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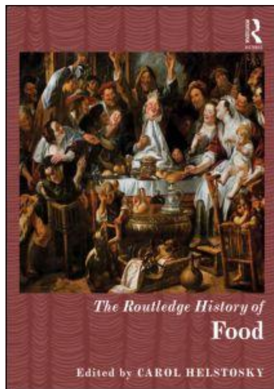

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Part I

1500–1700

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1

THE MAGIC OF JAPANESE RICE CAKES

Eric C. Rath

In Japan there is no food as magical as the rice cake.[1] The eighth-century *Record of the Geography and Culture of Bungo* (*Bungo fudoki*) tells the story of a man who wanted to use a rice cake as a target for archery practice only to watch as the rice cake transformed into a bird and flew away.[2] Aristocrats at the Heian-period (794–1185) court placed a small Fifty Day Rice Cake (*ika no mochii*) in the mouth of a baby fifty days after its birth to ensure the child's good luck and prosperity.[3] Until the youth was six years old and had passed through the critical years that many children in that age failed to survive, every New Year a rice cake would be touched to the child's head three times for good luck.[4] On the third day of the New Year aristocrats ate Teeth-strengthening Rice Cakes (*hagatame mochi*), acknowledging that the Chinese character for tooth was similar to the one meaning a century of life, and recognizing the connection between strong teeth and longevity. At festivals and celebrations at religious institutions, rice cakes remain the focus of elaborate displays on ritual altars; they are consumed and sometimes even thrown to parishioners.[5] In the early modern period (1600–1868) a rice cake could serve for a contest of good luck like a turkey wishbone: when two people tried to break a dried rice cake held between them, the person who snapped off the larger portion won.[6] Folk beliefs held that a woman would lactate in the evening if she ate a special Vitality Rice Cake (*chikara mochi*) in the morning.[7] The power of rice cakes to nourish was especially in demand in dire circumstances when foodstuffs resembling rice cakes, but filled with items almost unpalatable, were consumed as a last resort during famine. The fact that the steamed glutinous rice used to make rice cakes can be stretched like taffy means, according to traditional belief, that rice cakes impart a long life to those who consume them, but the rice cake's elasticity also points to the ways that the cakes can be molded into a variety of shapes and take on a wealth of meanings depending on the context.[8]

This chapter profiles the magic of rice cakes within the context of traditional Japanese dietary culture, which refers here to patterns of eating and ideas about food that originated in the premodern period (before 1868) but continue to be salient today. Made according to the traditional methods described below, rice cakes are time-consuming to create and the refined rice used to make them is less economical to prepare than brown rice. Therefore rice cakes were traditionally reserved for celebrations rather than eaten as a daily foodstuff.

Rice cakes demonstrate a truism of traditional Japanese dietary culture that foods, especially ones prepared for ceremonies or celebrations, cannot be reduced to a single meaning but can be viewed as a type of conceptual art comparable to rock gardens, Zen-inspired monochrome paintings, and the masked noh theater – media that may have an underlying narrative but also leave the reasons for many artistic choices unspecified so as

to allow and even encourage multiple explanations of appearances. Before the late nineteenth century Japan may have lacked any regional or national cuisine, but it did have a sophisticated culinary culture in which food preparation and consumption could express religious, emotional, and artistic values beyond the nutritional importance of the foods cooked and eaten.[9] Rice cakes exemplify the complex layers of meaning in traditional dietary culture that gave purposes to food, which might begin with the most basic means for survival and expand to include attempts to work magic as well as to communicate with, embody, and even consume divine forces.

Rice cakes were also one of the earliest food commodities. Specialist rice cake makers plied their trade by the late medieval age in the early 1500s. In the early modern period, rice cakes became the basis for the development of the confectionery trade, which grew by the end of the nineteenth century into one of the most prominent types of retailers of prepared foods.

This chapter examines how a simple recipe of pounded rice could fulfill all of these roles. After taking a close look at the composition of rice cakes and how they are made, the chapter surveys the many varieties of rice cakes and the magical properties that have been ascribed to them since ancient times. Then, to demonstrate that rice cakes reveal their magic not just in their supernatural powers, but also as one of the earliest and most popular processed food commodities sold in Japan, the chapter traces the importance of rice cakes to the development of the confectionery trade from the sixteenth century. The chapter concludes with some comments about the perceived centrality of rice cakes to modern ideas about Japanese civilization.

What is a rice cake?

The Japanese word for rice cake, *mochi* (餅), is a homonym for the word glutinous (*mochi*, 糯), and reflects the fact that the stickiness of glutinous grains helps bind them together into a cake. Japanese rice (*japonica*) has both glutinous and non-glutinous varieties. The distinction does not refer to gluten, the mix of two proteins in wheat, which gives bread its elasticity and helps trap air allowing the bread to rise. Instead, glutinous indicates the proportion of the starches amylose and amylopectin in the rice. The stickier, more glutinous, forms of rice have a higher percentage of amylopectin, up to 83 percent.[10] Glutinous rice is best prepared steamed as when making rice cakes, as described below. When glutinous rice is boiled, it becomes pasty; but when it is steamed it becomes firm and sticky.[11] Non-glutinous rice is tastiest when boiled or simmered with a lot of water to make porridge. Japanese table rice today is the non-glutinous variety, which when prepared in a rice cooker, is first boiled then steamed to bring out the best flavor and consistency.[12]

Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962), the founding father of the study of folklore in Japan, surmised that the origin of the word *mochi* was from the Japanese word meaning to hold or own (*motsu*). In traditional households, he contended that rice cakes were one of the few foods created for people to hold and eat solely by themselves. Except for rice cakes, all the other foods, such as the pots of porridge eaten on a daily basis, were made for the household's collective consumption.[13]

However, the word *mochi* is actually the shortened form of the ancient word *mochii* meaning "rice cake of steamed rice," a redundant term shortened to its modern form *mochi* in the seventeenth century.[14] The Chinese character used to designate *mochi* in Japan referred in China to foodstuffs like dumplings and crackers made from wheat flour and

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fried in oil.[15] Likewise, in Japanese the word *mochi* can signify other dumpling-like foodstuffs besides rice cakes. For clarity this chapter will use the English term rice cake to distinguish them from other types of *mochi* created from different ingredients.[16]

Making rice cakes

The technology to make rice cakes arrived at the same time that rice came to Japan around 400 BCE, and the basic method is still in use today.[17] The traditional way of dehulling rice or any other grain is to pound it in a wood mortar with a large pestle. Further pounding removes the bran, which turns brown rice into white rice. Polishing rice is the necessary first step in making rice cakes, but it is a time-consuming process by traditional methods, requiring two hours for one person using a mortar and pestle to mill just under five gallons of rice.[18] Consequently, households that follow tradition and make rice cakes at home today will use rice that is already milled, but poorer households before World War II would have had to mill their own rice. Polishing rice is less economical than eating brown rice because the milling process reduces the size of the grain by some eight percent, leaving less rice to eat.[19] Today, of course, inexpensive rice cakes can be purchased year-round, but given the labor and expense, it is no wonder that up through the first half of the twentieth century rice cakes were treats reserved for rare occasions, especially for poorer households.

The image of an impoverished farming family laboring to make rice cakes provides one of the most evocative scenes in Nagatsuka Takashi's 1912 novel, *The Soil* (*Tsuchi*). The novel depicts the hardscrabble existence of a tenant farmer named Kanji, who, "longing for the taste of vegetables," subsists instead on stolen sorghum.[20] Before the autumn festival of *obon*, a celebration for the spirits of the dead, Kanji struggles to follow custom and provide rice cakes for his family. After a hard day of work, Kanji pounds the steamed glutinous rice in a mortar with his daughter Otsugi's help and with her brother Yokichi observing.

> By the time the rice was cooked it was almost dark inside the house. The moon, which had appeared white in the sky before sunset, was now tinged with yellow, its light casting shadows from the persimmon and chestnut trees in the yard. Standing outside under the eaves of the house Otsugi ladled sticky spoonfuls of rice from the straining basket into the mortar. Every now and then she gave a little bit to Yokichi who was standing eagerly beside her. After licking off whatever had stuck to her finger she went on ladling. Then with steam rising up around him Kanji started to work with the pestle, pounding away at the hot, sticky mass as hard as he could. Whenever the end of the pestle got covered with rice Otsugi would scrape it clean with a wet spoon and push the rice in the mortar back down into a ball. Kanji would then begin pounding again. On and on they worked, the metal mortar gleaming in the moonlight, as the shadows around them deepened. Finally Otsugi reached down into the mortar and began twisting off pieces of smooth, translucent rice cake. These she placed on ginger leaves and lined up one by one on the tray beside her.

In the light of the moon that is almost full, Otsugi takes the finished rice cakes and places them on the home altar as an offering to the spirits of the dead.[21]

The reader may share the relief of Kanji's family in accomplishing this task undertaken late at night after a hard day of work, but the reader can also recognize the beauty of the scene in a way denied the characters. The moon overhead offers only light for Kanji and his family to work by, but the autumn moon bears special significance and is linked closely with creating rice cakes. One of the most familiar autumnal images is of the rabbit, said to live on the moon, who is always pictured holding a pestle and standing near a mortar ready to make his own rice cakes.[22] "Harvest moon" (*mochizuki*) is a homonym for the word "pounding rice cakes," and round rice cakes are moon-like in appearance.[23] Such autumnal references suggest that a long hot summer of farm labor for Kanji and his family has drawn to a close. "For the time being there was no more work to be done in the fields."[24] But Kanji remains too busy to pause and gaze up at the moon, which nonetheless shines on the rice cakes he has toiled to produce.

Nagatsuka's descriptions capture the physicality of pounding rice cakes integral to making them. Aristocrats in the premodern era, who might never even witness the creation of a rice cake let alone engage in that task themselves, nonetheless referred to rice cakes as *kachin*, a term supposedly derived from the sound of a pestle hitting a mortar filled with mushy rice.[25] Among commoners, the physical energy required in the repetitive act of pounding rice lent itself to ready comparisons with other sensual activities. According to one old saying there are "two things one cannot do by oneself: pound rice cakes and have an argument."[26] Another expression, "pounding the rice cake" (*mochi o tsuku*), referred to sexual intercourse.

New Year's Mirror Cakes

The most symbolically invested form of rice cake are Mirror Cakes (*kagami mochi*), white rice cakes shaped like fat discs created to celebrate the New Year and other holidays.[27] Mirrors are sacred objects in Japanese ritual used within religious institutions since ancient times as representations of the divine; they are the totems where a deity (*kami*) might take residence and be worshipped. That Mirror Cakes are meant to represent actual mirrors was accepted wisdom according to the 1697 book on pharmacology *Mirror to Native Foodstuffs* (*Honchō shokkan*) by Hitomi Hitsudai.[28] Mirror Cakes developed in the Muromachi period (1336–1573) from the ancient courtly custom of Teeth-strengthening Cakes mentioned earlier, when a rice cake made into the shape of a mirror took on a votive and decorative function as described below.[29]

There are many variations in the ways that Mirror Cakes are displayed at New Year, but typically two round white cakes are placed on a small wooden offering stand (see Figure 1.1). The rice cakes symbolize the sun and moon, yin and yang, and female and male. Between the cakes and the offering stand are a layer of leaves from a fern-like plant called *urajiro* on top of a piece of folded white paper. Perched atop the rice cakes is a type of small citron called a *daidai*, meaning of "generation after generation," a name expressing a family's history and hopes for its future continuity. Sometimes a rock lobster is added to evoke not only luxury but longevity, since the second Chinese character in the word lobster can be read literally as the "old man of the sea." Dried persimmons, dried chestnuts, dried konbu seaweed, and other foodstuffs that evoke happiness, blessings, and protection can be added to the display of Mirror Cakes along with small strands of white folded paper called *shide*, which are used to demarcate sacred spaces such as shrines. In Kansai, the area around Osaka and Kyoto, ten dried persimmons are strung together on a stick or piece of bamboo, with two persimmons at either end and six in the middle. The strand of persimmons is laid diagonally

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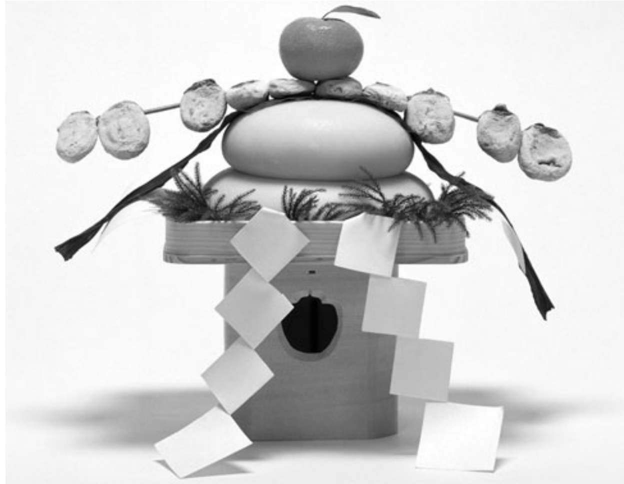

Figure 1.1 New Year's decoration of *Kagami mochi* rice cakes. © Datacraft Co. Ltd./Getty Images

across the top of the Mirror Cake and under the citron. Grouping two persimmons at each end suggests two and two (*fu, fu*) – a homonym for the word for married couple (*fufu*). The six (*mutsu*) persimmons in the middle of the strand recall the word for harmony and intimacy (*mutsumajii*), thereby evoking happy relations between husband and wife.[30] Dried chestnuts (*kachiguri*) signify victory (*katsu*) while the konbu, also called *kobu*, indicates happiness (*yorokobu*). Chestnuts and konbu were symbolically important to samurai in premodern Japan who served them at banquets for their auspicious qualities in hopes for success in future military campaigns or for celebrating their triumphal completion.[31] The fact that most of these foodstuffs were in dried form indicated that their meaning was symbolic and they were not meant to be consumed until their ritual purpose was completed.[32]

Uneaten but potentially consumable, Mirror Cakes serve as a reminder of the power of food to sustain life, a spiritual force that is magnified when put on display in a ritual context. The utilitarian function of actual mirrors remains when they are used on the altars of Shinto shrines as a representation of a deity, but the sacred context indicates the mirror's hallowed purpose and its potential to become not simply a symbol of the divine but also a temporary home for a deity (*shintai*). New Year's Mirror Cakes are likewise set apart from mundane space, making them so pregnant with spirituality that they can become the temporary dwelling place for the deities of the holiday, the divinities responsible for agriculture and the ancestral spirits of the household, according to folklorist Yanagita Kunio's interpretation.[33] Thus, New Year's Mirror Cakes not only signify the power of food and the prosperity of the household, they temporarily become the residence of the deities responsible for these functions.

Besides the main display of Mirror Cakes, in some farming households New Year's rice cakes were made as offerings to the animate and inanimate objects necessary to the household economy. The family's horses or cows received rice cakes as did the mortar, pestle, hoes, and sickles. So-called Adding a Year Rice Cakes (*toshitori mochi*), these rice cakes reflected the traditional view that everything and everyone became a year older on the first day of the New Year.[34] For similar reasons, wealthy merchant houses in Kyoto

made a display of three stacked Mirror Cakes on top of their brick stoves and offered smaller sets of Mirror Cakes decorated with sacred ropes to the household well, bathtub, sink, and toilet.[35] Households made their New Year's rice cakes on the twenty-eighth or thirtieth day of the twelfth month, avoiding the twenty-ninth day, which was thought to be inauspicious because "*mochi* produced on the ninth" (*ku mochi*) were believed to "hold suffering" (*ku mochi*).[36]

On the eleventh day of the New Year, the Mirror Cakes are removed from their ritual context and consumed. Since rice cakes represent longevity by virtue of the fact that the rice dough can be stretched, it is bad luck to cut Mirror Cakes lest one shorten one's life. Instead, Mirror Cakes are broken apart by hand or with a small pestle, and then added to a warm, sweet azuki bean paste soup called *shiruko*, which softens the cakes so that they can be eaten.[37] Consuming the Mirror Cakes can be viewed as a type of holy communion because the New Year's divinities still reside within them, providing the householder a way to invigorate their own life force by eating the spirit of the deities.[38]

The previous interpretation of the meaning of Mirror Cakes is typical of folklorists and owes much inspiration to the ideas of Yanagita Kunio who began taking an interest in food culture in the early 1930s. In a 1932 essay, "Foodstuffs and the Heart" (*Shokumotsu to shinzō*), Yanagita explained that rice cakes were so spiritually powerful because they represented the most important human organ, the heart, by which Yanagita meant the equivalent of the soul as opposed to an actual physical part of the human body.[39] Rice cakes, according to Yanagita, were a means not only to sustain life but could also serve as a way of spiritual renewal and an avenue of communication with the divine when they were consumed at the end of the New Year's holiday.[40]

Writing 700 years earlier than Yanagita, Zen Master Dōgen (1200–253) offered a Buddhist teaching titled, "Painting of a Rice-cake," which confirmed that rice cakes could stand both as a physical object and as a representation of spiritual truth. Dōgen introduces the famous Zen saying, "a painting of a rice-cake does not satisfy hunger," to explain that words cannot point toward enlightenment just as staring at a picture of a rice cake is no substitute for eating. But by the end of his discourse, Dōgen affirms the opposite position that words can express the truth just as a painting of a rice cake could satisfy hunger. Words are the Zen master's means for teaching the path to enlightenment. Dōgen concludes, "there is no remedy for satisfying hunger other than a painted rice-cake." Typical of any Zen master, Dōgen leaves his audience with the task of trying to comprehend the full meaning of his statements. He writes, "satisfying hunger, satisfying no hunger, not satisfying hunger, and not satisfying no-hunger cannot be attained or spoken of without painted hunger." While Dōgen's ideas are hard to penetrate, he confirms the power of rice cakes to signify, writing: "a rice-cake is wholeness of body and mind actualized. A rice-cake is blue, yellow, red, and white as well as long, short, square, and round."[41]

Dōgen's essay about rice cakes resonates with Yanagita's observation that Mirror Cakes represent the soul or, in Dōgen's words, "wholeness of body and mind actualized." But Yanagita, who sought to recover a popular "culture that does not depend on writing," eschewed written records as elitist and useless for reconstructing the ideas of ordinary people.[42] Consequently, Yanagita did not support his theories about rice cakes with textual evidence, preferring to synthesize his own conclusions based on oral testimony from rural informants.

Premodern culinary texts may not have been helpful to Yanagita anyway, because they do not provide support for his ideas about the sanctity of Mirror Cakes, but a few writings

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mention the magical powers of a different New Year's food that featured a rice cake, a soup called *ozōni*, literally "a variety of simmered things." According to several interpretations from early modern culinary writings, the vegetables and chicken or pheasant meat used as ingredients in *ozōni* represented the internal organs of the King of Demons, and consuming the dish was a way to ensure physical health and proper bodily functions.[43] One is tempted to imagine that the association of the rice cake in *ozōni* with a demon is due to the fact that eating *ozōni* can be as dangerous as it is healthy. Today, Japanese television newscasters at the New Year warn elderly people to be careful when consuming the sticky rice cakes in *ozōni*, yet every year several people choke to death on them. Happily, more pleasant thoughts usually come to the mind at mention of *ozōni*, which include both the felicity of this New Year's dish and pride in local recipes for it because there are many regional variations of *ozōni* around the country. Round rice cakes in miso soup are preferred in the Osaka and Kyoto region for *ozōni*, but Tokyo residents favor square cakes in a clear broth. Regional preferences in *ozōni* recipes are so pronounced in Japan that some food scholars have attempted to map them.[44]

Another invention besides Mirror Cakes and *ozōni* that derives from the ancient custom of Teeth-strengthening Rice Cakes are Flower Petal Rice Cakes (*hanabira mochi*), which also took form in the Muromachi period as a New Year's treat. The eponymous flower petal of the sweet is suggested by a very thin, circular white rice cake with a smaller round red rice cake placed on top of it. A narrow slice of simmered burdock is also added next to the red rice cake. The white rice cake is then folded in half to hide the red rice cake inside so that the tips of the burdock barely protrude from the ends giving the treat the appearance of a small soft-shell taco. Red and white are part of the traditional color scheme of the New Year and signify female and male, yin and yang. Thus Flower Petal Cakes represent the amalgamation of the two basic principles of the universe and suggest that the sexual union of male and female will lead to prosperity and healthy descendants for a family.[45]

Varieties of rice cakes

Yanagita Kunio observed that one of the chief characteristics of rice cakes was their many forms.[46] A rice cake museum in Akita prefecture claims to display more than 400 varieties of rice cakes and other *mochi*.[47] Beyond the flat flower petals of *hanabira mochi*, the round and thick Mirror Cakes, and the round or square varieties used in *ozōni* already mentioned, rice cakes can be decorated with different wrappers to change their appearance. Rice cakes served between two camellia leaves are called Camellia Cakes (*tsubaki mochi*), a confectionery dating to at least the Heian period and mentioned in the ancient novel *Tale of Genji* composed around the year 1000. Camellia leaves are inedible but a convenient way to hold the sticky rice cakes. The oak leaves wrapping rice cakes in the sweet *kashiwa mochi* are likewise discarded and not consumed, but Cherry Leaf Cakes (*sakura mochi*) use cherry leaves made edible by pickling them in salt and these are meant to be eaten. Instead of rice cakes, modern versions of these confections often feature a ball of dough made from rice flour, which is stuffed with *an*, sweetened azuki bean paste.

Sweetened azuki bean paste is the most typical filling for Japanese confectionery today, and the recipe for *an*-filled rice cakes dates from perhaps as early as the seventh century, but the ancient dish would have been more savory than sweet in that era. In the ancient and medieval periods sugar was known only as a rare imported medicine. Rice cakes

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derived any sweetness from the glutinous rice itself and by the addition of honey, malt, or a syrup derived from sweet arrowroot (*amazura*).[48] The happy marriage of sugar and rice cakes occurred in the late sixteenth century when Portuguese merchants began importing Chinese sugar to Japan and helped demonstrate the potential uses of the sweetener in cooking.[49] Japanese were keen to experiment with sugar, creating various types of sweetened rice cakes. *Cookery Collection* (*Ryōrishū*), a culinary text authored in 1733 by Kikkawa Fusatsune, a chef in the service of the warlord (*daimyō*) of Sendai domain, contains recipes for rice cakes stuffed with strawberries, apples, and even daikon radish.[50] The modern versions of these rice cakes are the strawberry, azuki bean paste, or soybean filled Great Fortune Cakes (*daifuku mochi*): plump sweets made from rice flour dough and stuffed with a filling, which are sold year-round even in convenience stores. (Daikon stuffing never caught on as a popular flavor for rice cake confectionery.) *Mochi* ice cream, now perhaps the most familiar stuffed rice flour confection sold outside of Japan, was invented in Los Angeles's Japan Town in the early 1990s.

Besides foods using pounded glutinous rice or the dough made from rice flour, *mochi* can be made from non-glutinous rice alone or in combination with glutinous rice. A famous rice cake made from non-glutinous rice is Gohei Cake (*gohei mochi*), created by mashing cooked rice in a small, serrated mortar (*suribachi*) until sticky and then forming the rice into balls. The rice balls are grilled, then glazed with soy sauce flavored with walnuts or miso mixed with sesame seeds.[51] A traditional way to cook Gohei Cakes is to grill them by skewering the rice ball at one end of a stick and planting the other end of the stick near an open fire.[52] Gohei Cakes are said to take their name from a woodcutter named Gohei who accidentally dropped his lunch on the ground. Despite wiping the dirt off his rice, Gohei lost his appetite until he noticed that a lump of rice near his campfire had started to grill and smelled good enough to eat. The taste of the grilled rice ball improved further when he added soy sauce or miso.[53]

Onigiri, also called *omusubi*, are rice balls made from non-glutinous rice. *Onigiri* remain a popular snack in Japan and a quick way to turn leftover rice into a portable meal by hand-forming the rice into a triangular wedge or flattened sphere. Wetting the hands with salty water before forming the rice balls helps avoid the rice sticking to one's fingers and the salt adds flavoring, but these days perfectionists can use plastic molds to form perfectly shaped *onigiri*. *Onigiri* are best eaten with a large piece of nori as a way to avoid getting rice stuck to one's hands, or the rice ball can be covered with black or white sesame seeds. *Onigiri* can also be grilled like Gohei Cakes. Common today are the many types of stuffed *onigiri*, which can be filled with tuna salad, bonito flakes, chopped Japanese pickles, salmon, or pickled apricot (*umeboshi*). Convenience stores, train stations, and other places that sell prepared meals offer customers a variety of inexpensive *onigiri*.

Mochi beyond rice cakes

Almost anything in the shape of a dumpling made from a glutinous variety of a grain or something that is naturally sticky such as taro that is mashed and formed into a ball can be called a *mochi*. Cooked grains or flours, beans, nuts, tubers, roots, and herbs are some of the many possible ingredients for *mochi*.[54] *Mochi* can be made from kudzu or bracken (*warabi*) when these are dried and ground into flour.[55] Grilling is the most typical way of eating the wide variety of *mochi*. Before World War II, a typical farmer's breakfast was grilled *mochi* made from the flour of any number of ingredients on hand including wheat,

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buckwheat, foxtail millet, barnyard millet, ordinary millet, or even the leftover husks from milling rice. These *mochi* could be plain or have a cooked vegetable filling. *Mochi* were a convenience food since they could be made earlier in the day or the night before and then simply grilled quickly before heading into the field for work.[56] People in mountainous regions such as the Hida area in the north of Gifu prefecture made *mochi* from chestnuts and acorns, which were important sources for carbohydrates and protein in the local diet.[57] Guides to surviving famines issued by the warrior government in the early modern period offered directions on how to make *mochi* from straw, although one family died of constipation from eating too much straw as described in a record of the Tenmei Famine of the 1780s.[58] Such *mochi* are the types of lowly foodstuffs referred to in the old saying, "cook a *mochi* for a beggar, but grill a fish for a lord."[59]

Only the most desperate would be willing to eat straw *mochi*, but one of the oddest recipes for *mochi* is for Paper *Mochi*, which is found in the cookbook *Anthology of Special Delicacies* (*Ryōri chinmishū*) published in 1764. The paper in question, called *hōshogami*, is pure white and one of the finest qualities available, so this clearly was not an inexpensive dish to prepare or a survival food. The directions indicate to soak the paper in water for three days until it dissolves into pulp. Kudzu is added as a thickener and miso for flavoring, and the mush is kneaded like dough and divided into pieces for simmering in a broth to make a sort of dumpling soup. The recipe asserts that anyone eating the dish would be protected against illness for a year. A modern commentator adds, perhaps facetiously, that the paper dumplings would also be a good source of dietary fiber.[60]

The four seasons of rice cakes

Rice cakes, created to celebrate festivals and to reflect the change of seasons, exemplify the importance of seasonality in traditional Japanese dietary culture. Accordingly, certain varieties of *mochi* and sweets are available only during select times of the year. Limitations of space prevent mentioning more than a few of these seasonal *mochi* here, but there are hundreds of varieties available today.

Four days after the Mirror Cakes have been removed from their place of honor in the household and consumed, another New Year's decoration takes their place, the ornaments called Rice Cake Flowers (*mochibana*) created to celebrate the agricultural New Year (*koshōgatsu*) on the fifteenth day of the first month. To make Rice Cake Flowers, small pink and white rice cakes are attached to willow branches.[61] *Mochibana* resemble a branch covered with tiny cotton balls or puffs of colorful snow, and are meant to serve as a decorative substitute for real flowers in the cold winter.

On the third day of the third month, diamond-shaped rice cakes in pink, green, and white are consumed in celebration of the doll festival (*hina matsuri*), a holiday honoring girls. By the time of the doll festival, Camellia Cakes are a distant memory of the previous month, but one can anticipate the Cherry Leaf Cakes served later in the spring when the cherry blossoms are in bloom. Oak Leaf Cakes are associated with the boys' festival, which is on the fifth day of the fifth month.

The sixteenth day of the sixth month marked the holiday of *kajō* when the early modern warrior government distributed sixteen varieties of sweets to regional warlords and its highest-ranking vassals at a ceremony at Edo Castle. Eating the sweets was thought to ward off the illnesses that tend to flourish in the summer heat.[62] Today, June 16 is Japanese Sweet Day.

A type of inside out *mochi*, with a rice cake on the inside and a topping of sweetened azuki bean paste, soybean flour, or sesame seeds on the outside, is called Peony (*botan*) in the spring and Bush Clover (*ohagi*) in the autumn. Although they are consumed year-round in Japan today and generally referred to as Bush Clover regardless of the season, traditionally these inside out *mochi* were made for the seven days preceding the spring and autumn equinoxes as a Buddhist offering to be used in rituals for remembering the dead at those times of year.[63] Once placed on the home altar, even momentarily, the sweet could be removed for consumption, allowing the eater to earn some benefits of good karma by practicing generosity before enjoying the delicacy.

In the lunar tenth month of the year, practitioners of the tea ceremony hold a New Year's ceremony for tea (now celebrated between September and November), when they open the vessels containing fresh tea and serve New Year's sweets such as Flower Petal Rice Cakes. The tenth lunar month also marked the festival of *gencho*, which mandated the consumption of Offspring of the Wild Boar Rice Cakes (*inoko mochi*) on the first day of the boar of that month.[64] Like many other seasonal rice cakes, the confections for this holiday served as a protection against disease and bad luck, but they also celebrated fertility since wild boar have large litters of offspring. The rice cakes for this holiday are traditionally made with sesame seeds and azuki beans. The custom of consuming *inoko mochi* is mentioned in the *Tale of Genji*, but eating the cakes became more widely observed in the early modern period when the shogun distributed Offspring of the Wild Boar Rice Cakes to warlords and high ranking vassals; and the emperor gifted the cakes to aristocrats. Today, the sweets are eaten in November.[65]

"For rice cakes, visit the rice cake seller"

The popularization of consuming different varieties of rice cakes to celebrate the change of seasons grew hand in hand with the development of the confectionery trade in Japan. Required for various ritual observances and considered delicacies to eat, rice cakes proved to be ideal commodities for entrepreneurs in medieval cities, which had diversified labor forces and classes of people who could afford to let someone else handle the laborious task of polishing, steaming, and pounding rice into cakes. "For rice cakes, visit the rice cake seller" (*mochi wa mochiya*), a time-honored saying that directs one to call on an expert for specialized goods or simply spend money to purchase something that would otherwise be too time-consuming and troublesome to make oneself.

One of the earliest rice cake dealers in Japan we have record of was a former samurai named Watanabe Susumu who received a license from the Muromachi shogunate to operate a rice cake store in Kyoto in 1512. Watanabe founded the Kawabata Dōki lineage of confectioners, a business still in operation today, and famous for making the Flower Petal Rice Cakes mentioned earlier. The Kawabata household grew prominent when they became official purveyors of rice cakes to the imperial court, a post they held until the modern era, providing all of the rice cakes and other confections needed for imperial rituals.[66]

Another rice cake maker in Kyoto named Chōgorō became famous by cultivating a relationship with Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98), the warlord who unified Japan in 1590 after more than a century of civil war. Chōgorō established his business near Kitano Shrine where Hideyoshi hosted a massive outdoor tea party for all of the country's tea masters in 1587. A shop near the shrine still sells the famous rice cakes, which are stuffed with bean paste and named after Chōgorō.[67]

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Other Kyoto sweet makers plied their trade near religious institutions to cater to the pilgrims and tourists who visited them. In the early modern period, vendors near Seiganji Temple and Hōkōji Temple sold Big Buddha Cakes (*daibutsu mochi*), large rice cakes with the image of a Buddha branded on top. Two confectioners that still stand facing each other at the entranceway of Kyoto's Imamiya Shrine specialize in Toasted Cakes (*aburi mochi*) made from soybean flour, grilled on a charcoal fire, and then glazed with sweet white miso. The skewers used for toasting *aburi mochi* are said to be carved from bamboo used in ceremonies at the nearby shrine, thereby imparting protection against disease for those who consume the cakes.[68]

The late seventeenth century marked the takeoff point for the growth of the confectionery business in Japan as native experience working with rice cakes combined with imported knowledge from the Portuguese about how to use sugar, which stimulated a vibrant sugar trade with China and later spurred the development of a domestic sugar industry from the eighteenth century in Japan.[69] A published listing of occupations in Kyoto in 1690 shows the specialization of the confectionery business into sweet makers (*kashishi*), rice cake makers (*mochishi*), makers of rice or kudzu sweets wrapped in bamboo grass (*chimakishi*), cracker makers (*senbeishi*), makers of dried, ground glutinous rice (*dōmyōjishi*) used in confectionery, candy makers (*ameshi*), and grilled rice cake makers (*yakimochishi*).[70] One counting of famous food shops in Edo dating to 1824 lists 120 confectioners (*kashiya*), the largest of any category of food stores.[71] The legacy of Japan's confectionery culture that developed in the early modern period is evident in the traditional Japanese sweet makers of today who sell a bewildering variety of treats in different colors, shapes, and designs but created basically from the same ingredients as rice cakes, except that rice flour has replaced pounded rice as the dough to which sugar and mashed azuki beans are added. "The culture of early modern confectionery begins and ends with *mochi*," as one food historian has observed, but traditional Japanese confectionery also includes sweets inspired by Iberian prototypes such as cakes (*kasutera*), cookies (*bōro*), and sugar candies (*aruheitō*, *konpeitō*).[72] Chinese recipes are represented by a variety of baked and steamed buns (*manjū*) usually stuffed with sweet azuki paste, and *yōkan*, a gelatinous sweet made from azuki beans, sugar, and flour or agar-agar. So-called dry sweets such as *rakugan* made from highly refined sugar and flour also became popular in the early modern period while "moist sweets," made from refined rice flour mixed with sugar and azuki bean paste, provided a medium to create a range of soft confections of different shapes, colors, and decoration to delight the eye and palate.

Integral to the marketing of traditional sweets were the poetic names (*mei*) given them. By the late seventeenth century, when the confectionery business was being established in Japan's major cities, sweet makers had come up with a bewildering number of names for traditional sweets that referenced famous people, natural phenomena, locales, and abstract concepts. Some of these sweets were adaptations of popular recipes; others were the fanciful invention of the confectioners or the suggestions of their clients. Whale Meat Cakes are rice cakes prepared to suggest the appearance of cooked blubber. The cakes are made from a mixture of glutinous and non-glutinous rice that is soaked overnight in a sauce of brown sugar and soy sauce. Chopped walnuts are added the next day before the cakes are steamed.[73] A mid-eighteenth-century kabuki actor from Edo (now Tokyo) named Arashi Otohachi is credited with inventing Fawn Cakes (*kanoko mochi*). Fawn Cakes have a sweet azuki filling and are covered with whole azuki beans, giving the sweet a dappled look said to be reminiscent of the coat of a baby deer.[74] Confectioners became masters at coining

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such artful designations for sweets, requiring consumers to familiarize themselves with the plethora of popular sweet names. Namura Jōhaku listed the names of 250 sweets in his guide to refined knowledge for gentlemen, *Treasury for Men* (*Nanchōhōki*, also called *Otoko chōhōki*), first published in 1693. Besides including familiar favorites such as Cherry Leaf Cakes, Camellia Leaf Cakes, and Whale Meat Cakes, Namura described such artfully named confections as Mountain Trail Cakes (*yamaji mochi*), Strong Mountain Wind Cakes (*yamaoroshi mochi*), Village Rain Cakes (*murosame mochi*), Plum Blossom Cakes (*baika mochi*), Chinese Lotus Cakes (*tōhasu mochi*), the alliterative Capering Course Cakes (*mau michi mochi*), Travel Companion Cakes (*michitsure mochi*), Memo Paper Cakes (*koshikishi mochi*), and Edge of the Marsh Cakes (*sawabe mochi*) to name but a few examples.[75] Some of the names suggest ingredients, but others demonstrate the degree to which rice cakes could, through the imagination of the confectioner, suggest abstract concepts including natural settings, environmental phenomena, and humor. A visit to a traditional confectioner today in Japan reveals a wide assortment of sweets that look quite similar except that their names vary according to the season or store indicating that the premodern custom of using clever names for sweets is well suited to modern marketing. For example, the sweet called *Ogurano* looks exactly the same as the confection called Fawn Cakes mentioned earlier, but rather than a baby deer, the azuki beans on the outside are meant to symbolize the autumn leaves covering Mount Ogurano.[76]

Recipes for a wide variety of *mochi* are found in early modern culinary texts. Culinary writings catered to both professional chefs and armchair gourmands who enjoyed reading about food, and by the nineteenth century the latter had become the principal audience for the hundreds of published texts on cookery, recipe collections, and model menus.[77] The five-volume recipe collection, *Assembly of Standard Cookery Writings* (*Gōrui nichiyō ryōrishō*), published in 1689, dedicates its second volume to *mochi*, noodles and sweets; and it contains recipes for seventeen different types of *mochi* made from rice, sorghum, foxtail millet, horse chestnuts, kudzu, burdock, Japanese pepper, and wheat gluten.[78] Other recipe collections provided more specialized knowledge created for and by professional confectioners but also read by general readers. The representative printed works on confectionery include two anonymous texts, *Secret Writings on Famous Japanese Confectionery New and Old* (*Kokon meibutsu gozen gashi hidenshō*, 1718) and its sequel, *Schema of Famous Japanese Confectionery New and Old* (*Kokon meibutsu gozen gashi zushiki*, 1761). Sweet-maker Funabashiya Orie popularized the treats sold in his shop through his recipe collection, *The Story of Funabashi Sweets* (*Kashiwa funabashi*), also translatable as *For Sweets, it's Funabashi*, published in 1841. The popularity of the genre provided an incentive for one comic novelist to try his hand at writing a cookbook for sweets. *Collection of Quick Recipes for Rice Cakes and Sweets* (*Mochigashi sokuseki teseishū*), published in 1805, is by Jippensha Ikku (1765–1831), who later became much more famous for his witty travel novel *Shank's Mare* (*Hizakurige*). Some modern scholars fault Jippensha Ikku for his defective recipes, many of which simply do not work. But he forewarned his readers, "success or failures will happen, but that does not mean that the recipes are impossible to make. Please try different approaches, and come up with a way of creating them yourself."[79] The largest writing on confectionery published in the early modern period, the two-volume *Secret Text of New Recipes for Famous Sweets New and Old* (*Kokon shinsei meika hiroku*), printed in 1862, contains an extensive selection of *mochi* recipes with fanciful names including Divination Rod Rice Cakes (*sangi mochi*), Whale Meat Cakes, *uirō mochi* (a soft sweet made from rice flour, brown sugar and kudzu starch, which resembled a cough medicine by the same name), Bracken Flour Cakes (*tsukeko mochi*), Sorghum Cakes,

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Brocade-Chinese Rice Cakes (*nishikitō mochi*), Grilled Wheat Gluten Cakes, Chestnut-Flour Cakes, Tangerine Cakes (cakes made from rice flour dyed orange with gardenia and formed into the shape of tangerines), and Grass Cakes made from rice infused with mugwort, to name a few of the recipes.[80]

Rice cakes may not strike the modern reader to be a junk food, but some critics in the early modern period worried about the health effects of eating too many of them. Confucian scholar Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714), who authored over 100 books on subjects including philosophy and natural history, preached moderation as the key to health. He urged readers of his book *Lessons on Nurturing Life* (*Yōjōkun*), written in 1713, to show restraint in eating rice cakes, dumplings, and other sweets. Kaibara also instructed readers on where to go to the bathroom, how often men should ejaculate, and how frequently to bathe so his warnings against rice cakes did not indicate that they were necessarily dangerous as long as they were consumed within the fitness regime that he outlined. Kaibara's advice is no longer heeded, except for his notion that one should eat until 70 to 80 percent full: "If you give yourself over to complete satiety, disaster will follow."[81] Mizuno Nanboku (1757–1834), a fortune-teller turned healer and life coach, eschewed rice cakes completely, claiming that he had never eaten them and that he subsisted instead on a coarse diet of barley and wheat. Mizuno preached moderation with a shriller voice than Kaibara, exhorting readers that the human mouth was "the entrance to the toilet." He advised someone who could not cut down on their rice consumption that they should throw a cup of rice on top of their feces to remind them what the rice becomes. "Wasted food becomes nothing but excrement, never directly benefiting society," Mizuno chided.[82] By preaching moderation or complete abstention from rice cakes, Kaibara and Mizuno confirmed that rice cakes were more than simple foodstuffs, but delicacies whose consumption they thought should be controlled. Despite the criticisms of a few moralists, the popularity of rice cakes and other sweets only grew during the course of the early modern period as evidenced by the spread of sweet makers described earlier. Rice cakes and *mochi* remain central to traditional dietary culture today.

Rice cakes and Japanese culture

The ability of rice cakes to signify other meanings may be indicative of traditional dietary culture but it is no less pronounced in modern academic debates about the character of Japanese civilization. Watanabe Tadao, a specialist in agriculture, and ethnologist Fukazawa Sayuri began their book *Rice Cakes* (*Mochi*) by highlighting the central importance of rice cakes in ceremonies marking key transitions in people's lives in Japan. The authors exclaimed, "one can say that we Japanese are a people unable to be born and even unable to die without rice cakes."[83] It is no longer tenable to claim that rice cakes are unique to Japan as some scholars once did.[84] More recent research postulates that Japan is part of a larger "*mochi* culture" that encompasses East and Southeast Asia.[85] The very prominence of rice cakes in Japanese culture prompted ethnologist Tsuboi Hirofumi (1929–88) to suggest that locales within Japan that did not celebrate the New Year with rice cakes represented the vestiges of an ancient culture that relied on dry field farming as opposed to growing rice in paddy.[86] Later scholars countered Tsuboi by explaining that even communities that do not consume rice cakes on New Year's Day might eat them a few days later, indicating that rice cakes are important for these populations as well.[87] Reducing Tsuboi's argument to an attempt to debunk the centrality of rice cakes within Japanese

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civilization is a simplification of his research that attempts to assert the cultural significance of dry field farming. Nonetheless, Tsuboi's efforts to uncover a sub-culture within Japan partially on the basis of a presumed lack of rice cakes represents his tacit acknowledgement of the focal place of rice cakes in the celebration of rituals, community identity, and national foodways. One would be hard pressed to find a similar foodstuff in Japan that is as simple in its manufacture as a cake pounded from steamed rice, but so infused with meanings and significance to the point that one could say, following Zen Master Dōgen, that a rice cake is "all inclusive."[88] Or one can simply conclude that the rice cake is magical.

Notes

1 I use the word magical not in a pejorative sense but simply to describe both the spiritual potential of rice cakes and their power to signify, especially when formed into various shapes and given fanciful names.
2 Tokihiko Oto, *Folklore in Japanese Life and Customs*, Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1963, p. 24.
3 Aoki Naomi, *Zusetsu wagashi no konjaku*, Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2000, p. 32.
4 Watanabe Tadao and Fukazawa Sayuri, *Mochi*, Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1998, pp. 221–2.
5 Suzuki Shigeo, "Mochi no hanashi are kore," *Koko chishin* 15, 1978, p. 23.
6 Matsushita Sachiko, *Iwai no shokubunka*, Tokyo: Tōkyō Bijutsu Sensho, 1994, p. 51.
7 Suzuki, "Mochi no hanashi are kore," p. 24.
8 Ogura Kumeo, Komatsuzaki Takeshi, and Hatae Keiko, eds., *Nihon ryōri gyōji, shikitari daijiten*, Tokyo: Purosatā, 2003, vol. 1, p. 46.
9 For a discussion of the nature of cuisine in premodern Japan, see Eric C. Rath, *Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Japan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010, pp. 11–37.
10 Alan Davidson, *The Oxford Companion to Food*, second revised edition, ed. Tom Jaine, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 342–3, 665.
11 Asaoka Kōji, *Nabe, kama*, Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1993, p. 71.
12 *Sake* making relies on non-glutinous rice exclusively but the sweet rice vinegar (*mirin*) used in sauces for grilled foods and for flavoring simmered dishes and pickles is made from glutinous rice mixed with distilled spirits (*shōchū*).
13 Yasumuro Satoru, *Mochi to Nihonjin: "Mochi shōgatsu" to "mochi nashi shōgatsu" no minzoku bunka ron*, Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1999, p. iv. Scholarship after Yanagita has critiqued his hypotheses for their lack of historicity and overgeneralization. See Ian Reader, "Folk Religion," in *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*, ed. Paul L. Swanson and Clark Chilson, pp. 65–90, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006, pp. 66–7.
14 Yasumuro, *Mochi to Nihonjin*, p. iv.
15 Kurosawa Fumio, *Kome to sono kakō*, Tokyo: Kenpakusha, 1982, pp. 206–7. Chinese-style wheat bread treats and foods made from rice flour fried in oil were eaten at court in ancient Japan and remain in use as ritual offerings to deities at some religious institutions. The character the Chinese used for rice cake (粢), pronounced *shitogi* in Japanese, referred in Japan to a specific type of rice cake used as an offering to the deities. Watanabe and Fukazawa, *Mochi*, p. 211.
16 Today, *mochi* generally refers to rice cakes, but historically sometimes the terms "rice *mochi*" (*kome no mochi*) and "white *mochi*" (*shiromochi*) were used to specify *mochi* made from glutinous rice. Masuda Shōko, *Zakkoku no shakaishi*, Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2011, p. 26.
17 Nakayama Keiko, *Wagashi monogatari*, Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1993, p. 13.
18 Miwa Shigeo, *Usu*, Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1978, p. 78.
19 Yunoki Manabu, *Sakezukuri no rekishi* (*shinsōpan*), Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 2005, pp. 161–2. The powder produced from milling rice was not discarded but used to make crackers or as animal feed.
20 Nagatsuka Takashi, *The Soil: A Portrait of Rural Life in Meiji Japan*, trans. Ann Waswo, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, p. 67.
21 Nagatsuka, *The Soil*, p. 96.
22 By the turn of the eighteenth century, a hammer-shaped pestle became more typical than the straight pestle since it was easier to use. Ishige Naomichi, *Men no bunkashi*, Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2006, p. 106.

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23 Celebrations of the harvest moon were on the fifteenth day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar (now September), a time for moon viewing and for making offerings outdoors to the moon of Moon Viewing Dumplings (*tsukimi dango*), taro, edamame, and chestnuts.
24 Nagatsuka, *The Soil*, p. 95.
25 Suzuki, "Mochi no hanashi are kore," p. 28.
26 Nishiyama Matsunosuke, ed., *Tabemono no Nihonshi sōkan*, Tokyo: Shinjinbutsu Ōraisha, 1994, p. 428.
27 Mirror Cakes are made on occasions besides the New Year, as for example, offerings to deities on festival days, on raising the roof of a new home, or to celebrate a wedding. Yanagita Kunio, *Shokumotsu to shinzō*, Tokyo: Kōdansha Gakujutsu Bunkō, 1977, p. 24.
28 Watanabe and Fukazawa, *Mochi*, p. 245.
29 Suzuki, "Mochi no hanashi are kore," pp. 25–6.
30 Ogura et al., *Nihon ryōri gyōji, shikitari daijiten*, vol. 1, pp. 46, 78.
31 Rath, *Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 66–71.
32 The spiny lobster probably would not have been consumable after several days on display. The dried persimmons could be eaten immediately, but the dried chestnuts would need to be soaked in water overnight to soften them while the konbu is usually boiled. Konbu is one of the chief ingredients to make stock as for miso soup.
33 Yasumuro, *Mochi to Nihonjin*, p. 6.
34 Yanagita, *Shokumotsu to shinzō*, pp. 30–1.
35 Ōmura Shige, *Kyō no obansai*, Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1996, pp. 128–9.
36 Mori Motoko, *Kikigaki Gifu no shokuji*, vol. 21 of *Nihon no shokuseikatsu zenshū*, Tokyo: Nōsan Gyoson Bunka Kyōkai, 1990, p. 67.
37 Matsushita, *Iwai no shokubunka*, p. 87.
38 Suzuki, "Mochi no hanashi are kore," p. 25.
39 Yanagita, *Shokumotsu to shinzō*, p. 28.
40 Yasumuro, *Mochi to Nihonjin*, p. 5.
41 Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen*, Berkeley: North Point Press, 1985, pp. 134–9.
42 Alan Christy, *A Discipline on Foot: Inventing Japanese Native Ethnography, 1910–1945*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012, p. 7.
43 Rath, *Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 83–4.
44 Ichikawa Takeo, "Shoku bunka ni miru chiikisei," in vol. 12 of *Zenshū Nihon no shokubunka*, ed. Haga Noboru and Ishikawa Hiroko, pp. 17–26, Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1996, p. 18.
45 Most modern versions of the sweet also include sweetened bean paste made from white azuki with white miso added. Nakayama Keiko, *Jiten wagashi no sekai*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006, pp. 118–19.
46 Yanagita, *Shokumotsu to shinzō*, p. 31.
47 The *mochi* museum, called Mochi no Yakata, is in Daisen City, Akita prefecture, Watanabe and Fukazawa, *Mochi*, p. 209. See www.obako.or.jp/ota/motinoyakata1.htm.
48 Aoki, *Zusetsu wagashi no konjaku*, pp. 22, 28.
49 Rath, *Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 91–3.
50 Matsushita Sachiko, "Edo jidai ryōrisho ni miru kashi," *Wagashi* 12, 2005, pp. 78–9.
51 Sakamoto Sadao, *Mochi no bunkashi*, Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1989, pp. 79–80.
52 Yoshikawa Seiji and Ōhori Yasuyoshi, *Zoku Nihon, shoku no rekishi chizu*, Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, 2003, pp. 23–31.
53 Zenkoku Ryōri Kenkyūkai Hiiragikai, *Nihon no kyōdo ryōri*, Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1974, p. 140.
54 Watanabe and Fukazawa, *Mochi*, pp. 230–1.
55 Yasumuro, *Mochi to Nihonjin*, pp. vi–vii.
56 Ichikawa, "Kaisetsu," p. 6. Seijō Daigaku Minzokugaku Kenkyūjo, ed., *Nihon no shokubunka: Sh?wa shoki, zenkoku shokuji shūzoku no kiroku*, Tokyo: Iwasaki Bijutsusha, 1990, p. 329.
57 Matsuyama Toshio, *Ko no mi*, Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1982, p. 193.
58 Harada Nobuo, *Edo no shokuseikatsu*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003, p. 217.
59 Nishiyama, *Tabemono no Nihonshi sōkan*, p. 428.
60 Matsushita Sachiko, *Edo ryōri tokuhon*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2012, pp. 233–4.
61 Yasumuro, *Mochi to Nihonjin*, p. 79.
62 Harada, *Edo no shokuseikatsu*, p. 121.

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63 Yanagihara Toshitake, "Minkan gyōji to ryōri," in *Teihon Nihon ryōri: Yōshiki*, pp. 204–8, Tokyo: Shufu no Tomo, 1979, p. 205.
64 The twelve animal signs of the zodiac designated years, months, days, and hours. The boar was the last of the twelve signs. The zodiac signs follow their own cycle rather than align with the numerical days of the month. Consequently, the first day of the boar varied from year to year.
65 Nakayama, *Jiten wagashi no sekai*, pp. 19–20; Nakayama Keiko, *Edo jidai wagashi dezain*, Tokyo: Popurasha, 2011, p. 192.
66 Hayashi Jun'ichi, "Edoki no kyūtei to kashi: Kawabata Dōki no monjō kara mite," *Kashi, cha, sake*, vol. 6 of *Zenshū Nihon no shokubunka*, ed. Haga Noboru and Ishikawa Hiroko, pp. 39–57, Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan, 1996, p. 40. Jinnai Tomiko, *Shoku o tabi shite: Kokoro o hikaeru yonjūgo hanashi*, Kyoto: Kamogawa Shuppan, 2003, p. 135.
67 Kamei Chihoko, *Engigashi, iwaigashi*, Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2000, p. 41.
68 Rebun, *Kyōto jōtō na wagashi*, Tokyo: Meitsu Shuppan, 2005, pp. 128–9.
69 For a discussion of the influence of Portuguese foods on the traditional Japanese diet, see Rath, *Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 85–111.
70 Akai Tatsurō, *Kashi no bunkashi*, Kyoto: Kawara Shoten, 2005, p. 116.
71 Aoki, *Zusetsu wagashi no konjaku*, p. 12.
72 Ebara Kei, *Ryōri monogatari kō: Edo no aji kokon*, Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1991, p. 13.
73 Whale Meat Cakes are a fixture of the Doll Festival in Yamagata prefecture. Yoshikawa and Ōhori, *Zoku Nihon, shoku no rekishi chizu*, pp. 163–6.
74 Nakayama, *Jiten wagashi no sekai*, p. 41.
75 Namura Jōhaku, *Onna chōhōki, nanchōhōki*, ed. Nagatomo Chiyoji, Tokyo: Shakai Shisōsha, 1993, pp. 326–8, 331–3.
76 Nakayama, *Jiten wagashi no sekai*, p. 41.
77 Historian Harada Nobuo, who surveyed the 182 culinary books that can be conclusively dated to the early modern period, discerned that most of these texts were published after the late 1700s, particularly in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. Harada Nobuo, *Edo no ryōrishi: Ryōribon to ryōri bunka*, Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1989, pp. 10–11. For an overview of early modern culinary texts, see Rath, *Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 112–20.
78 *Gōrui nichiyō ryōrisho* in vol. 1 of Issunsha, ed., *Nihon ryōri hiden shūsei: Genten gendaigoyaku*, pp. 95–217, Kyoto: Dōhōsha, 1985, pp. 127–33.
79 Jippensha Ikku, *Mochigashi sokuseki teseishū*, in vol. 1 of *Kinsei kashi seihōsho shūsei*, ed. Suzuki Shin'ichi and Matsumoto Nakako, pp. 221–307, Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2003, p. 228.
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82 Michio Kushi and Aveline Kushi with Alex Jack, trans., *Food Governs Your Destiny: The Teachings of Namboku Mizuno*, New York: Japan Publications, Inc., 1991, pp. 20, 33, 60.
83 Watanabe and Fukazawa, *Mochi*, p. 1.
84 In a 1965 publication, Moriyasu Tadashi argued that *mochi* were unique to Japan; Moriyasu Tadashi, *Okashi no rekishi* (*jō*), vol. 10 of *Shoku no fūzoku minzoku mechō shūsei*, Tokyo: Tokyo Shoin, 1985, pp. 24, 31.
85 Sakamoto Sadao posited an Asian "*mochi* culture" that encompasses Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, regions typified by the consumption of glutinous rice. Sakamoto, *Mochi no bunkashi*, pp. 128–9.
86 Tsuboi Hirofumi, *Ine o eranda Nihonjin*, Tokyo: Miraisha, 1982; Yasumuro, *Mochi to Nihonjin*, pp. 9–10. For a brief overview of Tsuboi's ideas in English, see Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice As Self: Japanese Identities Through Time*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, pp. 35–6.
87 Yasumuro Satoru, "Mochi nashi shōgatasu: Saikō – fukugō seigyō ron no kokoromi," in vol. 12 of *Zenshū Nihon no shokubunka*, ed. Haga Noboru and Ishikawa Hiroko, pp. 197–239, Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1996, pp. 197, 223.
88 Tanahashi, *Moon in a Dewdrop*, p. 136.