

A Historical Overview of Hasami Ware and a Sociological Examination from the Perspective of the Two-Wheel Policy

URANO Yasuko

Abstract

This paper aims to examine the development of Hasami ware—traditional Japanese pottery produced in the town of Hasami in Nagasaki Prefecture. I first provide an overview of the literature on the history of Hasami ware and then examine how Hasami ware attained its current status from a sociological perspective. I explore important factors that led to the development of today’s Hasami ware from the perspective of the two-wheel policy. These include an examination of how townspeople of Hasami involved in Hasami ware consistently pursued (1) policies for professionals and the general public and (2) the transmission of history in parallel with investment in the future. Based on the previous research, I highlight that the lack of a unified brand image made it possible for Hasami ware to be proposed as pottery as a social design, with each manufacturer proposing a new lifestyle. Hasami ware has brought about the establishment of a successful brand of pottery that promotes a simple and sophisticated lifestyle and offers strategies for generating social design and surviving in unpredictable situations by going beyond themes to create products that sell and build brands.

Keywords: Hasami ware, Two-Wheel Policy

Introduction: Purpose and Significance of the Study

This paper aims to examine the development of Hasami ware, traditional Japanese ceramics produced in the town of Hasami in Nagasaki Prefecture. The history of pottery making in the town of Hasami dates back to the late 16th century. However, it was only in the 2010s that it became widely known as Hasami ware. Today, Hasami ware is appreciated as a simple and sophisticated household essential, rather than a low-cost houseware. Notably, Nagasaki Prefecture, where Hasami is located, ranked third in terms of the largest manufactured product shipment value, according to the 2018 Census of Manufacture data for the tableware and kitchenware ceramics industry by prefecture, following Gifu Prefecture (which produces Mino ware) and Saga Prefecture (which produces Imari ware and Arita ware) (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2020). Hasami ware has played an important role in Japanese society by virtue of its highly skilled production technique and scale of economic contribution. It has been said that selling any commodity in the Japanese market has been difficult since the Heisei Recession. In this context, the successful establishment of Hasami ware as a brand promoting a simple and sophisticated lifestyle is a model case that can offer numerous hints regarding the ushering of a new

era. In this paper, I will first provide an overview of the literature on the history of Hasami ware and then examine how Hasami ware attained its current status from a sociological perspective.

The History of Hasami Ware

In this section, I will examine the important events that led to the current developmental state of Hasami ware from a sociological viewpoint using the report on the history of Hasami ware compiled by the Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative (2007) as the primary source, alongside other secondary sources. The history of Hasami ware has been studied from various perspectives based on findings from the excavation of kiln ruins, analysis of Hasami ware traded outside Japan, and archival research involving local documents (Nogami 1995; Nogami 1996). Compiling a comprehensive historical account is not an easy task, as is often the case in historical research. Regarding the history of Hasami ware, the number of studies providing an overview of its emergence in the Azuchi-Momoyama period up to the 21st century is limited. Therefore, Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative's (2007) report on the history of Hasami ware is a precious primary source, and including this material in the analysis conducted in this study has allowed the creation of a more comprehensive picture of the dynamics of Hasami ware.

The Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative (2007) have divided the history of Hasami ware into eight periods to encompass its emergence and developmental trajectory. Specifically, the report highlights (1) the period between the 1590s in the Azuchi-Momoyama period and the 1610s as the "period of dawn"; (2) the period between the 1610s and the 1630s as the "period of the birth of porcelain"; (3) the period between the 1630s and the 1650s as the "period of celadon"; (4) the period between the 1650s and the 1680s as the "period of overseas export"; (5) the period between the 1680s and the 1860s as the "period of Kurawanka"; (6) the period between the 1860s and the 1920s as the "Meiji and Taisho period" (using the era names); (7) the period between the 1920s and the 1980s as the "Showa period" (also using the era name); and (8) the period between the 1980s and the present as the "present times" (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007). Additionally, the Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative (2007) have indicated important points for each period. Such an extensive history underscores that Hasami ware's production technology and design have advanced in accordance with domestic and foreign circumstances and the needs of the times (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007), while infrastructural development has been promoted to facilitate efficient production, distribution, and sales.

As the Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative (2007) have synthesized, each historical period includes essential points that are salient to understanding the development of Hasami ware. In this paper, I would like to highlight the following three points: (1) Hasami achieved success in porcelain production at around the same time as the Arita region, that is, during the period between the 1610s and the 1630s; (2) technology advanced significantly between the 1630s and 1650s, facilitating the production of celadon; and (3) the industrial base solidified between the 1650s and 1680s through the production of celadon platters and blue and white porcelain bowls for overseas export (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative

2007). Nogami (1996) has contributed detailed studies on the differences between the Arita and Hasami regions. Moreover, Nogami (1996) has explained three points regarding the differences between Arita and Hasami in the early modern period. First, no clear difference in skill level was apparent between Arita and Hasami, when the production of porcelain started to become specialized (Nogami 1996). Second, production in Hasami started focusing on quantity over quality (Nogami 1996). Third, even within the Hasami area, technological levels differed between older and newer kilns (Nogami 1996). Some cases also indicate that the Hasami region achieved high-level technology and design in the 17th century. For instance, the Topkapi Palace collection in Turkey includes celadon which appears to have originated from Hasami manufacturers (Ohashi 1998). Moreover, many pieces have been excavated from castle ruins in Japan (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007). These cases suggest that ceramics produced in Hasami's high-tech kilns were traded as luxury goods.

Hasami's geographical advantage, given that it was easily accessible from Nagasaki's Dejima port and that it was an important trading base during the Edo era isolationist policy, is another important factor that contributed to the development of Hasami ware. Since ceramics are heavy and fragile, proximity to a trading port is advantageous because it would entail lower transportation costs. Additionally, proximity to Dejima meant more opportunities for contact with foreign cultures, making it easier to access cutting-edge knowledge and technology from abroad. Another advantage was the fostering of a unique aesthetic sense and design skills through the fusion of Japanese culture and foreign cultures. However, proximity to a trading base alone did not lead to products of Hasami being housed in palaces abroad and in castles in Japan. As mentioned above, the Hasami ware industry had already established advanced production technologies and design skills by the 17th century. The present-day Hasami ware was founded on the efficient modern production base that solidified during the period of overseas export between the 1650s and the 1680s, after which this highly efficient production base that had been built up to that point was utilized for production for the domestic market (Nogami 1996). Nogami (1996) has pointed out that the commoditization of Hasami ware progressed as part of the response to the social risks Japanese society faced in the 18th century, such as famine and soaring commodity prices. Kaneko (1996) has stated that "humanity's journey is the history of 'pottery'" (p.53). In this sense, Hasami ware also appear to reflect Japanese society's turbulent history, as they were sometimes exported abroad as luxury goods, while at other times, they were widely distributed domestically as everyday tableware for the common people. In other words, Hasami ware has been produced in the form of various ceramics in response to the demands of each period.

Nevertheless, despite its long and reputable history and technological sophistication, the ceramics produced in Hasami did not circulate under the name "Hasami ware"; it was only recently that it gained visibility as such. It has been pointed out that the reason Hasami ware was not visible back then can be attributed to the fact that ceramics were distributed as "Imari ware," named after the Edo-era cargo port of Imari (Hagami 2021). Subsequently, Hasami ware circulated as "Arita ware," named after a freight train terminal following the 1897 opening of Arita station (Hagami 2021). In the course of his study on Hasami ware, Hagami (2021) has interviewed Yuji Nakano, curator for the Hasami Town Board of Education, and Nakano pointed out some cases in which ceramics were distributed as "Kii ware, if

traded through merchants from Kii” (p.328) or as “Chikuzen ware, if traded through merchants from Chikuzen” (p.328). In light of the foregoing, it is easy to imagine how porcelain produced in Hasami was sold as Arita ware or Imari ware given the geographical proximity of these locations. However, it is difficult to picture it being sold as Kii ware because it was traded through merchants from the distant Kii region. Such an initiative, which can be called a brand strategy in the absence of branding, can be viewed as having been effective in ensuring the survival of the ceramic industry in the Hasami area.

Subsequently, between the 1680s and the 1860s, Hasami’s main products were 540-ml Compura bottles and Kurawanka bowls, which were widely used by the common people for meals and drinking (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007; Kikkoman Institute for International Food Culture 2022). Compura bottles were also used to export sake and soy sauce from Dejima port. Similar bottles were produced in Imari (Kikkoman Institute for International Food Culture 2022). Compura bottles are described as “tokkuri-shaped bottles” (thin-necked and rounded at the bottom) (Kikkoman Institute for International Food Culture 2022). Based on available images, the bottles have a simple and beautiful form, even by modern aesthetic standards. I surmise that the tradition of technological sophistication and design established in the 17th century was transferred to other periods, including the period characterized by the production of daily-use tableware for the common people. Regarding the Compura bottle of this time, Russian writer Tolstoy is said to have used a Compura bottle as his bud vase (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007). Hence, it can be said that Hasami ware has played an important role in disseminating the aesthetic sense that runs through Japan’s ceramic culture overseas amid the isolationist policies of the time. This statement holds even though this cannot be considered an exclusive contribution of Hasami ware since Compura bottles were also produced in Imari and not exclusively in Hasami (Kikkoman Institute for International Food Culture 2022), as mentioned above.

According to the Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative’s (2007) “Timeline of Hasami ware and Mikawachi ware,” there is no mention of Hasami ware being exhibited at the Paris World’s Fair (1889, 1900) in France, the Chicago Exposition (1893), or the St. Louis Exposition (1904) in the United States. According to the timeline, the aforementioned events featured Mikawachi ware, not Hasami ware. Since this paper focuses on Hasami ware, I will not go into detail about Mikawachi ware; however, I will note that Mikawachi ware also boasts a history of advanced technology established in the 17th century, including products that were gifted to the Tokugawa family (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007).

The Two-Wheel Policy Involving Hasami Ware

Based on the Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative’s (2007) “Timeline of Hasami ware and Mikawachi ware,” in this section, I will expound on the important factors that led to the development of the present-day Hasami ware. I will do so from the perspective of the two-wheel policy, which entails examining the unique way by which, after the end of World War II, the townspeople of Hasami involved in Hasami ware consistently pursued (1) policies for professionals and the general public and (2) the transmission of history in parallel to investment in the

future. Regarding the circumstances that led to the current development of Hasami ware, through interviews with people connected to Hasami ware, Hagami (2021) has explored their struggles in response to the various hardships that Hasami ware has faced since the 1990s, specifically the shrinking domestic market, the influx of foreign products, the diversification of tableware as evidenced by the rise of plastic-based products, and the use of the Arita name. In the present paper, I will apply the perspective of the two-wheel policy to examine the efforts of the townspeople of Hasami involved in Hasami ware in the period spanning the late 1950s to the present times, thus extending a little further into the past than the period Hagami (2021) covered, which starts in the 1990s.

I will begin by examining the policies toward professionals and the general public. Generally, to develop new markets and expand sales channels, exposing products at exhibitions and trade fairs is believed to be effective. According to the “Timeline of Hasami ware and Mikawachi ware” (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007), the Hasami Porcelain Festival and the Exhibition Fair were held in 1959. It is deduced that the purpose of the fair was to help industry professionals expand their sales channels; however, interestingly, a porcelain festival had already been held for the general public since the 1950s, which also contributed to the promotion of industrial tourism. In Japan, the concept of industrial tourism is said to have originated from Hiroshi Suda’s advocacy of the concept in his book (Suda 2009). Industrial tourism is now defined as any activity that targets a concept referring to industrial heritage, industrial sites, and industrial products for tourism (Suda 2009). In other words, although Hasami has been working on what is now known as industrial tourism since the late 1950s, it was only in the last decade that the term “industrial tourism” came to be widely recognized amongst the general public in Japan. Regarding the progression of events for the general public, the Hasami Porcelain Festival has been held over 60 times to date and has developed into a popular event featured during the Golden Week holidays, attracting 300,000 visitors annually (Hasami Town Tourism Association 2022). In 2020 and 2021, due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the event could not be held in its traditional form. The late 1950s, when the Hasami Porcelain Festival started, was a time when Japanese society entered a period of strong economic growth, and the time of the emergence of a consumer society. People were able to enjoy buying various commodities, such as home appliances, in pursuit of a comfortable and prosperous life. At the same time, people also started pursuing spiritual richness, in addition to the consumption of commodities, and activities such as appreciating artwork and craft making became widely popularized. Against this backdrop, in Hasami, differentiated policies targeting professionals and the general public were developed as an investment in the future.

Regarding the policies toward professionals and the general public, I will consider an additional point. The town of Hasami is home to the Ceramic Research Center of Nagasaki, whose predecessor was established in 1930 (Ceramic Research Center of Nagasaki 2022). According to the Center’s website, its main activities are (1) research and development; (2) collaborative research; (3) information dissemination; (4) human resource development; (5) product testing upon request; and (6) technical support (Ceramic Research Center of Nagasaki 2022). Furthermore, the August 31, 2020 issue of the Center’s technical journal, *Kama*, mentions that the Center offers seminars and individualized support for social media use to facilitate information dissemination, product development, and expansion of sales

channels in response to the challenges posed to in-person sales due to the postponement of the Porcelain Festival amidst the novel coronavirus pandemic (Ceramic Research Center of Nagasaki 2020). This shows that the Center provides diverse specialized support according to circumstantial changes. In addition to these specialized services, the Center is also engaged in various initiatives targeting the general public, with the aim of becoming the “local hub” (Ceramic Research Center of Nagasaki 2022). Today, the Ceramic Research Center of Nagasaki’s website contains a section entitled “Basic Pottery Knowledge.” The content includes Ohashi’s (1998) research results, which highlight that the ceramics collection housed in Turkey’s Topkapi Palace includes celadon speculated to have been produced in Hasami, as mentioned above. Hence, readers can gain broad and deep knowledge of the history of Hasami ware by perusing information ranging from basic knowledge to highly specialized research findings. Therefore, rather than simply focusing on selling Hasami ware, the Center has also contributed to the dissemination of basic knowledge about ceramics, as well as information about the history of Hasami ware.

Next, I will examine efforts to transmit history and invest in the future. According to the “Timeline of Hasami ware and Mikawachi ware” (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007), the people of Hasami have been preparing to pass on the history of Hasami ware to future generations through initiatives such as the Festival for the 370th Anniversary of the Start of Hasami ware in 1968. Moreover, the excavation of kiln ruins was conducted, and Hasami was designated as a traditional craftwork production site (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007). The year 1984 saw the inauguration of the museum of ceramic art, where emerging artists’ works are exhibited alongside historical works; the museum also sells ceramics and offers various lessons (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007).

As I mentioned above, Hagami (2021) has argued that, since the beginning of the 1990s, Hasami ware has faced problems such as the shrinking domestic market, the influx of foreign products, the diversification of tableware materials, and the use of the Arita name. The challenges facing Hasami ware that Hagami (2021) has detailed can also be observed in contemporary data. According to the Touhi Chamber of Commerce Local Economic Trends and Business Trends Survey Report (Touhi Chamber of Commerce 2018), there are 594 ceramics-related businesses in the town of Hasami, but this number was only 76 in 2014. According to the value of manufacturing and shipments, revenue shrank from 22.5 billion yen in 1990 to 6.38 billion yen in 2014 (Touhi Chamber of Commerce 2018). In the face of hardship, Hasami has continued to invest in the future by creating opportunities for successor training. For example, the Toshin-Kan was constructed at Nagasaki Prefectural Hasami High School and Nakaoyama district was maintained as a ceramics art village (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007). Both are now important sites for succession training. In an era in which the economy experienced prolonged low growth coupled with low sales, these sites built to support the comprehensive preservation and advancement of Hasami ware have been utilized for the continued development of Hasami ware in the present, such as in product development connected to *kawaii* culture. The fact that the people of Hasami have continued to implement initiatives geared toward the future, such as creating opportunities for successor training and holding expositions

even amidst a decline in the number of related businesses and economic hardship, is a significant accomplishment.

Conclusions

I began this paper by analyzing previous research and reviewing the history of Hasami ware as documented in the literature. Next, I examined the postwar efforts of the townspeople of Hasami involved in Hasami ware by framing their initiatives as two-wheel policies. The history of Hasami ware is quite long, dating back to the Azuchi-Momoyama period in the 1590s. In this paper, with reference to the many important factors related to the development of Hasami ware indicated in the literature, I elucidated the contribution of the following three points: (1) Hasami's achievement of successful porcelain production around the same time as the Arita region during the period between the 1610s and the 1630s; (2) significant technological advancement between the 1630s and the 1650s, facilitating celadon production; and (3) the solidification of the industrial base between the 1650s and the 1680s through the production of celadon platters and blue and white porcelain bowls for overseas export (Hasami ware Promotion Association and the Mikawachi Ceramics Industry Cooperative 2007). The enhancement of technical and design capabilities during the period of overseas export became the basis for the present-day Hasami ware, as I explained in relation to the third point. Based on the analysis of the postwar initiatives from the two-wheel policy perspective, I find that the people of Hasami town involved in Hasami ware have consistently engaged in (1) the creation of policies for professionals and the general public and (2) the transmission of history and investment in the future, akin to the movement of two wheels on a cart. In this paper, I discussed the progressiveness of initiatives that are equivalent to today's industrial tourism, such as the Hasami Porcelain Festival, which has been held since the end of the 1950s. Furthermore, I stated that the Hasami townspeople's continuous implementation of future-oriented initiatives, such as creating opportunities for successor training and holding expositions even amidst the Japanese economy's persistent low growth, has led to the present-day success of Hasami ware.

Historically, the development of Hasami ware has been characterized by technological and design sophistication since the period of overseas export in the 17th century. Based on the previous research (Ueno et al. 2010), I highlighted that the lack of a unified brand image has made it possible for Hasami ware to propose ceramics as a social design, with each manufacturer proposing a new lifestyle from their own unique perspective. The absence of branding has also paved the way for the development of ceramics connected to the *kawaii* culture of modern times (Hagami 2021). From this viewpoint, Hasami ware can be positioned as a case that does not conform to conventional sales strategies, such as raising local products' name recognition.

This paper outlined previous research on the history of Hasami ware, but research on Hasami ware is being undertaken in various fields. Since the 2000s, research has been conducted not only concerning the history of Hasami ware but also from the perspectives of brand building, social design, and innovation. The case of Hasami ware, with regard to which we have seen the establishment of a successful brand of ceramics that promotes a simple and sophisticated lifestyle, is a model case ripe with hints about strategies to generate social design and survive in unpredictable situations, going beyond

themes such as creating products that sell and building brands.

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波佐見焼の発展に関する歴史的概観と 両輪政策の視点からみた社会学的考察

浦野 慶子

【要旨】

本稿は、波佐見焼はいかにして発展したのかについて考察することを目的とする。具体的には、最初に波佐見焼の歴史に関する先行研究を概観したうえで、波佐見町および波佐見焼の関係者の戦後の取り組みを両輪政策の視点から考察した。本研究では、波佐見町および波佐見焼の関係者が戦後一貫して車の両輪のように（1）専門業者向けと一般向けの政策、（2）歴史の継承と未来への投資を並行して行ってきたという独自性について検討した。波佐見焼の事例は、売れる商品づくりやブランド構築といったテーマを超えて、いかにしてソーシャルデザインを生み出すか、予測しがたい状況においてどのように生き残るかについての示唆に富むものである。

キーワード：波佐見焼、両輪政策