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## **Subtle Taste and Elegant Simplicity (wabi and sabi)**

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### **1 Introduction**

“Subtle taste” (wabi) and “elegant simplicity” (sabi) have been sublimely performing the profound traditional spiritual ideals here in Japan generation after generation for a long time. These spiritual ideals are crossculturally interpreted and treated as the “highest aesthetic values” by cultured and artistic professionals all over the world who are really genuine to culturally and artistically feel such delicate peculiarity of these in their subtilized sensibility possessed.

It is obviously true that those two aesthetic values possess some common internal unique aspects and senses such as a fundamental sense of quiet sadness, encouragement of simplicity and rejection of superfluous gaudiness as well. It is “not” an aesthetically elegant and mature to thoughtlessly have “something superfluous” in such spirituality subtilized.

### **2 Subtle Taste and Elegant Simplicity (wabi and sabi)**

Subtle taste (wabi) is to inwardly express a way of being quietly clear and calm, a state

pursued by a tea master, Sen no Rikyu (1522-1591) who sublimely perfected the art of the Japanese Tea Ceremony which is currently appreciated and treated as one of the great aesthetic values in Japan.

Elegant simplicity (*sabi*) is a value to mean having well-seasoned, refined simplicity, which performs an ideal state in Haiku (poems in seventeen syllables) especially expressed by Matsuo Basho (1644-1694).

For you to substantially feel and understand those two values, it is indispensable to upgrade your “perceptibility” by inches. Virtually, “how you refine your delicacy” is entirely commensurable to “how you upgrade your perceptibility itself.”

Moreover, you are fundamentally required to have reasonable life experience to understand subtle taste and elegant simplicity. Especially you need to experience “something bitter,” again and again in life (reversely, something easy and comfortable spoils your spirit gradually).

### **3 The Ultimate Naturalization through Subtle Taste and Elegant Simplicity**

The two, subtle taste and elegant simplicity should be sensibly recognized to pursue the ultimate spiritual state in a human being what is called “the ultimate naturalization” as an originally individual matter in terms of holding communion with you respectively.

Right after holding communion with you, absolutely, you would be all set to hold communion with nature for the sake of realizing your “ultimate naturalization” as well.

The ultimate naturalization is finally achieved after experiencing cultivation and civilization in you (you are unavoidably required to be cultivated first, civilized second and naturalized third in your lifelong process until you breathe your last breath). All things considered, it is obviously true that you truly need the whole of your life to pursue the described ultimate aesthetic states.

#### **4 An Aesthetic Ideal, “Astringency”**

In order to genuinely appreciate the two Japanese aesthetic states elevated, subtle taste and elegant simplicity, it is rationally suggested to tranquilly and sentiently taste the “astringency” as a “culturally profound taste” through having experience to eat a “piece of tofu with negi and shouga” (a piece of bean curd with spring onion sharply cut and ginger suitably ground in accordance with traditional Japanese cuisine). Eventually, through experiencing it in the elegance of tranquility, you are certainly on a state to delicately feel “something essential in a sense of beauty in your process to do it.

“Astringency” is crossculturally recognized and gracefully appreciated as the ultimate Japanese aesthetic value through experiencing tasting “multitudinous astringent and bitter tastes” physically and spiritually throughout the whole of your life. It goes without saying that this is not a matter of concept but a “matter of the very delicate experience in life” based upon philosophically feeling a sense of transiency in consideration of the immense distances of space.

Metaphysically, the concept of astringency shall be treated as a “metaphor” to taste an aesthetically philosophical ideal value, “something astringent” which can be slightly appreciated through having hard life experiences in affliction.

#### **5 The very Subtilization of the Subtilization in a Sense of Beauty**

Real gorgeousness in a sense of beauty itself is appreciated through subtilizing a profound aesthetic state in the spirituality. I surely hope that you eventually achieve the comprehensive grasp of the ultimate beauty in terms of tasting a profound cultural flavor, “astringency.”

Quintessentially speaking, astringency can be gracefully tasted only by the very subtilization of the subtilization. It is not a matter of taste simply but the “ultimate aesthetic state elevated” through life experience.