

THE REFLECTION OF JAPANESE CULTURE IN *SNOW COUNTRY* BY YASUNARI KAWABATA

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Abstrak

Yasunari Kawabata adalah seorang penulis berkebangsaan Jepang yang mendapatkan Nobel sastra. Salah satu novelnya yang paling populer berjudul *Snow Country* sarat akan nilai-nilai budaya Jepang. Novel Kawabata ini lebih gamblang dibandingkan banyak penulis Jepang modern lainnya dalam hal seni. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji sejauh mana novel *Snow Country* bercermin dari kehidupan dan budaya masyarakat Jepang. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif yang menggambarkan dan menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan dari kutipan novel. Dalam menganalisis data, penulis menggunakan pendekatan mimesis dan konsep budaya untuk mencerminkan aspek-aspek budaya Jepang dalam karya sastra berdasarkan kenyataan. Hasil penelitian membuktikan bahwa penggambaran budaya di *Snow Country* sesuai dengan realitas budaya yang ada di Jepang, dan berdasarkan konsep budaya Hammersley (2019), budaya yang terdapat dalam novel ini terbagi dalam bentuk alat budaya Jepang, lingkungan budaya dan kehidupan Geisha. Alat budaya Jepang termasuk minuman tradisional 'Sake', pakaian tradisional 'Kotatsu, Kimono dan Yukata', seni 'Kabuki' dan alat musik 'Shamisen', seni atau mode rumah Jepang di Zaman 'Daimyo', bagian rumah tradisional Jepang; 'Shouji dan Tatami'. Lingkungan budaya Jepang ditemukan dengan penggambaran situasi di Pemandian Air Panas 'Onsen', kebiasaan masyarakat Jepang di musim gugur dan musim dingin. Terakhir, salah satu budaya Jepang juga digambarkan oleh seni Geisha adalah kehidupan Geisha dan rumah Geisha "Okiya".

Kata Kunci: mimesis, novel, budaya, dan Jepang

Abstract

Yasunari Kawabata is a Japanese writer who won the Nobel Prize in literature. One of his most popular novels, *Snow Country*, is full of Japanese cultural values. This Kawabata's novel is more palpable than those of many other modern Japanese writers in terms of art. This study aims to examine the extent to which the novel *Snow Country* reflects the life and culture of Japanese society. The method used is descriptive qualitative which describes and analyzes the collected data taken from the quotations of the novel. In analyzing the data, the writers use the mimetic approach and the concept of culture by Hammersley (2019) to reflect aspects of Japanese culture in literary works based on reality. The result of the study proves that the cultural depiction in *Snow Country* is in accordance with the cultural reality that exists in Japan, and based on the concept of culture by Hammersley,

the culture found in this novel is divided in the form of Japanese cultural tools, cultural environment and the life of Geisha. The Japanese cultural tools including the traditional drink 'Sake', traditional clothes/dress 'Kotatsu, Kimono and Yukata', art 'Kabuki' and music 'Shamisen', art or mode of Japanese houses in the Daimyo Period, Traditional Japanese Houses 'Shouji Sliding Doors' and 'Tatami'. Japanese cultural environments are found in the depiction of situations in Hot Springs 'Onsen', habits of Japanese society in autumn and winter. The last, one of the cultures of Japanese is also depicted by the art of Geisha, that is the life of Geisha and the Geisha house "Okiya",

Keywords: mimetic, novel, culture, and Japan

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature and culture are interrelated fields because aspects of cultural diversity can be explored in the study of literary works. One form of literary work is a novel. In general, a novel is the reflection of events that occur in society, or in other words, a novel is a portrayal of social conditions in a particular society. So, through novels, readers can reflect on phenomena or things that are happening in society.

Snow Country is one of the novels by Yasunari Kawabata, a Japanese writer who won the Nobel Prize. According to Pollack D, This Kawabata's novel is more palpable than those of many other modern Japanese writers in terms of art (2019). This novel feature an aspect of Japanese culture that characterizes the love story between Komako, a geisha, and Shimamura, the traveler. The formulation of the problem in this study is the extent to which the novel *Snow Country* by Yasunari Kawabata reflects the life and culture of Japanese society. The analysis of this novel uses a mimetic approach to reflect aspects of Japanese culture in literary works according to reality. With the discussion of Japanese cultural reflection in the popular novel *Snow Country*, it is hoped that the original Japanese culture can be widely known because literature is a picture of the life that exists around society.

Several writers have studied the novel *Snow Country*. One of them is Hartati Sinabela in 2011. Hartanti focused her research on aspects of geisha's life in Japan. In the same year, Yuli Christiana reviewed the novel *Snow Country* by Yasunari Kawabata using a reader-response approach. Furthermore, in 2016, F. Oktasari analyzed this novel by Kawabata with a comparative literary approach that focused on the theme of social conflict using the study of new historicism.

Meanwhile, a study of mimesis had been carried out by A'ini, Qurratul in 2015. Through a mimetic approach, Qurrotul tried to describe the life of a geisha in Arthur Golden's Novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*. Moreover, Putri R. (2020) used the mimesis method to examine the content of the story in the novel by Haruki Murakami which focused on depicting the daily life of a teenager in Japan. The portrait of the main character's life while being a new student is a real picture of the life of new students in general who live alone far from their hometown.

Furthermore, Ricca (2017) in her research entitled "The Aesthetics and Poetics of the Image in Japanese Culture" explained that *Snow Country* comprises a series of visions evoked poetically that communicate certain impressions. Kawabata's quasi-

cinematic mode of writing with images or painting with written words recalls the *emakimono* or "picture scrolls", traditional illustrated narratives that flourished during the Heian and Kamakura periods: a series of horizontal images and text painted on silk or paper that the reader experiences gradually as he or she unrolls the scroll from right to left.

This research entitled 'The Reflection of Japanese Culture in the *Snow Country* by Yasunari Kawabata' is relatively new and different from the previous research because the writers examine the novel using a mimetic approach and the concept of culture by Hammersley that will represent the culture of Japanese society in the form of cultural tools and cultural environment including the life of geisha. Through the study of mimesis in the novel *Snow Country*, the researchers examine the reflection of Japanese culture in the novel which is based on realities. Thus, it can be said that literature is a reflection of an era that reflects the situation or state of life. So, when literature is born in a place that has a strong cultural nuance, it will reflect the cultural portrait which can be used as documentation or cultural storage of an era.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection using reading, note-taking, and library techniques. Data were obtained by reading carefully and then noting the quotations from novels that reflect Japanese culture. After collecting data, the writers classified the data based on the concept of culture by Hammersley (2019). In analyzing the data, the writers used a mimetic approach by Teeuw (1983) and Endaswarsa (2011) to reflect several aspects of Japanese culture in literary works based on reality. The data were analyzed by describing the documentation of Japanese culture in the novel's quotations and matching it with the existing Japanese culture.

Teeuw stated that the mimetic theory of literary criticism places the main importance on how well a literary work imitates life. Thus, readers find the meaning of a literary work by comparing it to the real world in order to get the meaning (1983). This approach allows a literary work to be a reflection of the era in which the work was written. In this case, the author of a work intends to record the period and communicate the conditions or news that occurred at that time through narration to the reader (Endaswarsa, 2011, 88). The mimetic approach reveals literary aspects with socio-cultural reflection. This implies that literary works have important things for sociocultural life. This approach focuses on fragments of stories related to socio-cultural (2011, 93). According to the explanation of the mimetic approach, there are two steps to analyzing the literary works using the mimetic approach, first is finding the data or quotations in the novel that describe or imitate the culture of Japanese. Then, compare it to the real world to interpret the similarity. The sources about Japanese reality used are websites, journals, and books.

To add the mimetic theory used, this study mentioned the definition of culture based on Hammersley (2019) which stated that culture is a specific or unique way of life. It refers to the field of anthropology. Culture is not only referring to art, literature, and music but it is also broadened to the entire aspect of life or activity. Thus, culture

is diverse, and its diversity is based on the difference in environmental conditions, for example, climate, assets, etc. from that explanation, besides art, literature, and music, habits or tradition in society which is influenced by the environment can also be included into a culture.

III. FINDINGS

Snow Country by Yasunari Kawabata is a novel set in a snowy winter, with the main characters, Shimamura, a traveler from Tokyo, and Komako, a beautiful geisha. Komako falls in love with Shimamura, and vice versa. The two tried to make love but gave up and ended their relationship.

Snow Country by Yasunari Kawabata is one of the novels that reflect Japanese culture. In this way, this novel plays a role in helping anthropologists or sociologists in researching Japanese culture. In the novel, the relationship between literature and culture is reflected by Kawabata in the form of cultural tools and cultural environment including the life of geisha. Tools such as food, dress, the art of home design, and music can be categorized as the product of culture. Cultural environment means that the culture of Japanese is shaped by the difference in environmental conditions, especially the four seasons.

The following describes the cultural tools of the Japanese as reflected in the novel *Snow Country* by Yasunari Kawabata.

Sake

In the novel *Snow Country*, *Sake* is considered a typical winter drink in Japan that has a warming function, this is stated by the stationmaster on page two, "*Yah, aku harus memakai pakaian rangkap empat. Anak-anak muda cukup minum Sake ketika kedinginan.*"

From that quotation, it can be observed that one of the traditional drinks, *Sake*, is consumed in winter to warm the body. The youth often drink it to get benefits, and this habit is considered one of the Japanese culture in winter. In the real life, '*Amazake*' one of the names of *sake*, is consumed to get benefits such as beauty and health. '*Amazake*' has been used since the Edo era to prevent the user from stroke, and people nowadays used to drink it in the winter to warm their bodies up (Japan Fun, 2021)

Kotatsu

The second cultural tool is *Kotatsu*. In the novel *Snow Country*, *Kotatsu* is depicted on page fourteen, when Shimamura thrusts his right hand into the *Kotatsu* to warm it, and on page sixty-nine, where it depicts Shimamura sitting relaxed while smoking and his feet on the *Kotatsu*. The description of the use of *Kotatsu* is the same as in fact. According to Uswah, *Kotatsu* is a table that is used in the winter. This table is also called a leg warmer table. It is made of wood equipped with futons or thick blankets used to cover the table and heater. The heating device is under the table so that it can warm the users of the *Kotatsu* table. This traditional Japanese table is used during winter to support the user's activities on the table (2020)

Kimono and Yukata

The third cultural tool is the *Kimono* and *Yukata*. In the novel, it is described on page seventeen when Komako is wearing her *Kimono* very neatly. A thin summer *Kimono* with no lining, this *Kimono* is actually called a *Yukata*. In addition, the description of *Kimono* as a typical Japanese clothing is found on page one hundred and fifty-four novel "*Kimono-Kimono perjamuan tergantung di dinding.*" and page one hundred and seventy-eight "*ia berlari sambil mengangkat Kimononya.... Komako meraih Kimononya yang menyapu permukaan salju...*"

The next depiction of the kimono is on page one hundred and thirteen, it is described that the *Kimono* is a typical Japanese dress commonly used by geisha in Japan when they meet guests. This is in accordance with the statement that *Kimono*, thick powder, and geisha are three things that can't be separated. This is also disclosed on page one hundred and twenty-one "*ia mengenakan Kimono harian dan mantel*"

The depiction of the kimono in the novel which is often worn by a geisha is supported by the article by Meiskhe. The article reported that *Kimono* is often worn by geisha and *Kabuki* actors when performing arts. The *Obi* is a belt that completes the *kimono* outfit. Susohiki / Hikizuri has a long-form type of *Kimono* worn by geisha or Japanese dancers. *Yukata* is a kind of casual kimono worn in summer and at parties (2021).

Kabuki

The fourth cultural tool is *Kabuki* which is described on page eighteen of the novel; while Shimamura makes talks with Komako about *Kabuki*, Shimamura discovers that she knows more about *Kabuki* actors and their characteristics. On page seventy-four, it is shown that Shimamura was very familiar with *Kabuki* and Japanese dance, and he memorized some of the *Naugata* lyrics he heard in performances.

The description of *Kabuki* in the novel is in line with the fact that it is a famous classical theater art in Japan that was performed by actors dominated by women in the seventeenth century, but in 1629 there was a prohibition for women to play in this theater stage so that there were male actors who played female characters or as *Kabuki*. *Kabuki* role art is played by men even though the roles played are women (Leiter,2002) (Oscar, M. 2012).

Shamisen

The fifth cultural tool represented in the novel is *Shamisen*. It is described on page fifty-eight as Shimamura was about to leave, he saw out of the corner of his eye something white which was a box of *Shamisen*, and on page one hundred and twentieth, where a geisha sang the song "butterfly, dragonfly, grasshopper" accompanied by *Shamisen*." It is also mentioned on page one hundred and twenty-one "Shimamura spreads his arms and yawns. He put his hands on the woman's knees; he felt the tiny fingers hardened by *Shamisen*."

From the quotations above, it can be stated that the cultural tool, *Shamisen*, is usually used by geisha when they are singing. This is called one of the traditional

musical instruments. This depiction of *Shamisen* is in accordance with the reality that *Shamisen* or a stringed musical instrument is a traditional musical instrument originating from Japan. This musical instrument is a type of stringed instrument that is studied and performed by geisha. (Foreman;2008).

Old Japanese Houses in *The Daimyo* Period

The sixth cultural tool pictured in the novel is the old-fashioned Japanese houses built during the time of the *Daimyo*. In the novel, that is listed on page one hundred and seventeen, where Kawabata describes the old Japanese houses in the *Daimyo* period. Hall and Yamamura state that *Daimyo* is a character in an area. In the fourteenth century, *Daimyo* was defined as a person who had many domains. The term *Daimyo* in today's era refers to someone who has abundant wealth like people who have many territories in the past. The *Daimyo* has the authority to administer their area in the Tokugawa period or government. In 1500, the *Daimyo*, or provincial military lords, spread throughout the Provinces and they have the authority to rule their domain (Hall, S., Keiji, N., & Yamamura, K. (2014).

***Shouji* Sliding Doors and *Tatami* in Traditional Japanese Houses**

The seventh cultural tools pictured in the novel are *Shouji* Sliding Doors and *Tatami* in the traditional house in Japan. Houses in Japan usually have wooden floors with *Tatami* (Japanese straw mats). The house has insulated rooms with *Shouji* (Japanese traditional wall partitions) and sliding doors. On page one hundred and fifty-four it is stated that Japan is famous for the sliding doors made of paper that separate the rooms from the entrance hall.

"Ini agak kebesaran untuk dihuni satu orang.' Kamar-kamar itu dipisahkan dengan sekat rendah, dan kasur kecil. Komako tergelar sendirian di antara pintu-pintu geser yang kertasnya sudah menguning dan berdebu- pintu-pintu itulah yang memisahkan kamar dengan lorong masuk." (hal 154)

From that quotation, it can be seen that the Komako's room is partitioned by *shouji* and sliding doors. It is for the reason that the room is too big if that is occupied by only one person. The description of the room is based on the fact that traditional Japanese homes can be partitioned by *shoji sliding doors* and *fusuma*. Thus, the efficient and varied use of space can be made by the use of movable partitions. By partitioning the room, energy can be saved also because the heating and cooling process is used in a smaller room. (https://web-japan.org/niponica/pdf/niponica19/no19_en.pdf)

Furthermore, the depiction of *Tatami* is on page179 and page108 which state there is the term '*Tatami*' which is used as a bed. "*Shimamura teringat akan tusuk sanggul perak yang menancap di Tatami*", "*sinar bulan begitu terang menerobos ke dalam kamar, menegaskan bayang-bayang pada lekuk-lekuk telinga perempuan itu, mengubah Tatami menjadi hamparan hijau yang menggigilkan.*"

From that quotation, it can be described that *Tatami* is used as a mat for a traditional Japanese house. Spacey stated that *Tatami* is made of wicker which is used as a base for a house or floor. This floor mat can make the room air fresh in summer and can warm the room when winter arrives. In addition, another characteristic of traditional Japanese houses is the sliding door which can also be used as a partition in the house. The *Shouji* was lined with thin paper to allow light to illuminate the room (2015).

Cultural Environment

The environment is one of the extrinsic elements that influence the writing of a novel or literary work. Thus, the snowy condition or setting time of winter become one of the factors that contribute to the development of Japanese culture. In other words, the Japanese culture depicted in the novel *Snow Country* is also influenced by the geographical environment of Japan. The portrayal of the cultural environment including: '*Onsen*' Hot Springs, Autumn and Winter tradition in Japan, are described below.

Hot Springs '*Onsen*'

The description of hot springs in the novel *Snow Country* is illustrated when Shimamura goes on vacation to a snow area where there are hot springs near the mountain, and Shimamura stays at an inn near the hot springs. There Shimamura can freely visit Komako who lives not far from where he is staying, namely at the '*Geisha House*' near the hot springs. On page one hundred and thirteen, it is stated that hot spring baths are believed by the locals to keep the body warm, this is evidenced by the following quote from the novel; "*Setiap hari, Komako berendam di pemandian air panas, yang konon diyakini dapat membuat tubuh selalu hangat.*"

In fact, Japanese people often travel to summer baths for refreshment because the open air is believed to be able to break the deadlock of the work-life hierarchy, besides that Japanese people place *Onsen* not only for recreation but also for treatment. *Onsens* or hot springs in Japan have been used since ancient times for various positive purposes such as relieving fatigue, reducing stress, and various diseases. Even though it is located inland in mountainous areas, people are not reluctant to visit the *Onsen* when winter arrives (Harisal, 2019). Furthermore, Agishi and Otsuka state that *Onsen* is used as a healing practice. That is done by bathing using *Onsen* water. *Onsen* has the purpose to keep the body healthy because that is used to prevent and treat diseases. Bathing in *Onsen* is called one of the Japanese cultural health practices. In the Meiji era, *Onsen* is used for amusement and enjoyment. This bathing place becomes a popular place for spending short vacations (1998).

Habits of Japanese Society in Autumn

Japan is blessed with four distinct seasons. The novel *Snow Country* reflects the fact that in Japan there are four seasons, namely spring, summer, autumn, and winter. It is mentioned in the novel on pages one hundred and twenty, one hundred and thirty-five, and one hundred and fifty-six. On page one hundred and twenty, it is explained

that the season of descending from the mountain marks the end of winter. While Autumn is accompanied by falling leaves. The quotation is mentioned below.

'ada enam perjamuan hari ini, tetapi aku hanya mendatangi empat. Minggu depan kami akan sangat sibuk karena banyak orang datang untuk melihat daun-daun maple berguguran. Para tamu yang datang pada liburan musim panas memfokuskan untuk melihat daun maple yang berjatuhan. Pada saat itu pintu gerbang rumah penginapan dihiasi dengan ranting-ranting maple untuk menyambut mereka. ((Kawabata; 2009:135)

"tampaknya salju segera turun. mengakhiri musim rontok daun maple. Sembari melangkah keluar ia serukan selarik puisi, "Di sini di gunung-gunung kami, salju turun sebelum-sebelum daun maple gugur seluruhnya." Petikan ini merupakan kalimat dari naskah *Kabuki*. (Kawabata; 2009:156)

From that quotation, one of the habits of the Japanese in the Autumn is an outing to look at the view of maple leaves. Besides that, many inns adorn the entrance with maple branches. This habit becomes one of Japanese culture when Autumn comes, people often view the garden where there are maple trees. Those expositions of the habit of Japanese are in line with the reality which state that in the Autumn, there are many plants and trees grow up, for example, the Japanese maple which represents the color of autumn. The colorful leaves create a lively scenery for autumn in Japan so the Japanese often go out to gardens or mountains to enjoy autumn leaves. The color of Autumn can be observed in Zuiho-ji Park which can be found in the Arima Onsen Hot Spring Resort. Furthermore, the culture of enjoying the fall is also met from the long periods ago, Heian period. This season is also as important as enjoying the spring. People often write poems while enjoying the color of the leaves nearby the mountains. People like to pay attention to the changing color of the leaves gradually (Matsutani Shigeru, interviewed by Sawoji Osamu, September 2021, Highlighting Japan Vol 160, cabinet office of Japan <https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/mailform/inquiry.html>).

Habits of Japanese Society in Winter

In the novel, it is explained about the habits of the residents around the hot springs when snows fall, namely trampling the snow with straw shoes, making bricks from snow, and building long palaces with six meters of walls and three meters of height. In addition, on pages two, three, four, eleven, and thirteen, there are descriptions of the situation in Japan during the winter season.

"Pada awal bulan Desember, suhu turun jauh di bawah nol, salju setebal dua sampai dua setengah meter, tetapi terkadang bisa mencapai hampir empat meter. Pada saat itu, penginapan-penginapan mata air panas sangat sepi pengunjung dan akan mulai ramai apabila musim bermain ski datang. Salju tebal terkadang membuat longsor, menghalangi kereta datang tepat waktu. Orang-orang sekitar daerah stasiun sibuk menyediakan makanan untuk penumpang yang menunggu kereta datang. Di pegunungan sekitar stasiun, terdapat tiga bajak salju yang siap digunakan untuk mengeruk lapisan salju tebal. Di ujung utara dan selatan terowongan kereta dipasang sebuah alarm yang akan berbunyi jika salju longsor. Lima ribu pekerja siap

menyingkirkan salju dan dua ribu anak muda pekerja secara suka rela dari dinas pemadam kebakaran siap dikerahkan untuk mengatasi salju longsor.”

The depiction of the environment in Japan in the novel *Snow Country* is the same as the reality that occurs in Japan. It is supported by the explanation that in particular, sports done in winter such as skiing and skating are practiced especially in the region where snow is fall such as in northern parts of Japan (Sugimoto, 2009)

February festival

In *Snow Country*, there is a quote from the novel which states that the new year in Japan is usually celebrated at the beginning of February. In addition, it is also mentioned the habit of children collecting and burning straw ropes in a bonfire in front of the snow palace while singing songs to ward off birds. It is found in the novel on pages one hundred two and one hundred one listed below.

“empat belas Februari merupakan hari perayaan mengusir burung, sebuah festival anak-anak yang memancarkan semangat dari daerah salju ini.” Sejak sepuluh hari sebelumnya anak-anak kampung sudah menginjak-injak salju dengan sepatu jerami, dan mereka membuat bata dari salju yang sudah mereka perkeras itu. Dengan bata salju itu, mereka membangun istana yang panjang. Dinding-dindingnya enam meter dan tingginya tiga meter. Karena tahun baru di sini dirayakan pada awal Februari, tali-tali jerami berjumbai-jumbai di setiap gerbang kampung. ((Kawabata; 2009: 101)

That quotation is based on the fact that Japan has a snow festival held in the middle of February. This is called as Festival of *Sapporo* Snow. People celebrate it by making buildings or artworks from ice or snow. Besides, at the beginning of February is an event called *Setsubun*. People celebrate it by putting away beans to get rid of bad spirits in people’s souls. (Naho B M, February 09, 2022. Japan Web Magazine. <http://jw-webmagazine.com> <http://jw-webmagazine.com/top-10-things-to-do-in-japan-in-february-22417246c89d/>)

Geisha and Japanese Arts

In the novel *Snow Country*, Kawabata reflects on an era where the culture of geisha was perpetuated as a distinctly Japanese art. In the first part of the novel, it is stated that in certain celebrations, Japanese people often call geisha to entertain and enliven the festive atmosphere. This is evidenced in the quote on page sixteen.

“Ia turun ke tempat pemandian air panas setelah tujuh hari berada di gunung-gunung perbatasan. Ia meminta dipanggilkan geisha. Namun, sial, pada hari itu, sedang berlangsung perayaan menyambut selesainya pembangunan... Dua belas atau tiga belas geisha yang ada di tempat itu masih kewalahan ... Kebanyakan geisha di sini sudah agak lanjut usia dan sudah malas menari.” (Kawabata; 2009: 16)

In the quote above, it is stated that geisha must not only be good at dancing and beautifying themselves, but they must also be good at playing musical instruments, such as the *Shamisen*. this is also evidenced on page seventy-three, where the

publisher of the book is overjoyed when he learns that there is a geisha like Komako who practices music from notes in a remote place in the mountains.

The depiction of the relationship between Japanese art and Geisha is supported by the reality that the *Shamisen* which accompanied the geisha's performance in entertainment is known as one of the Japanese's traditional musical equipment. This musical instrument is used by geisha in *Kabuki* (Johnson;2009). This fact is also supported by Foreman (2017) who states that Geisha follow a class to be able to perform *Shamisen* and other Japanese traditional arts, so a geisha could be called an interdisciplinary artist who related to the traditional music of Japanese because they have the skill to use the music instruments.

Life of Geisha

As one of the cultures of Japanese, the life of geisha which is full of art is also depicted in this novel. Being a geisha is not entirely fun, because when they are called to a party, they can be forced to drink until they get drunk even if they do not want to. It is mentioned on page thirty-four that sometimes one of them met an evil male guest, who forced her to marry under threat. It is mentioned on page sixty-seven.

"Seorang lelaki mengajaknya menikah, tetapi ia tidak menyukai laki-laki itu. ia bimbang sekali memutuskan apa yang harus dilakukan hanya saja ia pernah bilang bahwa selama aku tinggal di sini, ia tidak akan membiarkan aku menikah dengan orang lain. Ia bilang akan melakukan apa saja untuk menghalangiku." (Kawabata; 2009: 67)

Sometimes there are also geishas who accidentally fall in love with their guests, even though they know the relationship between a geisha and her guest is unlikely to last long. This was said by Shimamura about a geisha he was about to order, "*Hanya hubungan sesaat, tidak lebih. Tak ada indahnya, kau tahu itu hubungan semacam itu tak akan berlangsung lama.*" On page twenty-two. This is also described on page eighty-three, where Komako is sad because she realizes that she loves Shimamura, "*Apakah ini kepedihan yang muncul karena menyadari betapa dirinya telah terjerumus dalam hubungan yang terlalu jauh dengan seorang pelancong.*"

The first part of the novel also mentions that a geisha cannot be forced by one person to do what she does not want, it all depends on the geisha herself. Even lodging houses cannot provide geisha if the geisha in question do not want to. This is evidenced in the quote on page nineteen.

"Tak seorang pun bisa memaksa geisha untuk melakukan apa yang ia tidak mau. Semuanya tergantung pada geisha sendiri. Rumah-rumah penginapan pun tidak bisa menyediakan hal itu untuk tuan." (Kawabata; 2009:19)

The novel also mentions that a geisha has the freedom to choose whether she wants to spend the night with her guests or not. Each guest can also send the geisha home at any time, as described on page thirty-one and followed by an explanation on page twenty-six.

"Jika seorang geisha bermalam tanpa meminta izin dari tuan rumahnya atau induk semangnya, ia harus bertanggung jawab sendiri. Namun bila ia meminta izin, induk

semangnyalah yang bertanggung jawab terhadap apa yang akan terjadi pada diri geisha tersebut.” (Kawabata; 2009:31)

”Terserah pada geisha itu sendiri apakah ia mau bermalam atau tidak. Jika ia bermalam tanpa meminta izin dari rumahnya, ia sendiri yang bertanggung jawab. Jika ia meminta izin, induk semangnyalah yang bertanggung jawab sepenuhnya, apa pun yang terjadi. Itu bedanya.” (Kawabata; 2009:26)

In mountainous areas, the rules regarding geisha are slightly different because the relationship between a geisha and her landlady is very loose. As Komako says on page twenty-seven that in ancient times, houses disguised as restaurants and drinking establishments serving geisha were covered with faded cloth. Old-style sliding doors and paper panels that are blackened with age make people think that there are few guests there. It is not just restaurants and drinking establishments that provide geishas, sometimes places for confectionery and daily necessities as well.

”Belum lama berselang, sebelum ada rel kereta api, tempat ini terutama melayani para petani setempat yang datang ke pemandian untuk keperluan berobat. Rumah-rumah yang menyediakan geisha umumnya ditutup dengan kain pudar –menyatakan diri sebagai restoran atau tempat minum tetapi pintu geser gaya lama dan panel kertas yang menghitam karena usia membuat orang beranggapan bahwa tamu disana sedikit. Toko gula-gula dan barang keperluan sehari-hari ada juga yang menyediakan seorang geisha dan pemiliknya memiliki sepetak ladang selain memiliki toko dan geisha.” (Kawabata; 2009:27)

The Prevention of Prostitution Act passed in 1956 affected the geisha work system, and after this law was enacted, geisha could determine the work they would undertake. Geisha can choose non-prostitution work that emphasizes artistic work, meeting foreign guests or dignitaries at banquets, singing, playing shamisen, dancing, etc (Dalby:1998 in Putri:2021). So geisha who are artistic workers can choose from a variety of occupations aimed at entertaining and accompanying important guests at banquets.

Geisha house “*Okiya*”

The picture of geisha in their duty of art is also portrayed in the novel. It is stated that a geisha has to work and live in a geisha's house “sejak guru itu meninggal jadi kau sudah tidak di kamar ulat sutra lagi sekarang? Sudah di rumah geisha betulan?...mereka memperkerjakan aku sebagai geisha.” (page 102). This is in accordance with the fact in Japan that 'Okiya' or Geisha house is the name of a house intended for geisha. To be able to see a geisha dance requires hundreds of thousands of yen. Therefore, a geisha house or geisha show is only for upper-class people.

Komako, like other geisha, also has debts to pay once she is at the geisha's house. This is in accordance with the fact that from the moment the prospective geisha steps into the house of the geisha 'Okiya', they already have an initial debt equal to the costs incurred by the Okiya owner to buy a geisha. The debt continues to grow because the costs of geisha education, beauty treatments, and doctors who are bailed out by 'Okiya', are actually charged back as geisha debts. Excerpts of the contents of the novel stating the above are on page one hundred and sixteen.

'aku tahu berapa banyak yang dibutuhkan tiap bulan untuk mencicil pinjaman, membayar bunganya, membayar pajak, dan untukku sendiri dan aku tidak akan memaksakan diri untuk mendapatkan yang lebih besar. Jika aku tak menyukai suatu perjamuan, lebih baik aku pulang. Dan aku tidak mau menerima panggilan larut malam kecuali ada langganan lama yang khusus dating memintaku. aku bekerja mengikuti suasana hatiku, itu cukup"

'semakin banyak perjamuan yang ia hadiri, semakin menguntungkan baginya, tetapi semakin tidak menguntungkan bagi orang yang memberinya pinjaman. Tak ada satupun geisha di pemandian air panas ini yang kurang uang dan terpaksa memperpanjang kontraknya" (Kawabata; 2009:116)

The description of geisha in the novel *Snow Country* is supported by a portrait of geisha's life in Japan in an article about geisha in the title "Gambaran Kehidupan Geisha Dalam Novel *Memoirs of A Geisha* Karya Arthur Golden oleh Qurratul A'ini. 2015. That article describes that geisha live in a special house called '*Okiya*', in carrying out their duties, a geisha is required to wear clothes called *Kimono* and must be good at playing musical instruments such as the *Shamisen*

IV. DISCUSSION

Literature could be one of the tools to portray the culture of a country. Through literature, all about culture could be learned. Rose de Angelis (2003:16,26) stated that literary writers are ethnographers because they write stories about people and their emotions, places, events, and context. Usually, ethnographers overtly or covertly participate in the daily lives of groups of people by observing, listening, and collecting data that shed light on the subject being observed or observed. In literature, authors/observers share parts of other parts, and overlapping parts provide windows through which readers can gain insight (social and cultural data) into particular cultures and societies. increase. Reading texts as cultural artifacts becomes a way of participating in social research. Authors/ethnographers present information to readers/participants. Readers/participants act as both subjects and objects in reading the information presented and making their own observations. the students who study culture may review culture from the perspective of ethnographers and also authors. This is for the reason that novels can be used as a field record and expose rich ethnographic evidence from an author who has a study of patterns of social act description. It means that writers have a contribution to unveiling their voice in a culture that may not be heard through the fieldwork process that is still essential for the understanding of civilization. By analyzing the culture represented in Yasunari Kawabata's *Snow Country*, the research results may be used as the manuscript to portray the culture of Japanese people using the mimetic theory by Teew (1983) and Endaswarsa (2011). Thus, the novel can be used as one of the references to learn about the culture of the Japanese. Besides that, this novel can be used as a way to preserve or perpetuate the culture of a country.

Teew stated that the mimetic theory of literary criticism places the main importance on how well a literary work imitates life (1983). By comparing the data of

cultural tools and cultural environment in the novel and in the real world, the reflection of the culture of Japanese people is vividly portrayed. This portrayal of the culture exposes how well the novel imitates the life of the Japanese. Kawabata intends to record the depiction of food, dress, the art of home design, music, habit in autumn and winter, and the life of geisha through the narration of *Snow Country* to the readers (Endaswarsa, 2011, 88). This reflection of art and civilization signifies that literary works have important things for preserving culture.

According to Hammersley (2019: 15) one of the meanings of culture is as a specific or unique way of life. It refers to the field of anthropology. Culture is not only referring to art, literature, and music but it is broadened to entire aspects of man's life or activity. Thus, culture is diverse, and its diversity is based on the difference in environmental conditions for example climate, assets, etc. Art, custom, capability, and traditions acquired by people as the representative of civilization refers to the concept of 'culture' (Hammersley 2019:22) and EB Taylor as cited in Erickson (2004:31). Furthermore, based on the opinion of J.J Honingmann quoted in the book *Introduction to Anthropology* by Koentjoroningrat, cultural tools in the form of objects are categorized as a form of culture. In addition, activities or patterns of behavior of a society and ideas in society are also said to be a form of culture (Koentjoroningrat, 2000, 186). Kluchkon in Koentjoroningrat (2003, 81) also mentioned that equipment in human daily life and technology, economy or sources of income, and art are also included in several elements of culture. Then, Carol in her book *Investigating Culture* states that, foods, dress, and aesthetics can also be included in the concept of culture (2017). To summarize, cultural tools, habits of society, technology, economy or sources of income, food, dress, and art are included in the concept of 'culture' in the study of Anthropology.

Refers to the definition of 'culture' by Tylor and Hammersley (2019), the finding of distinct aspects of life in the novel which characterizes Japan including art (theatre), modes (dress), tools, music, foods and habit or tradition uniquely used by Japanese are called as the culture of Japanese. That explanation supports the portrayal of *Sake, Kotatsu, Kimono and Yukata Kabuki*, and *Shamisen, Old Japanese Houses in the Daimyo Period, Shouji Sliding Doors and Tatami in Traditional Japanese House* and all forms of activities shaped by the environment of Japan that has four seasons such as the tradition of bathing in Hot Springs '*Onsen*', Habits of Japanese Society in Autumn and Winter and the life of Geisha are called as the 'culture' of Japanese.

The traditional drink, *Sake*, and traditional dress such as *Kotatsu, Kimono, and Yukata* picture how unique Japanese culture is. People of Japanese adapt to the winter season by making a drink that can warm body and setting a style of dress that can make people warm in winter and relax in summer. *Kabuki* as Japanese theater and *Shamisen* as a Japanese musical instrument also belong to the distinct Japanese way of life that is still maintained. Then, *Old Japanese Houses in the Daimyo Period, Shouji Sliding Doors, and Tatami in Traditional Japanese House* as the art or modes of Japanese houses are cultural tools in the form of objects categorized as a form of culture. The habits of the Japanese come to the *Onsen* for bathing when winter, a

festival in Autumn, and Winter are a distinct way of life that is shaped by the environmental condition of Japan.

V. CONCLUSION

Yasunari Kawabata's novel *Snow Country* reflects the true aspects of Japanese culture. Based on the mimesis theory, the cultural analysis in *Snow Country* is in accordance with the cultural reality that exists in Japan and based on the concept of culture by Hammersley, the culture found in this novel is divided into the form of Japanese cultural tools, cultural environment and the life of Geisha. The Japanese cultural tools include the traditional drink Sake, traditional clothes/dress Kotatsu, Kimono and Yukata, art and music Kabuki, Shamisen, art or mode of Japanese houses in the Daimyo Period, Traditional Japanese Houses Shouji Sliding Doors and Tatami. Japanese cultural environments are found in the depiction of situations in Hot Springs 'Onsen', Habits of Japanese Society in Autumn and Winter. The last, one of the cultures of Japanese is also depicted by the art of Geisha: Life of Geisha, Geisha house "Okiya". Through the cultural exposition of the novel, *Snow Country* can be used as one of the cultural documents to preserve the culture of Japan.

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