashi* packaging because your *wagashi* is famous in Tokyo.”

Thus, getting famous in Tokyo empowers the local people. The events function as the *Cite Project* (Boltanski, Chiappello).

Since 1980, *Toraya* co. has opened its salon de thé in Paris. The Salon is situated on rue Saint-Florentin near famous boutiques, Chanel and Luis Viton. It is *nyonamagashi* is about 5.5 euro per piece, almost the same price as the cakes of FAUCHON or LADUREE. The concept of *Toraya* Paris is to promote the cultural exchange between Japan and France.

As the water in France is hard, it is difficult to make *azuki* bean paste (*an*). Toraya Paris imports the *an* from Japan. After the earthquake on March 3, 2011, the imports of *an* was inhibited for several years. However, now, the products of wagashi sell well, and many French people are familiar with *matcha* or *mochi*, *dorayaki*, and other products.

The Chef Patisier, Mr. Nakano, participates in the events at his son's school, for example, football game and food education. He participates in food education at Japanese school in Paris and explains the Japanese food culture.

### **(3) From the production base of raw materials to the authentic tourism: Hokkaido-Tokachi**

Hokkaido (the north of Japan), especially Tokachi region, is the largest granary region in Japan. The average farm size is about 40ha, as opposed to 2ha in Japan (except Hokkaido). The agriculture in Hokkaido supports the Japanese food cultures. The Japanese representative foods, for example, *miso*, *shoyu* (*soya sauce*), or *natto*, are made from fermented soy beans cultivated mostly in Hokkaido. Hokkaido is the biggest region in which many kinds of raw materials, such as wheat, *azuki* beans, sugar beet, and dairy products, are cultivated.

Hokkaido region produces 90% of *azuki* beans, with Tokachi region accounting for 70%. The *azuki* cultivations in Hokkaido began in 1886. *Azuki* production developed as a result of the amelioration of varieties. The Hokkaido Agricultural Research Center developed the variety *Erimoshozu* in 1971. the climate of Tokachi region is well suited for cultivating such variety, as it has great resistance to coldness and disease. The variety is also suited for the *an* (sweet bean paste) making, which is a raw material for *wagashi*. The variety accounts for 98% of *azuki* in Tokach region. The Research Center and the agricultural cooperatives of producers, *wagashi* makers, collaborated to develop the supply chain of *azuki* beans in Tokachi.

However, Hokkaido does not have the tea ceremony culture, so the *wagashi* culture did not develop. However, a big company that makes cakes and cookies in Tokachi region is called *Rokkatei*. *Rokkatei* makes butter cookies, which are purchased as souvenirs of Hokkaido. *Rokkatei* is one of the biggest and famous cookie making companies in Japan.

Although the *wagashi* culture has not developed in Hokkaido and Tokachi regions, the demands for the bun stuffed with sweet *azuki* bean paste have been increasing. The bun is associated with the regional agriculture. In Tokachi region, there is a tradition in which the farmers who cultivate crops save the bun for agricultural seasonal workers offered as a snack at 10:00 am and 15:00 pm. The bun is made of imported wheat. The varieties of Japanese wheat have been cultivated for noodles. Farmers of Tokachi region have questioned this situation because they cultivate the wheat but they eat the bun produced out of imported ingredients. A bakery in Tokachi region, called *Masuya*, strived to make bun and pan made of wheat produced in the region. Thus, a collaboration between Hokkaido Agricultural Cooperative *Hokuren*, Hokkaido laboratory of National Agricultural Research Center, and professionals developed to cultivate the varieties of wheat for pan making. Accordingly, the collaboration led to the development of the variety of *Yumechikara* (Dream Power). The bakery *Masuya* in Tokachi region has made the products using the flour of *Yumechikara*, *azuki*

beans, cheese, and other raw ingredients made in Tokachi region. It took twenty years (1990-2012) for the bakery to convert the raw materials made 100% in Tokachi.

The bakery *Masuya* opened a Tokyo branch in 2016. It makes buns and breads, which it sells to urban consumers. The owner of the bakery said,

“I want to make Tokyo people know that these products are made of 100% Tokachi raw materials. And I want to honor farmers of Tokachi.”

Thus, the Tokyo branch becomes somewhat antenna shop of the agricultural products (pans, azuki beans, and cheese. among others) of Tokachi region. There is an authenticity based on the proximity to the image of Tokachi, such as landscapes of crop fields (wheat, azuki beans, soja beans, potato, sugar beets), dairy farms and the dietary customs of seasonal agricultural workers.

The Japanese government has established *Savor Japan* initiative in 2016. Along with the *Sites remarquables du Goût* in France, the government certified 5 regions as *Savor Japan*, including Hokkaido-Tokachi region. *Savor Japan* has an objective to develop the rural tourism around the typical agricultural products associated with the beautiful scenery and invite the foreign tourists. In the case of *Savor Japan* Hokkaido-Tokachi region, rural tourism would be built around agricultural experiences (harvesting the crops, caring animals, etc.) and trips to the cheese making atelier, bakeries, and sweet shops. An independent certification organization certifies and checks the production activities using 100% local raw materials (Tokachi Brands Certification Organization).

#### **4. Discussion and conclusion**

##### **(1) Market *agencements* of *washoku***

As discussed above, as a *dispositif*, UNESCO has framed *washoku* as cultural objects. In terms of gender, Butler (2010) wrote as follows,

“If we say that gender is performatively constituted, then we call into question whether there is a stable and intact gender in place prior to the expressions and activities that we understand as gendered expressions and activities. The presumption that gender is a metaphysical substance that precedes its expression is critically upended by the performative theory of gender” (p.147).

*Washoku* has been *agenced* by the cultural *agencements*. In these *agencements*, the cultural *diagramme dispositif* format the things and agencies. As Mol (2002) pointed out that a knowledge is a practice that intervenes another practice, so the nationalistic discourses intervene the universal cultural discourses. *Washoku* has been constructed by universalistic cultural discourses of UNESCO, but other types of discourses always intervene.

*Washoku* and *Repas Gastronomique des Français* are framed by the cultural *agencements* through the UNESCO inscription. However, these cultural things overflow the cultural *agencements*. For example, the *washoku* is framed by market *agencements*. The Japanese government aims to develop foreign tourists through the authentic images of *washoku*. The cultural and market *agencements* are interconnected. Both agencies format the same things and agencies.

## **(2) Digitalized market agencements of wagashi**

The Japanese government has developed an export strategy for its authentic agricultural products, and it is seeking to develop gourmet tourism in rural areas by using an authentic image of Japanese foods and agriculture. The food cultures are resources for promoting the food and agricultural production. We investigated the way in which the digitalized market agencements produce the economic exchange of food cultures. For example, a *wagashi* shop owner in Kyoto (*Kyogashi*) said that the clients in Kyoto are used to buy *wagashi* at their favorite shops, and there is a familiar linkage between clients and shops through generation, but nowadays, consumers from outside or tourists come to these traditional *wagashi* shops to buy *wagashi* with the help of the social media. In this case, they evaluate the esthetic value of the *wagashi*.

Thus, consumers are willing to take pictures of esthetic food and beautiful agricultural landscape. They upload these pictures on their own Twitter or Facebook pages to share them with their friends, arguing about their values.

In these circumstances, the products are not valued for their taste (deliciousness). The description of the recipes, cahiers des charges, or narratives (historical events, tradition, and so forth) are too long to be described on Facebook.

Traditionally, the Japanese traditional confectionery *wagashi* is valued along with tea ceremony culture, that is *wabi* and *sabi*, which shows the simplicity and quietness that typify the essence of tea culture. There also are problems of imitation. As becoming popular through the SNS (blog, Facebook, Instagram), other artisans started to imitate typical *wagashi*. The *wagashi* design is no legally protected.

Market economy becomes increasingly more digitalized through the e-commerce. These digitalized market *agencement* also frame the Japanese food cultures.

The “authentic” value of *wagashi* is compared and negotiated on the social media. Muniesa (2012) showed that valuation activities contain both cognitive and emotional aspects. With the spread of new media, various rating criteria have emerged for *wagashi*, which have influenced *wagashi* artisans as well. For example, the use of social media enables the artisans to connect directly with each other or with clients. The clients also share their emotions with each other. This means that the skilled artisans who had been hidden behind their brand/shops can now appear as creators or artists in the public eye, giving them the option to flexibly choose the way in which they want to pursue their activities. Special events at the department stores or exhibitions have provided a space in which artisans and consumers can directly interact with each other, resulting in the joint creation of emotion.

As noted above, the authentic *wagashi* shop *Toraya* in Paris is an antenna shop for the Japanese food cultures. The shop is also framed by market *agencement*. For example, the prices of *wagashi* are defined by comparing them with the prices of cakes of FAUCHON and LADUREE.

## **(3) Savor Japan: Authentic tourism**

Hokkaido, especially Tokachi region, is a production base for agricultural raw materials. Old

*wagashi* shops utilize the *azuki* beans cultivated in Tokachi region for its raw constituent, *an* (sweet bean paste). The cultivation of the *azuki* beans was unstable, so it was called “red diamond,” being object of speculation. The researchers of Hokkaido Agricultural Research Center developed a variety of *azuki* beans resistant to the damage of cold weather. The researchers translated the *azuki* beans by making equivalent between socio-technical problems (developing varieties) and socio-economic problems (stable production of raw materials for *wagashi* production) (Callon, 1986). Additionally, the human and non-human agencies, such as Agricultural Research Center, wheat variety *Yumechikara*, bakery *Masuya*, the image of Tokachi, consumers are successively translated, and constitute the networks.

*Savor Japan* Hokkaido-Tokachi exists only as the temporal result of *assemblage* and *dessemblage* of the networks connecting the human and non-human *actants*. The networks comprise physical things, such as landscape, physical spaces, soils, and snow, among others, on the one hand and human agencies (farmers, researcher of laboratory, politicians, and tourists) on the other. The networks comprise the ameliorated varieties of *azuki* beans and wheat, and by this way make agricultural landscape attractive for tourists. The networks form the patchwork of crops fields consisted of these *azuki*, *soja* beans, wheat, potatoes and grass lands.



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The Japanese authentic food cultures are formatted by the cultural *agencements* in which the universalistic and nationalistic discourses (Ichijo, 2016) as well as the market and even scientific *agencements* intervene. These *agencements* are interconnected, and these *agencements* simultaneously format the same cultural things.

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