

Korean Ginseng (*nhân sâm Cao Ly*) in Vietnam during the First Half of the 19th century*

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I. Introduction

As is already widely known among Vietnamese, Minh Mạng (1820-1841) was very energetic in controlling women in regard to making babies. In his fifty years of life, he had 142 children with a fair gender-balance-78 sons and 64 daughters, and Minh Mạng's energy has been attributed to his appetite for ginseng, specifically Korean ginseng.

His rule in various fields could be interpreted in the same context. He was quite active in administering his empire implementing new policies. He was in a relatively healthy condition to do so, with the help of ginseng, and he also appears to have utilized the ginseng in dealing with his subjects, most of whom regarded the ginseng as a

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valuable root.

The question then arises: where did Minh Mạng get the roots? How did he get enough ginseng to be able to share it with his men? Was the ginseng that helped his business really produced in Korea? And how did the ginseng roots contribute to the accomplishment of Minh Mạng's political objectives?

Certainly, ginseng was known in Vietnam for a long time, although it is difficult to determine when exactly the Vietnamese made contact with ginseng for the first time. Considering that ginseng was included in the gift list of Korea to China in the 6th century (Oc 2008: 45), it can be assumed that ginseng was known to Vietnam from China after this time. Nevertheless, ginseng has rarely appeared either in historical documents or in historical studies of Vietnam. As far as I know, ginseng is not found in the long history record of the *Đại Nam Thực Lục Tiền Biên* which covers over 200 years of the Nguyễn history. The *Thực Lục* of the Gia Long period (1802-1820) also maintains almost silence about ginseng.¹⁾ For example, when a faithful member of meritorious subjects of Gia Long, Nguyễn Văn Nhân, fell sick, the king's endowment included cinnamon, eagle-wood, and ambergris (*DNTL1*, 34:4a). We cannot find ginseng in the endowment list of Gia Long for his closest man.

From the time of Minh Mạng, however, the word 'nhân sâm (ginseng),' or *Cao Ly nhân sâm* (Korean ginseng) appears sporadically

1) There is only one record on the ginseng in 1805: "[emperor] ordered [the governor-general of] the *Bắc Thành* (northern territory with the administrative center located in Hanoi) to purchase ginseng." *Đại Nam Thực Lục Chính-Biên Đệ Nhất Kỳ* (hereafter *DNTL1*), 27:6a. But no evidence can be found for the result of this order in the *Thực Lục* of Gia Long.

in the *Đại Nam Thực Lục*, implying that ginseng had become a historical element. The Thiệu Trị period (1841-1847) also witnesses numbers of instances of the word *nhân sâm*.²⁾ In the early part of the Tự Đức era (1848-1883), we still can find records regarding ginseng until 1860. If we remember that for the 28 years of the Nguyễn dynasty in the time of Minh Mạng and Thiệu Trị (1820-1847) (hereafter MM-TT period), the Nguyễn dynasty was very active in the fields of overseas contacts to both Canton and Hạ Châu (land below, area of Island Southeast Asia), domestic development, and the territorial expansion, although the Nguyễn ultimately withdrew from Cambodia to the region of the current territory of Vietnam in 1847, the frequent appearance of the ‘*nhân sâm*’ could be believed to have represented the vitality of the Nguyễn empire.

Two issues will be discussed in this article. The first addresses the possible ways that the Vietnamese acquired ginseng overseas. The second chapter discusses the ways that the emperors share ginseng roots with their subjects. The examples of the endowment to the literati officials will be introduced first, whereas the latter part of this chapter deals with the ginseng for their soldiers in the battlefields.

2) Thiệu Trị also showed strong energy to make children. Before he died when he was 41 years old, he had 64 children (29 sons and 35 daughters) though the gender balance was not as fair as his father. *Đại Nam Thực Lục Chính-Biên Đề Tam Kỳ* (hereafter *DNTL3*), 72:15.

II. Ginseng Routes to Huế

One day in the February of 1835 (lunar), Minh Mạng was criticizing the ‘coarse quality’ of the Chinese Qian Long emperor’s poem on ginseng. He cited a part of that poem: “*ngũ diệp tam nha vân cát ửng, ngọc kinh châu thực lộ cam bạc* (五葉三榼雲吉擁玉莖朱寔露甘薄).”³⁾

His point was that Qian Long’s expressions were much too real, lacking poetic imagination or symbolism that should be based on, and too focused on polishing the words (*DNTL2*, 159:29b). In my opinion, Minh Mạng appeared to be unhappy with the expression of the *ngọc kinh* to symbolize the root of ginseng, because *ngọc kinh* has a double meaning - it also refers to the male organ. If this is linked with the letter ‘*châu*’, which means ‘violet’, the sentence ‘*ngọc kinh châu thực lộ cam bạc*’ can be translated into “the violet organ is really covered with tiny sweet dew,” although its literal meaning is “the jade root and red fruit is covered with sweet dew.” The meaning of ‘*ngũ diệp tam nha vân cát ửng*’ is “the ‘five leaves and three stakes’ (indicating the ginseng leaves, and frequently ‘*ngũ diệp tam nha*’ is used to indicate ginseng) is happily hugging the cloud;” however, this sentence can also be interpreted as a very sexual description, due to the words for ‘cloud,’ ‘five leaves,’ ‘three stakes,’ and ‘happily hugging.’

However, this criticism reveals an important fact - specifically, that Minh Mạng was as familiar with ginseng - including the leaves and fruits - as was the Qian Long emperor. In other words, I believe

3) *Đại Nam Thực Lục Chính-Biên Định Nhị Kỳ* (hereafter *DNTL2*), 159:29b.

several types of ginseng were known to Minh Mạng.

The most traditional method for Vietnam to import ginseng was from the capital of China, where Vietnamese tribute missions regularly visited once every four years during the Nguyễn dynasty period. According to *Đại Nam Thực Lục*, the tribute items in 1839 onward, included one pair of elephant tusks, two pieces of rhinoceros horn, locally produced cotton and silk clothes, eaglewood, *tốc hương* (速香), *sa nhân* (砂仁), and betel (*DNTL2*, 207:41b-42a).

In fact, however, the Vietnamese products brought to Beijing were more than tribute items. In the case of Korea, which sent tribute missions to China in greater numbers (three times a year at least), the merchant group was attached to the official mission. In the Vietnamese mission to Beijing, we don't have any evidence of the special merchant group, but the government officials did trade by themselves on a limited scale. For this purpose, they brought additional goods with them to China and exchanged the Vietnamese products with those of China.

One excellent piece of evidence is the next description in the *Đại Nam Thực Lục*. The record shows us how much the court officials were engaged in trade in Beijing, and how ginseng was acquired. Allow me to introduce the complaint of a group of young court officials against the routine works of the barter system trade in Beijing carried out by the missionary members:

“The member of the *như Thanh sứ*, or the going-to-Ch'ing envoy bring with them the goods, and exchange them with the *Thanh hóa* (Ch'ing goods) [...] all the members of the *như Thanh sứ* from now on should use silver currency to buy, and [we]

should prohibit them from bringing with [our] goods.” (*DNTL2*, 218:33)

In response to this suggestion, Minh Mạng’s argument is very clear:

“The suggestion is absolutely not reasonable at all. Generally it has been the right principle of past and present to exchange what [we] have with what [we] don’t have. [...] cinnamon, cardamom, and the bird’s nest are what we have. Whenever [they] go to Ch’ing [they] bring some and exchange them with the valuable goods of Ch’ing China [...] such as ginseng, medicine, and books.” (*DNTL2*, 218:33)

In addition, the members of missions appear to have been allowed to do their private business. In these circumstances, some officials and interpreters (who were probably Chinese) from *hành nhân ty* (行人司) could attempt to do their jobs over the limitation.⁴⁾ The year of 1846 saw bad luck among the envoy members who brought private goods over limitations. Certainly as a result of the over amount, Trương Hiếu Hợp, Phạm Chi Hương, and Vương Hữu Quang arbitrarily mobilized men on the way back to carry the private goods. This was uncovered and they were demoted (*DNTL3*, 60:9b).

Where did they obtain ginseng? And what types of ginseng were brought to Vietnam? *Đại Nam Thực Lục* provides us with a record for the answer to these questions. When the court officials Nguyễn Trung Vũ, Nguyễn Đình Tân, Đặng Văn Khai were ready to leave

4) To strengthen the limitation, Nguyễn government regulated the number of individual boxes each envoy member court could bring from China: 5 boxes for *chính sứ*, 4 boxes for two *phó sứ*, 12 boxes for 8 *hành nhân*, 5 boxes for 9 men of accompany. *DNTL2*, 85:29b.

for Beijing in 1830, Minh Mạng devised a skillful deal to acquire ginseng:

“On the very day you arrive in the Yên Kinh [Beijing] tell to the Ch’ing’s *Lễ Bộ* [Board of Rite] that our country usually have only a few [amount of] ginseng, so that ask them to give [us] *quan đông nhân sâm* instead of the [royal] gifts with the value of half price [of the royal gifts].” (*DNTL2*, 65:10a)

Minh Mạng’s idea was that he should get the *quan đông* ginseng by selling back (at half price) the royal gifts given by the Qian Long emperor.

Here we need to clarify what the *quan đông* ginseng was. In some parts of the *Thực Lục*, the ‘*quan đông nhân sâm*’ appears together with ‘*Cao Ly nhân sâm*.’ In any case, the ‘*quan đông nhân sâm*’ is put ahead of the ‘*Cao Ly nhân sâm*’ (*DNTL2*, 97:2b; 121:18b). From this order, it can be assumed that the *quan đông* ginseng was regarded as higher in value than the *nhân sâm Cao Ly*. Additionally, we need to remember that the founder of the Ch’ing dynasty, Nurhachi (1559-1629) was a powerful ginseng dealer. Leveraging the monopoly of the Manchurian fur and ginseng, especially from the northern side of the Zhang Bai Mountain on the border area between Korea and Manchu, he was able to accumulate sufficient wealth to prepare his military equipment. Based on this information, it would be reasonable to interpret ‘*quan đông*’ as the ‘east (*đông*) of the Shan Hai Pass (*Quan*),’ i.e. the Manchu area. Namely, the *Quan đông nhân sâm* can be interpreted to refer to wild ginseng from the Manchu area. This wild ginseng had a better reputation than the *Cao Ly nhân sâm*,

which was the industrial-grade ginseng in the 19th century.

My opinion is corroborated by an important study on the ginseng issue between Korean and Ch'ing China. Kim Seonmin provides us with useful information. Before the Ch'ing dynasty was founded, Korean ginseng (wild ginseng) was a very important gift item to go to Chinese emperors. From the beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty, however, Korean ginseng was no longer on the list of tributes, because ginseng was regarded as a local product of China. According to Kim, this transition represents a change in territorial distinction. Now that China had a ginseng territory, it no longer required ginseng from Korea (Kim 2010: 46). In contrast, there was a case in which the Ch'ing court endowed ginseng to Korea (Kim 2010: 44). Under this condition, the only wild ginseng the Vietnamese could get in Beijing was Manchurian ginseng.

Besides the *Quan đông nhân sâm* (關東人參), we encounter several names for the ginseng in the *Đại Nam Thực Lục*. The most popular vocabulary for the ginseng is 'nhân sâm,' and the next is 'Cao Ly nhân sâm.' The names of 'thượng phương nhân sâm (尚方人參),' 'chính bắc thượng phẩm nhân sâm (正北上品人參),' 'tây dương tối đại nhân sâm (西洋最大人參),' 'nam sâm (南參),' 'sâm (參),' 'hồng nhục tây sâm (紅肉西參),' 'hồng nhục sâm (紅肉參),' 'Cao Ly công phẩm nhân sâm (高麗貢品人參),' and 'Quan đông công phẩm nhân sâm (關東貢品人參)' were other names for ginseng in the Royal storage (*vũ kho*) in Huế.

These various types of ginseng can be categorized into three types of *Cao Ly nhân sâm*, *nam sâm*, and *tây sâm* according to the area of production. The *Cao Ly nhân sâm* was from Korea⁵); the *nam*

sâm is believed to be the ginseng native to southern China, Burma, and the central parts of Vietnam⁶); and the *tây sâm* (Western ginseng) was certainly the American ginseng.⁷)

The first place for the Vietnamese to be able to obtain Korean ginseng was Beijing. In Korea, the ginseng trade was monopolized in the hands of the Eui Ju merchant group, which was based on the northern part of the peninsula from the beginning of the 19th century. The Eui Ju merchants were attached to the interpreters who had the privilege to accompany the envoy to Beijing, passing through the Manchu area with a limited amount of ginseng.⁸) When the envoy group reached Beijing, the ginseng was to be traded.

Most of the ginseng was sold to the Chinese merchants, but there was also another possibility that the Korean merchants might sell the ginseng to customers other than the Chinese merchant because ginseng

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- 5) There was a kind of 'Korean ginseng' that might have been planted or raised in Vietnam during the MM-TT period. An evidence for the possibility is the following record (Dec. lunar, 1839) in the *Quốc Sử Di Biên*: "In the north, there is a [*Cao Ly*] ginseng product (*Bắc kỳ hữu Ly sâm sâm*)." The description on the ginseng's outlook is quite detail though not correct enough: "*Cao Ly nhân sâm*, [its] leaves look like *phiên súc* [*Polygonum Ariculare* L, a kind of wild grass for medicine], flower looks like horse's hoof, color is violet and white, height is five *thốn*, roots look like *mạch môn* [*đông*], its taste is sweet and warm." Phan Thúc Trục, p. 289.
- 6) In the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, we can find the name of *Nghĩa* (or *Ngãi*) *sâm* as a famous local product of the Quảng Ngãi province. *Quốc Sử Quán* (2006), pp. 522-525.
- 7) During the 19th century, Japan was also a place that produced ginseng; they had been successful in planting ginseng in the previous century under the patronage of *shogun* Tokugawa Yoshimune (1716-1745). However, I have not encountered any evidence for the Japanese ginseng brought to Huế.
- 8) The Korean government did not pay for the work of interpreters. Instead, each interpreter had the right to bring a certain amount of ginseng for their use in the trip by the profits from the ginseng trade. However, the interpreters required professional dealers for the trade with the tough Chinese merchants. The Eui Ju merchants were employed for this purpose.

markets called ‘*nhân sâm cục* (ginseng rooms)’ were held near the guest house of the Korean envoy, and this was a place where various kinds of customers flocked together. This was also the place where Chinese and Korean intellectuals met together over a cup of tea and wine dialoging by the brush-talks (Chaung 2010: 13-18). If you were a member of the Vietnamese envoy, you would be very curious about this ginseng market.

Under these circumstances, there could have been several ways for the Vietnamese to obtain Korean ginseng in Beijing. One was from Chinese traders. The second was to buy the ginseng in medicine shops. The third possibility involved Korean traders in the ginseng market. Additionally, I think there was also the possibility that the ginseng was obtained from the *Lễ bộ* of the Ch’ing government, as in the case of obtaining the Manchurian ginseng. The evidence is the existence of the *Cao Ly cống phẩm nhân sâm* (Korean ginseng included in the tribute items) mentioned above.

Though the amount of ginseng the Korean merchants were allowed to bring to China was strictly limited, they kept trying to avoid restriction by the successful negotiation with the inspectors in Korea and those of China (Oc 2008: 179-183). Additionally, the amount of ginseng allowed to the Eui Ju merchants increased continuously through the first half of the 19th century, from 200 *geun* (*cân* in Vietnamese) in 1811, 800 *geun* in 1823, 4,000 *geun* in 1828, 8,000 *geun* in 1832, to 40,000 *geun* in 1847 (Lee 2000: 142-148) leading to more and more chances for the Vietnamese to be able to obtain Korean ginseng at a cheaper price in Beijing.

The second place the Vietnamese could get Korean ginseng was

Canton. This possibility is corroborated by the first record on ginseng and its distribution in the *Đại Nam Thực Lục* in July (lunar) of 1823 (*DNTL2*, 22:8a), whereas the first trip to Canton began in May 1822, and was destined to return to Vietnam during the wintertime (Choi 2011: 7; 21). Recently, it was found that Vietnamese officials together with Chinese merchants (with the titles of the court officials in *hành nhân ty*) were regularly sent to Canton on the square-rigged/copper-bottomed ship(s) to purchase Chinese goods between the 1820s and 1840s (Choi 2011: 7-12). During their five-to-six-month stay in Canton, the Vietnamese officials were collecting the goods they needed.

We have clear evidence that they were expected to buy books, tea, and medicine (*DNTL2*, 209:6; *DNTL3*, 72:6b), although no direct evidence was found to indicate that they purchased ginseng here. The Korean ginseng must have been included in the medical items. The evidence is that there were ginseng roots transferred from north China around Beijing in the Canton medicine market. Under the conditions surrounding the development of domestic trade in China at this time, ginseng from the Zhi Yi region (Trực Lệ in Sino-Viet, capital and its environs) was an important item in the Canton market (Park 1998: 91). This kind of ginseng was absolutely Korean from my point of view in regard to the fact that China did not produce ginseng except for the Manchurian wild ginseng (under the royal monopoly), but Korean ginseng was traded regularly in Beijing.

The Korean ginseng in Canton could also have been the smuggled ones. During the 19th century, illegal trade in the western coastal area of Korea was quite dense; the Kae Seong merchant groups to which the ginseng cultivation monopoly was given by the Korean government

was looking for a way to achieve more profit from the ginseng trade overseas, besides providing the Eui Ju merchants with their ginseng. From the beginning of the 19th century, ginseng smuggling by the Yellow Sea became increasingly serious (Lee 2000: 253). The illegally traded Korean ginseng was brought to China on the ships, and could be assumed that one of the direct and indirect destinations of the Korean ginseng was Canton, where the Vietnamese square-rigged ships regularly visited.

The activities of the French missionaries belonged to the Société des Mission Étrangères de Paris provide us with examples of the reputation, illegal outflow, and the travel routes of Korean ginseng in the 19th century.

According to the study conducted by Cho Hyeon-Beom, 20 French missionaries entered Korea from 1836 to 1865. Among them, the first three men came into Korea through Eui Ju, the hometown of the Eui Ju merchants in the north by land route. From 1845, however, the French missionaries landed in the western part of the Korean Peninsula by the seaborne trips (Cho 2002: 186). Cho interprets the change in the route from land to sea was the tightened control of the border area of Eui Ju against the illegal entrance of the Catholic missionaries (Cho 2002: 184). However, I believe that this change represents more regarding the development and the convenience of the seaborne route by the Yellow Sea during the 19th century when the illegal trade by sea in both Korea and China was more developed than before. Via this illegal network, goods were going back and forth between China and Korea, as did French missionaries, with the help of illegal traders.

Evidence of the seaborne route is the case of the Bishop Berneaux (Siméon François Berneaux) (1814-1866). He used to be in Vietnam,⁹⁾ and landed in the area of Chang Yeon located in the coastal area of the north central part of Korea Peninsula in 1856 via Baek Ryeong Island (Cho 2002: 184-185), the farthest island to the west - at the altitude of central Korea, but closer to coastal area of Chang Yeon (less than 20 km), near Kae Seong. From this region he moved to Seoul to work until he was martyred in 1866. During this time he occasionally sent and accepted goods to and from his missionary colleagues in China. The list of items he sent to his colleagues in Manchu in 1865 is sufficiently attractive for us to pay attention. It included a pair of Korean shoes, three watches for repair, and a box of Korean ginseng.¹⁰⁾ In the letter to his colleague Verrolles (Emmanuel Jean François Verrolles, 1805-1878) in Manchu, Berneaux made a clear note that the box of ginseng was supposed to go to the bishop in Canton.¹¹⁾

The active spread overseas of Korean ginseng was due to several factors. The most basic element was the drastic decline in wild ginseng at the beginning of the 18th century due to the over-hunting for the

9) He arrived in northern Vietnam via Java, Manila, and Macau in January, 1841, but soon was arrested in Ninh Binh to be jailed in Huế. He was in prison until he released and departed Đà Nẵng in 1843 and went back to Bourbon. Again, he went to Manchu in April, 1844 from Bourbon through Singapore, Macau, Hong Kong, Hangzhou, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Liaodong to work in the Manchu area for 10 years before he began his move to Korea via Liaodong and Shanghai. Many thanks to Nguyễn Thị Thủy (a master student doing research on the French missionaries in Korea, at Inha university) for this information.

10) 10 Dec. 1865, Archives MEP: Copies de Berneux, vol. 3, f. 170, cited from Cho (2002), p. 202.

11) Ibid.

illegal trade to China and Japan, which led to the ginseng crisis in Korea (Lee 2000: 118). At that time, the Korean court sometimes had to worry that they did not have sufficient ginseng to present to the Japanese *shogun*, so that even the suggestion that wild ginseng should be imported from China was raised to the king (Lee 2000: 120). In this situation, efforts were made to develop skill in the artificial planting of the ginseng. The results were tremendous. To the end of the 18th century, industrial ginseng output was rising. From this point on, the Korean court allowed the increase of the ginseng quota for the exportation to China by the overland route attached to the Eui Ju merchants.

Besides the increases of ginseng product and of the ginseng exportation quota, the development of the ginseng processing skill was also an important reason for longer and broader travel of the Korean ginseng. From the end of the 18th century, the technology of the red ginseng (*hong sam* in Sino-Korean and *hông sâm* in Sino-Vietnamese) making by the commercially grown ginseng roots, became very popular. The fresh ginseng tends not to survive for long time because it rots easily, and the dried ginseng is very brittle. However, if you steam the industrial ginseng of the six year old until red, the ginseng survives long durations and humid weather. In addition, it is believed that the ginseng's medical effectiveness reaches its highest level as a result of this technique. The wide spread of red ginseng processing began at the end of the 18th century with an increase in ginseng production in Korea. Thus, as long as the *Cao Ly nhân sâm* is concerned, it was the red ginseng that out-flowed from the Korean Peninsula by land and sea during the booming period of ginseng

production in the first half of the 19th century.

Entering to the middle of the 19th century, the technique of red ginseng production became quite popular around the Kae Seong area. If you successfully buy an amount of fresh ginseng, secretly process it into red ginseng roots, and trade them on the Yellow Sea to Chinese traders on the ships, you could easily become a millionaire--especially if you have enough capital and live around the coastal area near to Kae Seong, this is a very attractive business. Even persons who belonged to the gentry class, the *yangban*, could not avoid being attracted to this business.

Lee Chul-sung, using a copy of the police bureau record in the 19th century (*Podocheongdeunglok*, 捕盜廳謄錄), provides us with a beautiful example. Cho Kwan-seop, a local gentry in the Incheon area, in 1863 visited a ginseng farm in Kae Seong to buy red ginseng roots. The owner of the farm illegally made red ginseng for him, and he bought 160 *geun* of ginseng. Cho hired someone to sell his ginseng in the Sea. Cho also knew the way to make profit by lending his money to others for this business. On the Yellow Sea, the red ginseng was traded with Western fabric (*seoyangmok*, or *tây dương mộc* in Vietnamese, 西洋木, in fact Indian cotton) (140 *geun* red ginseng was exchanged to the 150 rolls of Western fabric) (Lee 2005: 223-224; 226-227). When the ginseng dealers sold the Western fabric in Korean market, they doubled their profits via the ginseng trade. This was a situation that became more popular after the first Opium War (1840-1842). After the war, five ports besides Canton were forcefully opened, and the more Western goods traded close to the Korean peninsula, the more the red ginseng was supposed to be sucked

out of Korea. However, I believe this type of voyage had already begun before 1840, when Western goods were provided stably to Canton, coastal trade by junk was common in China, the ginseng production kept increasing, and most of all corruption was widespread, reflecting the loosened rule of the Korean state.

American ginseng was also readily found in the Canton medicine shops prior to the 1840s. Since it was found in Canada first and introduced to Europe in 1710 by the work of a Jesuit Father, Lafitau (Joseph François Lafitau, 1681-1746), American ginseng became popular in the European and Chinese markets (Taylor 2006: 87-99). After independence, traders in the USA paid attention to the wild ginseng from the northeastern part, parallel (latitude) with the location of the Zhang Bai Mountain, of their country. When the first ship, the *Queen of Chinese Empress*, left to Canton in 1784, wild ginseng was fully loaded as an important item that was believed to bring fortune from the overseas trade to the USA, and proved successful (Taylor 2006: 131-134).

Besides the ginseng routes from Beijing and from Canton, there is also evidence of an uncertain kind of private ginseng circulation. In 1841, Thiệu Trị mentions that “Last year gold, jade, silk, and ginseng were presented up to the court from the Sơn Tây province. The presents were returned.” (*DN TL3*, 18:17a) Later, Thiệu Trị found that the items had been confiscated from a culprit called Phạm Khắc Tuy in the Sơn Tây province (*Ibid.*). The context of this record is quite vague. However, we find a couple of facts related with the ginseng trade at the local level from this record. The items of gold, jade, silk, and ginseng are all precious ones to be presented to the emperor, and

all of the items appear to be imported ones. Needless to say, the ginseng was imported from a certain region outside of Vietnam with jade and silk. They are believed to be imported and sold to local people by Chinese merchants at the private local level in North Vietnam. At that time, there were Chinese streets in Hanoi, and the Chinese communities had been linked to China proper by a trade network of Chinese merchants who occasionally visited northern Vietnam. We have a piece of interesting evidence that the Chinese merchants were collecting low-priced silk in northern Vietnam, brought them to China, and remade them into Chinese goods with gorgeous stamps (*DNTL2*, 178:15). In this situation, the ginseng could be privately purchased by any Vietnamese customers who knew the reputation of the ginseng very well, although we don't know whether the ginseng purchased was real or fake. Phạm Khắc Tuy is believed to be one such customer, although the question as to whether this Vietnamese man was just a rich man or another trader remains.

Between the most possible routes for ginseng - Beijing to Huế by land, Canton to Huế by sea, the second route was more important. Tribute missions to Beijing occurred only once every four years. The distance was prohibitively far, taking one year to go there and back, and only around 20 men took part in (*DNTL2*, 85:29b-30a). The Chinese merchants also could have brought the ginseng to Vietnam, but it would have been cheaper to buy in Canton for the Vietnamese buyers, and also more reliable.

III. Distribution of Ginseng from Huế

1. Officialdom

The first experiment with the distribution of ginseng to civil servants was quite considerate of the regional balance. The first man who was honored to receive ginseng from the emperor was Trịnh Hoài Đức (1765-1825), a *minh hương* Chinese from southern Vietnam. In lunar July, 1823, when Minh Mạng heard that Trịnh Hoài Đức was sick, he endowed upon him ‘*nhân sâm*’ and cinnamon, and this present proved very effective. Five months later, Trịnh reported that he had recovered perfectly (*DNTL2*, 22:8a; 23:9a).

The next recipient of ginseng was Phạm Đình Hổ (1768-1839), a prominent scholar from Hanoi, who was working as the head of the Quốc Tử Giám in Huế. When he was sick in lunar September, 1827, ‘*nhân sâm*’ and cinnamon were presented to him by Minh Mạng with permission to go back home (*DNTL2*, 48:7b). Cheerful enough to Minh Mạng, in lunar November 1828, Phạm Đình Hổ still showed strength, proving capable of providing his emperor with valuable books he had collected in Hanoi (he survived until 1839) (*DNTL2*, 55:6b).

As seen above, the efficacy of the ginseng was proven by the two prominent scholars from the south and north, as well as by the emperor in central Vietnam. From this time onwards, ginseng of more various types was occasionally presented to a broader range of civil servants for more various purposes.

Let me introduce the cases found in the *Đại Nam Thực Lục*.

1. *Cao Ly nhân sâm*, presented to the court officials (*DNTL 2*, 83:10a, Sep. 1832)
2. *Nội tể Cao Ly nhân sâm*, 1 *lượng*, *Công bộ thượng thư*, Bùi Bạc who suffering severe cough (*DNTL2*, 165:6, Jan. 1836)
3. *Nhân sâm*, Nguyễn Trung Mậu's old mother (*DNTL2*, 171:18, 1836)
4. *Chính Bắc thượng phẩm nhân sâm 10 chi*, *tây dương tối đại nhân sâm 1 tạ*, presented to emperor's mother (*DNTL2*, 186:22b-23, Nov. 1837)
5. *Cao Ly sâm 3chi*, Quảng Trị *bố chính* Trần Hiến Doãn's old mother (*DNTL2*, 194:32, Aug. 1838)
6. *Cao Ly nhân sâm 2chi*, *Lễ bộ thượng thư* Phan Huy Thực who was sick (*DNTL3*, 9:17b, June 1841)
7. *Thượng Phương nhân sâm 5chi*, high-ranking local officials who visited capital, Nguyễn Văn Trung, Lê Văn Đức, Nguyễn Đăng Giai, Trần Văn Trung, Nguyễn Tự (*DNTL3*, 10:13, Jul. 1841)
8. *Nhân sâm*, court officials accompanying royal palanquin on the way back from Hanoi (*DNTL3*, 16:4, Feb. 1842)
9. *Quan đông nhân sâm*, to emperor's mother (*DNTL3*, 17:4, Feb. 1842)
10. *Nhân sâm*, presented up to emperor from Sơn Tây in the previous year (*DNTL3*, 18:17a, Mar. 1842)
11. *Thượng Phương Cao Ly nhân sâm 10chi*, Nguyễn Đăng Tuân (*DNTL3*, 24:14b-16a, Sep. 1842)
12. *Nhân sâm*, Nguyễn Đăng Tuân (*DNTL3*, 39:19b, May 1844)
13. *Nhân sâm*, Đỗan Uẩn (*DNTL3*, 51:8b, October 1845)
14. *Nam sâm 8lượng*, to the parents (over 70 years old) of the high-ranking civil officials over third grade outside capital (*DNTL3*, 67:12b-13, April 1847)
15. *Cao Ly nhân sâm 3chi*, *Hình bộ hữu tham tri* Vũ Tuấn's parents (*Đại Nam Thực Lục Chính-Biên Đệ Tứ Kỳ* hereafter *DNTL4*, 5:22a, Jan. 1850)
16. *Cao Ly nhân sâm 5lượng*, Trương Đăng Quế, Nguyễn Đăng Giai, Nguyễn Trạch (*DNTL4*, 9:34b-35a, Sep. 1856)
17. *Cao Ly sâm 4chi*, Định Biên *tổng đốc* Phạm Thế Hiến's mother (*DNTL4*,

13:4b-5a, July 1854)

18. *Cao Ly Sâm, 5chi*, Phan Tĩnh (*DNTL4*, 20:22b, Mar. 1859)

Of the 19 above-mentioned cases (including the two cases in 1837), nine involved the records on the *Cao Ly nhân sâm*, and six dealt with the *nhân sâm*. Manchurian ginseng has two records in 1837, 1842, and *nam sâm* and Western ginseng are each recorded one time. As discussed in the previous chapter, there were four types of ginseng according to the region in which the product was made - Korean ginseng, Manchurian ginseng, American ginseng, and southern ginseng.

Then, what is the ginseng described in the *DNTL* simply as ‘*nhân sâm*’? Was it one of the four types of ginseng, or just a broad term for any kind (or kinds) of ginseng? If the former case is true, then was it Korean, American, Manchurian, or Southern? If the latter, it is still worth clarifying what type of ginseng can be included in the group of the ‘*nhân sâm*’ because we need to gain more information regarding the possible routes of ginseng to Huế by the evidence regarding the distribution of ginseng to the civil servants.

Let us look at the cases according to the reigns. During the reign of Minh Mạng, four cases of the seven were *Cao Ly nhân sâm*. Among the remaining three cases, one was Manchurian, one was American ginseng, and next was ‘*nhân sâm*.’ Thiệu Trị’s reign left more records regarding the ‘*nhân sâm*.’ Of the eight cases, five records involved ‘*nhân sâm*,’ whereas there was only one record of *Cao Ly nhân sâm*, one *nam sâm*, and one record on Manchurian ginseng.

Why, then, was the reign of Thiệu Trị short of Korean ginseng?

I believe it is due simply to the method of recording. As has been determined previously, the group of historians of each *Thực Lục* was different. The historians of the Tự Đức reign who were in charge of compiling the Thiệu Trị's *Thực Lục* could have abbreviated '*Cao Ly nhân sâm*' as '*nhân sâm*' because the *Cao Ly nhân sâm* had become the most popular one, while they clarified the *Quan đông nhân sâm* and *nam sâm* because those types were very special for use. The precious *Quan đông nhân sâm* was for the mother of the emperor, whereas the cheap *nam sâm* were lavishly given to the parents (eight *lượng* for each man and woman) of the high ranking officials over the third grades all over the country. Only in cases of royal use, in which the highest quality of the *Cao Ly nhân sâm* was used, the historians must have clarified thus via the expression '*thượng phương* (medical use in the royal court) *Cao Ly nhân sâm*.' Additionally, I would like to point out the fact that the expressions of the '*Cao Ly nhân sâm*' and '*nhân sâm*' were never recorded together in any case. Thus, whether historians used the term '*Cao Ly nhân sâm*' or '*nhân sâm*' was just a matter of choice to indicate a specific kind, Korean ginseng. Of the four cases of Tự Đức, all were the *Cao Ly nhân sâm*.

More evidence will make clearer my assumptions regarding the '*nhân sâm*.' The first '*nhân sâm*' in the Thiệu Trị was the '*thượng phương nhân sâm*' bestowed in 1841 to the five high officials at the level of governor-generals including Nguyễn Văn Trung and Lê Văn Đức who were the eldest servants who made the largest contribution to the court. The second case was in 1842 when the roots of the '*nhân sâm*' were given to the court officials (*đình thân*)

accompanying the royal palanquin to Hanoi. At the point of bestowing the ginseng, Thiệu Trị asserted that he would like to share the ginseng with the respectful subjects ("*khanh*") because the ginseng would make them a bit more refreshed when they were tired of overwork (*DNTL3*, 16:4). The third record of the '*nhân sâm*' involved ginseng confiscated in the Sơn Tây province. The final cases were in 1844 and 1845 to Nguyễn Đăng Tuân and Doãn Uẩn, respectively. Those were the roots of ginseng bestowed to the highest subjects in each province, to the court officials with whom the emperor liked to share on the long trips to and from Hanoi, and to Doãn Uẩn and Nguyễn Đăng Tuân, who was the respectful teacher of the emperor and to whom 10 roots of the *Cao Ly nhân sâm* had been bestowed in 1842. The Sơn Tây *nhân sâm* was the ginseng offered to the emperor, although it was confiscated. Thus, it is highly possible that all of the '*nhân sâm*' in the Thiệu trị reign was Korean. This, of course, should not have been too much rare and expensive - like the Manchurian ginseng - so as to be only for royal use, and could not be so cheap as to be bestowed on common men and women. Additionally, we don't believe such high officials or teachers like Nguyễn Văn Trung, Lê Văn Đức, and Nguyễn Đăng Tuân would have been happy with American ginseng that appeared only one time in the *Thực Lục* of the Minh Mạng reign; however, this appears to have been for the fun of his mother for its size, and not for medicinal use in this case. Accordingly, I believe the *nhân sâm* bestowed to Trịnh Hoài Đức and Phạm Đình Hổ were also the ginseng roots from Korea.

The grantees of the ginseng can be grouped into high-ranking civil officials, their parents, and emperor's mothers. In other words, they

were emperor's men and their parents. The principal objective of the ginseng present was to promote loyalty (*trung*) and piety (*hiếu*), two important virtues in imperial ethics. In fact, however, the purpose was single, not dual, so long as the parents were all those of officials. This is clearly revealed in Tụ Đức's argument regarding his present of ginseng to the mother of governor-general Phạm Thế Hiển, noting that the purpose was '*giáo hiếu tác trung*,' to encourage loyalty by teaching piety (*DNTL4*, 13:4).

2. Battlefields

In the course of building the Đại Nam empire, especially during the time of the MM-TT, the Nguyễn dynasty encountered series of unrest everywhere in north and south, plain and mountain areas, and inside and outside of the country, such as in Lê Văn Khôi's revolt in southern Vietnam, Nùng Văn Vân's revolt in Cao Bằng, Lê Duy Lương's in Hưng Yên, the Thai invasion in the south, Khmer insurrections in the Mekong delta and Cambodia proper, and the French invasion.

Ginseng was delivered to every battlefield. As described before, ginseng was given to the civil servants - Trịnh Hoài Đức the first time, and Phạm Đình Hổ in the second case. During this time, however, no record was found regarding the endowments of the ginseng to the military men of Gia Long's generation, such as Lê Văn Duyệt, Lê Tổng Chất, and Nguyễn Huỳnh Đức.

As the imperial expansion was geared up and political unrest accelerated, the roles of the generals of Minh Mạng's generation became

bigger.

Endowments of ginseng began to be used not only as a realistic medicine for energy and power, but also for the symbolic motivation. This symbolic motivation could be applied to both the civil and military subjects. However, its significance was more important to the military field, because the most important functions of ginseng were the power, strength, and energy they provided.

Another element pertinent to this symbolic function was the routine endowment of ginseng with cinnamon, especially the Thanh Quế, i.e. the Thanh Hóa cinnamon. Thanh Hóa was a holy place for the Nguyễn emperors, as the place of origination of their ancestors. The combination of the Thanh Hóa cinnamon with the *nhân sâm* from Korea, that had been believed a country of the old books of the *nhô giáo (văn hiến chi bǎng)* according to Minh Mạng's evaluation (*DNTL2*, 220:8a), could have been very precious for its holiness. Usually the ginseng and the cinnamon were brought by the guard officers (*thị vệ*) of the emperors in the carefully decorated box and colorful gifts such as gold rings, swords...Wherever the ginseng went, military campaigns were mostly successful before the French attack of Đà Nẵng in 1858.

I arranged a list of ginseng distribution to the battlefield:

1. *Quan đông nhân sâm 1chi, Cao ly nhân sâm 2chi, Cao Ly nhân sâm 2chi*, Tạ Quang Cừ, Huỳnh Đăng Thận, for the pacification of the Lê Duy Lương's revolt (*DNTL2*, 97:12b, June 1833)
2. *Nội tể thượng hạng Cao Ly sâm 3chi, tham tán* Trần Văn Trí who was wounded in a battle in southern Vietnam against Lê Văn Khôi's revolt (*DNTL2*, 116:9a, Dec. 1833)

3. *Ngự dụng Quan đông công phẩm nhân sâm 1chi, Cao Ly nhân sâm 2chi*, Nguyễn Xuân and Trương Minh Giảng who defeated Siamese troops in Cambodia (*DNTL2*, 121:18b, March, 1834)
4. *Cao Ly công phẩm nhân sâm 3chi, hồng nhục sâm 3chi, kinh lược đại sứ* Nguyễn Văn Xuân and *phó sứ* Phạm Văn Điện who defeated Thai Army in Trấn Ninh Đạo, Nghệ An (*DNTL2*, 123:6b, March 1834)
5. *Cao Ly nhân sâm 3mai, Cao Ly nhân sâm 2mai, tướng quân* Phan Văn Thúc, *tham tán* Trương Minh Giảng (*DNTL2*, 97:24b-25a, June 1833)
6. *Công phẩm Cao Ly nhân sâm 3lưỡng, hồng nhục tây sâm 3lưỡng*, presented to the soldiers in southern Vietnam to pacify Lê Văn Khôi's revolt (*DNTL2*, 124:31b, April 1834)
7. *Cao Ly nhân sâm 1lưỡng, thảo nghịch tá tướng quân* Nguyễn Xuân (*DNTL2*, 143:5a, Jan. 1835)
8. *Cao Ly nhân sâm 3chi, Cao Ly nhân sâm 2chi*, Nguyễn Văn Trung, Mai Công Ngôn (*DNTL2*, 147:3b, Mar. 1835)
9. *Nội tề hiếu hạng Cao Ly nhân sâm 1lưỡng*, Hà Ninh *tổng đốc* Đoàn Văn Trường for the contribution to the pacification of the northern revolt, and he was sick (*DNTL2*, 152:7a, May 1835)
10. *Thượng phương sâm*, Định Biên *tổng đốc* Lê Văn Đức (*DNTL3*, 5:22, March 1841)
11. *Thượng phương nhân sâm*, to Nguyễn Văn Trung who fell into serious illness on the way back from Hanoi (*DNTL3*, 19:13b-14a, April 1842)
12. *Thượng phương nhân sâm 3chi, thượng phương nhân sâm 2chi*, Lê Văn Đức, Nguyễn Tiến Lâm (*DNTL3*, 22:13b, Jan. 1842)
13. *Sâm*, Lê Văn Đức, who was sick on the way to southern Vietnam to command the pacification troops as the *kinh lược* Nam kỳ (*DNTL3*, 26:6, Nov. 1842)
14. *Nhân sâm 5chi*, Nguyễn Tri Phương (*DNTL4*, 19:24b, Nov. 1858)
15. *Thượng phương nhân sâm 16chi*, Nguyễn Tri Phương and his staff members (*DNTL4*, 19:30a, Nov. 1858)
16. *Cao Ly nhân sâm 5chi*, Phan Tịnh, wounded in Phú Thọ battle (*DNTL4*,

20:22b, Jan. 1859)

17. *Thổ mộc nhân sâm 3chi*, *Cao Ly nhân sâm 5chi*, Nguyễn Tri Phương at Bình Thuận taking a rest curing wounded body (*DNTLA*, 24:33a, May 1860)

Compared with the cases of the civil servants, the kind of ginseng provided to the generals/soldiers were much more various, colorful, and precious. This included the Manchurian wild ginseng roots, *Cao Ly* ginseng, red ginseng, Western ginseng, and just *nhân sâm* or ‘*sâm*.’ There is also a very curious ginseng called ‘*thổ mộc nhân sâm*.’¹²⁾ There were 17 cases of the *Cao Ly* ginseng, 7 cases of (*nhân sâm*, 2 cases of *Quan đông nhân sâm*, two kinds of the red ginseng, and one case of *thổ mộc* ginseng.

These red ginsengs raise some interesting points. The red ginseng can be divided into two kinds. One was *hồng nhục sâm* (red flesh ginseng), the other is *hồng nhục tây sâm* (red flesh Western ginseng). Usually, red ginseng is made from industrial ginseng, and its value is much higher than that of normal industrial ginseng. The *hồng nhục sâm* here is located next to the *Cao Ly nhân sâm*, which is also believed

12) According to Nguyễn Thuật's account, the *thổ mộc nhân sâm* was a wild ginseng produced in the area of Jilin province, located in the northeast China. He introduces kinds of ginseng available in China during the 1880s when he visited Chinese coastal cities including Canton, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Tienjin based on the information from two Chinese colleagues whom he made friends in China. First colleague's ginsengs include *Quan đông nhân sâm*, *Cao Ly sâm*, *Lão Sơn sâm* (from Shenyang), and the *thổ mộc sâm*. The other colleague's ginsengs are *nhân sâm*, *Triều Tiên sâm*, *Liễu Đông sâm*, and *Lộ sâm* [probably from the region of Shanhsi]. Nguyễn Thuật (1887), p. 81. Interestingly, the first colleague claims that the *Cao Ly sâm* is produced in his country, China. This claim, however, cannot be understood as the evidence that the origin of the *Cao Ly* ginseng is China, but should be regarded as the evidence that the Korean style ginseng cultivation became spread in China during the 1880s.

to be a form of red ginseng. What, then, will be the reality of the *hồng nhục sâm*? The latter case of '*hồng nhục tây sâm*,' red ginseng made from Western ginseng, may provide evidence for the answer. I think that both the *hồng nhục sâm* and the *hồng nhục tây sâm* are, in fact, the same thing: Western ginseng processed into red ginseng in Canton.¹³⁾

The next point can be gleaned from the '*Cao Ly cống phẩm nhân sâm*,' which was recorded in the location before either the '*hồng nhục sâm*,' or the '*hồng nhục tây sâm*.' The '*cống phẩm*' refers to the items on the list of the tribute presents provided to emperors. In other words, these were the ginseng roots from the Korean king to the Chinese emperor. If so, it must be red ginseng of the highest quality. This type of ginseng must have been acquired from Beijing via the same method by which the *Quan đông nhân sâm* was acquired. Namely, we can clarify that Korean red ginseng was presented to the Ch'ing court and some of this ginseng was shared with the Vietnamese emperors.

By the destinations of the ginseng, we can draw a map of significant unrests occurring during the Nguyễn period. One valuable root of *Quan đông nhân sâm* together with several roots of *Cao Ly nhân sâm* went to the generals who won the pacification operations against Lê Duy Lương's revolt in the Ninh Bình area. Saigon was also a popular destination for a number of the *Cao Ly nhân sâm* roots, because it was the place wherein Lê Văn Khôi's revolt lasted for three years.

13) The technique for the steam-drying of ginseng is said to have been developed by the Ch'ing founder Nurhachi during the 17th century. Taylor (2006), p. 63. This was the original form of red ginseng production in China.

Another valuable Manchurian ginseng, together with roots of *Cao Ly nhân sâm* went to Cambodia, where Vietnamese troops defeated a Thai incursion. In 1842, the ginseng (certainly Korean ginseng) went to Lê Văn Đức, who was at the time commanding pacification forces against Khmer insurrections in the Mekong Delta. Finally, varieties of ginseng were distributed to Đà Nẵng and Saigon, where Vietnamese troops were struggling with French forces, and to Bình Thuận, where the wounded commander, Nguyễn Tri Phương, was taking rest.

The ginseng's destinations covered all three parts of Vietnam with the additional area of Cambodia, and the ginseng from Huế was used for energy to fight against insurrections by northerners, southerners and other ethnic groups including the Thai, Khmer, and French.

However, there is a span of time during which the ginseng roots were intensively used in the battlefields, and the use of ginseng roots represents the characteristic features of the Nguyễn policies. The time when ginseng was intensively distributed began in 1833 and ended in 1842. During the period of nine years, the central court of the Nguyễn dynasty launched policies of centralization, assimilation, and territorial expansion to Cambodia. These three politics were behind the endowments of ginseng to the battlefields mentioned above. The revolts of Lê Duy Lương and Lê Văn Khôi were the results of centralization, the Khmer insurrections of the assimilation policy, and the battles with Thai forces in Cambodia were caused by the Vietnamese annexation of Cambodia.

IV. Conclusion

During the MM-TT period, different kinds of ginseng roots traveled to Huế in various ways. *Quan đông nhân sâm* was the highest quality of these, and this ginseng root began its travel from Manchu to Beijing, and then to Huế via Hanoi by overland route. Korean ginseng left the border area in Eui Ju to Beijing either as commercial goods carried by Eui Ju merchants or as a tribute item from a king to an emperor. In Beijing, the Korean ginseng went into the hands of Vietnamese in the medicine shops and the Korean ginseng market or in the *Lễ bộ* of the Ch'ing court. From Beijing to Huế Korean ginseng took the same route as that of Manchurian ginseng.

Korean ginseng took another route to Huế. By the illegal trade in the central part of the Korean peninsula in the Yellow Sea, ginseng was traded to China, after which the ginseng took the seaborne route to Canton, where Vietnamese purchased it to load their vessels, which regularly visited this city. In this city, American ginseng was also imported, and this ginseng took part in the travel of Korean ginseng to Huế.

Of the two routes of ginseng by overland and by sea, I believe the latter to have been more frequent and bigger in regard to the scale of trade. Additionally, this was attributable to the active sails of the square-rigged/copper-bottomed court vessels of Vietnam to Canton from the 1820s.

The imported ginseng was employed for a variety of purposes. Among them, I paid particular attention to the distributions of ginseng to the civil servants and soldiers in the battlefields. Beginning with

the ginseng present to Trịnh Hoài Đức in 1823, the ginseng, particularly the roots of Korean red ginseng were presented to civil officials. From 1833, a larger amount of Korean ginseng was distributed to the various battlefields associated with domestic insurrections and territorial expansion to Cambodia. The present of ginseng to civil officials was to encourage the spirit of loyalty, and to military men was to provide power to crush the forces of opposite groups against imperial policies such as centralization, assimilation, and territorial expansion. In sum, the function of the distribution of ginseng to civil servants and military men was to enhance power and loyalty.

Korean red ginseng was fairly embodied with those two elements. As the renovated form of the red ginseng it had a clear connection to power, and was not from either Manchu or America, but rather from Korea, which was viewed by the Vietnamese rulers as a *văn hiến chi băng* [only together with Vietnam in the world], where they believed the *nho giáo* ideology, including loyalty, had been highly developed.

The increase in production and trade of red ginseng beginning in the 19th century in Korea was stimulating the spread of the ideological trend of the Đại Nam empire. This connection may have been attributable to the development of the coastal trade in parts of China during the 19th century. However, a more important reason might involve the active trips of court vessels of Vietnam between Huế¹⁴⁾ and Canton during the MM-TT period.

14) The departure point of the court vessels was Thuận An estuary in Huế. From here the vessels traveled down to Đà Nẵng, where cargoes loaded, and then sailed to Canton. When the vessels came back, they anchored in the Thuận An first to unload the cargoes. Choi (2011). p. 8.

Key words: Korean ginseng, ginseng, Manchurian ginseng, American ginseng, Minh Mang, Thieu Tri.

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<국문 초록>

19세기 전반 베트남에서의 ‘고려인삼’

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본 연구에서는 19세기 전반 특히 민망-티에우찌 시기 (1820-1847) 베트남으로의 고려 인삼 유입 경로를 파악하고 인삼이 베트남 내에서 어떤 기능을 수행했는가를 밝히고 있다.

인삼의 이동로로 육로와 해로가 있었다. 조선에서 출발한 인삼은 사행단을 따라 북경으로 이동했다. 공품 고려인삼은 청조의 예부를 통해 황제의 하사품으로 베트남에 주어졌으며 베트남 사절은 북경에서 고려 인삼을 약포나 상인으로부터 구입하기도 했다. 이렇게 해서 입수된 인삼은 사신의 행로를 따라 육로를 통해 베트남으로 전해졌다. 해로 이동의 경우 대부분은 불법 무역을 통한 유출이었다. 황해 해상을 통해 조선 인삼은 중국 밀무역 업자들에게 넘겨지고 바다를 건너간 인삼은 다시 연안 해로를 따라 광둥으로까지 이동했다. 북경에서 거래된 합법적 인삼이 해로를 통해 광둥으로 이동하는 경우도 물론 있었다. 당시 중국의 유일한 대외무역항이었던 광주로는 매년 베트남에서 채매단이 파견되었고 이곳에서 고려인삼이 구입되었음을 이 연구는 논구하고 있다.

응우옌 왕조 초기 유명한 남북 학자 쩌화이득 (Trịnh Hoài Đức)과 팜딘호 (Phạm Đình Hổ)를 시작으로 중앙 및 지방의 고위직 관료들에게 병 치료, 노부모에게의 선물 등 목적으로 고려인삼이 지급되었

다. 인삼은 충과 효를 이끌어내고 진작시키는 재료로 사용되었다. 그러나 효의 최종적 목표는 충인 것이니 문신 관료에의 인삼 하사의 효과는 충의 진작으로 귀일되는 것으로서 19세기 국가 이념의 강화에 인삼이 사용되었던 것이라 해석될 수 있겠다. 더군다나 인삼은 베트남의 시각으로 볼 때 ‘문헌지방’ 조선에서 온 것이어서 인삼은 인삼 그 자체로서의 약효와 유교적 이념의 구현체라는 두 가지 요소가 한데 모인 주술성을 갖기도 했다.

국가체제를 위협하는 남북의 제 반란은 물론이려니와 타이 군대와의 전투, 캄보디아 정복전 등에 파견된 장군 및 병사들에게도 인삼은 부지런히 지급되었다. 프랑스의 침입이 시작되었을 때도 전장에 고려인삼이 갔다. 남북의 제 반란은 중앙집권화, 소수민족 동화정책 등 민망-티에우찌 시기에 야심차게 추진된 제 정책의 결과물이었다. 타이 및 캄보디아군과의 충돌은 1830년대 중반의 캄보디아 병합 과정에서 야기된 것이었다. 베트남의 장군, 병사들은 인삼의 힘을 통해 유교적 이념이 지배하는 국가 체제를 수호하고 확장하는 첩병으로 기능할 것이 기대되었다.

마지막으로 이 논문은 인삼구매를 가능하게 한 베트남 조정의 능동성을 강조하고 있다. 북경을 통한 인삼 취득은 극히 적은 수량이었을 뿐이다. 대부분의 인삼은 ‘여동공무 (如東公務)’를 통해 광둥에서 구매되었던 것으로 인식되는데 광둥 방문은 하주공무 (下洲公務)와 짝하여 민망-티에우찌 시기에 적극 추진되던 해외 정세 탐지 및 선진 물자 구매의 일환이었다. 한국, 중국, 일본 등 동북아시아에서 맴돌던 인삼 유통의 지도가 19세기에 들어서 베트남까지 확대된 것이니 이는 민망-티에우찌 시기 적극적으로 추진되던 대외접촉의 결과였다고 볼 수 있는 것이다.

주제어: 고려인삼, 인삼, 민망, 티에우찌, 여동공무.

