

Compare Between the Scenes of Teaching in South Korea and Vietnam in the Folk Painting



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ABSTRACT: Painting is one of the most important and popular forms of art. It serves not only as a means of appreciation but also as a document expressing of a local culture, a country, or a continent. This study selects two folk paintings: "Village School" by Kim Hong Do (1745-1806?) from the Danwon Folk Painting Collection - a Korean national treasure (number 527) dating back to the late Joseon period (1700~1850); and "Village School" by the Hồ, Hoàng, and Nguyễn families in Vietnam, created in 1440 during the Le so Dynasty. The objective is to explore the teaching and learning cultures of Korea and Vietnam, with a specific focus on the cultural aspects of Han character education in both countries.

KEYWORDS: Folk painting, Village School, late Joseon period, Le so Dynasty, traditional costumes

1. INTRODUCTION

Korean painting has a long and resilient history, spanning from the Three Kingdoms period (57 BC - 668 AD) to the present day, with continuous changes and development ¹. Despite facing challenges from natural disasters and political instability on the Korean Peninsula, the distinctive Korean painting style has persevered and evolved. Additionally, Korean painting has been influenced by and selectively embraced elements from Chinese art, while also being significantly impacted by Japanese art. This diverse cultural exchange has given rise to a unique and distinct Korean painting style, setting it apart from art traditions in other countries.

Looking at the historical development of Korean painting, it can be affirmed that the late Joseon period (1700-1850) was the most flourishing era. The paintings created during this period can be divided into four main genres: literary figures, landscape paintings, folk paintings, and Western-style paintings. Among these genres, folk paintings stand out as the most distinctive and impressive to foreign viewers. Not only do they express the beauty and creative talent of the Korean people, but they also serve as a profound means to depict the culture of Korea during this era.

Folk paintings are artworks that depict the daily life of people during a specific era. When categorized, we can divide folk paintings into two main types: broad and narrow. In the broad sense, they include paintings showing human events and attire, such as court ceremonies, palace clothing, royal customs, as well as various scenes of daily life like seasonal activities, wedding and funeral traditions, folk beliefs, and traditional games - all reflecting the occurrences of daily life². In the narrow sense, folk paintings were once known as "genre paintings" during the latter half of the Joseon period. The term implied paintings that depicted "vulgar, trivial things"³. Therefore, folk paintings can be seen as artworks capturing the daily life and traditional customs of that specific era.

During the late Joseon period, Korean folk paintings experienced a remarkable development. The prominent artists of this era include Yun Du Seo, Jo Yeong Seok, Kim Hong Do, Shin Yun Bok, Kim Deuk Shin, and others. Many scholars have studied the culture using folk paintings as valuable resources to explore the history and cultural characteristics of that time. If you look up on the Korean Academic Research Information Service with the keyword "folk paintings" (풍속화) yielded an impressive result of 2,365 research works, including 490 domestic scientific articles, 4 international scientific articles, 61 research reports, 917 theses and dissertations, 885 books, and 8 published lectures. On the other hand, Among the notable artists of the late Joseon period, Kim Hong Do with *Danwon Folk Painting Collection*⁴ - The national treasure number 527 of Korea and was created during the late Joseon period. Searching on the Korean Academic Information Service using the keyword "Kim Hong Do" resulted in an extensive number of research works, totaling 1,920 research projects, including 325 domestic scientific articles, 1,063 books, 5 public lectures,

¹ Source: http://www.doopedia.co.kr/doopedia/master/master.do?_method=view&MAS_IDX=101013000882932.

² An Hwi Jun (1998), *The Tradition of Korean Painting*, Publisher Van Nghe, p. 139.

³ Lee Yeong Ju (2001), *Study on the Characteristics of Erotic Features in Shin Yun Bok's Paintings*, Master's Thesis, Danguk University, p. 14.

⁴ The pen name of Kim Hong Do.

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473 theses and dissertations, and 54 research reports. These statistics clearly show the significant and widespread interest in research on Korean folk paintings in general and, more specifically, on the works of Kim Hong Do.

Furthermore, research on Korean culture in Vietnam today has been approached from various perspectives. Some notable studies include "Labor Life of Late Joseon Koreans through the Folk Paintings of Kim Hong Do (1745-1806?)" (2020), "Gisaeng and Kisaeng in the Folk Paintings of Shin Yun Bok (1758~ ?)" (2022) by Nguyen Thi Thu Ha; "Image of Women in Late Joseon Period through the Folk Paintings of Shin Yun Bok" (2022) and "Labor Life of Women in Joseon Period through the Folk Paintings" (2023). However, these studies focus solely on Korean culture, and there is currently a lack of research that compares the folk paintings of Vietnam and Korea. Therefore, this comparative study of folk paintings between Vietnam and Korea will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of Korean culture from multiple perspectives .

In addition, a preliminary survey of the *Danwon Folk Painting Collection* by Danwon includes a total of 25 paintings depicting various themes such as daily life, entertainment, and street activities. Small themes usually consist of at least three paintings with the same subject, but the educational theme is represented by a single painting - the *Village School* painting. Therefore, based on reference to previous studies, this article selects the painting that portrays the scene of teaching and learning during the late Joseon period from the *Danwon Folk Painting Collection* by Danwon as a material for researching the educational culture of the Korean people in that era. Additionally, due to limited resources on Vietnamese paintings, the author chooses the *Village School* painting, which was created in 1440 - a painting depicting the feudal-era educational scene in Vietnam, as a material for comparative research with the *Village School* painting of Korea.

2. INTRODUCING THE ARTIST OF THE PAINTINGS VILLAGE SCHOOL OF KOREA AND VILLAGE SCHOOL OF VIETNAM

2.1 The author of the *Village School* painting from Korea

According to the Encyclopedia of Korean Knowledge⁵, the exact birthplace of Kim Hong Do is uncertain, but he is believed to have been born in 1745 (the year King Yeongjo 21) into a martial family but was downgraded to jungin (middle class) status. When he was around 7 or 8 years old, he often visited the home of Kang Se Hwang⁶ in Ansan, Gyeonggi- due to the fact that at the age of 7, 8 years old, he started learning to draw. Kang Se Hwang recognized Kim Hong Do's talent and recommended him to become a painter for the Royal Academy of Painting - an agency responsible for painting in the Joseon court - when he was still very young. At just over 20 years old, he was appointed as a court painter. In 1773, at the age of 29, he painted portraits of King Yeongjo and Crown Prince (later King Jeongjo). The following year, he took the position of a supervisor and worked at Ty Pho Thu, the department responsible for managing vegetables in the palace..

Kim Hong Do was a talented painter with proficiency in various genres, such as landscape painting, portraiture, Buddhist paintings, floral compositions, and depictions of folk customs. However, he particularly excelled in landscape and folk customs paintings. Some of his renowned works include *Danwon Folk Painting Collection* (1778), *Diễn viên đồ* (1784), *Kim cương từ quân* (1788), *Art Collection of the Year At Mao* (1795), *Art Collection of the Year Bin Thin* (1796), *Thâu thanh phủ đồ* (1805),...

The Danwon Folk Painting Collection by Kim Hong Do is currently exhibited at the National Museum of Korea and includes 25 paintings: *Rooftop Tiling, Inn, Dining Out, Folk Dance, Wrestling, Plowing, Letter Delivery, Blacksmith, Fortune Telling, Yutnori Game, Art Appreciation, Threshing Rice, Shoeing Horses, Archery, Smoking, Weaving, Traveling, Street Vendor, Wooden Boat, Well, Weaving Fabric, Fishing, Scenic Overlook, Market Street, and Laundry Yard*. Through these paintings, future generations can vividly envision the daily life and activities of the people during the late Joseon period in Korea.

2.2 The author of the *Village School* painting in Vietnam

The *Village School* painting depicts a classroom scene of the Hồ, Hoàng, and Nguyễn family lineage inviting Teacher Dương Văn Khai to teach in Quỳnh Đôi, Nghệ An, Vietnam in the year 1440. This artwork was used as a reference material in Professor Han Do Hyun's presentation at the Workshop on Teaching Korean Culture and Language in Vietnam, held in August 2019 at Ba Ria - Vung Tau University, Vietnam.

3. THE TEACHING SCENE OF THE JOSEON PERIOD IN KOREA AND THE TEACHING SCENE OF THE LE SO PERIOD IN VIETNAM

According to the Naver Knowledge Dictionary of Korea, *Village School* was a private elementary school during the Joseon period. It was similar to modern-day elementary schools but much smaller in scale, mainly focusing on teaching Chinese literature to prepare students for further studies abroad⁷.

⁵ Source: http://www.doopedia.co.kr/doopedia/master/master.do?_method=view&MAS_IDX=101013000788000.

⁶ Kang Se Hwang (1713-1791): a famous literary figure, artist, and art critic during the late Joseon period. He primarily engaged in creating paintings and critiquing artworks.

⁷ Nguồn: <https://terms.naver.com/entry.naver?docId=3559992&cid=47306&categoryId=47306>

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According to the article "*Education for Youth in the Joseon Period*" published in the Korean Economic Newspaper, the Korean people had a strong emphasis on studious thought. This tradition continues to this day. However, in the past, Korea did not have a universal education system, only private village schools - Only private educational institutions can undertake primary education. During the Joseon period, driven by this fervor for education, each village had a Village School. Village schools could be divided into three types. First, there were village schools established and hired by wealthy families or prominent households, where the students were the children of the household or sometimes close relatives. Second, there were village schools formed and funded collectively by the villagers, hiring teachers to educate all the children of school-going age in the village. Third, there were village schools established by a particular family lineage, which operated within their living area and only taught the children from that lineage who were of school-going age. Of course, there were also cases where fathers and elder brothers taught their own children who were of school-going age.

The educational program in Joseon village schools was quite similar. Typically, children started learning characters at the age of 5 or 7. Additionally, secondary education was handled by *Huong Hieu*⁸ which were public educational institutions established in each village, also known as "goeul." After receiving basic education at home or in village schools, students progressed to the second stage of education at *Huong Hieu*. However, the number of students admitted to *Huong Hieu* was limited, so not everyone could enroll. The textbooks used for teaching and learning in all Joseon village schools consisted of five volumes, which were studied in the following order: "*Thiên tự văn*," written by Chu Hương Tự from China's Luong Dynasty, "*Đồng bảng tiến tập*," written by Park Se-mu during the reign of King Jungjong of Joseon (1488 ~1544), "*Minh tâm bảo giám*" - a book containing many famous sayings and moral anecdotes for education, "*Thông giám tiệt yêu*," and "*Tiểu học*." These five books served as fundamental textbooks for elementary and middle school education. They all aimed to teach basic knowledge before moving on to literature, history, and philosophy. As the late Joseon period approached, Jang Hun (1759 ~1828) wrote "*Gyemong-pyeon*," which became widely popular. Unlike the previous textbooks, this book covered practical topics related to nature, earth, and human life, including information about animals and plants. It can be said that it contained essential knowledge for human life. When this book was published, many Joseon village schools chose to use it as their primary textbook, making "*Gyemong-pyeon*" surpass "*Đồng bảng tiến tập*" and "*Tiểu học*" to become a bestseller of its time.⁹

In the case of Vietnam, the Minh Kinh examination in 1075, with Thái sư Lê Văn Thịnh achieving the top score, can be seen as the beginning of education in Vietnam. Thus, to select this first talented person, there must have been pre-existing schools with teachers and students in society. These were the village school system, which coexisted alongside state-run schools, and began with the establishment of Quốc tử giám in 1076. In ancient Vietnamese society, village schools represented educational and intellectual centers: 'Every village had private schools where teachers taught young children and elementary students. Villages without literary scholars would invite teachers from neighboring villages to instruct the children of local families, and these teachers also had the right to accept other students from the village'. In this educational system, with the exception of some privileged descendants of officials, almost all students experienced educational stages with teachers and village schools before proceeding to higher levels and achieving success. In Vietnamese village schools, the curriculum was based on prescribed textbooks and the Confucian classics, historical records, literary collections, and more. However, the teaching methods and approaches varied significantly among teachers and village schools. Fundamentally, the teaching method was unified, dividing learning into three stages: '*ấu học và tiểu tập*' (early education and primary stage), '*trung tập*' (middle stage), and '*đại tập*' (higher stage), with corresponding materials and writing abilities for the students. Nevertheless, in terms of specific teaching methods, each teacher had considerable autonomy in how they conducted their lessons and imparted knowledge¹⁰.

The painting *Village School* by Kim Hong Do <Painting 1> depicts a scene familiar in East Asian and Vietnamese culture. In the painting, nine children from the Joseon era of Korea are sitting in front of a teacher. The teacher is teaching them Chinese characters. Similar to other paintings by Kim Hong Do, "*Thư đường*" lacks background details and focuses on the characters. Instead, Kim portrays the figures with simple, bold strokes. We can sense his distinctive artistic style in this painting.

From observing the painting <Painting 2>, we can see that the teacher and all the other students are attentively looking at the student sitting in the middle [1] who is trying to hide his tears. What might have happened in the *village school* depicted in this painting? It's possible that at this moment, the teacher is calling each student's name to check if they have learned the lesson from the previous class. Student [1] is sitting with his back to the book, wiping his tears. Looking next to the teacher's desk, we can see a cane placed there. It seems that this student did not study the lesson before coming to class. We don't know if the boy is crying out of fear of being punished with the cane or because he is in pain after being punished. We also can't tell if he is untying the strings of his daenim to receive the cane on his calves or retying daenim after being punished. But one thing is clear, the boy is being scolded for not being able to answer the teacher's question due to not studying the homework.

⁸ Local Confucian temples or official schools affiliated with Confucian temples were present during the Goryeo and Joseon periods.

⁹ Source: <https://www.khan.co.kr/article/200412011808361>

¹⁰ Source: <https://tapchivanhoaphatgiao.com/luu-tru/6440>

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Painting 1: *Village School*



Painting 2: *Village School* (with numbering for analysis)

The interesting thing is the expression on the teacher's face. Surely, he is not angry. We can see that he is looking at the punished student with sympathy for not having memorized the lesson. The teacher is trying to suppress a smile while observing the child crying due to the scolding, and his face seems unable to hold back a further laugh. He is simultaneously withholding a laugh and attentively looking at the child with compassion, which creates a friendly, not intimidating, feeling for us.

The facial expressions of the students vary slightly. The boy sitting at the front on the left [2] is covering his mouth, probably whispering the answer to the question posed by the teacher to student [1]. Meanwhile, the other two students in the same row [3, 4] are holding their books open, seemingly saying, "Look here and answer this!" They are both flipping through the pages and diligently memorizing while waiting for their turn to recite. The student sitting at the very bottom of the row on the right [9] is seen from behind, not showing his face. This boy is not looking at his book but sitting up straight with confidence, attentively observing the scene of his classmates being scolded. It seems he has memorized the lesson, appearing very self-assured before the class. The second student from the bottom in the right row [8] is intently looking at his book, unable to smile. He might be preparing for an upcoming quiz. Looking at the other students [6], [7], who are all smiling mischievously, we can guess that they have already finished their exercises. However, there is one student wearing a "gat" hat, appearing more mature than the others. The "gat" hat [5] is a hat that only married people can wear. The student wearing it is seated at the top position, respected by other students as an elder, while the young boy sitting at the end of the row [9] is the youngest in the classroom.

In the Joseon era, the social hierarchy was divided into four classes: yangban (noble class), jungin (middle class), sangmin (commoners), and cheonmin (lowest class). Initially, only the yangban class had the privilege of receiving education. However, this social hierarchy began to change during the late Joseon period, specifically during the reign of King Yeongjo (1724-1776) when Kim Hong Do lived. During this period, some commoners became wealthy through trading and commerce. With their basic needs secured, the next priority was education to enhance their abilities. Kim Hong Do's painting "*Village School*" depicts both the yangban and commoner children studying together – a scenario that was not possible in earlier historical periods. The children on the left, wearing thinner clothing, are commoners, while those on the right, dressed in thicker clothing, are from the noble class. Based on their appearances, it can be inferred that the scolded child [1] is a commoner who probably couldn't complete the assignment due to helping his parents with their work the day before. Perhaps due to the spirit of mutual assistance, the commoner children on the left [2, 3, 4] are trying their best to help their classmate. Meanwhile, the noble class children on the right are laughing mischievously, seemingly taking pride in their status. Interestingly, Kim Hong Do seems to have portrayed the commoner children on the left as more intelligent than the noble class children on the right. From this aspect, one can perceive a certain critique or disapproval of the privileged class, although it is not explicitly stated.

This Vietnamese painting, "*Village School*", holds a special place in the hearts of Koreans due to its meticulous observations, well-structured composition, warm Korean touch, and the subtle humor and emotions captured by Kim Hong Do. When we observe the classroom scene in the "*Village School*" painting, we can vividly imagine the lively atmosphere and the spirit of learning of the people in Korea during that era.

The case of the Vietnamese *Village School* painting <painting 3> is not determined by the author of Vietnam. It depicts a private school class organized at the home of the Ho, Hoang, Nguyen lineage, inviting teacher Duong Van Khai to teach in Quynh Doi, Nghe An¹¹. This painting was created in 1440, during the reign of King Le Thai Tong (1423-1442) reign from 1433 to 1442, in the early period of the Le Dynasty. The Le so Dynasty was the first phase of the feudal regime in Vietnamese history to reach the peak of its development as well as its decline. The Le so Dynasty was established after Le Loi (1385-1433) launched the Lam Son

¹¹ Source: Professor Han Do Hyun's presentation at the Workshop on Teaching Korean Culture and Language in Vietnam, August 2019, Ba Ria Vung Tau University.

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Uprising and defeated the Ming Dynasty. He changed the name to Giao Chi, which existed during the Ming occupation, to Dai Viet, with its national name originating from the reign of Ly Thanh Tong. The Le Dynasty period had ten emperors spanning six generations, a time when the emperors of the Le Dynasty held complete power. It was a period of grandeur and prosperity for the Vietnamese feudal regime. Under the reign of King Le Thai To (Le Loi), and especially under the reign of King Le Thai Tong, society entered a stable and rapidly developing period after the previous war. During King Le Thanh Tong's reign, Dai Viet experienced unprecedented development in all aspects: economy, culture, society, education, and military. The country of Dai Viet had never been as powerful and influential in the larger region as during this period, known as the Hong Duc flourishing period (洪德晟世)¹². The Vietnamese *Village School* painting is one of the visible evidences of the extremely prosperous educational development during this period.

In <painting 3>, eight Vietnamese students are sitting and learning Han characters with their teacher in a private school held at a family's home. The classroom is equipped with study desks and mats for sitting. By observing this scene, we can infer that this is a village school established by local landlords or officials, belonging to the feudal aristocracy of Vietnam during the Le so dynasty. During this period for their children, Vietnamese society was divided into two main classes: the feudal aristocracy and the farmers. The feudal aristocracy comprised the king, officials, and landlords who held power and ruled the country. The farmers, the majority of the population, worked on the land and paid heavy taxes, serving the state. Additionally, there were other social classes, such as merchants, artisans, and slaves in the society..



<Painting 3>: Village School



<Painting 4>: Village School (with numbering for analysis)

Observing the painting *Village School*, we can see that student [2] is only partially depicted, showing only his right hand, so we cannot determine whether he is reading a book, listening to the teacher, or being distracted with his private work. However, students [1, 4, 5, 7] are all diligently reading Han characters. On the other hand, student [8] is not reading a book but comfortably lying down on a mat spread out on the floor, practicing writing. Besides the attentive readers, there are two students [3] and [6] who are not looking at their books but seem to be listening to the teacher's lecture. Their seating positions, [3] and [6], are quite similar, being the only seats directly facing the teacher - the best seats for listening to the lecture and asking questions. Student [4] is probably the oldest among the students in the class, as he is the only one sitting on a higher chair with a separate higher study desk, while the other students are sitting on the mat with lower desks to hold their books.

Now, let's observe together to find the similarities and differences in education during the feudal era in South Korea and Vietnam through the paintings '*Village School*' of Viet Nam and '*Village School*' of Korea.

3.1 Similarities

Firstly, both Vietnam and South Korea have strongly adopted and incorporated elements of Chinese culture, especially Han characters. In the paintings, we can see students from both countries studying Han characters in the village school of Viet Nam and the village school of Korea. The regional similarity between Vietnam and South Korea is supported and confirmed by linguistic evidence. Due to historical and geographical factors, South Korea began to assimilate and be influenced by Chinese culture quite early on. According to research by Trieu Nhuan Te and Liu Shih Hang, the system of Han characters was likely introduced to Korea around 1122 BCE. In the 15th century, Korea had the Hangeul script as a pure Korean script, but Han characters continued to be widely used and served as the official language in the royal court. Even in modern times, Han characters are still present in written texts, particularly in academic documents, with numerous Han annotations. In the case of Vietnam, during the process of cultural and linguistic interaction, the Vietnamese people absorbed and borrowed Han characters and words to enrich their language. The incorporation of Han-derived words into Vietnamese took several centuries. According to documents, about 60% of Vietnamese

¹² https://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nh%C3%A0_L%C3%AA_s%C6%A1

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words have Han elements in their formation, and this percentage continues to rise with the creation of new words, using Han components as morphemes¹³.

Secondly, all the students depicted in the paintings are male. This is the result of the strong influence of Confucianism from China in both feudal eras of Vietnam and South Korea. During the Korean feudal period, it can be said that the lower the status of Korean women, the lower the status. Only men were allowed to be heads of households, and women were especially prohibited from participating in the civil service examinations. All official positions were reserved for men. This situation was also similar in Vietnam. Vietnamese society underwent significant changes in the social, economic, educational, and cultural systems from the 10th century to the first half of the 19th century. One of the most important changes was the emergence of the feudal system along with Confucian ideology. Confucianism had a strong impact on all aspects of life, especially on women. In feudal society, women had to endure many injustices under the ideology of "valuing males and despising females." They had no say in their own lives. All their values and worldview were confined within the framework of "loyalty, filial piety, and chastity." Women were not allowed to study or participate in decision-making, whether in personal matters or household and state affairs. As a result, women in feudal society were constrained both mentally and physically. Their lives revolved around the inner chambers and the responsibilities of being a "virtuous woman." Therefore, in both feudal eras of Korea and Vietnam, the two paintings reflect the harsh reality where only males were allowed to receive an education, while females were denied the opportunity to learn to read and write, being confined to the roles of virtuous wives and mothers.

The third similarity is that the students in the same class have different ages. In the painting "Village School" from Korea, we can see both young unmarried students with hair tied in a sam-tail and one married student wearing a "gat" hat. This might be because each village or hamlet had a limited number of Village schools, and not all children in the village had the opportunity or were required to attend school. Hence, in both paintings, we observe a diverse group of students, ranging from the youngest with sam-tail hair [9] to the adolescent who is already married [5] in the "Village School" scene. By observing the different heights and sizes among the students with sam-tail hair, we can infer they have varying ages. Similarly, in the painting "Village School" of Vietnam, we can also see a variety of ages among the students. There is a baby with a tuft of hair [5] sitting and reading, and another child [8] lying down and practicing writing in the right corner of the painting. Furthermore, a mature young man [4] is sitting upright, reading a book in front of a higher desk. The overall atmosphere of the classroom allows us to understand that both countries have a long tradition of valuing education since ancient times. This scene shows us that the village schools of Vietnam during the Le so period and those in Korea during the Joseon era were open to students of different ages. Moreover, depending on their ages, these students were taught and learned various subjects appropriate to their levels of knowledge and development..

3.2 Differences

esides the mentioned similarities, when comparing the two paintings, some differences also come to light. The first striking difference is the traditional attire of the two countries. Both paintings vividly depict the traditional costumes - the national spirit of each nation. We can see that the Korean men's hanbok is predominantly white. The ancient attire of the Korean people was often white. The Korean people are famously fond of wearing white clothes and are even referred to as the "White-clad nation" (baekui minjok). The book "The Dictionary of 101 Social Questions That Even Social Studies Teachers Are Curious About" surveyed the origin of why Koreans like to wear white clothes. However, no ancient records can be found in Korean documents. Nevertheless, in the Chinese book "The Records of the Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel," it is mentioned that the Buyeo and Silla people liked to wear white clothes. This trend of favoring white clothes was continued until the Goryeo period (918-1392) and the Joseon period (1392-1910)¹⁴. On the other hand, the traditional attire for Vietnamese men is white trousers and black áo dài.



¹³ Source: <http://nguvan.hnue.edu.vn/Nghiên-cứu/Ngữ-văn-Hán-Nôm/p/doi-chieu-cac-am-tiet-han-viet-han-han-voi-cac-am-tiet-han-968>

¹⁴ Source: Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2019), quoted.

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The second difference is in their hairstyles. During the Joseon period in Korea, men used to keep their hair long until the 19th century. However, in the 15th century (the time when the *Village School* painting was created), Vietnamese men had short and neat haircuts. In Korea, unmarried young boys wore their hair long and tied it into a sam-tail at the back of their heads, while married men tied their hair neatly and wore a "gat" hat. On the other hand, in Vietnam, young boys had three tufts of hair, similar to the children [5] and [8] in the painting, while adult men had short hair and wore a brown cloth around their heads.

The third difference is that Korean people do not wear shoes inside their homes, while Vietnamese people wear shoes both inside their homes and classrooms. Looking at the feet of the young student [1] in the painting "*Village School*" [painting 2], we can see he is wearing beoseon socks. Beoseon are footwear made from fabric to keep the feet warm, and they are a distinctive accessory in Korea that both men and women wear. The history of beoseon can be traced back to the Three Kingdoms period (3rd century ~ 676). In 834, there were references to "socks" (襪) and "knee-length socks" (襪袴) in the clothing regulations, which are believed to be beoseon socks and knee-length beoseon. At that time, beoseon used different materials depending on one's social status. People of higher social status wore beoseon that were intricately embroidered with thin silk (綾), silk fabric (羅), silk yarn, and the colors were also regulated based on one's social status. Based on the historical context, it is believed that during that time, beoseon socks for women were presumed to be made by sewing socks and knee-length socks separately and then combining them to wear on the feet. In the Goryeo period, the material of socks varied according to social status, but the color of socks was universally white without distinguishing social classes. However, the king wore red socks, while the queen wore blue socks. In the Joseon period, the use of silk for making beoseon socks decreased, and cotton fabric became the primary material used. In most cases, white cotton socks were worn without distinguishing social classes. This reflected the prevailing trend of valuing purity and honesty in society during that time¹⁵. Returning to the painting "*Village School*" from Korea, the young student [1] is not wearing shoes but white socks inside the classroom. This is a cultural norm in Korea, where wearing shoes indoors is taboo in this country.

Unlike the Korean custom of not wearing shoes indoors, Vietnamese people often wear shoes inside their homes. This can be observed in the painting "*Village School*" from Vietnam. In <painting 4>, we can see a pair of wooden clogs on the feet of student [4] and three pairs of clogs placed on the floor for students [2,3,6]. In the past, due to the hot and humid climate and the Vietnamese tradition of rice cultivation, along with their proficiency in using boats, Vietnamese people often went barefoot. At the end of the 10th century, King Le Dai Hanh was even known to go barefoot, wearing loin cloths, and walking on bare ground. During the Tran dynasty, people went barefoot, and their feet became so tough from walking on rough terrain that they could climb mountains swiftly and without fear of thorns. Only the nobility wore leather shoes, but they had to take them off when entering palaces. Generally, ancient Vietnamese people seldom used clogs. However, according to historical records, clogs appeared in Vietnam quite early. Ancient Chinese books such as *Nam Viet Chi* and *Giao Chau Ky* mentioned that Lady Trieu in the 3rd century wore clogs made of ivory. In the past, in rural areas, on cold days, women and men only wore clogs made of bamboo when attending important festivals. The clogs used inside the house were often made of wood, with a curved tip to protect the toes, and vertical straps are braided with rattan. Returning to the pair of wooden clogs in <painting 4>, we can see that these clogs are made of wood and have horizontal straps. It is difficult to determine precisely whether the straps are made of leather or fabric, but definitely not the kind of rope braided from rattan or bamboo.

Thus, from just two paintings depicting the same theme of teaching Han characters, we have observed many similarities and differences in the cultures of South Korea and Vietnam.

4. CONCLUSION

The painting "*Village School*" from Korea depicts a scene of homework checking in a classroom during the late Joseon period. On the other hand, the painting "*Village School*" from Vietnam portrays a scene of Han character learning in a Vietnamese classroom during the Le so dynasty. Comparing these two paintings, we can identify several similarities and differences. Firstly, both countries, due to their geographical proximity to China, shared the practice of teaching Han characters. Furthermore, they both had a patriarchal culture during the feudal era, evident from the absence of female students in both classrooms. The third similarity lies in the diverse ages of students in the same class in both Vietnam and Korea during the feudal period. Apart from these similarities, we also notice three differences. Firstly, Korean students wore traditional hanbok, predominantly in white, while Vietnamese students donned traditional áo dài in black with white trousers. Secondly, Korean men maintained long hair, whereas Vietnamese men in this era had short hair. Lastly, Korean people didn't wear shoes indoors but rather wore socks (traditional socks), while Vietnamese people wore clogs (wooden clogs) indoors. Thus, from just two paintings depicting the same theme of teaching Han characters, we have observed many similarities and differences in the cultures of South Korea and Vietnam.

¹⁵ Source: <https://namu.wiki/w/%EB%B2%84%EC%84%A0>

Compare Between the Scenes of Teaching in South Korea and Vietnam in the Folk Painting

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