

# Japanese Culture in Some Literary Works Taught in the School in Vietnam at Present

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**Abstract** Literature is an important element of culture to reflect honestly on life, which conserves and preserves values in the most natural and durable way. Japanese literature is one of the great literatures of Asia with the fusion of Eastern-Western arts, the bold traditional national identity combined with modernity. Each literary work has the bold national culture mark, providing readers with rich and diverse information on the Japanese natural image, traditional culture and spiritual life. Studying and teaching Japanese literature with the typical works of Matsuo Basho, Yasuanari Kawabata in schools in Vietnam in order to raise the knowledge for the country, people, creative talents, life and traditional culture of Japan, expanding the vision and the ability of sensation for the cultural essence of humanity.

**Keywords:** Japanese culture, the narrow road to Oku, Matsuo Basho, Snow country, a thousand cranes, the sound of the mountain, Yasuanari Kawabata

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## 1. Introduction

Japanese literature is one of the great literatures of Asia with the fusion of Eastern-Western arts, the bold traditional national identity combined with modernity, with many famous authors and hundreds of valuable works. Among them, Yasunari Kawabata and Kenzaburo Oe won the Nobel Prize in Literature (1968 and 1994), which brought glory to Japanese literature in particular and Asian literature in general. Japanese culture has introduced into Vietnam in many different ways, in which Japanese literature is mainly by way of translation and direct introduction by the special and valuable works of the researchers of literature and publishers in charge. Japanese literature has been popular in Vietnam from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century until now, but the study and teaching of this literature are only begun in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Particularly, after 1986, in the expansion of region and international exchanges in many fields, Japanese culture and literature translated, introduced, researched in Vietnam is growing stronger. Many famous authors with typical works of Japanese literature are selected for translation, introduction and study such as: *The Tale of Genji* by M. Shihibu; *Tale of the Taira*; *Haiku poetry* by Matsuo Basho; *Silent Hills* by Sunato Tokunaga; *Road to the water source* by Kazuro Hirotsuda; *Homecoming* by Jiro Osaragi; The ancient poetry of Japan is *Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*; *Bansu field* by Miyamoto Yuriko; *Ince Memed* by Koman

Yasa; Yasunari Kawabata who is great Japanese writer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century won the 1986 Nobel Prize in Literature with novels: *Snow Country*, *A Thousand Cranes*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Ancient capital*, *the sound of the mountain*, *Snow country*, *The Face of Another* by Abe Kobo; *The Woman I Disowned* by X. Endo; *The Twilight Years* by A. Riyoshi; *The August without Emperor* by Kinzo Kobayashi; *Thirst for Love* by Yukio Mishima; *Five Women Who Loved Love* by Ihara Saikaku; *Distant Thunder* by T. Wahei; *Island of the Dolls* by Tazinaki Iunichiro, *Family* by Toso Shimazaki; *Norwegian Wood* by Marakami Haruki; collection of tale of *The Chrysanthemum Vow* by U. Akinari; collection of tale of *In bamboo forest* by A. Kutagawa, etc. The collections selected many outstanding works of many authors such as *Crab Factory Ship*, *White chain*, *Modern Japanese short stories*, *Korean - Japanese ancient poetry*, *The Tale of the Heike*, etc.

Japanese literature and the literary works of Matsuo Basho, Yasuanari Kawabata have been researched by various researchers in a variety of contexts. N. I. Konrat in *Japanese literature from ancient period to early-modern period* affirmed "Japanese literature as well as literature of all nations is raised in the wide environment of the people from the dawn of the existence of the Japanese tribe, in a long time before the Japan was established" [1]. The author has introduced the typical works of Japanese literature from the 8<sup>th</sup> century to the early period of the Japanese bourgeois literature (after the Meiji revolution in 1867). Donal Keene in *Dawn to the West* has stated that it is impossible to use only language to learn Japanese literature [2]. When introducing *Snow country* by

Kawabata under *A Reader's Guide to Japanese literature*, J. Thomas Rimer has mentioned the formation process of artistic style of the writer Kawabata since he participated in the school of New feelings of the West as Western colleagues at the same period: "As time went on, however, he felt himself drawn as a modern man back into the older artistic and aesthetic concerns that helped create the great Japanese tradition" [[3]; 155]. At the same time, the author affirms the value and influence of the Tale of Genji for some modern writers including Kawabata: "Give the power of the tale and its influence on such diverse traditional Japanese arts the No theater, painting, and waka poetry, to say nothing of the effect the text has had on such modern writers as Tanizaki and Kawabata, it is no wonder that the novel (to use our modern term, which can serve only as a rough approximate means of identification) has spawned a whole tradition of literary criticism in Japan" [[3]; 36].

In Vietnam, Japanese literature also attracts the attention of researchers, especially they are the works, the authors taught in the school such as: Haiku poetry, *The narrow road to Oku* by Matsuo Basho, Yasunari Kawabata with *Moon shines bottom of water*, *Snow country*, *Ancient capital*, *A thousands of cranes*, *The sound of the mountain*, *Sleeping beauty*, etc. In *Japanese Literature*, the researchers have selected to introduce Japanese literature works according to the development process of the country and the people of Japan. In the Introduction of the book, the authors affirm: "Japan is a world economic power with a long history, a rich culture, a unique and quite great literature, etc. Modern Japanese literature is a typical literature of the combination of tradition and modernity, between the unique nationality and the essence of world culture" [[4]; 5-6]. Luong Duy Thu in curriculum of *General of Eastern Culture* has six chapters to introduce Japanese culture and literature as from the dawn to modern times. In each chapter, the author introduces the typical authors, literary works in each historical period of Japan. Nhat Chieu in *Japanese Literature from its initial period up to 1868* has identified that the Japanese culture is inclined to affection and beauty, Japanese literature is the literature of affection and nature. "Japanese literature is "the vibe, the throbbing and rhythm according to the movement of the universe. By a few words, a Japanese poem reminds us the movement of the invisible universe that we often forget; Japanese poem evokes the invisible hometown nostalgia" (Osawa)... In Japan, the artists and poets know how to use the "invisibility" and "space" (space on the picture, space in words) as a means of expressing effectively. It is an art that is imbued with Zen thought: "Direct pointing to the human heart" [[5]; 7]. The author has commented on the characteristics of Japanese literature, specifically introduced to the formation and development of Japanese literature from its initial period up to 1868, quoted some classic works including: poetry, novels, dialogues, theater and short stories. The author states that: "Japanese poetry and literature express the highest level of this lovely "belief": worship the Beauty. The Beauty is the criteria, is the standard in the life of the Japanese from many generations... with more than a thousand years, Japanese literature will certainly make a very different impression if it is thoroughly understood" [[5]; 9]. In *Japan in the*

*mirror*, Nhat Chieu has introduced Japanese culture and literature in many contents: nature, history, myths, women, Japanese Zen, art, theater, novels, Basho. The author believes that: "The aspects of Japanese culture observed here are often in the relation to literature". For instance, the Fusang woman will appear in their own literature, as Fuji Mountain appears in the poems talked about it, etc. Because the literature is an extremely vivid mirror, it brings the soul to events and numbers" [[6]; 3]. In the introduction of *Japanese ancient tale*, Tran Huu Kham also comments on the characteristics of Japanese culture and literature and states that: "As a modern industrialized country, Japan has a high national pride expressed in the preservation of unique national cultural identity" [[7]; 12]. Huu Ngoc in *Roaming in Japanese Literature Garden* has outlined the whole of Japanese culture and literature, introducing the authors and works in Japanese literature from folk literature to contemporary literature. The author states that: "The material and spiritual culture of Japan is a success of the human" [[8]; 7]. Luu Duc Trung in *Entering the Garden of Asian Literature* has made a generalization of Japanese literature starting with the Nara period with famous works to modern literature with a variety of literary trends. According to the author, Japanese literature after 1945 has become complicated, everything of miscellaneous, complicated, vulgar, fast-living, rushing-living literature, existentialism, modernism has influenced on the spiritual life of Japan. "Facing with that situation, many writers have used real writing style to expose the dark reality, such as Mishima Yakio (1925-1970), Abe Kobo (1924), Oe Kenjabur (1935) – winner of Nobel Prize in Literature in 1994. Among the modern writers, the pioneer in the protection and revival of the Japanese literary tradition is Kawabata Yasunari. Japanese literature has experienced many ups and downs, but always maintained its inherent identity and independence" [[9]; 282]. In addition, the author also introduces the writer Kawabata and his works that "are considered to be masterpieces of Japanese thought and soul" [[9]; 303] and "Kawabata is a pioneer in the struggle to protect the national tradition. He is as a traveler (Kiojn) not feeling tired on the long way to find, restore and create the beauty. His works are eloquent proof of his love for the country, the people and for the art" [[9]; 303]. In particular, the author has analyzed *Moon shines bottom of water* – the work is taught in the literature program of high school in Vietnam. The author states that: "Japanese and Vietnamese literatures are inherited the same cultural roots of the East. Vietnamese thought as well as Japanese thought caught each other in Kawabata. It is a love for the beauty, the nature and the life. So, Kawabata's work has been widely paid attention by Vietnamese readers. Some of his masterpieces have been translated into Vietnamese. He is also a foreign writer mentioned in the teaching program in high school" [[9]; 302]. Luu Duc Trung continues this commentary in *Yasunari Kawabata - Life and Works* [10]. Mai Lien in *Japanese literary anthology from its initial period to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century* has identified that Japan has a long and wonderful literature: "Japan is also a country with unique culture, with many glorious achievements. Like Vietnam, Japan is in the influence scope of culture and literature of India and China. More than a thousand years ago, the Japanese have absorbed the

culture and literature of these two great civilizations of humanity with their own unique perception and thinking, they have created a lot of “amazing & beautiful flowers” which enrich the cultural and literature treasures of the world” [[11]; 7]. The author states that: “Japanese literature has unity and inheritance. Literary forms and aesthetics value are rich and varied” [[11]; 14]. With all the characteristics and achievements of Japanese literature, “Currently, Japanese literature has been taught in Vietnamese schools including post-graduate schools, universities and high schools. The culture and literature of cherry blossom country are really attractive to many Vietnamese students” [[11]; 8]. In addition, there are many studies introducing general issues on the country, people, culture, history of Japan: *Japan – country and people* by Eiichi Aoki [12], *The United State – Europe – Japan, The Culture and Development* by Do Loc Diep [13], *The Colors of Japan* by Pham Cong Luan - Asako Kato [14], *Japan - country, people and literature* by Ngo Minh Thuy, Ngo Tu Lap [15], *Japanese ancient tale and Japanese national identity* by Doan Nhat Chan [16], *Natural Sensation of Vietnamese and Japanese* by Nhat Chieu [17], etc. In addition, Vietnamese researchers also translated studies on Japanese culture and literature: *Japanese* by V. Prrikov, I. Ladanov (Composed by Duc Duong) [18], *Japanese History* by RHP Mason and JGCaiger (Translated by Nguyen Van Sy) [19], *Hoa Dao* by Osawa (Translated by Ngo Thanh Nhan and Nguyen Hong Giao) [20], *Japanese religion* by Murakami Shigeyoshi (Translated by Tran Van Trinh) [21], etc. Besides, many articles on Japanese culture and literature have been published in magazines such as: *Understanding the characteristics of Japanese Culture* by Tran Van Kinh [22], *Some characteristics of Japanese Haiku poetry* [23] and *Japanese Haiku Poetry on the Spring* by Ha Van Luong [24], etc.

In addition, many studies on Matsuo Basho, Haiku poetry and his works: In *Japanese Literature from its initial period up to 1868*, Nhat Chieu spends one chapter to introducing Matsua Basho, Haiku poetry and *the narrow road to Oku*. “Basho is a man who has given eternal vitality to haiku poetry, so he is considered the master of this illustrious poetry, not only in Japan but also around the world. Basho's genius embraces different phenomena of the life, thus, it creates a great influence”, the author said [[5]; 274]. In *Japan in the mirror*, Nhat Chieu continues to assert that: “Basho not only makes Haiku become true poetry but also turned it into a path. The path in the deep sense of the East: Path. Thus, from Basho onwards, with haiku poetry’s artistic perfection, it can be called haiku no - michi ... Basho thought that the path was extremely empty, but it was extremely crowded. The mysterious autumn that Basho envisioned was turned into a day of eternal spring” [[6]; 182-183]. Vinh Sinh in *the narrow road to Oku* by Matsuo Basho said: “In the stars shining in the sky of the Japanese poetry, Matsuda Basho is the famous star of many Japanese and foreign fans” [[25]; 3] and “People love *the narrow road to Oku* due to the virtuosity and implicit Haiku poetry, but the short prose is also very popular” [[25]; 20]. Mai Lien in *Japanese Literary Anthology* from its initial period to the mid-nineteenth century commented, “Haiku is a very unique poetry. Basho made this poetry become the top of the Japanese literary poetry and made it famous in the

world literature poetry. Genius Basho has a great influence on Japanese literature. Therefore, people considered Basho as the creator of the Japanese soul” [[11]; 596-597]. In the *Dictionary of Literature*, the researchers agree that “Basho has had a great revival for haiku poetry, bringing it to an unprecedented level in Japanese literary life” [[26]; 102]. Besides, there are many studies on haiku poetry by Matsuo Basho: *Meditation and Haiku poetry* by DTSuzuki (Translated by Le Thi Thanh Tam) [27], *Haiku poetry - bass rhyme from mental domain* by R.H.Blyth (Alan Watt – Translated by Le Kinh Tam) [28], *Matsua Basho, the great haiku teacher* by Ueda Makoto (translated and commented by Nguyen Nam Tran) [29], etc.

Writer Yasunari Kawabata and his works are also attracting the attention of many domestic and foreign scientists: In *A History of Japanese Literature*, author Shuichi Kato has introduced the works of *Snow country*, *A Thousand Cranes*, *Ancient Capital* in terms of “beauty”, “feeling” and appreciated the femininity of Kawabata's works [30]. *Encyclopedia of Japan* edited by Itashaka has introduced Kawabata with his style of writing and his typical works. The researchers claim that Yasuanari Kawabata attaches great importance to the traditional beauty, his works have kept the “eternal traveler” style to look for the beauty in the tradition [31]. J. Thomas Rimer in *A reader's guide Japanese’s literature* presents *Snow country* and claims that Snow country had recorded Kawabata's changes to the novel's pattern. *Kawabata – life and works* by Luu Duc Trung have deeply studied the life and literary career of Kawabata. The author studies and analyzes thoughts, life and works, certain times factors that affect the artistic path of Kawabata. The author insists that Kawabata's distinctive style is “deep lyrical factor, calming sadness” [[10]; 18] and this style of Kawabata is inherited from the literature type of “women’s literature” of Heian period. In his introduction to the Japanese love story of *Alone fire*, the translator Nguyen Duc Duong has appreciated the writer Kawabata as “a great soul with full of love”, “the sophistication and accuracy of describing the inner world of man as well as the nature, the complex psychological phase is mixed in the eager and calming vibe” [32]. *Dictionary of literature* states that the writer Kawabata is “one of the greatest writers of Japanese literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century... The subjects of all of Kawabata's works are loneliness, death, love, sexuality, grief. These strains of thought originated in the writer's profound sense of the deciduous nature of the life and things. However, the behind of these metaphysical obsessions, it also reveals a unique ability to detect the different lifestyle and thoughts of the East, always promote the level of the “beauty” in all aspects of the life mentioned above” [[26]; 707-708]. The researchers in *World Literature Curriculum* have stated: “Kawabata is often referred to as “Japanese beauty”, he wants to emphasize that it is not the common sense, it is the special feeling of the beauty. On the path of artistic creation, Kawabata always looks for the beauty, saves the fade beauty. He is considered a “traveler” (kojin) during the journey for looking for the beauty” [[33]; 223] and “Kawabata's compositions for the life are considered as “national treasures” of Japan. He is a wonderful phenomenon that his next generations have not understood

and known how to reach that magic” [[33]; 226]. *Curriculum of the General on Eastern Culture* has introduced Japanese literature to typical authors and works, including “Yasunari Kawabata is considered to be the most successful performers for the traditional beauty of Japan in his short stories and novels: The dancing girl of Izu, Snow country, A thousand cranes, Ancient Capital, Sleeping beauty, etc.” [[34]; 231]. In addition, there are many articles published in research journals on the various contents of each of Kawabata's works.

In general, the studies are highly appreciated in Japanese literature, the great contributions of Matsuo Basho and Yasunari Kawabata to Japanese literature and world literature. This article inherits the research achievements of the leading scientists, researches Japanese culture in the typical works of the poet Matsuo Basho and writer Yasunari Kawabata taught in the school in Vietnam at present.

## 2. Content

### 2.1. Teaching Japanese Literature in Schools in Vietnam at Present

The teaching of Japanese literature in schools in Vietnam only really began in the 70s and 80s from after the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Students learnt Japanese literature from high education level to college and university education level in the field of Literature. In addition to providing the learners with an overview of the country, people, ethnicity and culture of Japan, it is focused on introducing some of the valuable and typical authors and works in Japanese literature.

At the high education level, the introduction of Japanese literature focuses on the poems of Matsuo Basho and the prose of Yasunari Kawabata. Introductions and teachings of Haiku poetry of Matsuo Basho in Literature curriculum of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade with official lessons in the advanced program and advanced reading sections of the basic program, helping the students to gain basic understanding on the culture, literature and unique Haiku poetry of Japan as well as the talented face of the poet Matsuo Basho. In the 12<sup>th</sup> grade literacy program, it is the general introduction to Yasunari Kawabata's life, literature career, art style and emphasizes on traditional values, his literary features through *Moon shines bottom of water*. Yasunari Kawabata is a typical man inheriting and developing the traditional quintessence of Japan with a literary sense of sensibility and aesthetics, he is considered as “the eternal traveler looking for the beauty” and famous for title of “the eye seeing through the beauty”, “the savior of the beauty” [35], so the teaching of the works of Yasunari Kawabata will provide the students with general knowledge on the country, people, culture, arts and literature of Japan.

At college and university education level, Japanese literature and culture are taught in the content of the curriculum in the fields of Literature, Eastern Studies, Cultural Studies, Faculty of Japanese Language from 15 to 30 lessons depending on the level of training, specialized training. The amount of knowledge about Japanese culture and literature are introduced more broadly with the

characteristics and influences of historical events, the cultural characteristics of the country of Fusang, the typical values of the literature with the representative authors and works in different genres in each period. After introducing the overview of Japanese culture and literature, the following lessons in the program and Japanese literature are introduced in each period of development from folk, medieval, early-modern and modern literatures. In particular, the program focuses on each author who has a great influence, the typical works of each literary period with different genres such as: *Manyoshu* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves) is considered as “Nara's masterpiece and the lighthouse of Japanese poetry” [[5]; 37]; Medieval literature introduces Matsuo Basho and the Haiku poetry by *the narrow road to Oku*; Early-modern literature introduces the R. Akutagawa and genre of short story; Modern literature introduces the modern Japanese prose, typified by Yasunari Kawabata and some of his works, such as *Snow country*, *A thousand cranes*, *Ancient capital*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *the sound of the mountain*, etc. Such presentation provides the students with the general, scientific and systematic knowledge of Japanese literature from time to time, contributing to enrich the understanding of the country and people and culture of Japan.

### 2.2. Japanese Culture in Some of Typical Literary Works Taught in Schools in Vietnam at Present

Literature reflects the culture of the nation, in each literary work is dominated by the characteristics of the national culture. Japanese culture is unique and individual culture, rich in type, diverse in expression. It not only contains the historical elements of the past and contemporary life, but also the depth of personality, psychology, value of people here. For the Japanese, the beauty becomes the norm, the aesthetic ideal and the criteria to evaluate all values in the life. Although the beauty is simple, humble or magnificent, it belongs to the world around us, which is the present and real beauty in the life. Depending on this sense, Japanese literature has its own characteristics of a literary sensibility, aesthetics, deeply contains “Japanese mark” reflected in each work, character, image imbued with aesthetics, affection.

#### 2.2.1. Japanese Nature Beauty in Works of Matsuo Basho

“As a beautiful girl, Fusang archipelago lying stretched out, pillowing up the water waves of the Subarctic region and putting the foot into the middle of the tropical sea, one side is the Japanese Sea, another is Pacific” [[6]; 5], the nature in Japanese literature is the amazing beauty of snow, moon, fog, flowers, hills, waves, streams, etc, which is the beauty in a four-season painting: Spring - Summer - Autumn - Winter. The nature naturally goes into the poetry page as an invitation, source of inspiration. The nature of Haiku poetry of Matsuo Basho is the four-season painting with all its features and natural landscapes associated with landmarks throughout Fusang.

Matsuo Basho's life is a journey to all regions of Japan and the nature is the main theme of the poetry throughout his life journey. The natural beauty in *the narrow road to Oku* by Matsuo Basho is the flexible transformation of the

four seasons that the journey of the author experienced. From spring pictures with cherry blossom clouds to autumn pictures with red maple leaves, the picture of the snow and the cold air in the winter, from deep sea to profound forest, from the great things as Mogami river or the galaxy to the small and trivial things as bugs, lice, mussel shell or flower corpses, etc., all things create a delicate and romantic features in accordance with the Japanese aesthetic soul.

Spring - the season of flourishes of the life, the flowers and foliage and human life are in harmony with the spring. Basho also uses the spring time to begin his journey. The poet is not meant to describe the feelings before the beauty of the cherry blossom, but to express the feelings of separation, secession at the beginning of the journey, in accordance with the separation of the spring for all species singing and dancing, making its beauty. Despite using direct or indirect seasonal words to talk about spring as "dollhouse", "young leaves", "larks", "willow", etc., it also shows the unique points in the poems of Basho which is very delicate, highly figurative and not only provokes the season in certain time but also in the movement of time. Spring painting in *the narrow road to Oku* is the end of Spring, Basho describes the movement of the Spring to the Summer by the seasonal words of "young leaves", "green leaves". As the process of growth, the young leaves grow and become the green leaves as well as the spring grows to the summer, the intercourse of the two leaves in space also makes the season pass in time.

Spring has passed, and the summer is coming. The movement of time, the impact of feeling: the cold water in winter will be the cool water in the summer. As black and white, they are clearer when they are placed side by side. Talking about summer, besides talking directly to the season, the author also uses many unique seasonal words such as "the sound of cicada", "pulling up the rice seeds", "planting rice seeding", "coot", "random rain", "the galaxy river", etc. because the summer is full in the journey of the traveler on the road to Oku- in the deep domain. Every seasonal word as mark appears at every turn of the season, and the result is a seasonal picture of different times, images and feelings. Summer of Oku is over, Basho only refers to the word of "summer" four times, "May" twice and "the rains". The seasonal words are not very much, but it also does not lose the special characteristics of the summer. Rain images in the works are mainly the random rain of May associated with images of leaking, chinch and mosquitoes, muddy roads or the surging river flows, etc., instead of describing the ruins, emptiness, Basho contemplates the beauty of the harmony, peace of the rain.

Autumn appears with the familiarity of the "moon", "meadow grass", "daisy", "grasshopper", etc. in which, the author uses a lot of the seasonal words of "moon". "Moon" is a familiar and characteristic image of Eastern poetry. The journey to Oku begins at the end of the spring and early summer and occurs primarily in the autumn. When autumn has passed, Basho says goodbye to the nature and people of Oku, so it is so sad in the late autumn.

*The narrow road to Oku* is actually a rotating dance of four seasons. The nature has been described directly by the author with images of four seasons of spring - summer - autumn - winter. These images are close, majestic and

imposing as the image of mountains, rivers, places that are mark of the author's journey. The image of Fujji Mountain is vague on the foggy sky on the first day of Basho's journey and the first mountain image appearing on Oku Road is Nikko Mountain (sunlight). Although it does not look cold, but the "sunlight" as a metaphor of the light of the Buddha has brought the majesty for the forest of Oku. Then, there are the mountains of Shitomae no seki with high mountains, luxuriant trees, without the sound of birds, the autumn wind on Shirane Mountain (or Nata) compared to the white on the rock mountain in Ishiyama Temple and images of the mountains of Oku.

The author describes the natural beauty of a country with more than fourteen thousand islands, rivers, which have created the paintings with natural scenery beauty of Japan. When writing about the beauty of Matsushima, in which the image of water associated with the island image is as geographic features of the country of Japan. It is an immense water space, a wild and profound natural beauty and there are a lot of islands, some of them are very tall and up to the sky, others are under the waves. Some islands lie piled up each other up to two or three layers, separated from each other on the left, and then connected to the right. There is a big island carrying a small island on the back or in the arm, which expresses the love for the children, etc. Matsushima has a deep beauty like the face of a beauty. In Kisagata, Chokai Mountain has "towering height, shadow on the river surface". In the sparkling night with stars, the encounter of the sea or the Galaxy River and Sado Island on the day of Qixi Festival is not different than the pity and emotion encounter of Cowherd and Weaver girl. At Iro beach, the waves, light or air above the water surface also have been lonely and solitary, etc. The image of natural power of Oku has created the respect, sensational and nostalgic feelings.

Dance of grass and flowers with the pace of time, the mountains, rivers, fields, the path to the smallest, most idyllic things of nature of Japan seem to have a place in Basho's poetry. *The narrow road to Oku* by Matsuo Basho is like embracing all nature of Fusang into the verse of Haiku by the talent of the poet imbued with the thought of Meditation.

### 2.2.2. Japanese Natural Beauty and Traditional Culture in the Works of Yasunari Kawabata

With the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1968, Yasunari Kawabata has been brought the glory to Japanese literature in particular and to Asian literature in general. He is the representative of the Japanese traditional quintessence succession and development of the sensibility and aesthetics. In the journey of "eternal traveler looking for the beauty" Yasunari Kawabata has left the reputation for posterity with literary masterpieces. The beauty that he pursues throughout his life is rooted in Heian culture and the beautiful love in the soul of the Japanese. He is honored to receive the Noble Prize of humanity for his wonderful writing and great sentiments that reflects the mind and soul of Japanese. Snow country, A thousand cranes, Ancient capital, Sleeping Beauty, the sound of the mountain are works reflecting concepts on Japanese traditional beauty, especially the simple and idyllic beauty of the nature in harmony with the normal life.

For the Japanese, the Beauty is the eternal embodiment of the world and the nature is the measure of the beauty. Being aware of the impermanence of the beauty in life, the Japanese respect and openly embrace the beauty. The eternal aspiration of the Japanese is to live in harmony with the nature, inspire the natural beauty in the heart of things revealed. The beauty is as a cool stream for Japanese literature to imbue through the centuries. In the time of "the wave of European rain and the American wind", many young writers have been placable, but Yasunari Kawabata - the eternal traveler looking for the beauty still believes that "Eastern literature, especially the Buddhist scriptures is the most wonderful literature of the world. I want to write a work called Eastern song (Tohsatong), which will be my beautiful song... I can die before the song is achieved, but please know that i had planned a whole program in my mind" [[36]; 1071], the traveler Kawabata has wandered all the way to look for Japanese traditional beauty. The beauty is felt as a protagonist throughout his life and writing.

Yasunari Kawabata's aesthetic view is the deepening beauty of the origins of Eastern philosophy and the beauty of the nature, the beauty of the sweet Fusang woman, the characteristics of the traditional art, the aesthetic and sensitive literature style through the centuries from the *Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves* and covering the souls of all things in Shinto has been associated with the love of Zen that created a aesthetic philosophy of Yasunari Kawabata. Yasunari Kawabata's artistic experience is influenced by Zen-Buddhism Aesthetics, based on inner contemplation. The traditional Japanese aesthetic concepts such as Aware, Wabi, Sabi, Yugen converge fully in his works and can only be felt as hard to name aesthetically. As a transparent mirror, snow on a mountain or water in a lake, Japanese traditional aesthetics always shine and dissolve into the wonderful works of Yasunari Kawabata.

According to Yasunari Kawabata, the Beauty is existed in this world, though it is extremely fragile but rooted in the source of the life. Not sending nihilistic beliefs into the metaphysical religion, the world of characters with the mission of expressing purity, sincerity and making the Beauty of Yasunari Kawabata is in young children, girls and the people who are dying. They have innocent eyes, pure emotion, no rapacity, no craving, no appropriation, no destruction. It is the beauty, sincerity and sadness that deepen the emotions in the life. Yasunari Kawabata believes that the beauty in the human heart is virtue and spiritual experience. This experience is due to the sensitivity of the artist and on the journey of looking for, the expression in his works is an eternal and unchanging value. His works "transcend all mundane mediocrity to leave only the eternal beauty of a positive, vibrant and pure reality" on the principle of reflecting the beauty as "looking and honoring the beauty in a mixture existence between the goodness and the immoral, purity and vulgar, sincerity and falsehood, pomps of the outward and the depths of inner feelings" [37].

Yasunari Kawabata said that the method of expressing the beauty is the purpose of the artist, not to make people amazed by the monstrous thrill that must be used in the meager means but to express the most, to use the language and color to express the emotions and experience of the life. The work of Yasunari Kawabata is more evocative,

the artistic image is built by symbolic images and used in the most condensed way. The reincarnation of the beauty in the image of his work is always in very earthly way from the human to the world of things. The art of expressing the beauty in the Yasunari Kawabata aesthetic concept is a vacuum poem - an effective means of showing the beauty of Haiku's poetry and his achievements in his poetry. The vacuum world in aesthetics of Yasunari Kawabata does not separate the world of feelings, from the details and the smallest thing also give the true feeling.

In his speech at the Nobel Prize ceremony, Yasunari Kawabata highlighted the characteristics of Japanese souls: snow, moon, cherry blossoms – the words show the beauty of four seasons transforming, crystallizing all Japanese traditions on the beauty of the river, the grass and the trees. Kawabata's love for Japanese traditional beauty is partly a love of the nature and is described in his works. Japanese nature is portrayed in the work of *Snow country* with the beauty of captivating lonely traveler and makes Kawabata engrossed in looking for. The natural beauty in *Snow Country* appears in each season. Each season has a fragrance, bringing the own beauty of each season. Spring makes Shimamura "not take his eyes off the green grass sprouting up on the mountain slopes... fragrant air of shoots attracts him...his eyes follow the path of flights of two yellow butterflies appearing under him, and they become white as they fly higher and he faces to the sky, they fly around very far and high on the edge of the mountain peaks" [[38]; 245]. The pure beauty of spring and space of "quietness and peace like a hymn" [[38]; 247] makes the soul of the traveler become fresh. The magic beauty of the nature here has made people ecstatic and thought that "I am here already". Beautiful autumn with the straight cedar trees, dragonflies flying in the wind, the splashing waterfall. The autumn on the slopes with silver flower carpets and "the sound of insect in lanterns under the porch", "the steady music of thousands of insects at sunset ...", "butterflies are flying at night", "on a metal grid in the window, a lot of butterflies are like swimming in the moonlight ... the tiny, slender insects clinging to Komako's neck" [[38]; 309]. The natural environment here is pristine with the small insects, increasing the poetry of autumn. When "snow falls... being the end of season of maple leaves", the winter is coming. The white of cold snow has brought a strange, pure, magnificent beauty to the winter of *Snow Country*: "The dark mountains are still glowing with snow ... They seem so impatient strangely", "The peaks with full of snow are sparkling and tender brightly", white snow all around "the shiny ice bands around the porches like the delicate and sparkling embroidery" [[38]; 265] ... Large space with cold snow in *Snow Country* creates a spiritual and mystical sense. The beauty of Japan is described by Yasunari Kawabata in *the sound of the mountain* with the image of the simple, small things having vitality: Ipomoea quamoclit, daisy, sunflower, cherry blossom or "Acacia flowers are so tender, slightly yellowish white with a little green color" [[38]; 182], "At that time is the spring, the beautiful time of black lily. They are in the mountain, in a very high position" [[38]; 105] ... The natural beauty of Japan is also described through the feeling of the character Singo. The Singo believes that the plants also have the

emotional life as the human and associates the fate of flowers as human life. Regretting the faded beauty, Singo' eyes stops in front of the image of daisies on the window, in the middle of the moonlight, hears the sound of dew falling on the leaves and the stars trembling on high. "Singo hear the light noise sound. It looks like the dew is falling on the leaves" [[38]; 10] and "the stars tremble in the trees growing on the top of the mountain" [[38]; 11] ... The nature is described in *the sound of the mountain* not saddening an ancient sorrow but containing the hope of rebirth in the life.

With the message "I belong to Japanese traditional beauty", the works of Yasunari Kawabata contain the profound marks of Japanese traditional culture. It is the beauty of the exquisite woman, traditional costumes, cherry blossom and the pure beauty of *Snow Country*; Japanese traditional festivals are depicted in detail in the poetry of *Ancient capital*; the sad beauty of the traditional ritual tea culture in *A thousand cranes*; *The sound of the mountain* is the echo of Japanese traditional cultural values, the talented writing page of the artist feeling deep concern in the beauty. Living in harmony with the nature, the characters in the work as the flowers with a feminine beauty defy the reality that still having many hardships. The natural beauty from the small and modest things and the beauty of the pure, innocent, harmony soul but also the sadness in *the sound of the mountain*; The hidden beauty of this "old shadow" from the melancholy song of a lonely destiny, of a human life can not resist the cold law of time, but the desire for the beauty is always immortal on the path of looking for such illusions that can not substitute for the reality. The beauty is always on the fragile boundary between the real and virtual although it is difficult to grasp but can feel and see in *Sleeping Beauty*, etc.

The works of Yasunari Kawabata, though written in modern writing style, are still rich in the aesthetics and sensation of traditional literature, like a transparent mirror reflecting the beauty of Japanese nature, people and traditional culture.

### 3. Conclusion

At present, the teaching Japanese culture and literature at different levels in Vietnamese schools in relation to many other foreign cultures and literature has been supplemented, adjusted and developed completely, contributing to introduce the unique culture of cherry blossom country to the majority of Vietnamese people. Through researching and teaching, the natural beauty, the people and the traditional culture of Fusang are widely popular to a wide range of people from different classes in the life in Vietnam. Besides, it also further improves the quality and selection of translation for introducing Japanese culture and literature in a systematic and rational manner according to each genre, each period of development, helping Vietnamese readers to get the general and specific and systematic knowledge of Japanese culture and literature, "contributing to the shortening of the gap between Vietnamese readers and the authors, the great works of Japanese literature" [[4]; 262].

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