

HANJUNG NOK

Memoirs of an Yi Dynasty Court Lady  
Translated with an Introduction and Notes

by

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Abbreviations

The titles of frequently mentioned works of reference are abbreviated in the footnotes as follows:

- CWS Yijo sillok. Chosŏn Wangjo sillok. 48 vols.  
Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, ed. Seoul, 1955-58.
- HGS Chindan Hakhoe. Han'guksa. Seoul, 1968.
- HK Han Woo Keun. The history of Korea. Seoul, 1970.
- HMT Koryŏ Taehakkyo, Seoul, Korea. Minjok Munhwa  
Yŏn'guso. Han'guk munhwasa taegye, Vols. 4, 6.  
Seoul, 1970-1971.
- KGT Kyŏn'guk taejŏn, Pŏpche charyo, Vols. 4, 6.  
Korea (Republic) Pŏpchech'ŏ, ed. Seoul, 1962.
- KTH Taejŏn hoet'ong. Kugyŏk Taejŏn hoet'ong, Han'guk  
kojŏn kugyŏk ch'ongsŏ, Vol. 1. Han'guk Kojŏn  
Kugyŏk Wiwŏnhoe, ed. Seoul, 1960.
- WGS Yi Ch'ŏl-wŏn. Wangungsa. Seoul, 1954.

Other abbreviations.

- BI Biographical Index
- GOT Glossaries of Offices and Titles

## INTRODUCTION

The main body of this thesis is a translation with notes from the Hanjung nok, an autobiographical memoir which gives an account of Court life in the time of King Yǒngjo (r. 1725-1176) of the Yi dynasty, and a touching description of the tragic incidents involving her family by Lady Hong of the Hyegyǒng Palace (1725-1815). She was the daughter of Hong Pong-han (1713-1778), daughter-in-law of King Yǒngjo, and consort of the heir apparent Crown Prince Sado (1735-1762), mother of King Chǒngjo (r. 1776-1800) and grandmother of King Sunjo (r. 1800-1834).

In order to set the scene for the memoir, a series of brief accounts will be given of the official system, land tenure system, social structure, political groupings, cultural and intellectual currents of the Yi dynasty. King Yǒngjo, his grandson King Chǒngjo, Lady Hong and the Imo Incident will then be described in some detail, as more directly relevant to the translation. Finally, the place of Lady Hong's memoir in Korean Literary History and the derivation of the text will be discussed.

Since the action takes place entirely at the Court of King Yǒngjo, the accounts of Korean life given in this introduction concentrate upon the Korean royal family and nobility, and must omit the very important developments taking place at this time in the economic and social life of the people as a whole.

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King T'aejo (r.1392-1398) had initially patterned the bureaucracy on the old Koryo system, which imitated the Government system of T'ang dynasty (618-907) China, and which consisted of Three Departments and Six Boards (San sheng liu pu chih). This system had been introduced during the period between Songjong (r.981-997) and Munjong (r.1046-1083) of the Koryo dynasty. However, it was not merely a slavish imitation. The Korean rulers were clearly aware of the need for adaptation of the Chinese political theory of the Han (202 BC-220 AD) and T'ang dynasties to fit their own circumstances.

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- 1 Yi Ki-baek, Han'guksa sinnon, (Seoul 1972), pp. 205-209
  - 2 HK p.298

## The Yi Dynasty Official System

The Yi dynasty ruled Korea from 1392 to 1910. The bureaucratic system of the Yi dynasty was established during King T'aejong's reign (1400-1418)\*. This involved the division of the bureaucracy into two branches, Civil and Military, with Civil Officials taking precedence. The two major civil offices were the Royal Secretariat (Sŭngjŏngwŏn) and the Council (Uijŏngbu). Below them were Six Boards of Government (Yukjo): the Civil Office Board, the Ceremonies Board, the Revenue Board, the War Board, the Punishment Board and the Public Works Board. The Council supervised all government affairs, which were administered mostly by the Six Boards.<sup>1</sup>

This was a structure in which hierarchy was strictly observed. There were nine official grades, corresponding to the importance of the posts held. Each of these grades was divided into upper and lower, and these in turn were subdivided. There were four ranks within each grade, making a total of thirty-six official grades. It was common practice for officials of the highest grades to hold several posts concurrently, further increasing the centralization of power. Generally, civil officials took precedence to military, in accordance with the teachings of Confucianism.

Later developments in the government structure took place after the Japanese invasions of the sixteenth century which had thrown the Yi dynasty bureaucracy into confusion and the only group that was able to maintain any order was the army's Frontier Defence Command. Eventually an executive council of both military and civil officials emerged, absorbing the functions of the old Council. This new Council, called the Pibyŏnsa,<sup>2</sup>

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1 HGS v.3, pp. 344 - 364

became a permanent feature of Yi dynasty government and continued to function until the end of the nineteenth century.

### The Land Tenure System

The system of land tenure under the Yi dynasty was based on the reforms at the end of the previous Koryŏ dynasty. These either confiscated or taxed all the old private lands and Buddhist temple estates and redistributed them, mostly as temporary grants to support the government officials. This, of course, destroyed the material power base of Koryŏ nobility and considerably checked the growth of private agricultural estates. However the families of officials who died while holding office were allowed to keep official land. Also, meritorious subjects who had helped the founder to establish the dynasty were awarded hereditary lands. The numbers of such landholders also increased with each political crisis. Therefore, in spite the government's original intentions, the great private estates reappeared. However laws regulating relations between landlords and tenants were effective to a degree, and the farmers of the early Yi dynasty were somewhat better off than they had been during the Koryŏ dynasty.

### The Social Structure

Korea was a strongly aristocratic society for most of its history. After the founding of the Yi dynasty, social classes came to be clearly distinguished and class boundaries strictly enforced. Ostensibly this was in conformity with the Confucian principle that ruled and rulers must always be distinct, and that the principle of subordination must apply both to political and social relations. But Korean society went far beyond Confucian injunctions in the rigor of its class structure, which was rooted in its own distinctive past.

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1 HGS v.3, pp. 303 - 324

2 HK pp. 304 - 315

There were roughly four classes in Korean society.<sup>1</sup> At the top were the nobles (yangban) who monopolized both political power and wealth. Next were the intermediaries (chungmin), a relatively small class between the yangban and the commoners. They were trained for professional careers such as medicine, astronomy, law or the lower bureaucracy. Then came the commoners (sangmin) who were mostly farmers and made up the majority of the people. Finally there were the base people (ch'ŏnmin) who were mostly slaves owned by officials, the palace or others. Actors, female shamans (mudang), entertaining women (kisaeng) and butchers also belonged to this class. Status in all classes was hereditary. The yangban were also the landlord class and here we find an important contradiction. In their capacity as officials, it was their duty to see that the central government was strong and efficient; in their capacity as Confucian scholars, they were supposed to ensure that all government actions were based upon virtue as defined by Confucianism. But in their capacity as landlords, obligations of family and clan impelled them to increase their holdings by whatever means they could, which in effect led them to rob the state of part of its revenues. Though the Yi Kings made various legal attempts to curb the growth of private estates (nongjang), many exceptions were inevitably made to these laws and they continued to grow. This conflict of interest ~~comparable to the situation in Confucian China~~ continued to the end of the dynasty.

The early Yi dynasty class system was disturbed by the commercialism and especially by financial distress in the aftermath of the Japanese, <sup>(1592, 1597)</sup> and Manchu <sup>(1627, 1637)</sup> invasions.<sup>2</sup> The government began offering promotion in social status to anyone who would supply it with funds or grain. On the other hand, the factional

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1 HK pp. 256-258  
Takashi Hatada, A history of Korea, (Santa Barbara,  
California, 1969) pp. 66-68

struggles which followed the wars and culminated in the triumph of the Noron faction forced all but a few yangban from office, and many of them came to constitute an inferior class to the actual ruling group. The Seoul yangban, on the other hand, went into business in large numbers so that wealth rather than lineage began to be the criterion of social status. Also the number of slaves was greatly decreased by the invasions and by the financial difficulties of the government and yangban to whom they belonged after the invasions. Like the distinction between yangban and sangmin in the late Yi dynasty, the traditional distinction between slaves and sangmin thus became blurred.

#### Political Groupings

Nongjang were not large, continuous tracts of land but consisted of numerous, relatively small patches here and there throughout the country. Therefore a landlord could not manage his land personally, and seldom lived in the countryside if he could manage to reside in Seoul. Generally the administration of such estates was left to slave overseers as agents, who supervised the work of the tenants and collected the rents. Though tenant farmers remained in the majority, an increasing number of slaves were used to work the nongjang. This of course, led the yangban to remove tenant farmers from the tax rolls and many farmers to enter the service of the landlords to escape taxes and corvée which were becoming a very heavy burden in the late Yi dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

The heart of the problem lay in the fact that land was the chief source of wealth, and land ownership was most easily secured by means of government posts. Every yangban family

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The name Sōwōn originated from the phrase shu yuan which is found in the names of the Chinese Confucian academies - Li cheng tien shu yuan; Chi hsien tien shu yuan and others which existed during the reign of Emperor T'ang Hsuan-tsung of China (~~685-762~~<sup>712-756</sup>). The first Sōwōn was established in 1543 by a country magistrate called Chu Se-bong in Kyōngsang Province, in honour of the late Koryō scholar, An Yu.

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- 1 HK pp. 256-258  
Takashi H, ibid. pp. 66-68
  - 2 Yi KB, ibid. pp. 236-240
  - 3 HK pp. 262 - 263
  - 4 Yi KB, ibid. pp. 236-240  
Takashi H, ibid. 68-74

strove to place at least one of its members in the government, from which position he could protect and increase the family holdings.<sup>1</sup>

The yangban bureaucracy which presided over this disintegration of the economy was itself unstable by nature. And while the number of yangban increased, the number of official posts did not. This situation gave rise to factionalism, and eventually to conflict between an older conservative group and a young reform group. The Confucian system made no provision for opposing points of view, or for compromise; in terms of Confucian morality there was always a single policy that was right, and all others were wrong. There was thus no way to mediate disputes.<sup>2</sup>

An important element in the growth of factionalism was the spread of the private Confucian academies (sōwōn) founded by unsuccessful yangban on their estates.<sup>3 \*</sup> The significance of the sōwōn was that they provided employment for yangban who could find no official post, and at the same time functioned as power bases and training grounds for the factional struggles in Seoul.

The historical cause for factionalism was Sejo's (r. 1455-1468) usurpation in 1455.<sup>4</sup> The scholars, especially the rising generation of yangban led by Kim Chong-jik (1431-1491), an eminent southern scholar, believed that Sejo's usurpation had been a crime. When they managed to gain appointments in King Sōngjong's reign (1469-1494) they were able to express their displeasure with the older officials, many of whom supported Sejo. The old conservative officials tended to place more emphasis on Chinese literature than on the study of the

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1 HGS p. 570

2 Sohn Pow-key, Kim Chol-choon and Hong Yi-sep.  
The history of Korea (Seoul, 1970) pp. 145-147  
Takashi H, ibid. pp 75-85

Confucian classics. Most of them were also open to charges of having illegally expanded their estates and of having profited from collusion with the tribute contractors (petty officials, merchants and high-ranking government slaves commissioned to collect the tribute with the tacit support of the official tribute collectors).

Factional strife was continuous, and the yangban officials were inevitably involved in it. Little pretence was made any longer that either party was motivated by a desire for reform or by disagreement over the interpretation of Confucian principles. By about 1575 the old conservatives were called Easterners (Tongin) and young reformers Westerners (Sŏin) after the location of their leaders' residences in Seoul.<sup>1</sup> When the young reformers were eliminated in 1545, faction-fights became naked power struggles, and everyone knew it. Naturally land tenure, taxation and the military system fell into confusion. While Korea was plagued from within by the dissensions of the yangban, external affairs were about to bring the most serious crisis the dynasty had faced since its foundation.

Hideyoshi invaded Korea in 1592 and again in 1597, causing seven years of devastating war. Not long after these invasions, Korea was again invaded in 1616 by the Manchus, who were to establish their rule in China with the capture of Peking in 1644. The loss of life and damage to property from these wars with Japan and Manchuria reached tragic proportions, and this period marked the beginning of the rapid decline of the Yi<sup>2</sup> dynasty.

In Seoul, factional strife subsided temporarily with the invasions but when the wars were over it became violent once

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1. Kang Chu-jin, Yijo tongjaengsa yŏn'gu, (Seoul 1971), pp. 297-338
  2. Yi Pyŏng-do, Kugsa taegwan, (Seoul 1960), pp. 452-454

more; the suffering and destruction caused by two foreign invasions had nothing to mitigate the factional struggles of the yangban bureaucrats. On the contrary, they intensified during the post-invasion period, as the old factions split and multiplied at a bewildering rate.

Two important political developments took place during the seventeenth century. Firstly, the factions, now permanent groups in spite of frequent splits, insisted upon monopolizing the government whenever they took power, so that only the members of a single faction held office at any given time. As a result, the King lost the power to make appointments freely, and was thus at the mercy of the faction in power, though he could at times hold the balance between the factions when contention arose. The Westerners split again permanently into Noron (Old Doctrine) and Soron (New Doctrine) factions<sup>1</sup> and their quarrels continued as before. But during the reign of King Yǒngjo and thereafter the Noron faction managed to eliminate all other groups and monopolized power.

Under these circumstances the examination system (see below) could hardly be expected to operate as had been intended. The final monopoly of power by a single faction had serious effects upon the social and economic position of the yangban class as a whole and brought about a further weakening of the royal power.

During the reigns of Yǒngjo and Chǒngjo, personal animosities cooled somewhat. A new policy of impartiality was adopted, posts being awarded equally to the Noron and Soron factions.<sup>2</sup> But this was not the kind of basic reform that was needed to end the conflict between the aristocratic nature of

## Official Examinations System

Men were recruited through the State Examination (Kwaǒ) system to fill government posts. The beginning of this system can be traced back to 788, the fourth year of King Wǒnsǒng of Silla, but it was administered with considerably more rigour and regularity than had previously been the case in the Yi dynasty. Examinations were of three kinds, civil, military, and miscellaneous, the last being used to select technicians, interpreters and other specialists. The most important was the civil examination. There were two civil examinations, the Major State Examination (Taegwa) and the Minor State Examination (Sogwa). They were given every three years. Candidates for the Minor State Examination first took a preliminary test in the provinces. If they were successful, they then went to Seoul, where a further test was given. There were two general subjects, Confucian classics and poetry and composition. Successful candidates in the first were given the title Saengwǒn; and those in second were called Chinsa. They were assigned to the most junior government positions and were qualified to attend the Sǒnggyun'gwan, the Confucian Academy. The Major State Examination was similarly organized. Preliminary tests for this were also held every three years in the provinces, which low-ranking officials were eligible to take. If successful, they too proceeded to Seoul where thirty-three of them were selected in the second test. The third and final examination (Chǒnsi) was held in the presence of the King. Successful candidates were graded in three ranks and were immediately assigned to posts corresponding to these. Candidates in the top category were placed in medium-grade posts if they were new men, or promoted four ranks if they were already officials.

The military examinations roughly paralleled the civil, though they were not subdivided into Major and Minor. Two hundred candidates were selected every three years, and from them the second examination in Seoul chose twenty-eight, who took the final examination and were assigned to military posts corresponding to the grades they achieved.

The miscellaneous examinations selected specialists for assignment to the government translation bureau, the office in charge of the calendar, which therefore was concerned with astronomy and also with geomancy and meteorology and the construction of water-clocks, to the office concerned with medicine and the care of the royal family, and to the Ministry of Justice.

In addition to these regular examinations, special ones were held on various occasions such as national holidays (Chǒngsi-Kyǒn'gwa) or on the occasion of the King visiting Sǒnggyun'gwan to participate in the semi-annual rites in honor of Confucius (Alsǒngsi) etc. KTH pp. 247-268, HK pp. 237-239.

Korean society and Confucian ideals of government. Although factionalism was for a time eliminated, power continued to depend upon wealth and position rather than talent, and the Confucian concepts that had contributed so much to Yi dynasty government and society no longer had any real influence on the actual practice of government.

Official Examinations System (see opposite)  
Yi Dynasty Culture and Family Life

Political and intellectual life in the time of this dynasty was dominated by Neo-Confucianism, while Buddhism which had been so important to the former dynasty rapidly declined. Yi Sŏng-gye (later King T'aejo, r. 1392-1398) had set up a Confucian academy (Sŏnggyun'gwan) from which scholar-officials were recruited through State Examinations. Only nobles were eligible to sit for the Examinations, and only those who passed the Examination became officials, or yangban, and were the social, political and economic leaders of Yi dynasty, which ruled yangban bureaucratic state.

Turning to philosophy, the factional disputes were reflected in two basic trends of Confucian thought. Generally the young reformers were strict followers of Chu Hsi (1130-1200), and held that the scholar's attention should be directed mainly to the study of the Confucian Classics and Chu Hsi's works, and the principles of human behaviour which they taught. Many of the old conservatives, on the other hand, clung to an earlier tradition which was more broadly based, aiming chiefly at proficiency in Chinese literature and composition, so as to be able to draft official and diplomatic documents. One of the most important of Chu Hsi's teachings was that a subject must be loyal to his legitimate sovereign no matter what the circumstances. The young reformers who followed this teaching

retired to a private life of study and teaching when King Sejo seized the throne, rather than serve him. The old conservatives had helped to found the dynasty and their successors who supported Sejo were of a more practical turn of mind. Under Sejong they had formed the majority of the scholars of the Chiphyŏnjŏn, (The Hall of Talented Scholars) which performed many valuable tasks. It was they, not the young reformers from Kyongsang Province, who completed the great work of codifying the laws in the 15th century.

Chu Hsi studies and the Confucian social ethics to which they gave rise stimulated the growth of philosophical enquiry and two schools of thought developed. The leading school was set up by the young reformers when they failed to reform the government along strictly neo-Confucian lines, retiring to a private life of teaching. Their isolation from the harsh realities of practical politics led them into a sort of unrealistic idealism, both abstract and theoretical. One of the most famous Confucian scholars in this tradition was Yi Hwang (1501-1570).

An opposing school was established by another great scholar, Yi I (1536-1584). He and his followers attached greater importance to practical ethics than to metaphysical theory and so had a great appeal to the old conservatives. These two schools of philosophy came to be reflected in the two main factions that divided the bureaucracy.

One of the most important elements in Confucian thought was the principle called ye (li in Chinese). This principle held that the decorous conduct of social relations and correct performance of rituals on special occasions had an important bearing upon the prosperity of the state. It was therefore

necessary to establish precisely what these forms of behaviour should be and record them systematically.

The father-son relationship as expressed in filial piety was the standard by which all the other virtues were judged. If children were respectful to their parents, all other relationships could be assumed to be good. Korean sons expressed their filial piety to their parents in peculiar ways that could not be found in other societies. Examples of this were such practices as cutting their fingers to give blood to their dying parents, observing three years of mourning for each parent, squandering their fortunes for family funerals and other ceremonies. The greatest impiety a son could show was to die before his parents.

The ruler-subject relationship was also interpreted in a peculiar way in Korea. The relationship between ruler and subject was believed to that of heaven and earth. One is high and noble, the other humble and low. It was only natural that the former should be served by the latter. In this sense, the Korean people blindly obeyed any authority that was said to be deserving of honour. However, an undeserving ruler could be called an "enemy" as an expression of their disrespect. Thus authority was either absolute or non-existent. This attitude towards authority was a characteristic of the Yi dynasty. If a ruler did not have a good understanding of Confucian principles he was despised by his officials.

In Yi dynasty, the husband-wife relationship was regarded as the origin of man's life and of all his happiness. But if a husband did not have absolute control over his wife in the Confucian way, family life would be destroyed. But this ideal

was not attained in Korean society. A wife was required to be a loving doll-like housemaid to her parents-in-law. A woman married according to the wishes of her parents. The husband and wife relationship was strictly controlled by the parents, who inhibited any expression of affection. Women were extolled for their chastity. Girls were educated not to suit their husbands but to suit their parents-in-law. Therefore, there was no real relationship between husbands and wives, but only that between parents-in-law and daughters-in-law. Women as a whole had no legal or social recognition, and were not regarded as individuals.

In spite of the government's strong prohibition, Buddhism continued to have a hold over the royal family, to a greater or lesser degree depending upon the inclinations of the reigning monarch. Therefore it must not be imagined that Buddhism lost all its influence over the Korean people.

On the other hand, shamanism deriving from the native religion of Ancient Choson flourished in the Yi dynasty. As Buddhism was rejected, Confucianism took over. But the latter had little religious flavor to attract the populace. This created a kind of religious vacuum in the early Yi dynasty. Shamanism moved in at this juncture. It not only monopolized the religious life of the masses but also invaded the royal court. Dubious shrines were built in the palaces and many court ladies worshipped there. Shamans even attended royal ancestral services.

Perhaps the most portentous phenomenon for Korea as for all Asia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the appearance of travellers from Europe, first explorers and traders then missionaries and then soldiers.

Though there are a few recorded instances of Western contacts in the years following 1592, opportunities to benefit from direct association with Europeans were let slip and Western thought only influenced the country in an indirect way.

There were two factors that prevented immediate and significant contact between Korea and the West. First, Korea's geographical isolation. Second, and perhaps more important, was the cultural chauvinism and isolationism of the Korean ruling class. However the annual journeys of the Korean envoys between Seoul and Peking provided a means of contact with Western thought. Though Western learning made a considerable impression on Korean scholars, its only practical result was a calendrical reform in 1654, following the Chinese example.

But if Western science and technology did not immediately take root in Korea, Western religion did. At first most of the Confucian scholars took only an academic interest in Catholicism but the oppressed common people and the yangban of the long-defeated Southern faction embraced the new religion as an alternative to traditional beliefs.

The government did not at first interfere with the spread of the Catholic faith because it was regarded as unimportant. But they were soon compelled to take notice of its rapid spread. They discovered that the doctrine of Catholicism was subversive to Confucian concepts of society and of the relationships between individuals in much the same way that Buddhism was. In

1785 Catholicism was therefore officially banned. In 1791 a Catholic Yun Chi-ch'ung and his relatives were arrested and executed. There was no further persecution during Chǒngjo's reign. Several Southern scholars had been given posts, and missionaries were not molested for a time (it was among the Southerners that Catholicism was most popular).

Meanwhile, partly because of the stimulus of Western ideas, a new school of thought was growing up among the Korean intelligentsia. Called Silhak (True Learning) it was directed primarily against the preoccupation among the officials with Chinese literature or with the speculative side of Chu Hsi's Confucianism. The Silhak scholars demanded an end to empty formalism and ritual trivialities and a return to the true spirit of Confucianism. They also demanded a practical, empirical approach both to government and to learning. The movement had its origins in the seventeenth century, but came to prominence in the eighteenth.

However some Silhak scholars among the Seoul yangban who could no longer depend solely on land for their income asserted that commerce could be a useful source of revenue, and that it should be encouraged. Many went further and suggested that handicrafts and other forms of manufacturing should be developed for the export trade, and that new forms of technology such as those of the Europeans should be imported. This new school of thought was called Pukhak.

(r.1725-1776) (r.1776-1800)

King Yǒngjo and Chǒngjo

The reigns of Yǒngjo and Chǒngjo form a period in later Yi dynasty history comparable in some ways to the earlier reign of Sejong the Great. Both Kings were intelligent and able, and

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King Yǒngjo was the fourth son of King Sukjong. He was appointed Crown Prince in 1721. As soon as he ascended the throne in 1725, as the twenty-first King of the Yi dynasty, he attempted to end factional strife because he was aware of its detrimental effects on State administration. His principal policy to end factional splits was expressed in the slogan, "Peace prevails while a monarch administers with objective non-partisanship". He amended the recruitment of officials of the Office of Study Promotion from the system of recommendation to one of voting. Before re-applying the short-lived universal military service tax, he went out of the palace gate and asked the opinion of officials, literati, soldiers and peasants. He then reduced the military service tax of two p'il of cloth by half, and ordered this deficiency supplemented by taxes on fishing, salt and increased land tax. He also re-organized the State's revenue and expenditure by adopting an accounting system. He minted coins to encourage the circulation of currency.

King Yǒngjo's concern for the improvement of peasant life was manifested in his eagerness to educate the people by distributing important books in Korean script, such as, "Standards of Behaviour", Samgung haengsil and "A Compendium of Agriculture", Non'ga chipsǒng. He also reinstated the drumbeat appeal for spontaneous petitioning. Further, he eliminated medieval types of punishment and torture. He warned the Yangban against luxurious living and stopped the accumulation of wealth by excessive exploitation. He also established a special State Examination for old people (Kirogwa). Literati and soldiers of 60 years and above sat for this Examination and those who passed were appointed government officials. He ordered the compilation of "Teachings of the Royal Ancestors" Chohun, "The Collection of Edicts and Decrees" Sugyo Chibyo, "The Supplement to the Grand State Code", Sok taejǒn, and "The Supplement to the Illustrated Arts of War", Sokpyǒng-jang tosól. Under him the pluviometer was again manufactured in quantity and distributed to local officials to encourage agricultural efficiency. He also undertook public works, mobilizing 200,000 persons for a two month period to dredge river beds. This work was made into a regular public service by the establishment of the Office of Dredge Works. All his efforts and policies were intended to reassert the Confucian monarchy and humanitarian rule. His reign together with that of his grandson Chǒngjo, was the golden age of the latter Yi dynasty.

Chǒngjo was as fine a scholar as any of his officials. It was during their reigns, for example, that the Korean tax system came as near to being rationalized as it was ever to do. Political stability was also achieved by breaking the monopoly of the Noron faction and giving posts to others on the basis of merit, regardless of party. Also while there was resistance to Western notions such as Catholicism, this was moderated by the fact that many of Southern faction, who were now gaining some degree of power, were either Catholic or strongly influenced by that religion. Scholarly activity also flourished during their reigns.

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But towards the end of Yǒngjo's reign the latent factionalism of the officials was stirred up again by the Imo Incident. Yǒngjo had selected a son by a court lady to be Crown Prince in the first year of his reign, but this son died a few years later. In the eleventh year of his reign, Yǒngjo then selected for this title Changhǒn (Prince Sado), his son by Lady Sǒnhǔi. He was very fond of the new Crown Prince, who at only sixteen years of age was ordered by Yǒngjo to rule on his behalf. This was in the twenty-fifth year of Yǒngjo's reign. However, as he grew older the Crown Prince began to show increasing signs of mental instability, neglecting his studies and behaving in a manner so eccentric that Yǒngjo became very worried. Moreover, the Crown Prince was on bad terms with both the young Queen (Yǒngjo's second wife) and the Woman Mun (Yǒngjo's favourite mistress). Both these ladies spoke badly of the Crown Prince to the King. In May 1762, Na Kyǒng-ǒn, a steward of Yun Kǔp (1679-1770), the Minister of the Punishment Board, reported to Yǒngjo that the Crown Prince was guilty of treason, enumerating his misbehaviours and faults. Yǒngjo was

informed for the first time that the Crown Prince had killed his mistress, a court lady who had borne him two sons; and that he had gone incognito on a trip to enjoy the pleasures of the entertaining women of Kwansŏ (present P'yŏngyang). Yŏngjo was very upset, but these accusations were not serious enough to cause him to withdraw the title of Crown Prince from Changhŏn and put him to death.

However in June 1762 vicious rumours were circulating at court, and for reasons that are not clearly recorded in any official documents, Lady Sŏnhŭi advised Yŏngjo to destroy the Crown Prince, her son, Yŏngjo then deprived Changhŏn of his title and ordered him to kill himself. Changhŏn refused to do so, begging forgiveness and promising to reform his behaviour. But Yŏngjo had him locked up in a grain box. After about a week the deposed Crown Prince had starved to death. He thus died on 12 July 1762 (21d Intercalary 5m Imo).

#### The Imo Incident

This incident, called the Imo Incident after the name of the year in which it took place, was never clearly recorded in official documents. This was because King Chŏngjo, the son of Crown Prince Sado, got permission from his grandfather Yŏngjo to destroy all records of the incident, and had them burned. This naturally later gave rise to many different stories about the causes of the incident.

The standard history of King Yŏngjo's reign, Yijo Sillok, gives only a bare account of the incident as related above. However, the incident must have been discussed in court circles for many years after it had taken place, and finally private histories appeared which gave differing accounts of it. These private versions of the incident generally ran as follows.

The King had chosen Prince Changhŏn, the son of a court lady, as Crown Prince. There was wide opposition to this choice: the legitimate Queen was angry, while members of the ruling Noron faction feared that the Prince might rob them of their privileged positions when he became King. These parties plotted together to change the succession, and to this end laid false evidence before King Yŏngjo that the Crown Prince was plotting to overthrow him by force. The King believed them, and angrily ordered that Prince Chǎnghon be executed at once. The plotters, however, could not bring themselves to shed royal blood, much as they desired the Prince's downfall. The King thereupon gave an order that the Prince was to be placed alive in a grain box and the lid nailed shut. This was done, and thus the Prince died.

At the time of this Incident, the Lady Hong's father Hong Pong-han was the President of the Council and her uncle Junior Vice-President of the Council. Their attitude towards the Incident is not clear. However there had apparently been friction between Hong Pong-han and Kim Ku-ju, a brother of Queen Kim. This was aggravated by the Incident. Hong Pong-han and his party who were sympathetic to the Prince and critical of the King's loss of virtue were termed Sip'a, whereas Kim Ku-ju and his followers who were critical of the Prince were called Pyŏkp'a. However, neither the official record of the incident nor the private histories can satisfactorily explain the real cause of tragedy. Especially since King Yŏngjo has the reputation of being the wisest king of the Dynasty.

Lady Hong's memoir is thus an indispensable source for understanding the Imo Incident. Thanks to her memoir, what might have been regarded as simply another faction dispute

over the succession is clearly revealed as a personal tragedy, about which she was anxious to tell the truth. Her account describes the growing madness of her husband the Crown Prince and the emotional strain between father and son which greatly aggravated the Prince's conduct. She recalls that the cause of the Incident lay in the mental breakdown of her husband more than anything else. His death at the hand of his own father and on the recommendation of his own mother is a very human and poignant tragedy that completely transcends its historical setting.

### Lady Hong

The authoress was only ten years old when she married Crown Prince Sado and went to Court. She was a daughter of a poor but upright scholar, later President of the Council, and was brought up by a mother who was the perfect model of a woman in Confucian society. She had no opportunity to acquire a regular education. Though she could read and write, as a woman she only learnt Han'gŭl. This would have only given her a grounding in the Confucian ethics that prevailed at Court.

Lady Hong's life was considerably marred by the illness and early death of her husband. Thereafter, her family enjoyed some protection when her son, King Chŏngjo, succeeded to the throne in 1776. But after his death in 1800, her family again came under cloud when young King Sunjo succeeded to the throne at the age of eleven and King Yŏngjo's second wife became dowager Queen carrying on politics from behind the screen and favouring her own family against the Hong family. One of Lady Hong's brothers was a Catholic. He was convicted of belief in perverse doctrines and sentenced to death, which

caused her much suffering. The authoress showed tremendous patience, loyalty and filial piety in the face of these great difficulties and family tragedies.

Her memoir also describes the miserable fate of Yi dynasty women. This is done with such keen intelligence that one wonders how many unfortunate women died without being able to record their resentment. In particular, it reveals the very inferior position that women occupied in the court life of the time.

In addition to its value as a description of court life and as a vital historical source for the Imo Incident, this memoir is an important piece of literature.

#### Lady Hong's Memoir in Korean Literary History

Perhaps the greatest cultural achievement of the Yi dynasty was the invention of the Korean alphabet, Han'gŭl. Since Korea had not yet developed a system of recording its own language and had to use the Chinese writing system, King Sejong (r. 1418-1450) ordered the scholars of Chiphyŏnjŏn to devise a phonetic alphabet for the Korean language. In December 1443, the scholars presented to King Sejong the final form of Han'gŭl, consisting of seventeen consonants and eleven vowels. In 1446, Han'gŭl was adopted as a means of recording Korean by royal decree. However the development of a genuinely native literature had been impeded by the fact that Korea adopted Chinese ideograms before developing a writing system of its own. Chinese literature had such high prestige, moreover, that even after the invention of Han'gŭl in the fifteenth century literature using Korean themes and written in the Korean language was slow to appear. In the seventeenth century,

however, native literature began an extensive development. Parallel with the rising awareness of Western technology and ideas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a new national consciousness arose, leading to a new interest in Korean history, language (especially Han'gŭl) and literature.

Prose narratives at first followed Chinese models even when written in Korean. The Korean classical novel, kodae sosŏl, which includes fictional stories, myths, legends and factual anecdotes from histories, biographies, memoirs, diaries and autobiographies, was written only by men in the Hanmun style. However fiction came in time to be written exclusively in Han'gŭl, as it is today, and so had a much wider appeal than literature which used Chinese characters. The few works written by women in the Han'gŭl style about court life were categorized as court novels. Examples of this form are Sŏgung nŏk or Kyech'uk Ilgi written by a court lady of Queen Dowager Immok in seventeenth century, Inhyŏn Wanghu jŏn or Inhyŏn Sŏnghu Tŏkhaeng nok also written by a court lady of King Sukjong (r. <sup>1675-1725</sup>~~1695-1705~~) and the memoir translated in this thesis, Hanjung nok written by Lady Hong in the eighteenth century. Their style is notable for its use of the elegant court language of the Yi dynasty rarely found in works by men. All three works describe the life and incidents at the Yi dynasty court so graphically that they established the court novel as a new genre of literature.

The ostensibly splendid court life of the Yi dynasty was also a series of scrambles for the throne between members of the royal family, aggravated by factional struggles for power among the court nobles and matrimonial quarrels between the

queens and royal concubines. However life at Court was extremely restricted by the prevalent Confucian ethics.

In the court novels, we generally find two categories of women. First, those whose resentment and bitter grief was kept controlled with tremendous perseverance, loyalty, benevolence and chastity. Such models of female virtue in the Yi dynasty were Queen Inhyŏn in Inhyŏn Wanghu jŏn; Queen Dowager Immok in Kyech'uk Ilgi and Lady Hong in Hanjung nok. Secondly, there are those who became the royal concubines by winning the Kings' favour and who then devoted themselves to unscrupulous and often vicious schemes to ensure their comfort and advancement. Among these are Kahi in Kyech'uk Ilgi, Lady Chang in Inhyŏn Wanghu jŏn and the Woman Mun in Hanjung nok.

However males are described in these court novels more as individuals with varying characters. Especially in the description of Prince Kwanghae in Kyech'uk Ilgi and Prince Sado in Hanjung nok the authors present sides of their characters which neither Sillok nor any other official documents have recorded. On the whole authors of these three works tried to analyse events in terms of the characters of the persons involved rather than by merely describing the facts. In this they resemble the modern novelists. However, some literary critics regard these three works as essays rather than novels, for they are stories of personal experiences.

For over a century, these three court novels circulated in manuscript among court ladies. But with the diffusion of education and the growth of Korean nationalism towards the end of the nineteenth century, they became literary classics, printed in numerous editions and enjoyed by all educated people. Today

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1 Skillend W.E. Kodae sosŏl, (London 1968), pp. 236 - 238

they are regarded as a rich storehouse of Korean history and culture, and are renowned for their brilliant narrative and style.

Derivation of the Text of Lady Hong's Memoir

Begin in 1798, when Lady Hong was in her sixtieth year, this memoir was completed in six separate sections according to the manuscripts of the Ilsa and Karam Collections. The Ilsa Collection however divides the MS into four chapters, chapters one and three being each subdivided into two parts. The Karam Collections has six chapters. The present translation is based upon the first three chapters of the collated text (Kim Tong-uk and Yi Pyong-gi, ed. Handyung nok, Minjung Sogwan, Seoul, 1961), corresponding to Chapters I, II & III of the Karam Collection, or to Chapter one part one, Chapter one part two, and Chapter three of the Ilsa Collection. Chapter I is a description of Lady Hong's early life, which forms a necessary background for her narrative. Chapter II and III describes the Imo Incident.

provide a private account of her life for her own family. Her intention in describing the Imo Incident was to inform her grandson, the young King Sunjo, of the true facts of the tragedy that had befallen his grandfather, and thus to prevent him from blaming her family, which had been unjustly accused of complicity in the incident.

The original manuscript of Lady Hong's memoir has disappeared. However, it became popular reading, especially among court ladies, and was transcribed in many copies under various titles, such as <sup>1</sup>

1. 한동만독 Handyung Mannok, manuscript, 3 vols. dated 1910, according to the catalogue of the Ilsa Collection.
2. 한중록 Hanjung nok, manuscript, 6 vols., title on the cover 恨中錄 given as in the Karam Collection.
3. 한중록 Hanjyung nok, manuscript, 6 vols., Kim Tong-uk Collection.

4. 한중만일록 Hanjyung Manillok, manuscript, 6 vols. from the 孟峴 Maenghyŏn royal household dated (辛酉, 1921).
5. 恨中錄 Hanjung nok, manuscript, Kim Kyŏng-ch'un Collection.
6. 閑中隨錄 Hanjung surok, manuscript, 84 leaves of the mid-nineteenth century. Ilsa Collection.
7. 閑中漫錄 Hanjung mallok, manuscript, 6 vols. from Asami Collection.
8. 寶臧 Pojang, manuscript, 1 vol. (abridged version) from Asami Collection.

Other than these, there are two versions in Hanmun, Uphyŏllok, "Record of weeping blood" (manuscript, 55 leaves) in Hanjung Mallok in the National Library. As to these titles, 閑 is the character used for Han, and this would lead to translating 한중록 ( 閑中錄 ) Hanjung nok as "A Record Written at Leisure", 한중만록 ( 閑中漫錄 ) Hanjung mallok as "Discourses at Leisure" and 한중만일록 ( 閑中漫日錄 ) Hanjung Manillok as "Memoir Written at Leisure". But the scholar Yi Pyŏng-gi <sup>thought</sup> ~~thinks~~ that the character for han should be 恨, "resentment", and many writers on the subject agree with him. These manuscript copies are all of much later date than the original, according to the literary scholar Kim Yong-suk.

The edition used in this translation is Kim Tong-uk 金東旭 and Yi Pyŏng-gi 李秉岐, ed.: 한동록 Handyung nok ( 閑中漫錄 ). 民衆書館 Minjung Sŏgwan, Seoul, 1961. 25 and 595 pages. The main text is that of Pang Chong-hyon's manuscript. Variant readings in Yi Pyŏng-gi's and Kim Tŏng-uk's manuscripts are noted in the margin. In addition, it gives a translation into modern Korean with interpretative notes.

EDITORIAL NOTES

In order to keep the narrative as clear as possible, most important official titles will be given English translations with the Korean title romanized in brackets. The characters for these titles and a brief description of their origin and significance are listed in a Glossary of Offices and Titles at the end of the Translation. Persons mentioned in the text are also listed with dates, offices held and other details in a Biographical Index. Finally, maps are provided of the Court in the time of King Yongjo, as an aid to following the many references to places in the narrative. A bibliography is also appended.

All Korean words used in this thesis are transliterated according to the system of McCune-Reischauer.

## CHAPTER I

## Hanjung nok

I came to the palace when I was very young<sup>1</sup> and exchanged letters with my parents every morning and evening. My father<sup>2</sup> warned me not to let my mother's letters stay too long in the palace or to write at too great a length myself, but to write back a brief greeting jotted down on top of my mother's<sup>3</sup> notes. So I used to write a few words on the top of my mother's letters, which were sent back and collected at home, and the writing read and erased.<sup>4</sup> Because of this, nothing that I have written remains in our family. But my nephew Su-yǒng<sup>5</sup> begged me to write something and send it home for them to keep and treasure. This, he thought, would be praiseworthy. Although I felt that he was right, I could not find the time to do as he suggested. But now I am in my sixtieth year,<sup>6</sup> and it is a hundred times more painful than before to cherish the recollection<sup>7</sup> of my late lord, while, as time goes by, my memory will get weaker and weaker. So I am setting forth my former emotions

<sup>1</sup> Lady Hong of the Hyegyǒng Palace, the authoress of this book, entered the palace when she was ten. See BI.

<sup>2</sup> Hong Pong-han. See BI.

<sup>3</sup> Lady Yi of Hansan. See BI.

<sup>4</sup> To erase the record, they used to wash the calligraphy off with water.

<sup>5</sup> Hong Su-yǒng the eldest grandson of Hong Pong-han and eldest son of Hong Nag-in.

<sup>6</sup> The sixtieth birthday anniversary is regarded as the most important and is celebrated with a big family party, with all relatives present. It is more celebrated when both parties of a marriage are still alive. HMT vol.4, p.417.

<sup>7</sup> The authoress' painful recollection of her late husband, Crown Prince Sado who was killed in 1762.

and experiences, although I fear that I can only recapture a hundredth part of them.

I was born at noon on 6 August 1735 (18d 6m Ŭlmyo) in King Yŏngjo's day at the house of my mother's family<sup>1</sup> in Kŏp'yŏng-dong Pansongbang.<sup>2</sup> Before I was born, one night my father saw a black dragon lying coiled up round the rafters of my mother's room, so when I was born, he could not imagine why I should have been a girl, which did not seem to fit the omen of his dream.

My grandfather, Lord Chŏng-hŏn<sup>3</sup> came to see me and took a real liking to me, saying "Even though she is a girl, she is no ordinary child." When I was three weeks old,<sup>4</sup> mother and I came back to my father's house. There my great grandmother Lady Yi<sup>5</sup> saw me and was full of hope, saying, "This child is no ordinary girl, so please bring her up very carefully." Then she arranged a wet nurse for me.

As I grew up my grandfather was so fond of me that I hardly ever left his lap. He used to say jokingly, "This girl is already a little lady, so she is bound to grow up quickly." Those precious words which I heard from two generations of my elders when I was a child, stayed in my mind when I came to the palace: although (eventually) I took no pleasure in my life there, the words seemed to prefigure my future.

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<sup>1</sup> It was the custom before the modern hospital system for the mother to deliver her first child at her parental home, to be cared for by her mother until she recovered from child-birth. HMT vol.4, p.415.

<sup>2</sup> This street is now called P'yŏng-dong, Sŏdaemun-ku, Seoul. Han'gŭl Hakhoe, Chimyŏng ch'ongnam, (Seoul, 1966), v.1, Sŏul p'yŏn, p.60.

<sup>3</sup> Hong Hyŏn-bo. See BI.

<sup>4</sup> A baby's 21st day of life is celebrated with a party.

<sup>5</sup> Lady Yi of Chŏnju. HMT vol.4, p.416.

I had one sister and my parents treasured us like two precious beads. But as my sister died when she was still very young, I received all the affection of my parents. They brought me up very strictly, and my eldest brother (your father) also instructed me with great dignity. Because I was a girl, my father loved me especially; so much so, that I felt uneasy when I was away from him. I always tried to be close to my parents. From the time I became old enough to understand things better, I never caused them the least anxiety and thus I returned their overwhelming love. Although, being a girl, I could never truly repay my parents, my gratitude towards them was nevertheless deep and sincere. Whenever I remember my parent's special love for me, my heart ached with tears. For I felt that it must have been because I was fated to come to the palace (so soon) that they unwittingly loved me too much.

Lord Chǒng-hǒn was the great grand son of the Royal Son-in-law Yǒngan-wi<sup>1</sup> and grandson of Lord Chǒng-gan. Being the second son of Lord Ch'ǒm-jǒng, he built a new mansion in An'guk-dong<sup>2</sup> and established a cadet family. Although the house looked as splendid as a court minister's, since he received a very small share of his family's fortune life was difficult and hard. Nevertheless, my grand uncle, Deputy Minister of a Board (Ch'am p'an) treated my father very well and when my father was young he used to say, patting him on the head, that my father was like Yun O-ǔm<sup>3</sup> and that although he was then very poor he

<sup>1</sup> Hong Chu-wǒn. See BI.  
Wi. See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> An'guk-dong, Chongno-ku, Seoul.

<sup>3</sup> The noted President of the Council in King Yǒngjo's day, Yun Tu-su (1533-1601). Pename, O-ǔm. King Yǒngjo. See BI.

was fated to be an unusual man who would one day be very rich. For from ancient times, those who were destined to lasting happiness in their later years felt it honourable to go through hardships in their youth. For this reason he did not share much of the family fortune with his brother; his way being to love his brother from a distance, and everyone in the family praised his behaviour. But our circumstances were naturally very hard and Lord Chǒng-hǒn, who had the title Minister of a Board (Sangsǒ)<sup>1</sup> was a very honest and upright man with no thought of making a career for himself, and his house was quiet and unfrequented, like a poor scholar's.

My grand father's second<sup>2</sup> wife was the daughter of a Confucian scholar and well educated. She was a clever, virtuous and gracious woman who treated Lord Chǒng-hǒn (her husband) with the respect which might be shown to an important guest. She ran the house plainly in keeping with her husband's principles. This was why my mother, although she was married to the eldest son of a ministerial family, did not have even one silk frock hanging in her closet, very few jewels in her jewel box and only one set of clothes for each season. When these got dirty she would make no fuss about washing them herself at night; and she wove her own cotton cloth and did her own sewing. And since she disliked hearing the maidservants, young and old, praise her diligence, she covered the windows with wrapping cloth so that her light could not be seen, and worked late into the cold night until her hands were worn. Though she clothed her children in

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<sup>1</sup> The Minister of the Ceremonies Board.

<sup>2</sup> Lady Yi of Sǒngju. See BI.

very plain cotton since this was her own way of dressing - we were always dressed in clean and correct garments for the season. Judging from this you will understand immediately how frugal and tidy she was. My mother was not lightly moved to joy and anger; her nature was peaceful but austere. In our family everyone praised and respected her.

Our family is descended from a royal son-in-law;<sup>1</sup> it belongs to a great clan which has produced senior government officials one generation after another. My mother came from the Yi family,<sup>2</sup> an upright clan. My father's eldest sister was married to a famous magistrate,<sup>3</sup> while his second sister<sup>4</sup> was a daughter-in-law of Prince (Kun)<sup>5</sup> Ch'ōng-nung of King Hōnjong's day, his youngest sister was a daughter-in-law of the Minister of the Civil Office Board (Ibu Sangsō) and the wife of my father's second brother was a daughter of Deputy Minister of the Civil Office Board. Though ladies of our family all came from the most reputable clans of their generation, they were in no way haughty or extravagant as is often the case. When our family came together on festival days my mother always showed respect to the elder members, and greeted the younger ones with a kind smile and affectionate words. As a child I always felt our house was full of gentle content. My father's second brother's wife was likewise virtuous and in all things respected my mother more

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<sup>1</sup> Yōngan-wi, Hong Chu-wōn.

<sup>2</sup> Yi of Hansan. The authoress' grandfather Yi Chip was the Governor (Kwanch'alsa) of Hwanghae Province.

<sup>3</sup> He was Pujehak, Yi Tōk-jung.  
Pujehak. See GOT.

<sup>4</sup> She was the wife of the Provincial Governor, Yi Ōn-hyōng.

<sup>5</sup> See GOT.

than anyone else except her own mother-in-law.<sup>1</sup> She was a most noble-minded and well taught woman. She was really a praiseworthy and unusually superior woman. She loved me very much, taught me my Ŏnmun (Korean alphabet) and instructed me in everything. For this reason I honoured her like a mother, and indeed mother used to say that I was too close to her.

Lord Chŏng-hŏn died in 1740 (Kyŏngsin). It was too much for me to see my father's agony. He kept up the offerings at his father's shrine day and night for three years, and afterwards erected a memorial tablet. Although I was too young to understand, I dare not forget my father's filial piety towards his ancestors. He was extremely well behaved, visiting the shrine early every morning and going to see his step mother, bowing to her and comforting her with gentle words and kind affection. Everyone said that my grandmother loved him and expected more of him than she could have done for a son of her own. Moreover he was devoted to his two elder sisters and instructed his three young brothers as much as he could. He was more than a real son to his parents. In 1741 (Sinyu), his eldest sister fell sick with an infectious disease. All her blood relatives except my father hurried away, but he looked after her saying "If one does not succour one's own brother or sisters when they are sick, how could one call oneself brother or sister". After her death, he went to see her family and tried to arrange the funeral. After the funeral he did his best for her bereaved children, and brought one of her daughters to our house and arranged for her marriage. So it may be seen that his love and concern for

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<sup>1</sup> Lady Yi of Sŏngju.

his relatives was more than the usual. Furthermore he often invited my two aunts, my father's eldest and second eldest sisters, the wives of Yi Chinsa<sup>1</sup> and Yi Nam-p'yǒng to our home. From this it will be understood he was a man of extreme filial piety. Because he was brought up by his grandmother, he never missed performance of a single rite for her, mourning her like one of his own parents. Even as a child I respected him for all these things. He always studied hard and read with famous scholars; often when the instruction was over, teacher and friends would come home with him. After my grandfather's death in 1740, my mother performed the special memorial service for the ancestors for three years in accordance with the rites decorum. She prepared all the offerings in person and conducted herself according to the prescribed customs, waking up early in the morning, washing her face, combing her hair and greeting her mother-in-law at the right time everyday. She would always put her hair up before she went to see her mother-in-law, wearing a formal jacket. She respected and helped my father unlike an ordinary woman, which in return made my father hold her in high respect.

My mother married at Haeju,<sup>2</sup> Hwanghae Province in 1727 (chǒngmi) and lost her father immediately afterwards. Since it was not proper to go to her parents-in-law's house in mourning, she went home the following year. She lost her mother in 1738 (Muo) which also brought her deep sorrow. Whenever she came back home after visiting her mother's house where she could not

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> Capital of Hwanghae Province.

stay long enough my mother and her brother used to weep. My mother's family was famous for their uprightness, and affection between brothers and sisters was natural to them. Thus even the women in the family got on very well together. Lady Hong, the wife of my mother's brother,<sup>1</sup> entertained her young sisters-in-law very graciously whenever they visited her home. My mother's brother, Lord Chi-rye as well as my cousin, Sanjung's family loved me very much. My mother was one of three sisters. One of them who was married to Saengwŏn Kim<sup>2</sup> was widowed in her early youth and my mother was devoted to her. After Saengwŏn Kim's death, my mother felt very sorry for her sister's children and treated them as generously as she did her own. She supplied their wants in food and clothing to save them from freezing and starvation. She even helped to arrange their marriages later on. For this reason, my cousins used to say that in this world, everyone has one mother, but we have two. When my cousin, Kim I-gi married in the late Spring of 1741 (Sinyu) at my mother's family home, my mother went there to prepare for the ceremony. The daughter<sup>3</sup> of my mother's other sister - the wife of the Deputy Board Minister (Ch'amp'an) Song was married to my youngest uncle. When she was a child, she used to come to her mother's family home and play with me. At cousin Kim's wedding, she came in her brightest costume, whereas I was wearing white, though I was then too young to wear mourning clothes.<sup>4</sup> My mother said, "Your cousin is so nicely dressed but you aren't, so let's make you look like her." I said, "I don't think I can

<sup>1</sup> Lord Chi-rye, Yi Pyŏng-gŏn.

<sup>2</sup> Saengwŏn Kim Tal-haeng of Andong.  
Saengwŏn. See GOT.

<sup>3</sup> She was a daughter of Song Chae-hŭi and married to Hong Yonghan, the youngest uncle of the authoress.

<sup>4</sup> Korean traditional mourning clothes are plain white cotton.  
HMT vol.4, pp.321-398.

dress as prettily as she can, because I am in mourning." Having said this, I would not go out of the gate and instead stayed close to my mother. Though I was too young to understand things, my parents' constant instructions made it possible for me to say this.

In March/April 1743 (3m Kyehae) my father was named Senior Student of the Confucian Academy (Sŏnggyunḡwan)<sup>1</sup> and had audience with the King. He was then 31 with a nobility of disposition like gold or jade and the natural bearing of a phoenix. He was foremost among the Confucian scholars of the Confucian Academy. His answers to the King's questions were in complete accord with the law. The King was very impressed by him and after the King paid homage to the Confucian temple he held a state examination which he asked the Confucian scholars to sit again. Judging from what had happened, we imagined the King must have been intending to pass him. So my uncle<sup>2</sup> came home to wait for the public notice of the result. Alas my father failed and, waiting at home, I wept from disappointment. That Autumn my father was appointed Ch'ambong<sup>3</sup> of one of the royal tombs, (Ŭinḡng) and our family was blessed by an official salary<sup>4</sup> for the first time since 1740 (Kyŏngsin);<sup>5</sup> all the family rejoiced at this and my mother shared the rice amongst our relatives down to the last peck.

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> Hong Sang-han. See BI.

<sup>3</sup> See GOT.

<sup>4</sup> The pay for an official of the Lower Ninth Court rank was eight sacks of rice, four sacks of various grains, eleven rolls of good quality hemp cloth and one sheet of paper money. KGT v.1, p.165.

<sup>5</sup> The date of Hong Hyŏn-bo's death.

In 1743, an edict requested officials to submit the names of their daughters so that a wife might be selected for the (Crown) Prince. Some said that it would not do any harm for a poor scholar not to report his daughter and go to all the trouble of preparing a costume. But my father sent in my name saying he was a serving official from a family which had seen many generations of government service and that his daughter was a grandchild of a minister, so he could not deceive the government by failing to report. But then my family was too poor to prepare the new clothes. I can still see my mother working so hard to prepare my garment; she made my skirt out of the material which she had been saving for my late sister's marriage, lined it with used material, and to prepare the rest she borrowed money.

The First Selection was on 13 November 1743 (29d 9m).<sup>1</sup> The King Yǒngjo praised my meagre ability and showed special favour for me. Queen Chǒngsǒng<sup>2</sup> looked at me closely. Since Lady Sǒnhŭi<sup>3</sup> (Prince's mother) was not allowed to be present at the selection, she called me in beforehand and on seeing me her face filled with delight, and she loved me. The court ladies took me in their arms one after another.

In the mean time I received presents from the King, Yǒngjo while Lady Sǒnhŭi and Princess Hwap'yǒng<sup>4</sup> instructed me in court etiquette and I did just as they taught me. That night when I came back from the Court, I slept in my mother's arms. Early

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<sup>1</sup> The King held the First Selection Ceremony of a wife for the Crown Prince in person on the 13 November 1743. CWS, v.43, p.115.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

<sup>3</sup> See BI.

<sup>4</sup> See BI.

next morning, my father came into the room and said anxiously to my mother, "What can we do? This child has come first" My mother was also worried and said, "Since she is the daughter of a poor scholar, it could have been better not to report her name". I heard this conversation while still in bed, and was deeply affected and cried a lot. When I remembered that the court maids had been especially kind to me, I was shocked, and not at all glad. Though my parents said that I was too young to understand these things, I was very depressed after this First Selection. Probably it was because I was fated to experience so many changes of fortune during my life in the palace. Somehow it seemed very strange yet, on the other hand, it seemed that I understood quite clearly.

After the First Selection, our family was visited by various people, from the lowest rank of dependents, men whose steps had not turned towards our home for a long time. This showed me the ways of the world, life and men.

The Second Selection<sup>1</sup> was on 13 December (28d 10m). This time I was naturally more frightened than before, when my parents sent me into Court hoping that I would have the good fortune to fail the selection. But when I came to the Court, it seemed that it had already been decided to choose me. They appointed quarters for me near the royal presence, and treated me differently from all the others, and thus I was even more confused. When I went up to the royal presence, King Yǒngjo treated me quite differently from the rest, coming inside the screen and

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<sup>1</sup> At this Second Selection Ceremony, only the daughters of Hong Pong-han, Ch'oe Kyōng-hŭng and Chōng Chun were considered. CWS, v.43, p.117.

patting my head. His Highness said "I keep thinking of your grandfather. When I saw your father I was glad to think that I had found such a man; and now you are his daughter!" He was very pleased. Queen Chōngsōng and Lady Sōnhŭi seemed very fond of me and all the Princesses took me by the hand. They did not send me home straight away; instead I stayed at the Kyōngch'un-jōn<sup>1</sup> so that I could make a more dignified appearance, and some food was sent in for my midday meal. A court maid tried to take off my coat<sup>2</sup> to measure me. I refused to let her, but at last she persuaded me. I was frightened and wanted to cry, instead I held back my tears and cried after I got into the palanquin. I was again frightened when the palace male servants<sup>3</sup> were carrying out my palanquin, and I saw a black costumed maid,<sup>4</sup> one of those who carries royal messages, standing there. When I got home, they brought my palanquin in through the guest's entrance<sup>5</sup> and my father was in his full-dress attire when he helped me out. Both he and my mother looked very confused and were most careful in their behavior, therefore I could not help crying, clasping my parents in my arms. My mother was also in ceremonial dress and had covered the table with a red cloth. She bowed four times on receiving the Queen's<sup>6</sup> letter, and bowed twice on receiving Lady Sōnhŭi's letter, showing great deference.

From then on, my parents changed their mode of address to

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<sup>1</sup> The Queen's residence in Ch'an'gyōng Palace. See Map I, A.

<sup>2</sup> A green ceremonial coat. Sōk I.S., *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> These servants belonged to the Aekchōngsō. Aekchōngsō. See GOT.

<sup>4</sup> Court maids of the Queen's Palace used to wear black costumes.

<sup>5</sup> sarang; a guest room reserved for male guests.

<sup>6</sup> Queen Chōngsōng.

me and used reverent forms of speech, and all the elders of my family showed me respect, to my inexplicable uneasiness and sorrow. Anxious and fearful, my father kept on instructing and warning me about so many things that I felt as if I had committed a sin and did not know where to put myself. I felt my heart being torn into pieces to think that I would soon have to leave my parents, and felt no interest in anything. In the meantime, every single member of my family came to visit me before I finally left for the Court. My parents entertained our more distant relatives in the exterior court (i.e. the guest room) and escorted them back (without their seeing me). But I humbly saw in person those who shared great grand parents with us, together with their offspring. One of my distant relatives<sup>1</sup> warned me that the palace was so strict, that once I was inside, it would be farewell forever, and he urged me to be respectful and careful. He said "My name is Kam for mirror and Po for assistant. Please remember me after you get into the palace". Although I had not seen him before, I was naturally sad to hear what he said.

The Third Selection<sup>2</sup> was on 28 December (13d 11m), and as it drew near, I was overwhelmed with sadness and so slept in my mother's arms at night. My two aunts<sup>3</sup> and the wife of my uncle,<sup>4</sup> caressed me and were depressed at my going. My parents showed great love to me, cherishing me day and night. They

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<sup>1</sup> Yi Kam-bo, a cousin of the authoress' grandfather. He was a District Magistrate (Moksa).

<sup>2</sup> The Third Selection Ceremony was held on 28 December, 1743 and the daughter of Hong Pong-han was selected. CWS v.43, p.118.

<sup>3</sup> Two sisters of the authoress' father; one was the wife of Yi Tök-chung, the other of Yi On-hyong.

<sup>4</sup> Lady Sin, the wife of Hong In-han.

felt so sorry for me that they were unable to sleep for many nights on end; even now my heart still aches (at the memory).

After the Second Selection, Governess (San'gung)<sup>1</sup> Ch'oe and the Saekjang<sup>2</sup> Miss Kim Hyōdōk, were sent to my home (to stay with me). Governess Ch'oe was a large and imposing woman, not like the usual delicate court lady. She had served the Court for generations. My mother entertained her especially warmly. Governess Ch'oe measured me for my costume and came back before the Third Selection together with the Saekjang Miss Mun Tae-bok. They brought costumes prepared by Queen Chōngsōng - a green formal silk coat (Tangŭi)<sup>3</sup> a pair of jackets, creamy silk jacket with a grape pattern and a violet silk jacket; a crimson patterned silk skirt, and a jacket of ramie cloth.<sup>4</sup> Although I had never been dressed so prettily, I had never felt the need of the kind of dresses which other girls had. For instance, among my close relatives, there was a girl of my age whose family was very rich. She was very dear to her parents and had practically every fine dress you could imagine, but I never felt jealous of her. One day she visited us in a deep red skirt lined with the same material, looking very pretty. My mother saw her and asked me if I wanted to wear the same sort of thing. But I answered "If I had one like that, I could scarcely avoid doing so, but I haven't any wish for one", at which my mother was very moved and said "You say so because

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1 See GOT.

2 See GOT.

3 A formal coat for royal and aristocratic women whose four edges both front and back pointed upward. Kim Yong-suk, Yijo yōryu munhak mit kungjung p'ungsok ui yōn'gu (Seoul, 1970); p.415.

4 The royal bride used to wear a jacket of ramie cloth as wedding underwear even in winter. This was supposed to ensure that the future of the bride would be cool, refreshing and satisfactory. Kim YS, ibid. p.415.

you are the daughter of a poor family. I will reward you by making a beautiful skirt when you get married."

Now she wept because I had changed my status and said "Because I could not dress you beautifully with bright clothes, I want to make a skirt for you now, and dress you in it before you go into the palace, where you will no longer be able to wear ordinary costumes." Thus she made the skirt between the Second and Third Selection with her thoughts full of sadness, and I wept as I put it on.

I thought it right to say farewell to the principal shrine<sup>1</sup> of my father's family and at the shrine of my mother's parents and announced my intention of doing so (i.e. asked permission), receiving the King's permission. The wife of the elder brother of the Royal Son-in-law, Kũmsõng-wi was a sister-in-law of my second aunt,<sup>2</sup> so my request was conveyed through these people to Lady Sõnhũi who apparently sought permission from the King. So I went to the principal mansion of my father's family in a palanquin, together with my mother. As my father's cousin<sup>3</sup> and his wife had no daughter of their own, they had always loved me and let me stay at their house from time to time. The King knew this and ordered my father's cousin to instruct my family about the marriage, so he came to my home after it had been decided that I should marry the Crown Prince and stayed with us.

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<sup>1</sup> Every home maintained an altar to worship ancestors according to the status of the deceased in the course of confucianism. HMT V.4, pp.399-414.

<sup>2</sup> The wife of Yi Ŏn-hyõng.

<sup>3</sup> Hong Sang-han and his wife Lady Ŏ.

Thus when we went to his house it was only his wife, my aunt, who was there to welcome us, and guide me on to the shrine so that I could bow before the ancestral tablet. According to custom, descendants are supposed to bow to the shrine kneeling on the ground but I went into the main hall of the house and bowed there which made me feel frightened.

That day I went to my mother's parents' home and my uncle's wife<sup>1</sup> welcomed me, although she was sad at losing me. My cousins used to carry me on their backs and in their arms but that day they sat some way away from me and behaved very respectfully, making me feel very sad. I was very fond of my cousin Madame Sin and felt depressed about leaving her behind. After visiting my two aunts,<sup>2</sup> my mother's sisters, I came back home, for the day of the Third Selection was drawing near. My father's sisters asked me to visit all my blood relatives and took me visiting on the night of the 12th. It was a pleasant moon-lit night, but cold with the wind blowing over the snow. My aunt took me from one house to another with my hand in hers, and tears ran down my cheeks.

After I was home, in my room, I tried to control my sorrowful feelings, staying awake all night. Early next morning, the others pressed me to hurry up and go to the palace. I put on that costume which had been sent to me beforehand from the palace. The womenfolk of our distant relatives came to my home that day to say good-bye, and close relatives were gathered

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<sup>1</sup> Lady Hong of Namyang, the wife of Lord Chiryé.

<sup>2</sup> Two daughters of Yi Chip; the wife of Saengwŏn Kim and of the Deputy Board Minister, Song Chae-hŭi.

there to escort me to the Detached Palace (Pyŏlgung)<sup>1</sup>. When I went on to the shrine to perform the ritual farewell, my father read the written prayer holding back his tears with some difficulty. The sadness which they all felt at my departure was more than I can express.

So I went to the palace, first resting after my journey in the Kyŏngch'un-jŏn, and then proceeding to the T'ongmyŏng-jŏn<sup>2</sup> where I humbly met the three Royal Highnesses<sup>3</sup>. Queen Dowager Inwŏn<sup>4</sup> saw me for the first time and said "She is very beautiful and cheerful; how lucky our State is". King Yŏngjo was very glad to see me, repeating "What a good day it was when I decided to choose such a sensible girl" Queen Chŏngsŏng was delighted and Lady Sŏnhŭi showed me such affection that I felt a natural respect for the two of them springing from my heart by itself. They redressed my hair and face. Then I sat down in ceremonial costume to receive the dinner table which was set for me. Soon after it got dark, I bowed four times to the three Royal Highnesses and went out to the Detached Palace. King Yŏngjo himself escorted me to the Royal palanquin and said

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<sup>1</sup> Pyŏlgung; Ŏi Palace where the future Royal wife of the King or the Crown Prince were received prior to their wedding. Formerly it was the royal residence where King Hyojong was born and lived before he succeeded to the throne. The second wife of King Injo (father of King Hyojong) was married in this residence. Thereafter the royal wedding ceremonies were held here. Han'gŭl Hakhoe, ibid. p.247.

<sup>2</sup> The residence north of Kyŏngch'un-jŏn in Ch'angdŏk Palace. Built in the Koryŏ period, it had a green tile roof. It burned down on the 15th February, 1790 during King Chŏngjo's reign. It was the Queen's residence where she held banquets for female royal relatives. See Map III, B. Ch'angdŏk Palace. See Map I, B.

<sup>3</sup> King Yŏngjo, Queen Dowager Inwŏn and Queen Chŏngsŏng.

<sup>4</sup> See BI.

"Keep well and come back soon". He also told me, holding my hands in his, that he would send a copy of the Hsiao-hsüeh<sup>1</sup> for me to study with my father. When I came back to the Detached Palace after receiving such proof of the King's constant affection for me, it was dark and the lights were on.

Since court ladies were asleep on either side of me, I was unable to get to sleep that night, feeling frightened and depressed because I had to sleep apart from my mother, which in turn affected her. Governess Ch'oe, a strict woman who did not care very much about the personal feelings of others, told my mother that it was against the laws of the land for her to sleep beside me any more so she should go to her bedroom. This was very cruel of her, and as a result I was unable to sleep. Next day, the King had sent Hsiao-hsüeh and thereafter my father taught this text to me every day. My father's cousin<sup>2</sup>, my father's second younger brother<sup>3</sup> and my brother,<sup>4</sup> joined the class with my father's youngest brother who was then still a child. The King also sent the Instruction Manual containing the prose-pieces written by His Majesty for Queen Hyosun<sup>5</sup> intending that I should read it in my spare time between the Hsiao-hsüeh lessons.

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<sup>1</sup> Hsiao-hsüeh; the Book of Moral Training compiled by Liu Tzu-ch'eng following the instructions of Chu-tzu in 1187. It was soon introduced to Korea and used as a text book for moral training and as an elementary book of Confucian studies for children of about eight years.

<sup>2</sup> Hong Sang-han.

<sup>3</sup> Hong In-han.

<sup>4</sup> Hong Nag-in.

<sup>5</sup> See BI.

Amongst the other furniture, folding screens, curtains, *et cetera*, in the Detached Palace was a big egg-fruit-shaped Japanese pearl given by Lady Sŏnhŭi. It belonged to Princess Chŏngmyŏng.<sup>1</sup> She gave it to her grandchild Madame Cho. It seemed they had sold it and Lady Sŏnhŭi bought it through the family of one of her court ladies. I felt as if it was not by chance that when I, a descendant of the princess, came to the palace and received this pearl. Lord Chŏnghŏn was very fond of calligraphy and painting and had an embroidered gold folding screen which consisted of four panels. After 1740 (*Kyŏngjin*)<sup>2</sup> one of his servants took this and sold it. Quite accidentally, Lady Sŏnhŭi bought it through one of the relatives of her court maid, and she sent it to me so that I could have it in my bedroom.

One of my aunts, a younger sister of my father, said that it was very strange to see that folding screen which used to belong to her grandfather, now in one of the granddaughter's bedrooms of the Court (Detached Palace) today. And also Lady Sŏnhŭi sent me her own folding screen of dragon embroidery which I likewise set up in my bedroom. My father saw this and said that the colour of the dragon in this screen was the same as the one which he had seen in his dream of the night of 5 August 1735 (17d 6m *Ŭlmyo*)<sup>3</sup>. After the dream he had been unable to remember the appearance of the dragon, but seeing this one on the screen, he recollected that the dragon in his dream was just like it. Everyone there was surprised at this correspondence between the embroidery and my father's dream. The scales

<sup>1</sup> See BI.

<sup>2</sup> After the death of the authoress' grandfather, Hong Hyŏn-bo in 1740.

<sup>3</sup> I.e., the night before the birth of the authoress.

of this dragon were embroidered with golden thread on a black surface so that the black and gold seemed to shuffle along. My father, who could not describe the dragon he remembered exactly as a black dragon, eventually recalled that it was like this.

During the first fifty days I spent at the Detached Palace the three ladies (Queen Dowager Inwŏn, Queen Chŏngsŏng and Lady Sŏnhŭi) sent the Governess to me to see how I was. Each time she came, she sought an interview with my family and treated them with sincere respect which made me feel very grateful. As soon as Governess Ch'oe arrived at the Detached Palace she was followed by the Officer of Ceremony with a table of wine and food. And the food was so abundant and the entertainment so hospitable that everybody in the Court talked of its magnificence at the Royal Wedding in 1744 (Kapja).<sup>1</sup>

While I was staying at the Detached Palace, my grandmother<sup>2</sup> fell seriously ill. My parents were extremely anxious and agitated for the Royal Wedding was drawing near and her condition was grave. At such a time, even without any other worries, it would have been very hard for them to leave me. But in spite of their anxieties, whenever they came into the Detached Palace to see me, they never failed to appear content. When they had to move the patient to another place for safety, my father brought her out on his back to the palanquin. The court ladies heard of this and greatly praised him for his filial piety towards his stepmother. Fortunately, my grand-

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<sup>1</sup> The authoress' wedding.

<sup>2</sup> Lady Yi, the stepmother of Hong Pong-han. His real mother was Lady Im.

mother recovered and this was indeed a blessing for the country, as well as for my family. I still think I was never so anxious as during those days.

On 21 February, 1744 (9d 1m Kapja),<sup>1</sup> I was formally appointed wife of the Crown Prince, and the wedding took place two days later.<sup>2</sup> As the wedding day drew near, I wept all the time at the thought of leaving my parents behind. Although they should have been very sad, they endured their distress and warned me, "If the family of a subject became royal relatives, they gain the favour of the King and prosper." But this prosperity invites the evils. Our family, as a descendant of the royal son-in-law,<sup>3</sup> won boundless royal favour one generation after another. For this I would not refuse to undertake any difficult task for the country. But when a scholar with very little experience of the world becomes a royal relative all at once, this is a sign not of happiness but of the beginning of misfortunes. It worries me so much that I do not know what to do. He instructed me on every point saying "Please revere the three Highnesses and devote yourself to them. Please help and lead the Crown Prince towards the right way, talking carefully and making every possible effort for the happiness of your home and the country."

Although I was listening respectfully to all these countless words of warning, I could not stop weeping. Even the

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<sup>1</sup> King Yǒngjo sent Head envoy Kim Hǔng-gyǒng and his deputy Nak P'ung-gun to invest Lady Hong, the authoress, as the wife of the Crown Prince. CWS v.43, p.122.

<sup>2</sup> The wedding took place at Detached Palace (Ŏi Palace or Pyolgung) on 23 February 1744. CWS v.43, p.123.

<sup>3</sup> Yǒngan-wi, Hong Chu-wǒn.

most insensitive being would have been moved on such an occasion. After the marriage ceremony<sup>1</sup> my parents again instructed and warned me concerning various matters while I listened respectfully. My father was then wearing deep crimson official clothes and a pokdu<sup>2</sup>. My mother was wearing a wōnsam<sup>3</sup> with her hair in a K'ūnmōri.<sup>4</sup> All our relatives were gathered to see me off and lots of people came from the court. My parents conducted everything inside and outside our home so modestly, solemnly and properly that everyone who saw them praised them and said that the country had found a wonderful father-in-law.

After the wedding, I came into the palace, where the wedding reception<sup>5</sup> was held, and on 24 February, 1744 I had an audience with the King. The King said "Since I have now received your P'yebaek<sup>6</sup> let me advise you. Be gentle to the Crown Prince, being neither flippant in your voice nor changing the colour of the face frivolously. In our Court, there are many common things which may appear unusual to you. You should pretend not to have seen them." I accepted these warnings with respect. On that same day, the King and the two Ladies<sup>7</sup> had an audience with my father at T'ongmyōng-jōn, talked very kindly and gave

<sup>1</sup> The marriage ceremony which was held at the Detached Palace as the preliminary to the National Wedding.

<sup>2</sup> A hat worn by those who passed the State Examination and were awarded the examination certificate. KGT V.1, pp.216-233.

<sup>3</sup> A woman's ceremonial dress. Sōk In-sōn, Han'guk poksik sa (Seoul, 1971), p.122.

<sup>4</sup> A woman's formal hair style for important occasions such as a wedding ceremony or an audience with the King. Han'guk Yōsōngsa P'yōnch'an Wiwōnhoe, Han'guk yōsōng sa (Seoul, 1972), V.2. pp.220-230.

<sup>5</sup> It was and still is the custom among the common people for the friends of the bridegroom to be entertained at the bride's home with the newly wed couple in attendance after the wedding ceremony. But this ceremony was held at the palace, the bridegroom's home. HMT vol.4, pp.318-321.

<sup>6</sup> A bride's presents to her parent-in-law.

<sup>7</sup> Queen Chōngsōng and Lady Sōnhūi.

him a cup of wine. My father received it, drank some, poured the remainder into his sleeve and picking up some citron seeds (from the table) kept them in his bosom. The King told me my father showed great understanding of the rules of behaviour at which my father was moved to tears, retired and told the family that for royal favours such as this, they should be prepared to pay with their lives.

Next day the King gave audience to all the government officials at Injǒng-jǒn<sup>1</sup>, so that the officials could see me and members of my family. After the audience, when I went to Taejo-jǒn<sup>2</sup> to pay my respects, Queen Chǒngsǒng met my mother and showed her very courteous favours treating her just as the parents of a middle class match might have treated each other. And the Queen told my mother that it was meritorious of her to make her daughter so beautiful so that the kingdom could enjoy such a happy event. Queen Dowager Inwǒn sent a governess to entertain us. Although she did not meet us in person, she offered us her kindest favour which was a great honour. Lady Sonhui met my mother and made friends with her in-laws at once in gentle manner. My mother was so calm and talked so concisely yet generously and modestly that every one in the Court praised her and loved her. This is why when my mother died in 1755 (Ŭlhae), all the court ladies of the palace where the King and Queen resided wept; so much had my mother won the hearts of the people in the Court.

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<sup>1</sup> The King's residence in the Ch'angdǒk Palace. See Map III,A.

<sup>3</sup> The Queen's residence in the Ch'angdǒk Palace. See Map III,B.

After three days' stay at the T'ongmyǒng-jǒn I came back to the Chǒsǔng-jǒn<sup>1</sup> and settled in Kwanhŭi-hap<sup>2</sup>. By this time my mother had gone back home, reducing my heart to nothing. On the other hand my mother did not show her emotion on her face, and said farewell calmly, advising me that because the three ladies<sup>3</sup> loved me and the King treasured me like a daughter of his own, I should strive to do my best for them out of filial piety, bringing happiness to home and nation. "If you value your parents, please keep these words in your mind." And when she entered the palanquin, she wept and so earnestly asked the court maids to look after me that they said "How can we refuse your request since we have seen you like this?"

On 27 April, 1744 (5d) I humbly presented myself at Sǒnwǒn-jǒn<sup>4</sup> and on the 29th at the ancestral temple of the royal family, I was deeply moved when both the King and Lady Sonhui showed their pleasure and praised me for having passed through the National Wedding, wearing such a heavy formal hairstyle, without making any mistake.

My father used to come to Court on the 1st and 15th days of the month. But he only came to see me when the King allowed him to do so, and even then he would not stay very long, saying "The Court is an extremely strict place, so a mere commoner should not stay here too long". But whenever he came to see us, he advised me as best he could with innumerable words, and would

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<sup>1</sup> The Crown Prince's residence in Ch'an'gyǒng Palace. Burnt down in 1756. See Map II, D.

<sup>2</sup> The pavillion which used to be next to the Chǒsǔng-jǒn in Ch'an'gyǒng Palace.

<sup>3</sup> Queen Dowager Inwǒn, Queen Chǒngsǒng and Lady Sǒnhŭi.

<sup>4</sup> The hall where the portraits of the 12 Kings, T'aejo, Sejong, Wǒnjong, Sukjong, Yǒngjo, Chǒngjo, Sunjo, Ikjong, Hǒnjong, Ch'ǒljong, Kojong and Sunjong, were kept in Ch'an'gyǒng Palace. See Map III, J.

also go to see the Crown Prince (Tongung) and encouraged him to study. Since he talked of classics and history so earnestly, so that the Prince could understand, the Crown Prince treated him especially well, treasured him and devoted himself to my father in return. My father passed the Major State Examination<sup>1</sup> in November 1744 (10m Kapja). The Crown Prince was extremely happy about this and came to the other residence where I was, rejoicing. At that time, none of the family of the Royal Father-in-law Kyŏngun<sup>2</sup> nor the family of the Royal Father-in-law Talsŏng<sup>3</sup> had passed the State Examination. Amongst the family of Queen Chŏngsŏng in particular, none of them had become estab-

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<sup>1</sup> Men were recruited through the State Examination (Kwagŏ) system to fill government posts. The beginning of this system can be traced back to 788, the fourth year of King Wŏnsŏng of Silla, but it was administered with considerably more rigour and regularity than had previously been the case in the Yi dynasty. Examinations were of three kinds, civil, military, and miscellaneous, the last being used to select technicians, interpreters and other specialists. The most important was the civil examination. There were two civil examinations, the Major State Examination (Taegwa) and the Minor State Examination (Sogwa). They were given every three years. Candidates for the Minor State Examination first took a preliminary test in the provinces. If they were successful, they then went to Seoul, where a further test was given. There were two general subjects, Confucian classics and poetry and composition. Successful candidates in the first were given the title Saengwŏn; and those in the second were called Chinsa. They were assigned to the most junior government positions and were qualified to attend the Songgyungwan, the Confucian Academy. The Major State Examination was similarly organized. Preliminary tests for this were also held every three years in the provinces, which low-ranking officials were eligible to take. If successful, they too proceeded to Seoul where thirty-three of them were selected in the second test. The third and final examination (chŏnsi) was held in the presence of the King. Successful candidates were graded in three ranks and were immediately assigned to posts corresponding to these. Candidates in the top category were placed in medium-grade posts if they were new men, or promoted four ranks if they were already officials. KTH pp.247-268.

<sup>2</sup> Kim Chu-sin; the father of Queen Dowager Inwŏn.

<sup>3</sup> Queen Chŏngsŏng's family.

lished in life. Therefore, although the Prince was too young to understand these things, he was fascinated and rejoiced. After the ceremony of awarding a red tablet to a person who passed the State Examination my father had an audience with the King. The King presented flowers to him by way of congratulation and was most pleased, for the King had been very disappointed when my father failed the Examination of the preceding year (1743, Kyehae).

Both Queens, Inwŏn and Chŏngsŏng called me in and praised my father saying that it was a most happy event that the royal father-in-law had passed the State Examination. Queen Chŏngsŏng's family had experienced difficulties from the factional strife.<sup>1</sup> She was very glad that the prince had married into a family who supported the Noron<sup>2</sup> not because she was prejudiced in favour of Noron but because she supported it. It made her feel almost like a relation. Moreover, when my father passed the Higher Civil Service Examination, she was so glad that the tears gathered in her eyes. I was struck with immense admiration for her to see this.

My father used to aid the Crown Prince's studies with all his might, writing out for him whatever was beneficial in classical literature and criticizing the prince's own compositions. Although a royal instructor (Pinyo)<sup>3</sup> used to teach the Prince, he really learnt more from my father. There was no other official who could match him in his efforts to lead the

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<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, pp.5-9.

<sup>2</sup> See Introduction, pp.5-9.

<sup>3</sup> Ch'umban'gwan. See GOT.

prince to become a gentle and virtuous ruler. But how sad it was! When I came to the Court as a very young child, I found the Prince's character was outstanding and his devotion to his father above average. He not only respected the King but was also devoted to him, as indeed he was to Queen Chǒngsǒng, as much as to his own mother. To his own mother, his filial piety went beyond expression. Lady Sǒnhŭi was naturally kind and affectionate but strict. Though she loved her children, she taught them so strictly that they feared and respected her, as if she were not their mother.

When her son was made Crown Prince, she did not behave like a mother but treated him with great respect, instruction always preceding affection. Therefore her son was terrified of her and extremely careful in everything concerning her. She treated me in just the same way as she did the Crown Prince. As a daughter-in-law it made me feel dreadfully uncomfortable to be treated so excessively well as that.<sup>1</sup> From the time I first came to Court I never dared to omit the obligatory morning greetings. I used to greet the Queens Inwǒn and Chǒngsǒng once in five days, but Lady Sǒnhŭi once in three days. Though I saw them so often, I never dared to present myself except in ceremonial dress, nor to go late in the morning, the regulations in the court being so strict. I was unable to sleep properly for fear of being late for this morning greeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Lady Sǒnhŭi treated her daughter-in-law with the same affection as her son, the Crown Prince.

When I came to the Court, I brought along my wet nurse and a girl attendant, Pongnye. Pongnye was an attendant whom my great grandmother allowed my father as a special favour when he passed the Minor State Examination.<sup>1</sup> When I was a child, I used to play with her, always spending my time in her company. She was sharp, quick witted and very faithful, unlike most people of low birth. My wet nurse was a simple soul, honest, diligent and loyal. I persuaded them to wake me up early every morning and urged them not to neglect it whether in the severe cold of winter, in the hot summer or in wet, windy or snowy weather, since it was of great importance. It was thanks to these two that I was never late for the morning greeting. Afterwards, my wet nurse attended me when all my children were born and served me well. Perhaps this is why she was blessed with over eighty long years of life and her descendants were paid generous wages in cotton for generations.

Pongnye obeyed me like my hands and feet and always understood my feelings of joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure. She shared my fortunes for fifty years and was appointed as the Governess at the 1790 (Kyǒngsul) Happy Event<sup>2</sup> by King Chǒngjo<sup>3</sup>. On that day, she prepared Kaengban<sup>4</sup> for me.

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<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on page 49.

<sup>2</sup> King Sunjo's birthday on 29 July 1790.  
King Sunjo. See BI.

<sup>3</sup> See BI.

<sup>4</sup> Seaweed soup and rice. It was and still is Korean custom for mothers to eat seaweed soup and rice at every meal after the delivery of a baby.

Even though she is now seventy, she is very energetic and still serves me just as she did. Thus my wet nurse and Pongnye served me meritoriously and because of this, they seemed to have enjoyed long happiness.

In those days, the regulations of the Court were so strict that there were many hardships other than the early morning greeting, although I never felt troubled by them. Probably I was able to put up with such things because of my old style upbringing. Although I had many sisters-in-law and treated them, I never imitated them because of the difference of our positions, but behaved just as Queen Hyosun. So it was that even though she was very much older than I was, we loved each other very much and I learnt a great deal from her. As to the various princesses Hwasun<sup>1</sup> was gentle and reverent, and Hwap'yǒng<sup>2</sup> was submissive. Both of them treated me very kindly. Two younger sisters-in-law were more or less the same age as I and very precious to the family. They had all the toys you could think of, but I never enjoyed playing with them, which made Lady Sǒnhŭi anxious. She used to say, "Though you want to play with them, you hesitate to do so out of a wish to follow the ways of Court. Please do not act like this; play like the other princesses." She guided me in everything with utmost sincerity, which I cannot forget even for one moment.

When I came to the palace in 1743 (Kyehae) the eldest<sup>3</sup> of my younger brothers was five and the second<sup>4</sup> was three. Both of

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<sup>1</sup> See BI.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

<sup>3</sup> Hong Nak-sin.

<sup>4</sup> Hong Nag-im.

them were big boys for their age and looked like twins. After the wedding, my mother used to come to the Court once or twice a year with the two of them. King Yǒngjo loved them and when he came to see us, he used to let them go around with him. If he called my brother (eldest of my younger brothers), he would answer very clearly in a loud voice like a cavalry orderly, which the King thought was very amusing. Later my brother grew up to pass the Higher Civil Service Examination<sup>1</sup> in 1748 (Pyǒngsul). The King was very glad saying, "That child who used to answer like a cavalry orderly passed the Examination. The President has an outstanding son." And if he read as a Confucian scholar official, the King praised him clapping his hands and saying "You read very well." The Crown Prince loved him very much and whenever my brothers came into the Court the Prince never let them leave him, taking their hands and going about everywhere with them. When the eldest of my younger brothers at the age of nine came into the Court, the Crown Prince had just paid homage at the Royal Ancestral Temple and put his crown aside. The Prince tried to put it on my brother's head for a game, but my brother held his head tight with his hands and said "A subject should not wear it, sire." The Crown Prince was surprised, and did not force him; the incident threw my brother into a sweat. He was certainly precocious compared to the children of these days!

According to court regulations, males of over ten years of age were not allowed to sleep in the royal palace. One day,

<sup>1</sup> Hong Nak-sin passed the Chungsi, a special State Examination for officials who had already passed the State Examination for higher learning. Those who passed this special examination were promoted to higher posts. It was held every ten years. KTH pp.258-259.

the Crown Prince repeatedly called the second of my younger brothers, but when he reached the front gate, a royal guard apparently said something disrespectful which upset my brother and he refused to come any further. Then the Prince went out in person to the front gate and led him in saying, "You stand so firmly by your principles, how can I expect you to help me?". The Prince then wrote something on a fan and gave it to him. I remember this as if it happened just yesterday. This brother of mine was particularly obedient and gentle, so that I loved him especially.

Father was appointed a commanding general of the army for seven years after he passed the Higher Civil Service Examination, and thus his honour was exceptional. Although many would have said that it was because he was a royal relative, Lady Sŏnhŭi told me privately that (years ago) when my father had had an audience with the King at Sŭngmŭn-dang<sup>1</sup> as a Senior Student of Sŏnggyun'gwan, the King saw him for the first time and after the audience, came back to the palace and told her; "Today I found a subject who can serve me splendidly and his name is Hong Ponghan." If I consider this, then it is clear that the reason the King took him into government service was not because he was a royal relative but because the King discovered his ability and treated him accordingly. From that time forward the King entrusted him with the management of government money, grain and soldiers, as well as other important military and governmental affairs. My father did his best to serve the State by day and night almost forgetting his food and sleep, neglecting his private affairs completely and only concerning himself with

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<sup>1</sup> The hall where the King personally conducted the State Examinations in Ch'an'gyŏng Palace. See Map II, C.

questions of State. Whenever he saw me he would say, "The King's favour is such that I don't know how to repay him."

I had become pregnant earlier and gave birth to a son, Ŭiso in 1750 (Kyōngo), but he died in the Spring of 1752 (Imsin). The three Highnesses and Lady Sōnhŭi were so sad about it that I felt very guilty to have shown them a dreadful example of impiety. In October (9m) of the same year, by the blessing of heaven, King Chōngjo was born. I did not expect that my usual misfortune would allow me to experience such a happy event. The baby's appearance was outstanding and his bone structure was excellent. He really looked like a dragon or a phoenix, like heaven and the sun. When King Yōngjo saw him, he was very overjoyed and told me that the child's appearance was so exceptional altogether that it must be a blessing from the divine spirits of the royal ancestors, and a sign of the happiness of the State. "How could I be so worthy as to experience such good fortune in my declining years!", he said expressing his admiration for the child. He also observed "A descendant of princess Chōngmyōng, you became the wife of the Crown Prince. Your body is blessed to make this outstanding contribution to the welfare of the State. Please rear the child carefully, dressing him plainly so that you may be sparing with his good fortune." Of course, I valued his instructions very highly and obeyed them as best I could. Although I could not do my duty as a mother at the first child birth, being then too young. After the sad loss of that Spring<sup>1</sup> everybody in the palace was delighted at the second Happy Event<sup>2</sup> and jumped with joy a hundred times more than on

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<sup>1</sup> The death of the authoress' first child, Ŭiso.

<sup>2</sup> The birth of King Chōngjo.

the occasion of the previous birth.<sup>1</sup>

My mother came into the palace before the parturition, and my father was on night duty in the palace for seven or eight days before he saw the child. Both of them were extremely delighted and congratulated me time and time again. Moreover, for the baby was so very handsome, that they were most excited and praised me so much that I was both proud and happy, which was of course natural, although I was not yet twenty years of age. I felt as if I had something to rely upon, as if I had been somehow inspired. For on the November/December 1751 (10m Sinmi), the Crown Prince had dreamed of a dragon playing with a magic stone (Yōūiju),<sup>2</sup> and when he woke up, he thought it an unusual omen. So immediately afterwards he drew the dragon which he saw in his dream on a strip of white silk and hung it on the wall. He was only seventeen then, and it would have been natural to have passed off the dream, even if it was unusual. Instead, he said that it was an omen for begetting a son. It was strange that in some ways he was like a man of experience and maturity. His drawing was excellent and I believed that his unusual dream heralded the birth of a Sovereign. Although the Prince was a silent man, stern and discreet, he always smiled at the baby whenever he saw him and praised me himself saying "With such a wonderful son like this, you have no need to worry about anything."

That year<sup>3</sup>, the measles was raging and a princess got it first. The palace physicians asked the Crown Prince and the

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<sup>1</sup> The birth of Ūiso.

<sup>2</sup> Yōūiju said to be found under the jaw of a dragon, and to bestow omnipotence on the person who acquires it.

<sup>3</sup> 1751.

Royal Grandson (Wǒnson)<sup>1</sup> to change their residence to avoid the disease. At that time the baby was less than three weeks old and very difficult to move, but in obedience to the King's instruction, the Crown Prince moved to Yangjǒng-hap<sup>2</sup> and we took the Royal Grandson into the Naksǒn-dang.<sup>3</sup> Though the Royal Grandson was less than three weeks old, he was a big baby and it did not worry me so much to take him some distance. We still had not appointed a governess for him, so I left him to one of the old court maids and to my wet nurse. But before sunset, the Crown Prince had fallen sick with the measles and all the court maids got it too, so there was no one to look after him. Lady Sǒnhŭi came in person to look after her son and my father also stayed at his residence on guard during the night. Though the symptoms were only mild, the Prince had such a high temperature that my father held and tended him with deep devotion which words can hardly express. When he got a bit better, he constantly asked my father to read to him. When he did so, the prince used to say that he felt refreshed after listening to the reading. Although I cannot remember all the books he had read to the Prince, day and night, one of them was Ch'u shih piao<sup>4</sup> by Chu Ko-liang.<sup>5</sup> My father explained as he read this book, from ancient times, there had never been any two

<sup>1</sup> Wǒnson; the prospective heir of the Crown Prince.

<sup>2</sup> A pavilion which used to be to the east of Chǒsŭng-jǒn in Ch'an'gyǒng Palace.

<sup>3</sup> A hall which used to be next to the Yangjǒng-hap in Ch'an'-gyǒng Palace.

<sup>4</sup> Famous letter of loyalty written by Chu Ko-liang (181-234) to his young Emperor Liu Shan (Hu-chu, 207-271) of the Shu Han dynasty during his military expedition to Wei. See Lu Pi, San kuo chih chi chieh: Shu Shu, ch. 5, pp.15-18.

<sup>5</sup> Chu Ko-liang (181-234); principal advisor of Han Chaolieh (221-223), founder of the Shu-Han (the Three Kingdoms) and regent for his son. He is one of the main characters of the Chinese novel San-kuo-chih yen i by Lo Kuan-chung (ca. 1330-ca. 1400, supposed.)

people who understood each other's hearts so well as the Emperor Chao-lieh of (Shu-) Han and Chu Ko-liang, and that this was why he himself had always admired this work. He also told him various sayings of wise Kings and famed subjects of ancient times in a form of story, to which the Prince responded remarkably well, although he was ill. As soon as the Prince got better, I went down with the measles, probably because I was worried so much over the Prince's sickness not long after my childbirth, thus my symptoms were very serious. The baby (King Chōngjo) broke out into a rash at the same time I did. He was then only three months old but the symptoms were mild and he passed through the illness without much trouble. Lady Sōnhŭi and my father were both afraid of my concern over the sick baby in my illness, and so they did not tell me that he was also infected. I was therefore unaware until they told me that my father had to go backward and forward between me and the baby and had been concerned beyond what words could express. One night he collapsed and had been unable to stand up. When, after I recovered, I heard of his distress and concern for us for the first time, I was very sorry. One of the wet nurses nursed the baby and my father had to look after the sick baby all by himself to his utmost anxiety. Fortunately the baby passed through the illness without much trouble, much to my surprise; he had grown well after the measles and could already understand letters on his first birthday. He was indeed precocious and quite different from the ordinary children. In the early Autumn of 1753 the King personally tortured the Senior Superintendent of Education (Taejehak)<sup>1</sup> Cho Kwan-bin at the

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

Court and everyone in the Court was very frightened. The two year old baby waved his hand and said "Don't shout". It was very strange that a two year old baby could be so intelligent. At the age of three he was given a royal instructor and was taught the Classic of Filial Piety (Hyŏgyŏng)<sup>1</sup>. His young age did not disturb his learning. He loved learning so much that it was not at all hard to teach him. At the age of six when the King invited the Confucian scholars into the Court and held a lecture, he asked him (King Chŏngjo) to read the book beside the King's seat. He read it so well with such a clear voice that the Royal Instructor, Nam, Yu-yong said "A child of the immortals has come to read this book". At which King Yŏngjo was extremely delighted. I do not think there was ever anyone so precocious. When he was still very young he gave so much evidence of his devotion to the Crown Prince that I can hardly recollect it all and put it down. Everything about him was unlike a common person, and more akin to a heavenly being. This was the glorious son I had when I myself was still young and later I gave birth to Ch'ŏngyŏn<sup>2</sup> in 1754 (Kapsul) and Ch'ŏngsŏn<sup>3</sup> in 1756 (Pyŏngja). Ch'ŏngyŏn had a very gentle and generous disposition and Ch'ŏngsŏn had a beautiful appearance and a gentle heart, so they were like two beads in my hand. Everyone respected and envied me.

As to my own family, my father was earnest, achieved a great name and shone with prosperity. And also I had many brothers and sisters which made me feel secure. When my mother visited the Court, she used to come with my youngest sister and

<sup>1</sup> Hsiao ching; a compilation of filial piety doctrines by Confucius (551-479 B.C.) and Tseng, Tsian (505-437 B.C.). An ancient Chinese classic.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

<sup>3</sup> See BI.

brother<sup>1</sup> ahead of her. My youngest brother was born in the latter part of my parents' lives and so they loved him especially. Moreover his character was loyal, pure-hearted and generous. From childhood he showed a spirit which gave promise that he would make a great name for himself later on. King Chǒngjo loved him very much and played with him, so I also loved him especially and expected great things of him. My youngest sister was born after I came to the Court at a time when my parents missed me very much. Most people would take more delight in begetting a boy, but my family missed me so much after I came to the palace that when my youngest sister was born, the whole family was overjoyed and I also was glad as if I had left part of myself at home with my parents. My sister's nature was as flawless as jade and her behaviour was filial. In spite of my parents' and brothers' excessive love for her, she was never haughty. Whenever she came to the Court, both Queens and Lady Sǒnhŭi loved her. At the Royal Wedding reception in T'ongmyǒngjǒn court maids from all the palaces held her in their arms one after another as if they were enjoying the sight of the moon or lotus blossom. This showed how beautiful her natural disposition was. I loved her deeply not only as a sister but also for what she was in herself. She always stayed near me (when she came to Court) and when she paid a visit to the palace with my mother in 1750 (Kyǒngo) at the age of five, and she heard that I was expecting the baby, said "The King will be very happy" just like a grown-up. Everyone who heard her was surprised and Queen Hyosun hung a pendant jewel upon her (jacket). Later on, when I saw her, she was no longer wearing it, and when I asked the reason, she answered, "Because the lady who gave it to me was

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<sup>1</sup> Hong Nag-yun.

no longer here,<sup>1</sup> so I did not wear it." When she came to see me the Autumn after that sad national event of April/May 1752 (3m Imsin)<sup>2</sup>, she wept to see me, and again broke into tears when she held the hand of the governess who used to look after the baby. She was only seven then and it was strange to see how she could be so precocious. For the Happy Event of October 1752 (9m Imsin)<sup>3</sup> my mother came to Court together with my little sister, who, when she saw the baby said "This child looks so big and strong he will never cause my sister any anxiety." Everyone who was there laughed, but my mother rebuked her instead because her words were not proper for a young child. But I told my mother not to blame her because after all she was right.

At that time, the Court was full of continuous happiness and my home was also prosperous with my brothers and sisters all doing better than most. So all the court ladies congratulated me on my good fortune. The Crown Prince treated my mother extremely well, being very respectful to her, just as if she had not been a commoner. My mother loved and treasured him as few mothers-in-law do, and devoted her whole heart to him. When my mother came to Court, if there was anything which made the Prince upset, my mother would calm him saying "Things are not like that". Then he would soon recover himself. When I had Ch'ōngyōn in 1754 (Kapsul), my mother stayed in the royal palace for almost 50 days, and all the time the Prince treated her so kindly that my mother was very deeply appreciative of his favour.

<sup>1</sup> Queen Hyosun died 1751.

<sup>2</sup> The death of Ŭiso.

<sup>3</sup> The birth of King Chōngjo.

The Prince's disposition was excellent, his learning was improving gradually, and his spirit and natural disposition should have continued to make gradual progress. But unfortunately he began to fall sick between 1752 and 1753 (Imsin and Kyeyu), to my immeasurable anxiety and my parents' deep concern. My mother was so anxious day and night, that she prayed at practically every well-known mountain and river.<sup>1</sup> She could not sleep at night, for she prayed to Heaven so much for him. All this is because she had such a daughter as myself, and therefore was so devoted to the State and concerned about it.

Since my brother<sup>2</sup> was born when my parents were still young, they instructed him very strictly, and so he gained considerable education while still young. His will and spirit were excellent. He conducted himself in an outstanding way and when he was fifteen was already like a grown-up scholar, so everyone in our family held him in great esteem, menservants and maids treating him with great deference as their lord and master. Since he acted in accordance with adult codes of behaviour his colleagues did not dare despise him and Lord Chŏnghŏn always thought of him as a man of great ability in the family. He had intended to marry in 1743 (Kyehae) but put it off because of the Crown Prince's marriage (to myself) and his wedding was finally held in 1745 (Ŭlch'uk). His wife was a great-granddaughter of Yŏyang<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The conventional native religion of worshipping heavenly gods, great mountains and big rivers was maintained by the Yi dynasty. People prepared ritual food offerings for the mountain and earth gods, purify themselves with fresh cold water, visiting famous mountains and rivers to pray for the happiness of the family, and the banishment of misfortunes and disease from the home. Kim Pu-sik, Samguk-sagi (Gakuto soŝho reprint, Tokyo, 1964 of the Kojŏn Kanhaenghoe, Keijō, 1931) ch. 13, p.1A.

<sup>2</sup> Hong Nag-in.

<sup>3</sup> Yŏyang Puwŏn'gun, Min Yu-jung.  
Puwŏn'gun. See GOT.

and a granddaughter of one of the retired government officials (Pongjoha)<sup>1</sup> which meant that she was from one of the most distinguished families. When she was very young she used to come to the Court and the three Highnesses would care for her. Now all three were very happy to know that she had married into my family, and sent a court governess to take part in her marriage procession.<sup>2</sup> Both Queen Dowager and Queen called for me and enquired about the marriage in detail, abundantly demonstrating their generosity of heart towards their relatives by marriage.

When my sister-in-law came into the palace for the first time after her marriage, I recognized that her natural disposition was pure and graceful, her spirit exalted and beautiful, her appearance dignified and her conduct in perfect accordance with the rules of behaviour. She was like a stork among the chickens, and jade shining out amongst the other stones when she stood amongst the other royal young women relatives visiting the Court. She and my brother made a really perfect match - a match made in Heaven. So in our family the eldest son and his wife were most eminent, and my parents treasured them more than anything else in the world.

Subsequently my sister-in-law gave birth to two daughters one after the other, and for quite a long time they were unable to have a boy which made my parents very anxious and impatient. But when you, Su-yŏng, were born on May/June 1755 (4m Ŭlhae) your bone structure was outstanding and you were very handsome

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> A bride was escorted to the home of her future husband to be married to him. HMT V.4, pp.306-321.

even as a baby in swaddling clothes so that your parents loved and treasured you more than an immense sum of treasure and were ambitious for you as for a 1000-li horse. They wrote to me congratulating themselves sincerely. I thought it was only natural that their child should be so wonderful and was very glad for my family. Afterwards, King Yǒngjo saw you and was most favourably impressed, and gave you the name Su-yǒng, which was the greatest honour for a baby. And King Chǒngjo loved you very much. I think there was no one who had such an honour as a child as you did.

After you were born, my home lacked nothing. But alas! My mother died in September/October 1755 (8m Ūlhae). Of course, it is natural for people to be very sad when they lose their mother. But in my case I felt as if I had been left by myself in the world. It was such agony that it made me feel the world was (suddenly) empty, and I felt no desire to go on living. My father was also very sad, not only because he had lost a most intelligent wife, but also because of my sorrow. So, although I could not neglect myself too much, and I had to comfort my father, my sorrow was too much to forget even for one second.

When the death was announced, Lady Sǒnhŭi came to see me in person and comforted me like my own mother. This kind of affection between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is rare, even among commoners. I was moved very much and could scarcely avoid trying not to be too sad. After the funeral, when I went up to see both Queen Dowager and Queen to make my greeting, they held my hands in theirs, and wept and lamented over my mother's sad death, comforting me. I felt the great honour bestowed upon me in spite of the distress caused by my affliction.

Indeed, I felt too sad to stay on in this world although I forced myself to do so, and King Yǒngjo said that I was lamenting too much, while Queen Chǒngsǒng and Lady Sǒnhŭi both chided me for breaking the state customs with regard to formal wear and observing mourning too long. This made me even more depressed because I felt that I could not fulfil my proper obligations as regards mourning.

The wives of my second and third brothers<sup>1</sup> were second cousins to each other. The wife of my second brother was wise, graceful and obedient and the spouse of my third brother was gentle and friendly. My parents were very happy about them but before long, they lost my mother. Then my second brother was seventeen and my third only fifteen. They seemed to feel they had attained adulthood in vain. My youngest brother was then only six, at the age my father lost his mother, and he did not seem to understand his sad situation. But my young sister was old enough to know it, she behaved like a mourner, feeling sorry for her younger brother and looking after him like a grown-up, so that they were a support to each other. My youngest brother was dependent on my grandmother, and my sister was helped by my sister-in-law.<sup>2</sup> So I had no need to worry about their clothing and food, but when I thought that they had no one to fall back on, and how lonely they must feel, I could not forget them even for a moment. Each time my sister wrote to me, the letter would contain words describing how much she missed our mother, and I would shed streams of tears reading each letter.

<sup>1</sup> The wife of the second brother Hong Nak-sin, was Lady Cho of Imch'on, daughter of the Minister of the Civil Office Board, Cho Myǒng-chǒng. The wife of the third brother Hong Nag-in, was Lady Cho of same clan, the daughter of Ŭn'gyo Cho Myǒng-gǒn. Ŭn'gyo, See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> The wife of Hong Nag-in.

In March 1756 (2m Pyǒngja) my father was sent out as governor (Yusu)<sup>1</sup> of Kwangju and I was very sad at his departure. Moreover, he took my grandmother with him whom I thought of as a second mother, which distressed me even more. In September/October 1756 (intercalary 9m) I gave birth to Ch'ǒngsǒn, and felt very depressed, remembering that each time I had given birth before my mother had come into the palace. (When I recalled this) my sorrow was so great that I was unable to look after myself properly, and since I was on a meatless diet for too long, I became critically exhausted. King Yǒngjo was very worried, and ordered my father to get me some restorative for me. Thanks to this I was able to recover from the child-birth safely. But sorrow took so deep a hold of my mind that I was still very weak, which made my father deeply concerned about me. That same month my father was appointed the Provincial Governor (Kamsa) of P'yǒngyang and departed in sorrow. Though his private affairs disturbed him, he hastened away to obey the royal commands as best he could, and stayed in that place.

In the middle of the following winter, the Crown Prince was stricken with small-pox. My father was always concerned over his own lack of ability, and when he heard this news in that distant province, he remained day and night in a cold room, worrying over the news from Seoul so much, they said that his beard turned completely white. Fortunately, the Crown Prince survived the small-pox and recovered, which was a great blessing. But less than 100 days after his recovery, Queen Chǒnsǒng died and he was so sad that every one admired his filial piety. At the national funeral people were moved to tears to see his affliction. National affairs were confused then and the prince

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

did not recover fully from his illness for a long while.

My father was posted back to the Seoul government office in June/July 1757 (5m) and we were very glad to see each other again after the separation, but one anxiety following on another made us do nothing but weep each time we met.

That December 1757/January 1758 (11m) King Yǒngjo was very angry and my father was obliged to remonstrate<sup>1</sup> with him out of utmost loyalty which was extremely awkward in view of his situation. This made the King angrier than ever and he dismissed him from office, so that he was no longer entitled to reside within the city gates. Yet from the time I came to Court, the King's affection toward me never changed and even at this very difficult period, he never lessened his love for me. But it was then that I received a stern reprimand for the first time, and did not know where to put myself and stayed in retirement.

After a long while, the King ordered my father to be re-appointed to his former position<sup>2</sup>, called me in and displayed his usual affection. Though I was fearful at the time, the King's extreme favour to me was something I felt I could scarcely repay even by breaking my body and pulverising my bones.

<sup>1</sup> On 18 of December 1757, King Yǒngjo summoned the both Senior and Junior Vice Presidents of the Council to inquire why the Crown Prince had not requested an audience with the King since August/September of that year. CWS v.43, p.667. On 21st of December, the Junior Councillor of the Left (Chwa-ch'amch'an), Hong Pong-han together with Senior Vice President of the Council, Sin Man, presented themselves at Court. The King was about to announce his abdication but Hong Pong-han remonstrated with him on the grounds that the Crown Prince was unable to express himself at the regular Council Meeting because of his fear of his father. This made the King very angry. CWS v.43, pp.668-669.

<sup>2</sup> On 12 January 1758, the King pardoned Hong Pong-han and reappointed him to his former post as Ōyongtaejang. He seems also to have been appointed to an additional post as Junior Councillor of the Left. CWS v.43, p.670. Ōyongtaejang, see GOT.

I experienced so many things which I would include here also if they were the kind of thing I could write down. Our country was unfortunate in losing Queen Dowager Inwŏn a month after Queen Chŏngsŏng's death. I had immense love for both Queens, accompanying them humbly. In one day, I had so many anxieties yet I was left with no one to rely on. For I wanted to devote my feeble self to Queen Chŏngsŏng, being near to the apartment where she was lying in state before the burial performing the simple rites at noon and weeping bitterly<sup>1</sup> in the morning and evening, and indeed for five months I followed this practice. But there was no way to repay the affection Queen Dowager Inwŏn showed me. Her illness had taken a serious turn within one short month, and suddenly Queen Chŏngsŏng was no more, so that I was left all alone and very anxious in my devotion to her. King Yŏngjo served the Queen Dowager day and night without removing his robes or belt, so that I felt acute anxiety. My sense of emptiness and grief at the Queens' death were beyond expression when I looked at the King. As soon as the three years mourning for both Queens was over, King Yŏngjo remarried in 1759.<sup>2</sup> At that time, there were all sorts of worries in the palace which no one mentioned. Lady Sŏnhŭi told me, "Since Queen Chŏngsŏng is dead, it is correct for the state to fix upon a Queen, and to hold a state wedding". She congratulated the King and prepared the State Wedding in person with utmost sincerity, really rejoicing that Court would again be complete. Her virtuous devotion to His Highness was really outstanding.

<sup>1</sup> Korean custom of lamenting the death.

<sup>2</sup> On 15 August 1759, King Yŏngjo married his second wife, Queen Chongsun. CWS v.44, p.12.

When the Crown Prince had an audience with King Yǒngjo after the State Wedding, he conducted himself very carefully and in a devoted manner, showing innate filial piety and sincerity. He used to be very happy whenever he had finished greeting both King and Queen without any difficulty and every one in the palace knew this. Alas! What was the use of explaining to Heaven; how sad it all was!

The Crown Prince had filial piety, brotherly love and warm affection beyond the average, so he treasured King Chǒngjo immensely, and defined his moral obligation so strictly that he never let the Princesses even dare to compete with him, or his half-brothers to look up to him. He respected Hwasun<sup>1</sup> and Hwap'yǒng<sup>2</sup> as elder sisters and sympathized with Hwayǒp<sup>3</sup> sharing her in view of the fact that the King was not fond of her. This is why he lamented very much when she died. As to Madame Chǒng<sup>4</sup> since the King was so devoted to her and indeed was influenced by her much more than he was by the Crown Prince, this would have naturally led him to lose his temper with her had he possessed the heart of an ordinary man. But the Crown Prince never failed to show a warm affection towards her, which would have been impossible for an ordinary man.

In April, 1761 (3m Sinsa), King Chǒngjo entered the Palace School and the coming-of-age ceremony took place at Kyǒnghŭi Palace, but the Crown Prince could not attend, neither could I. Naturally I felt sorry about it as a mother, but I also had another great worry at that time. My father was then experiencing great difficulties and trouble, and when he was overconcerned

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<sup>1</sup> See BI.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

<sup>3</sup> See BI.

<sup>4</sup> See BI.

to repay the favours the King showed him and protect the Crown Prince (who was acting on behalf of the King) he would feel as if he were choking and suffered from repeated attacks of vomiting all the time. Whenever he saw me, he used to invoke heaven with his hands clasped, praying for the peace of the country. This utmost sincerity of his I express here not simply from being his daughter, for heaven itself made it clear and the divine spirits of heaven and earth witnessed it. That same month, my father was appointed Junior Vice President of the Council, since the post was vacant and moreover the King was ill. Although he did not wish to accept (when chosen) he earnestly devoted himself to the work of his post for he felt he owed so much to royal favour. Then hundreds and thousands of anxieties were piled one upon another, while he tried to repay the King's favour with his life. So he always appeared worried and cautious. When he went to the Royal Ancestral Temple to pray for rain as a temporary ritual officer, he prayed in his mind for the nation to be peaceful, looking up at the ancestral tablets of the kings of many generations. He sent his prayer to me in a letter and I wept over the letter as I held it.

My brother<sup>1</sup> had passed the Minor State Examination in 1750 (Kyōngo) and coming to Court, met the Crown Prince who said, "Your will and spirit are in harmony with each other." In 1761 (Sinsa) he passed a Major State Examination and often served the Royal grandson - as an official of the Institute of the Royal Grandson (Kangsōwōn). He frequently instructed him and earned great merit thereby. Whenever he did the night duty at the Institute of the Royal Grandson we used to meet each other, talk

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<sup>1</sup> Hong Nag-in.

over state problems and then try to forget them completely.

In the Winter of 1761 (Sinsa) a wife was selected for the Royal Grandson. My father had been invited to the ceremonial party for the sixtieth birthday of the mother of Sǒngǔng<sup>1</sup> who served as the Board Minister and saw the future Queen<sup>2</sup> as a child. He told me of her outstanding disposition, so when the Crown Prince saw the name of Lord Kim Si-mok's daughter on the list of daughters of officials, he was inclined to select her. As she was a girl of great virtue everyone in the Court agreed with him, and the decision was reached without difficulty. It was really heaven-sent. The Crown Prince loved his daughter-in-law and treasured her greatly. Though she was very young when the Crown Prince died, she was overcome with extreme sorrow and as time went by she cherished the memory of the deceased more and more, and still weeps whenever she speaks of him. This is not only because of his love for her, but also because she is very filial. She went down with small-pox right after the Second Selection and soon afterward her future husband contracted it. Though the symptoms of both were very mild, it was so close to the Third Selection that I was very worried. However, although he caught small-pox at the end of December 1761 (11m Sinsa), he recovered from it within a few days, fortunately for both our family and the State. King Yǒngjo was greatly relieved after his anxiety on behalf of his grandson, and the Crown Prince was very glad, which I remember as if it were yesterday. I had prayed in my heart to the gods of earth and heaven that my son should pass through his illness without serious trouble, clasping hands in utmost earnestness. During

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<sup>1</sup> See BI, Kim Sǒng-ǔng.

<sup>2</sup> See BI, Queen Hyōi.

the same period my father stayed on duty at the Court, his deep anxiety being beyond words. But thanks to the royal ancestors, both King and Queen (the Royal Grandson and his future wife) came through their sickness without much trouble.

That same month they held the Third Selection, and on 25 February 1762 (2d 2m Imo) the State Wedding was held, its completion being a most happy event for the whole nation.

Alas! How can I speak about the Incident of a certain month of a certain year. Confronted by this disaster, it was as if the heaven and earth touched each other and the sun and moon turned pitch-black, so that I had no desire to remain in the world any longer. I tried to kill myself with a sword, but failed because those around me snatched it away. Then I considered that I could scarcely make the Royal Grandson suffer the bitter agony of being deprived of me at this time when he was only eleven years old, for then how could he fulfil his life? And so I endured and went on enduring, preserving my woeful lot and crying to heaven. At that time my father was sternly rebuked by the King, and retired outside the East Gate. He came back to the palace when everything was hopeless (after the Crown Prince was locked up in the grain box)<sup>1</sup> and that infinite agony of his was something beyond comparison. On the day itself, he fainted, and when he regained consciousness he too did not want to go on living. But like myself, his one sincere wish was to protect the Royal Grandson, so he was unable to follow the Crown Prince (into the other world). Only the spirits know this arduous loyalty of his. That same night I came back to my own home with the Royal Grandson. Heaven and earth would have changed colour at the sight of our great grief.

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<sup>1</sup> See below note 2 on page 183.

Then King Yǒngjo ordered my father to rescue and protect the Royal Grandson. Although I was overwhelmed with sorrow I thanked him and wept profusely for the Royal Grandson when I heard the King's decree. I caressed my son and warned him to express his gratitude for this royal favour, but I myself was very sad. Later on, when we went back to the Court early one morning in accordance with the royal decree, my father held my hand in the courtyard and wept, saying, "May you live long with the Royal Grandson! May the latter years of your life be immensely happy!"

Since time began there has never been any sorrow like mine. Before they buried him in the tomb mound Lady Sǒnhǔi came to see me, sad and resentful. The Crown Prince's aged mother was in such agony that I suppressed my own sorrow and tried to comfort her, saying, "For the sake of the Royal Grandson, please look after yourself". After the funeral, she went back to her palace and left me alone with hardly anyone to rely on.

In September/October (8m) of this year I had a humble audience with the King. In spite of my inward sadness which I never dared to dispel, I wept and said, "Your Highness conferred a great favour upon myself and my son by sparing our lives!" King Yǒngjo held my hand and said weeping, "I hardly imagined you would take it this way. It was very hard for me to make up my mind to see you. But you are very beautiful, and I derive a sense of comfort from you." When I heard these royal words, I felt even more oppressed and it was painful for me to go on living this woeful life. And I also said, "I hope your Highness will take the Royal Grandson to Kyǒnghǔi Palace<sup>1</sup> and teach him."

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<sup>1</sup> See Map I, C.

The King asked, "Do you think he can bear to live apart from you?" I said, weeping, "It is a small matter that he should be distressed by leaving me but it is important that he should learn in the company of Your Highness." I tried to send the boy away but our feelings at leaving each other were indescribable. The Royal Grandson would not leave me for all the world, but finally he went off weeping, which broke my heart. I endured this misery, and the King's favour for him grew greater every day. He loved the Royal Grandson very much and Lady Sǒnhǔi transferred her love from son to grandson and poured all her grief-stricken love towards him. So that she should not be ignorant of his conduct, diet and other problems, she stayed in the same room, waking him up early in the morning to ask him to study from dawn. This 70 year old Lady would wake up when her grandson went out for his study, and see to his breakfast herself. Therefore, although the Royal Grandson did not usually eat early breakfast, he used to force himself, being unable to decline her devoted care, as it was said. Lady Sǒnhǔi's feelings at that time are unimagineable.

Since he loved learning from the time he was only four or five, it did not worry me that he might not study hard, although we lived separately in different palaces; on the other hand he missed me more and more as the time passed. For the Royal Grandson longed for me so sincerely that, although he used to go to bed late at night, being in company with the King, he would get up early in the morning, write to me and get my answer before he could go to the Institute of the Royal Grandson with his mind at rest. Of course it is natural that a child should miss its mother, but for the three years we were separated, he was like this all the time, which was strangely precocious. During

those three years, I was very often ill, and the sickness clung to me most of the time. So the Royal Grandson used to consult with the Royal physician over my illness, and send the medicines prescribed for me like an adult. He was born filial and extremely clever being able to act like this even as a ten years old boy! On his birthday in October/November (9m) of that year, I did not feel like going (to Kyŏnghŭi Palace to celebrate his birthday) but I was compelled to do so by a Royal command. My residence at that time was a low-roofed house situated south of Kyŏngch'un-jon. The King gave the house the name, Kahyodang writing the signboard himself and saying "I wrote this to repay you for your filial heart at this time". I was hardly able to bring myself to accept it; I wept and felt uncomfortable. But father rejoiced at it and told me to write the title<sup>1</sup> of the Hall on all my family correspondence.

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<sup>1</sup> Kahyodang.

CHAPTER II

The Imo Incident was an affair the like of which was never seen in ancient times. This is why King Chǒngjo asked King Yǒngjo to erase the record from the Diary of the Royal Secretariat (Sǔngjǒngwon Ilgi) at the beginning of 1776 (Pyǒngsin)<sup>1</sup> and so the original documents concerning it disappeared, because King Chǒngjo, out of his filial devotion was very anxious that the general public should not look at them without understanding. But the time is now long passed and there are now only a few who know the facts of the matter. In the meantime, a crowd of people, seeking profit and fastening upon the calamities of others, have distorted the facts, and dazzled their listeners alleging that King Yǒngjo disposed of the Crown Prince not because he was sick but because the King believed an unfounded charge. Or they would say, "Some subject advised the King to take a course of action which His Highness could not imagine, and so matters turned out for the worst, to our utmost grief".

King Chǒngjo witnessed the whole thing and although he was only very young at the time he was very perspicacious and should not have been deceived. But as regards the matter of the Crown Prince and the Incident of a certain year, he always used to draw one particular conclusion and was unable to distinguish truth from falsehood, probably out of his filial piety for his father, so he did not give due weight to the facts, or perhaps was afraid of them. And indeed this likewise sprang unavoidably

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<sup>1</sup> In 23 March 1776 (2d 4m Pyǒngsin), King Chǒngjo presented a memorial to King Yǒngjo asking him to erase the Imo Incident from the Diary of the Royal Secretariat. This petition was accepted which was done at Sǒilam. CWS v.44, pp.528-529. Sǔngjǒngwǒn. See GOT.

from his distressed feelings, since he was carried away because of his close relationship to his father. But King Sunjo's situation is quite different and it is contrary to feelings of humanity and the principle of all creatures in the universe that a descendant should be ignorant of such a major event. Even as a young boy Your Highness (King Sunjo) wanted to know about the Incident but for all the world, King Chǒngjo could not bring himself to tell you the details; and who else dared to tell you, or indeed knew the truth in detail? Other than myself, there is no one in the royal palace who knows the truth and can inform you. So that the royal successor (King Sunjo) will not misunderstand this Incident of great sorrow, I have tried to record all the details, show it to you, and then destroy the record. But I could not set down everything, no matter what the reason, and time has passed away. Now with the experience of one disaster after another, my life is like a cotton thread nearly frayed, and it really goes against human nature not to let the King know the truth before I die. Therefore I record this enduring the death (all over again), and shedding tears of blood, but omitting a great number of things which I could not bring myself to relate and which would make the account tedious.

As a daughter-in-law of the King Yǒngjo, I owed the King affection all the time, and in connection with that Incident his favour gave me renewed life. At the same time my true devotion to the Crown Prince, as his wife, is beyond all bounds; therefore if I distort a hair's breadth about their relations, father and son, may God punish me with death. For already there are various stories about the Incident, and all are ungrounded and false. Once you read this record, you will

understand clearly the beginning and end of the Incident of that year.

Although King Yǒngjo was unable to feel very much affection for the Crown Prince from the beginning, he was scarcely responsible for what took place later; moreover the Crown Prince possessed a noble, good and generous character, but his sickness was so extreme that the fortune of the dynasty hung upon its slightest turn. This being so, it was inevitable that he should experience such things, while his son, King Chǒngjo, and I, his wife, had to suffer the greatest misfortune. Only our sense of duty kept us alive through our bitter suffering. Now Your Highness wants to know the details of this. In general, if people blamed King Yǒngjo, they said that the Crown Prince was not ill and some subject was guilty; this not only fails to grasp the real facts of the situation, but also is a very sorry thing for the three kings. If you keep this in your mind, I do not think it is at all difficult to distinguish the principles of right and wrong in the Incident. I made a draft of this record in the Spring of 1802 (Imsul), but did not show it to you in advance. Lately I suffered unfairness<sup>1</sup> which led me to write this account, and moreover Lady Kasun<sup>2</sup>, asked me to write it since she thought it was right that the descendant (of the Crown Prince) should know the facts. So I forced myself for the first time to write this record containing all my heart and blood and show it to Your Highness. My heart is alarmed all over again and feels as if it is choking me, and my body seems

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<sup>1</sup> In 1801, the authoress' second younger brother Hong Nag-in was convicted of heresy for being a Catholic and poisoned to death.  
CWS v.47, p.397.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

to collapse so that I cannot write, weeping over each word. There can scarcely be any one like me in this world! I feel nothing but resentment. May, 1805 (4m Ŭlchuk).<sup>1</sup>

After the death of Crown Prince Hyojang<sup>2</sup> in 1728 (Musin), the State had no foundation (Crown Prince) for many years, which gave King Yŏngjo great anxiety day and night. But in February 1735 (1m Ŭlmyo), Lady Sŏnhŭi gave birth to Crown Prince Sado. King Yŏngjo, and both Queens, Queen Chŏngsŏng and Queen Dowager Inwŏn, were extremely glad at this most happy event for the State and all the people in the land were overjoyed. The Crown Prince was born with an outstanding disposition and especially fine appearance. According to the records, within 100 days of his birth he showed various extraordinary signs; at four months old he began to walk, at six months to answer King Yŏngjo when he called him, and at seven months he could point to the four cardinal directions. At the age of two he learned characters, and had mastered about 60 of them. At the age of three when a court lady gave him tasik<sup>3</sup> to eat, he ate the ones with the letters "Long life" and "Happiness" on them, but put aside those with the eight trigrams on them and would not eat them. The court lady asked him to eat them, but he said "I won't eat them because they are the eight trigrams." Later he asked someone to hold up a book with the portrait of T'ai-hao Fu Hsi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The date on which the authoress wrote this chapter. It was the fifth year of King Sunjo's reign and after the death of Queen Chŏngsun.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

<sup>3</sup> Tasik; a small cake made of green pea flour, pine blossoms, spinach, chestnuts, sesame and honey, with patterns pressed into it.

<sup>4</sup> T'ai-hao Fu Hsi; the legendary inventor of the trigrams.

and bowed to it. When he came across the character ch'i, 'luxury', while he was learning the Thousand Character Classic, he pointed to his royal costume and said, "This is luxury". And also when he was asked to put on the Crown of the Seven Treasures (gold, silver, lapis, crystal, coral, agate and pearls) which the King Yǒngjo used to wear in his childhood, he refused to put it on, saying it was 'luxury'. When he was asked to put on the royal costume which he had worn on his first birthday celebrations, he refused, saying, "It is embarrassing to wear such luxurious cloth". This was so remarkable in a child of three years, that the court lady tentatively put out the silk and cotton and asked which was luxurious and which was not. The Prince said that silk was luxurious and cotton was not. Once again, in order to see how he would reply, she asked him, "What material would you like me to use to make your royal costume?" He pointed to the cotton and said, "I would like this for my costume", which proved that he was really unusual.

His physical appearance was magnificent; his disposition filial, friendly and clever. Therefore, if only his parents had kept him near them and instructed him, loving and guiding him at the same time, he could have developed a most virtuous personality. But instead, they lived far apart from him so that small errors grew greater with the passage of time till at last matters reached a pitch which can hardly be described. This came about from his extremely unlucky fate and the sad destiny of the State which human power could not change, to my utmost and immeasurable sorrow.

Because King Yǒngjo was worried about the Crown Prince's palace having stood vacant for so long, when the Crown Prince was born he was so glad that he did not take account of what it meant for a baby to be taken away from its parents. He only rejoiced that the Crown Prince's palace would now have a master, and so sent the child from the Chippok-hǒn<sup>1</sup> to the long empty Chǒsǔng-jǒn. The baby was placed there in the custody of the governess when only 100 days old, since the King was so anxious to establish him formally at the earliest opportunity.

The Chǒsǔng-jǒn is a big palace originally built as a Crown Prince's residence. Next to it is the Nakasǒn-dang where the Crown Prince goes to attend lectures on classics and histories of ancient China; the Tǒksǒng-hap<sup>2</sup> where the King lectured to the Ch'amch'an'gwan<sup>3</sup> and the officials below him; the Simin-dang<sup>4</sup> where the Crown Prince reviews his lessons with the Royal Tutor and the officers below him; and just outside the Simin-dang, the Ch'un'gyebang<sup>5</sup>. Since all these apartments would belong to the Crown Prince when he grew older, the King wanted him to be master of Chǒsǔng-jǒn like an adult Prince.

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<sup>1</sup> An enclosed balcony of the Ch'an'gyǒng Palace. Crown Prince Sado and King Sukjong were born here. See Map II, E.

<sup>2</sup> It used to be on the eastern side of Chǒsǔng-jǒn in Ch'an'gyǒng Palace.

<sup>3</sup> See GOT.

<sup>4</sup> The hall in Ch'an'gyǒng Palace where the Crown Prince conducted his administration on behalf of the King.

<sup>5</sup> The Royal Institute of the Crown Prince (Seja Sigangwǒn) and the Office of Royal Bodyguard of the Crown Prince (Seja Iggwisa).

Since that palace was a long way from the one in which the King Yǒngjo resided and also from that of Lady Sǒnhŭi, King Yǒngjo and Lady Sǒnhŭi used to visit the young Prince every day, whether it was in the hardness of winter or in midsummer, and very often stayed with him, as other people have related. But how could this be like living in the same palace with his parents, where they could care for him day and night and instruct him endlessly. I cannot understand why, when he had only just got a precious son to whom he would eventually entrust the State, the King did not put formality aside and have the baby brought up by himself and Lady Sǒnhŭi. Instead, since they lived far away, from the time the Crown Prince began to understand human affairs, he naturally spent more time away from his parents than with them. So those who surrounded the Crown Prince morning and evening were eunuchs and court maids, and what he heard were only the trivia of middle-class lives. This was already a basic mistake, sad and worthy of reproach.

In his childhood the Crown Prince's virtue was extraordinary; his manners were completely in accordance with the dictates of ritual, and his disposition was stern. He used very few words, so the people respected him in the way they might do a grown-up King. With this natural endowment and disposition, if only he had stayed close to his parents, and if only his father the King had taught him reading and learning during his leisure moments from state affairs, sitting by his side! And as to his mother Lady Sǒnhŭi, since the Crown Prince's success was her highest aim in life, if only she had kept his hand in hers, instructing him in various things, both with firmness and kind affection, so that both their minds should belong to each other without separation, rather than leaving him to himself!

From the beginning, it was most grievous and heart-breaking that they kept the young baby in the far away Chōsŭng-jōn.

In the second place, it was unfortunate that the King brought in those weird court maids. I am not now recording woman's gossip but the true facts of the situation. The Queen Dowager Ō<sup>1</sup> had lived in the Chōsŭng-jōn and had died there not long before. In the Ch'wisōn-dang<sup>2</sup> at the other side of the Chōsŭng-jōn, Lady Hŭi<sup>3</sup> had been living since 1694 and calling down imprecations upon Queen Dowager Inhyōn<sup>4</sup>. It was very strange that King Yōngjo left his baby son in swaddling clothes in such a desolate palace all by himself, and moreover allotted the Lady Hŭi's residence as his palace kitchen, and ordered that the Crown Prince's meals should be prepared there. Three years after the death of Queen Dowager Ō, all the court maids who used to serve her had left the palace. When the King established the Crown Prince's palace, he recalled these court maids from various places which was fair and proper enough. But I cannot understand why he had to recall Governess Ch'oe and all those court maids ranking under her who used to belong to the palace of King Kyōngjong and Queen Ō and make them maids of the Crown Prince's palace. This must have made them feel as if King Kyōngjong was still alive, and so they were stubborn and unfeeling.<sup>5</sup> These extremely insignificant factors led to serious trouble, to my great resentment.

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<sup>1</sup> See BI, Queen Sōnŭi.

<sup>2</sup> A house in Chan'gyōng Palace.

<sup>3</sup> The mother of King Kyōngjong and the royal concubine of King Sukjong.

<sup>4</sup> See BI.

<sup>5</sup> King Yōngjo was the half brother of King Kyōngjong. Queen Ō objected when her husband appointed his brother, later King Yōngjo, the Crown Prince.

King Yǒngjo was truly overjoyed at obtaining a son, and loved him incomparably up to the age of four or five. The King used to come to stay with him at night and there was hardly any distance between them, while the Crown Prince himself, being by nature filial and kind to his brothers and sisters, naturally loved his parents. Although their residences were far apart, there was no particular reason for trouble and the King loved and instructed him as I have said. So if they were ordinary middle-class father and son, there would not have been the least trace of estrangement between them. But alas! To the misfortune of the State, the King used to get angry at small things which could hardly be specifically pointed out, and yet without mentioning the reason to the people. Gradually, when this happened time after time, without understanding the reason clearly himself, he began to stay less and less at the Crown Prince's palace. The boy was just at that stage when a child needs constant care, both in instructions and prohibition, otherwise he will be left to his own devices. It was only natural that with little supervision trouble began to occur.

King Yǒngjo was exceptionally devoted to his daughter Princess Hwap'yǒng. In 1738 (Muo), he invited the Royal Son-in-law, Kǔmsǒng-wi<sup>1</sup> and allowed him to play at the Crown Prince's palace before the wedding, and after the selection; he showed special affection to his royal son-in-law because of his special feeling for the princess. Now the court ladies of the palace of the Crown Prince were those of the King Kyǒngjong,<sup>2</sup> and Royal Governess Ch'oe in particular was a person without an

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<sup>1</sup> See BI.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

evil thought but very strict. Though she was loyal, her personality was not graceful or quiet, but jealous and insidious. And next there was Governess Han who was very talented, cunning and full of envy. Although she was then court maid of the Crown Prince's household, since she was originally a court maid of King Kyōngjong's palace, how could she be expected to devote herself to King Yōngjo? At the same time, those court maids of lesser birth, being ignorant of where their first duty lay, did not regard Lady Sōnhŭi as high or noble, and instead despised her and spoke to her disrespectfully, only remembering her as a poor and obscure citizen. And they even deliberately slighted her, which made Lady Sōnhŭi feel uncomfortable, while King Yōngjo, of course, sensed what was happening.

It was on New Year's Day when the scriptures were being read, Kŭmsōng-wi came to Court and there was a delay in the preparations for reading the scriptures.<sup>1</sup> At that time, these same refractory court maids, upset about what had happened, sat together, criticizing (the proceedings) to each other. Lady Sōnhŭi was distressed at this and King Yōngjo, seeing how things were going, thought the ladies very insolent. But he did not punish them, because he was afraid that they might in turn reproach his daughter and son-in-law, if he punished them while they were staying in his palace. But he was very put out by what had occurred, so even though he still wanted to visit the palace of the Crown Prince, he did so less than before because he did not like to face the court maids there. Is it not

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<sup>1</sup> Blind fortune-tellers were commissioned to read the scriptures, and to pray for happiness and good fortune.

frustrating to think that, instead of removing them, the King put the Crown Prince in the custody of these same strange court maids and visited the Prince's palace the less on account of his hatred toward them?

Meanwhile, the Crown Prince was growing older and liked to play, as is natural for children. At that time he needed constant instruction, but Governess Han took advantage of the fact that the King's visits were so infrequent and told the Governess Ch'oe, "if every one stops him playing and doing as he wishes, the child will become deeply frustrated and ill at ease. So, Governess Ch'oe, be strict and lead him in the right way, while I will let him play now and then so that he can ease his mind." For Governess Han was clever with her hands and used to make scimitars, arrows and bows with wood and paper. Governess Ch'oe and she used to be on duty turn by turn, so as soon as Governess Ch'oe went off duty, Governess Han allowed the children of the court ladies who were already behind the door to jump out with all the toy weapons ready, shouting out like soldiers as they played with the Prince. Though he had the disposition of a King, the Prince was attracted by such things and of course wanted to play. After all even Mencius' mother had to move house three times.<sup>1</sup> He was carried away when he played, but worried, lest if his father the King should come and see him playing, he might punish him. Therefore, the child's mind which used to be open to his parents had now changed. And he also worried lest his mother should find out and so was reluctant to have even a maid from his mother's

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<sup>1</sup> The mother of Mencius (372-289 B.C.), the Chinese philosopher, chose her neighbours carefully to foster the education of her son. She changed her abode three times.

palace coming to his own residence. He was born with a hero's disposition so he naturally enjoyed this kind of game very much, and thus his playing gradually extended in a way which is hard to describe. That court maid Han acted in accordance with changing whims and out of wickedness of heart!

It was not for three or four years that in 1741 (Sinyu), when the Crown Prince was seven, King Yǒngjo realized the wickedness of Miss Han and dismissed her, punishing many other maids as was most just. If only the King had sent all those maids out of the palace and then disciplined himself profoundly! If both he and Lady Sǒnhŭi could have stayed near their son, instructing him all the time! Then he would have become such a filial Prince that he would have pleased the King very much. But although the King dismissed the Han woman, he kept the other maids. And he let his child grow up in a great mansion without the care of a respected elder, and doing just as he pleased. Since those with whom he associated everyday were only eunuchs and court maids, how could you expect him to learn much?

In the meantime, though there was nothing to which one could point specifically that disturbed the relationship between the King and the Prince, the latter began to feel afraid of his father, while the father for his part suspected his son might grow up in a way contrary to his hopes and expectations. Moreover, the character of father and son was utterly different. King Yǒngjo was clever and benevolent, carefully observant yet prompt in action, whereas the Crown Prince was reticent in speech and hesitant in action, unlike his father. Though he possessed a noble and virtuous mind, when

he was questioned even at ordinary times, he could not answer immediately and was slow to reply. When it was the King who enquired of him, although he had his own opinion on the subject, he was even less capable of answering straight away, and instead used to wonder how he should answer, which disappointed the King. This also was one of the main reasons for the Incident. As far as his childhood education was concerned, though born a King's son, he still should have been instructed by his parents, who should have remained constantly at his side so that parents and child were familiar with each other. Instead, the Prince left his parents while he was still a babe in arms and was taken over by the court ladies. They did everything for him; from tying his coat strings to fastening the ends of his trousers with cords, so that everything was made too easy for him. When he granted the royal lecturers and his colleagues audience at the Royal Institute, his reading used to be loud and clear and he used to understand the meaning without any mistake, so that those present would speak very highly of him and his reputation was extensive amongst those outside the Court. But alas, what a bitter misfortune it was! He was so slow to answer his father out of fear and deference that time after time the King was overcome with disappointment and at last became both angry and deeply anxious about him. The more this happened, the more the King should have tried to teach him in person so that their deep feeling for each other could be put on an intimate footing. Instead, the King always kept him far away, hoping that all by himself he would grow up properly in accordance with the King's wishes. Thus, naturally, trouble developed. Of course they grew even less intimate with each other, and whenever they met together the King's resentment against his son predominated over his affection for him.

Whereas the son was very careful, as well as fearful of seeing the King, as if he went through some enormous ordeal whenever he had audience with him, all of which eventually built up a wall between them. Alas, what a sad thing it was!

The Kyōngmogung<sup>1</sup> was appointed the Crown Prince in April/May 1736 (3m Pyōngsin); in 1741 (Sinyu) when he was seven he discussed the Chinese classics; in February/March of 1742 (1m Imsul), when he was eight, he paid homage to the Royal Ancestral Temple and in April (3m) of that year he entered the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince. Everyone admired his natural disposition. In March/April 1743 (3m Kyehae) he celebrated the coming-of-age ceremony and in February/March 1744 (1m Kapja) he was married to me.

When I came to the royal palace and saw how the things were, there were three Queenly consorts (the Queen Dowager, the Queen and Lady Sōnhŭi) and court regulations were so strict and royal etiquette was so important that there was not the slightest regard for persons as individuals. I could not relax even one minute, being full of fear and caution. As for the Crown Prince, his real feelings for the King his father were deficient, while his respect for the court code was exceptional so that this ten-year old child never dared to sit face to face before his own father; instead he used to prostrate himself before the King like any other government official, which was going too far. He never washed his face or combed his hair down early enough (for the morning greeting) and so had to do this in a fuss at his reading time. Whenever we went for the morning greeting, I

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<sup>1</sup> Kyōngmo-gung; the name of the Crown Prince's shrine. The authoress often mentioned her husband by this name. See BI, Crown Prince Sado.

used to wash my face early, putting on the heavy formal hair style and court costume and anxious to go, but the Crown Prince was never ready so that I had to wait for a long time, for a princess was not supposed to go unless the Prince preceded her. Even to my child's mind, it was very strange that the Crown Prince took such a long time to wash his face and I thought that something must have been wrong with him. Sure enough, about 1745 (Ŭlch'uk), he was not like his usual self as he had been when he played bounding about fiercely; there was something unusual about him and he seemed to fall sick, though not very noticeably. The court maids gathered together and whispered about it; they seemed to be worried. In September/October (9m) of that year, he fell seriously ill and began to behave in an unusual manner. Since his sickness was serious, of course shamans were consulted. All of these said with one voice that this misfortune resulted from the Crown Prince's staying in the Chōsŭng-jōn. Therefore we prayed at the ancestral tablet hall and recited incantations a great deal, spending a fortune<sup>1</sup> but he did not recover. So the Crown Prince left the Chōsŭng-jōn and moved into the Yunggyōng-hōn<sup>2</sup> in order to avoid further calamity. I moved into the Chippok-hōn nearby in order to serve him. In January/February 1746 (1m Pyōngin), we moved to the Kyōngch'un-jōn. The Crown Prince was then 12 years old and since the Kyōngch'un-jōn was close to both Yōnggyōng-dang and Chippok-hōn, Lady Sōnhŭi frequently visited us.

<sup>1</sup> To perform exorcism, the preparation of offerings for the grand ritual was necessary. Shamans who conducted the ritual were paid large sums of money. During the Yi dynasty, there was a state shaman attached to the Court for the national ceremonies of exorcism. These were established in the Koryō period and continued throughout the Yi dynasty, in spite of the strong anti-shamanism at the end of the Koryō period led by the Confucian scholars. Korea (Government-General of Chōsen, 1910-1945), Minkan shinkō, Vol.3. Kokusho Kankōkai, ed. (Tokyo, 1972), pp.265-306. See also Introduction, p.12.

<sup>2</sup> The apartments on either side of the main hall of Taejo-jōn, the Queen's residence in Ch'angdōk Palace. See Map III, C.

Princess Hwap'yǒng's nature was kind, generous, obedient and frugal. She treasured her brother, asking him, "please stay in Yǒnggyǒng-dang", and thus they were very close to each other. Because King Yǒngjo was so devoted to his daughter, he also treated the Crown Prince very well, associating him with the princess' happiness and consequently causing the Crown Prince to be less afraid of his father. If only Princess Hwap'yǒng had lived, she could have helped to improve the relationship between the King and his son. In 1747 (Chǒngmyo), the Crown Prince studied earnestly and life was for a time free of problems. But in November/December (10m) of that year the long galleries of the Ch'angdǒk Palace were burnt down and the King moved into the Kyǒnghŭi Palace. At this time the Crown Prince lived in Chuphŭi-dang; the Lady Sǒnhŭi lived in Yangdǒk-dang<sup>1</sup>, and the Princess Hwap'yǒng in Ilnyǒng-hǒn<sup>2</sup> both of which were distant from the Crown Prince's residence and thus they could rarely see each other. From that time forward, the Crown Prince started to give himself up to amusements. Princess Hwap'yǒng died in June/July 1748 (6m Mujin). For King Yǒngjo, who had lost that daughter whom he loved much more than an ordinary child, the agony was so deep that it threatened to affect his health, and Lady Sǒnhŭi was similarly afflicted. Both of them were so overcome at losing the princess that they forgot everything else, and could not look after their son properly. In the meantime, the Crown Prince did not hesitate to amuse himself more and more until there was nothing he had not tried; he was well skilled in the techniques of shooting arrows and flourishing his sword, and therefore he concentrated on that sort of thing. But he also passed the time drawing, and

<sup>1</sup> A hall in the Kyǒnghŭi Palace.

<sup>2</sup> An Enclosed balcony in the Kyǒnghŭi Palace.

asked Kim Myōng-gi, who was a blind fortune-teller in charge of national prayers, to write down various apocryphal and heterodox works for him. He then learnt them by heart, being fond of such books. Since he was interested in this how could he be expected to be sound in his learning! When the King kept him nearby he worked hard at his studies and there was no barrier between father and son, and the Prince did not play. But as soon as he lived apart from his father, he started to play again and stopped concentrating on his studies, which set father and son against each other even more. If only his parents had kept him within their control things would not have reached such a dreadful state. But for some reason I could not understand, the King never sincerely instructed him and never sat down together with him when no one was there. Instead he left his son to do just as he pleased and did not seem to pay attention, yet always scolded him in the presence of others just as if he were maligning his son. Once the King was ill, and Queen Dowager Inwōn came down and all the princesses and both Royal Sons-in-law, Wōlsōng-wi<sup>1</sup> and Kūmsōng-wi also came in (to see the King) so that there was a great gathering. Then the King ordered the court maids to bring in all the Crown Prince's toys and show them to everyone, embarrassing his son in the presence of so many people.

As for the Crown Prince's studies, the King would invite him to the Regular Administrative Board Meeting or some other gathering of all the government officials, and then question him about the meaning of particular phrases or passages. Moreover he would question him unkindly concentrating on points to which

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<sup>1</sup> The husband of Princess Hwasun, Kim Han-jin.

his son could not give a clear reply, so that the Prince who in front of his father was generally hesitant in answering, even on points about which he was certain, became panic-stricken and unable to speak before such a large audience. And then the King would scold the Crown Prince, criticising him in the presence of the others. When this was repeated, although the Crown Prince never dared to blame his father, he became very upset and angry about the King not instructing him sincerely. He became very afraid of his father, and also opposed to him, so that eventually he lost his (filial) character, to my utmost grief.

While Princess Hwap'yǒng was alive, she used to take her brother's part so that whenever such problems occurred, she would remonstrate with the King in favour of her brother. Thus she helped him a great deal. But after her death, whenever the King was excessively severe with him or otherwise lacking in affection for him, no one would intervene to urge the King not to do so. And so his affection towards the Crown Prince grew less and less, while the Prince feared his father so much that he could no longer fulfil his duty as a son. If only Princess Hwap'yǒng had been alive, she could have helped to improve both the affection of the father and the filial piety of the son. The death of that virtuous princess when she was still young really affected the fate of the kingdom. I still regret it very deeply.

The Crown Prince had a very generous disposition and was broad-minded and flexible. He was also extremely faithful and used to speak to his subordinates in a way which gave them confidence. Although he was terrified of his father the King, whenever he was questioned about some misbehaviour, he never hid

the facts but confessed, so that the King knew he was never telling a lie.

I have already mentioned that his filial piety was very exalted. His brotherly affection was also exceptional. Although it was natural for him to love especially Princess Hwap'yǒng, whom the King loved so much, this was not because he allowed his feelings to be led by any political consideration but because he sincerely loved her. He was always sympathetic to Princess Hwasun who grew up without a mother and respected her as his eldest sister. As for Princess Hwahyǒp,<sup>1</sup> born in 1733 (Kyech'uk) she was superbly beautiful and filial, but her father the King never loved her, probably because when she was born the King was heartbroken, for she was a girl and he had hoped for a son. So he did not even let her stay with Princess Hwap'yǒng in the same palace, while Princess Hwap'yǒng herself was disturbed at receiving all the King's love and vainly begged him not to treat her in this way. Because of the King's attitude to Princess Hwahyop, even her husband, the Royal Son-in-law Yǒngsǒng-wi<sup>2</sup> was also unable to enjoy royal favour. The Crown Prince, whose fortune was similar to hers in that he had failed to gain the affection of his father the King, and whose age was also closer to hers, was always very sympathetic to Princess Hwahyǒp and treated her with great devotion.

The Prince was fifteen in 1749 (Kisa) and celebrated his coming of age ceremony on 10 March (22d 1m); it was then decided that he should begin full married life on the 15th. Now that the Crown Prince, son of the King's declining years, was

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1 See BI.

2 See BI.

fifteen years old and married in fact as well as in name, it would have been wonderful if the King had been pleased to accept the situation without interference. Instead, the King suddenly ordered the Prince to act in his place<sup>1</sup> - why I could not understand. It was after the Crown Prince began to act for the King and on the day of my coming-of-age ceremony that to my utmost sorrow countless troubles began. King Yǒngjo was filial to his parents, and held his ancestors in the highest regard, respecting Heaven and loving his people. His abundant virtue and sincerity went far beyond that of the greatest kings who ever lived. I do not think there was any other king who could be compared to him amongst those of many previous generations, judging either from my experience or from historical records. But having experienced so many difficulties - such as the Sinim Disaster<sup>2</sup> and the Musin Rebellion,<sup>3</sup> - the King appeared almost mentally ill in the way he shunned certain things, and fretted and worried over problems.

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<sup>1</sup> King Yǒngjo ordered the Crown Prince to deputize for the King on 11 March 1749 (23d 1m Kisa). CWS v.43, p.326.

<sup>2</sup> Sin-Im Sahwa, 1721-1722; this calamity occurred because of factional strife between the Noron and Soron groups over the succession to the throne in King Kyǒngjong's reign. King Kyǒngjong was childless and had been sick for a long time. The President of the Council at that time, Kim Ch'ang-jip, and three other ministers who belonged to the Noron group advised the King to appoint Prince Yǒnin and have him deputize for the King. Prince Yǒnin was later King Yǒngjo, and the half brother of King Kyǒngjong. Prince Yǒnin was thus appointed the Crown Prince in 1721 (the first year of King Kyǒngjong's reign) and later deputized for the King on Kim Ch'ang-jip's advice. But the Junior Vice President of the Council, Cho T'ae-gu and his Soron group successfully impeached Kim Ch'ang-jip and the rest of the ministers, falsely accusing them of various crimes, then sending them into exile and eventually killing them. This upset occurred during the year of Sinch'uk and Imsin. But as soon as King Yǒngjo succeeded to the throne, the Soron group itself was attacked and Kim Il-kyǒng and his fellows were killed. Because of this bitterness, when King Yǒngjo succeeded to the throne, he proclaimed the slogan of "Non-partisanship" and tried to end this factional feud. HGS v.4, pp.53-55.

<sup>3</sup> Musin Yǒkpyǒn; the remnants of the Soron group, who felt resentful at what had happened in the Sin-Im Sahwa, rose in rebellion in 1728 (Musin), the fourth year of King Yǒngjo's reign. Their leaders were Yi In-chwa, Chǒng Hui-ryan and others. HGS v.4, p.58.

It is impossible for me to record all the myriad instances of his anxiety. He used to choose the words he used, for example, and shunned words such as "death" or "return". Then again, before he came back to the palace he used to change the robe he had worn for the Regular Administrative Board Meeting or for some other activity outside the royal residence at the palace. After he had had a conversation he considered ominous, or had happened to hear ominous words he used to rinse his mouth and wash his ears or call someone to come and speak the first words before he went into the royal residence. He was particular about the doors he used when he went out for some happy event, distinguishing them from those which he used for an unpleasant occasion. He never let anyone he disliked stay at the residence of someone he loved, nor would he even allow someone whom he did not like to go through a place where someone he loved had walked. I am afraid to say that I cannot respect him for this extreme way of making a distinction between love and hatred.

Even before the Crown Prince began to deputize for him, the King would very often ask the Crown Prince to attend the torture of a condemned criminal, or to represent him at public matters connected with the Punishments Board; or the investigation of a major crime; or some other ill-omened affair connected with the Court. Before the King went into the rooms of Princess Hwap'yǒng, the princess who was born in 1738 (Muo), was now known as Madame Chǒng, he would change his robe of audience for a fresh one. On the other hand, when he passed by the Crown Prince's residence he would stop outside and without changing the robe which he had worn for administrative business outside the royal residences, call the Crown Prince and ask, "Have you had your meal?" to which the Prince would reply. Then he would

wash his ears after he heard the Crown Prince's reply and throw the water into the courtyard of the Princess Hwahyŏp. But since this was a higher residence, he had to throw it over the wall and usually did not succeed. But for some of his other daughters he would change into a fresh robe to see them while for his precious son he would exchange a few words (to shake off the omen), rinse his mouth out and then go off. This is why the Crown Prince used to tell Princess Hwahyŏp jestingly, "We are part of the paraphernalia for purification." He was very grateful to Princess Hwap'yŏng, for she tried her best to make him comfortable. He neither suspected her at all, nor was jealous of her; instead he always loved and treasured her. Every one in the Court knew about this and admired him. Though Lady Sŏnhŭi was very sad about the bias of the King's affection, she could not do anything about it.

There were certain public matters, such as those connected with the Punishment Board (Uigŭmbu)<sup>1</sup> and executions which the King would never attend in person; instead he entrusted eunuchs with these duties while he remained inside the palace with the princesses. The King explained that the reason for commanding the Crown Prince to deputize for him was that, since the death of Princess Hwap'yŏng in 1748 (Mujin), he himself was extremely sad and very often sick, and so he wanted to rest, but in fact it was to entrust the Crown Prince with the affairs which he himself shunned to take into the inner court, or those which he could not entrust to the eunuchs. After the Crown Prince began to act for the King, the latter administered public affairs with

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

the aid of his eunuchs and conducted the first three Regular Administrative Board Meetings of the month with the Crown Prince in attendance, while the Crown Prince (Sojo)<sup>1</sup> conducted the other three Regular Administrative Board Meetings.

When the Crown Prince was acting for the King, there were always difficulties between them and everything he did involved him in trouble. Generally, whenever a court official wrote a memorial to the King, if the memorial referred to some state problem or criticized the opposite faction<sup>2</sup> the Crown Prince would find it difficult to reach a conclusion by himself and would report to the King. But even if the matter had nothing to do with the Crown Prince and concerned one of his subordinates, the King would get angry, saying, "It is because the Crown Prince is unable to maintain harmony amongst our subjects that a memorial such as this has been sent, a thing which never happend before," and so he would blame the Crown Prince. If the Prince simply reported the memorial to the King to get his reply, the King would scold him saying, "As you can't even decide such an easy matter, what is the good of letting you act on my behalf?" When he did not report, the King would also rebuke him, saying, "How dare you decide such an important issue without referring to me?" If the Crown Prince acted in one way, the King would blame him for not doing the opposite, and if he acted the other way, then the King would blame him again. He used to get upset and oppose every effort of the Crown Prince's. What was worse, if the people suffered from cold and hunger, or there was a natural calamity such as drought or other extraordinary

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> Between the Noron and Soron groups. See Introduction, pp.5-9.

phenomena, then the blame was laid at the door of the Crown Prince's lack of virtue. And so, if it became cloudy or a thunderstorm appeared in Winter, the Crown Prince would get very concerned lest the King might blame him. He was terrified of everything, and consequently he would suffer from evil thoughts and delusions and gradually became sick in his mind. King Yǒngjo was very virtuous and benevolent and examined matters not at all carelessly but very closely and clearly. But he could not realize that his extremely precious Crown Prince was falling ill, to my great grief. These repeated alarms caused by the King's rebukes, and concern over the King's anger made the Crown Prince, who was clever and outstanding but was never allowed to do even one thing as he wished, feel very uncomfortable and sad. For example, the King never asked him to attend splendid spectacles such as the State Examination (Chǒngsi)<sup>1</sup>, or the Civil Service Examination (Alsǒngsi)<sup>2</sup>, or the Testing of the skilled archers or one of the State Military Examinations (Kwanmujae)<sup>3</sup>. Instead he would ask him to be present at the questioning of condemned criminals. So how could the Prince be comfortable and happy? It would have been better

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<sup>1</sup> Chǒngsi = Kyǒn'gwa; one of the Yi dynasty State Examinations. When a happy event took place the King occasionally held this State Examination. KTH p.248.

<sup>2</sup> Alsǒngsi; one of the Yi dynasty State Examinations. The King conducted this examination at the Sǒnggyun'gwan after he had personally performed a memorial service at the Confucian Shrine. KTH p.248.

<sup>3</sup> Kwanmujae; one of the Yi dynasty State Military Examinations which was held specially by the royal command. There were two Military Examinations; a preliminary and final examination. The candidates for the preliminary examination were tested on various military techniques. Those who passed this were given a final test in specialized military techniques by the King. Those who passed this final test were appointed Magistrates or Commanders of Local Military Garrisons. Those who were already in the military posts, were promoted. KTH p.419.

if the Prince had tried to show his father the King his filial devotion time and again even though his father went too far; or if the father showed the son more and more affection, even though he could not believe in him. But for no particular reason, matters developed in this way as a result of numerous incidents showing, I think, that it was the will of Heaven and the fate of the realm and not a thing which human effort could avoid. But on the other hand, since everything I witnessed still remains present in my mind, and my agony is deeply fixed in my heart, I cannot but record the real state of affairs, even though I feel quite guilty doing so: both King Yǒngjo and the Crown Prince appear to be lacking in virtue toward each other. Before the writing paper, my heart feels smothered and choked.

Even at the age of fifteen, the Crown Prince had never been given the opportunity of accompanying the royal procession to the royal tombs. As he grew older, he wanted to see the countryside very much, so whenever the Ceremonies Board suggested to the King that the Prince should accompany the royal procession to Seoul or to the royal tombs, he used to be very anxious about whether he would be allowed to go. But when, time after time, he was denied permission, at first he felt mistreated and startled, but gradually he became more irritated and sometimes even wept. Though he was originally devoted to his parents in his heart, he could not show one-hundredth part of his sincerity because he was not skilful. His father the King never understood his son, and always showed his displeasure in his words and manner, never forgiving him, which made the Prince more terrified of his father than ever, until eventually he became sick. So when the Prince became ill with anger, he used to

relieve his feelings upon the eunuchs and court maids or even upon me, so many times. When I gave birth to Ūiso in September 1750 (8m Kyōngo), King Yōngjo should have been very happy, but the King felt so depressed and sad over Princess Hwap'yōng's death in childbirth in 1748 (Mujin) that his sorrow overrode his joy at obtaining a grandson. Though the King was very proud and happy about my giving birth without difficulty, he felt sad all over again about the princess' failure to bear and rear a child. For this reason he could not even say to his son, "You have already got a child." On the other hand, the King always loved me more than I deserved, for which I was deeply grateful. But I always felt uncomfortable and was very careful, because I alone was blessed and praised. But when I gave birth, he did not even say, "You have done very well to give birth to a boy without complications". So I felt very uneasy since being too young, I myself did not appreciate the problems of bearing a son. For the King was lamenting anew over the death of the princess, and was upset, unhappy and distressed. Whereas the Lady Sōnhŭi treasured me for giving birth to a son, and thought it was a great blessing for the State. She stayed near my delivery room for seven days, nursing me. The King felt uneasy, saying to Lady Sōnhŭi, "You are inhuman to forget the princess and rejoice so abundantly". But Lady Sōnhŭi laughed and deplored the King's bias.

The Crown Prince was advanced for his years and like an adult was very glad that he had got a son who would be a firm foundation for the State later on. He never dared to mention the King's failure to congratulate us adequately on the baby's birth, but felt very sad saying, "What am I doing having a son when I myself find it so very difficult (to get along)". I felt very sad hearing this.

Although what follows is not something I should record, I cannot but do so. When I was pregnant with Ŭiso, I saw Princess Hwap'yŏng very often in my dreams. She would come into my bedroom, sit beside me and laugh. In my immature way I thought it was because Princess Hwap'yŏng had died in childbirth, and I was concerned about my well-being since the princess appeared so regularly in my dreams, understanding that the spirit of delivery is merciless. When Ŭiso was born and washed, I found he had a red spot on his shoulder and a blue spot on his stomach. At first I did not pay any special attention to this, but on 11 October 1750 (12d 9m of that same year), King Yŏngjo was supposed to proceed to Onyang, and on the 10th (11d) he and Lady Sŏnhŭi came to see us with their faces half happy and half sad. All of a sudden, they undid the coat collar of the baby and bared his shoulders, discovering the red spot immediately. They seemed to be very moved and really to think that Princess Hwap'yŏng had been reincarnated. From that time on, they treasured the baby just as they had treasured my sister-in-law, Hwap'yŏng. At first when the child was born, the King never took any special precautions towards him and used to come to see the baby in the robe which he had worn for his audience with the government officials. But from that day forth, he was most careful of anything he felt could harm the baby, indulging in groundless and obscure superstitions which I could not understand. Probably the King saw something in his dreams (which made him act like this). One hundred days after the baby was born, the King ordered the Hwan'gyŏng-jŏn,<sup>1</sup> where he used to give audience to the people, to be repaired and moved the baby into

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<sup>1</sup> The King's residence in Ch'an'gyŏng Palace. See Map II,G.

this palace. Seeing that King Yǒngjo loved the baby so much, I implored him to treat the father better. But in fact, the King loved the baby because he thought it was the reincarnation of Hwap'yǒng and as its parents, we were treated no better than before - a thing I could not understand. When the baby was only ten months old, in May/June, 1751 (5m Sinmi), the King invested him with the title Royal Grandson (Wangseson)<sup>1</sup>. Although he did this from his extreme love for his grandson, I thought he was doing rather too much, and when the baby died in the Spring of 1752 (Imsin), the King's agony went beyond anything that could be imagined.

Thanks to the wordless help of Heaven and the influence of the royal ancestors, I again became pregnant in January/February, 1752 (12m Sinmi) and another boy was born in October/November of that year (9m Imsin), who was to become King (Chǒngjo). It really was an unexpected happiness compared with few blessings I had experienced before then. When he was born, his appearance was perspicacious and grand, his bone structure was outstanding and he really was the True Man of Taoism (one who has attained the way), the Heaven-sent one. In January 1752 (11m Sinmi) the Crown Prince had woken up from his sleep and said, "I dreamt about a dragon; it must be an omen that I shall beget a noble son". He asked me to get a strip of white silk for him, and he drew the dragon he saw in his dream and hung it on the wall. Of course there ought to have been an unusual omen before a sage was born.

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

King Yǒngjo was delighted to regain a foundation for the State after the bitter sorrow of losing Ūiso, and said to me, "Since the Royal Grandson is outstanding, this must be the blessing sent by the divine spirits of the royal ancestors. As a descendant of Princess Chǒngmyǒng, you became the Crown Prince's consort, and your body was blessed so that you were able to make this meritorious contribution to the State". He also said, "Please rear the child very well but plainly, for in this way you economise his happiness". I of course, held the royal instruction in high regard, never forgetting the royal favour and obeying the King, keeping his instruction in mind all the time. The Crown Prince too was overjoyed and happy, and everyone in the country was delighted and jumped for joy a hundred times more than in 1750 (Kyǒngo). My parents congratulated me clapping their hands joyfully. Whenever they saw me, they congratulated me on giving birth to the Royal Grandson. I was very proud and happy to think that at the age of less than twenty, my body had been so blessed that I was able to ensure the happiness of the State, so that I had someone to rely on. I prayed and promised myself that in my old age I should long be able to enjoy his filial devotion.

In November (10m) of the same year (1752) there was a measles epidemic and Princess Hwahyǒp caught it first. The Crown Prince moved into Yangjǒng-hap to avoid the disease. The Royal Grandson was moved into Naksǒn-dang. He was still less than three weeks old then, but I was not worried about him being moved for he was a very strong baby. The governess had not yet been appointed for him so I sent the baby with one of the old court ladies and my wet nurse to look after him. Before the end of the day, the Crown Prince went down with the measles and by

the time he recovered, I had caught it in turn. The baby also caught the measles at the same time. My symptoms were very serious because I was worried over the Prince's disease and it was not long after I had given birth. The Royal Grandson's rash soon appeared but his symptoms were mild.

I did not know this because Lady Sŏnhŭi and my father did not tell me, out of their concern that I might be anxious while I was still seriously ill. After his recovery from measles, the Crown Prince still had a very high temperature, so my father had to look after him, as well as nursing me and protecting the Royal Grandson, going to three places day and night, and worrying so much that his hair and beard turned white.

Princess Hwahyŏp died from the measles. The Crown Prince had always been very sympathetic towards his sister because they shared similar circumstances; so he showed her special brotherly affection. When she was sick, the Prince asked the male servants outside the residence (about her symptoms) all the time, and when she died he could not get over his grief, which was the sign of his innate goodness.

In January (12m) of that year (1753), King Yŏngjo was upset by a memorial criticizing government policy addressed to him by Censor (Taegan)<sup>1</sup>, Hong Chun-hae. So the Crown Prince prostrated himself at the Sŏnhwa Gate<sup>2</sup>. He received strong criticism from the King. It was a severe winter, and it snowed while he was awaiting the royal decision on his punishment.

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> The front gate of the Hŭijŏng-dang, a hall in the Ch'an'gyŏng Palace. See Map II, D.

He prostrated himself in the snow, and the flakes covered him until people could hardly distinguish him from the snow. Still he would not move, and even when Queen Dowager Inwŏn asked him to get up, he still refused to take any notice. Instead he waited until the King's exaggerated fury (over the memorial) had calmed down; and then he got up, showing what a serious man he really was. Even after that, the King's anger had not completely vanished, and on 18 January (15d 12m) the King proceeded to Ch'angŭi-gung<sup>1</sup> and said to Queen Dowager Inwŏn, "I am going to abdicate the throne, Madam!" Queen Dowager Inwŏn answered, "You may", since she misunderstood, being hard of hearing. King Yŏngjo then declared that since he had received permission from the Queen Dowager, he would abdicate the throne, at which the Crown Prince became extremely confused. He composed a letter to the King which the Officials of the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince took down very smoothly, so that the officials admired him afterwards. Meanwhile the King stayed in his old residence, the Ch'angŭi-gung, for a long time and would not return to his palace. Queen Dowager Inwŏn came down to the retirement room (sosil)<sup>2</sup> and stayed there, saying, "Because of my hard hearing, I gave the wrong reply and committed a sin against the State!" And she wrote to the King asking him to go back to his palace. Meanwhile the Crown Prince was still awaiting the royal decision on his punishment, prostrating himself on the ice of the courtyard at Sŏnji-kak in Simin-dang; he now went to the Ch'angŭi-gung on foot and waited for the

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<sup>1</sup> The Royal residence where King Yŏngjo lived before he succeeded to the throne. At present, 35 To'ngŭi-dong, Chongno-ku, Seoul and its vicinity. Han'gŭl Hakhoe, *ibid.*, p.244.

<sup>2</sup> This was a room to which people retired after incurring the displeasure of the King.

royal decision about his punishment, prostrating himself again. He beat his head against the stones, tore his (horsehair) headband and wounded his forehead until it bled. As you can judge from this wounding of his royal body, he did not pretend to be virtuous, but did it out of innate filial piety, loyalty and obedience. In the meantime, the King rebuked him a great deal, but the Prince did his duty obediently, and so became very well known for handling the situation successfully. Then the King ordered officials of the Second Court rank and above to be exiled to a remote place, my father being one of them, but the decree had not yet reached him. At the time he was just outside the city while the Prince was suffering, and they discussed their problems through correspondence, their countless letters betraying utmost anxiety. I collected all of them and showed them to the Royal Grandson (King Chǒngjo) when he grew up. He was very moved by my father's utter loyalty, and took them with him saying, "I will keep and read them".

After staying for several days (at the Ch'angŭi-gung), the King returned to his palace, reappointed all the officials and held Regular Court Reception (Chocham)<sup>1</sup> including them, so that my father also came back, saw the Crown Prince's forehead and caressed it, weeping. The Crown Prince told my father everything that had happened while he was away. I can remember the whole scene as if it is just happening now before my eyes. When his illness did not affect him, the Prince's humanity and filial piety were well nigh perfect, and he was noble in every way.

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<sup>1</sup> A Regular Court Reception held in the King's presence four times a month. All the government officials gathered at the Royal Audience Chamber for a morning reception.

But when he was affected by that illness, he acted as if he were an entirely different man - to my amazement and grief.

He used to enjoy reading Taoist texts or miscellaneous Taoist stories all the time. Once he told me, "People say that if you read and study the Scripture of the Jade Pivot (Yu-shu-ching)<sup>1</sup> you can raise the spirit (of the god of thunder). I shall read this book."

After this, he took to studying the book at night, so that eventually his mind became affected, and in the middle of the night he used to declare that he could see an avatar of the god of thunder, and seemed very scared. Thus this led directly to worsening of his mental illness - to my deep resentment and sorrow. From the time he was about ten years old he had begun to suffer from mental disturbance, and ate or behaved in other ways slightly abnormally. But from the time he began to study the Scripture of the Jade Pivot, he completely changed his disposition, and became terrified of certain objects. He no longer dared to look at the two characters "jade" or "pivot", or at the Jade Pivot Charms<sup>2</sup> given him to ward off calamity on the May festival<sup>3</sup>. And from this time forward he was terrified

<sup>1</sup> Yu-shu-ching; a Taoist text describing the God of Thunder, Chiu T'ien Ying-Yuan P'u-hua T'ien Tsun, and his role in punishing the evil-doer. It also deals with punishments in the various hells. The work appears to date from the thirteenth century or before. Liu Ts'un-yan, Buddhist Taoist Influence on Chinese Novels, (Wiesbaden, 1962), V.1, P.251.

<sup>2</sup> Charms made from various drugs, made up in variously shaped packets with gilden coverings, and threaded with five-coloured thread. When worn during the May festival, they serve to avert calamity during the year.

<sup>3</sup> Tanojöl; one of the four major festivals of Korea which is on the 5th day of the 5th month of the Lunar calendar. Though the celebrations differ from region to region, women ride on swings and wash their hair in an infusion of boiled iris leaves. Men wrestle and pull heavy ropes in a tug-of-war. Hong Song-mo, Ton'guk sesigi, Chosön Kwangmunhoe, ed. (Seoul, 1911), pp.29-34

of the sky, or of the characters for "thunder" and "thunderclap". Indeed, he had always been frightened of the crash of thunder, but not so much before. From the time he studied the Scripture of the Jade Pivot, whenever there was a thunderstorm, he used to lie on his stomach with his hands covering his ears, and only get up when it had stopped. His father the King and his mother did not know about this, and I alone felt that the situation had become extremely serious. These symptoms of fear began in the Winter of 1752 (Imsin), and became very susceptible to fright in 1753 (Kyeyu) and the following year; by this time the incidents occurred so frequently that the problem became deeply rooted. That Scripture of the Jade Pivot is really my enemy!

Meanwhile, the Prince had his affair with the girl Yangjye during 1753 (Kyeyu), and fathered her child. He was so terrified that the King would reprimand him (when the King found out) that he tried very hard to have her lose her child. But she preserved the child and gave birth to In, a queer little thing destined to be a cause of trouble (in the future). Since the King used to scold the Prince so severely over routine matters, on this occasion his rage was redoubled to such an extent that the Prince shrank with fear. My father thought it so embarrassing that the Prince received such stern reprimands that he calmed the King's fury by talking to him. In the Court, no one is allowed to be jealous, moreover I am not so vicious by nature (as to be jealous), and from the beginning Lady Sŏnhŭi had warned me saying, "Do not take any notice". Moreover, I did not need to be jealous of this affair because the Prince did not care for Yangjye or look after her welfare even when her delivery time was due. He had relations with her out of a

passing fancy, but when he fathered her child, the Prince was so scared of being blamed by the King that he avoided the whole situation; also Lady Sŏnhŭi was not at all sympathetic on the matter. Therefore Yangjye's position seemed to be very difficult without my intervention. Although I had very little information about such things, I did my best to look after her; as a result of which King Yŏngjo blamed me very much, saying, "You are so set on not going contrary to the Prince's will that you aren't even jealous of an affair which would upset anyone". For the first time since I came to the Court, I received a stern reprimand and was awestricken. But it was very strange, since from ancient times jealousy has been one of the seven deadly faults,<sup>1</sup> and it is believed to be the highest virtue of a woman when she is not jealous. However I was blamed because I was not jealous: it must be my fate. Generally speaking, if the relationship between father and the son had been normal and King Yŏngjo and Lady Sŏnhŭi had paid some attention to this baby as a grandchild, or the Crown Prince had been attracted to the child, I would not have been so relaxed although I had a generous disposition. Instead both King Yŏngjo and Lady Sŏnhŭi pretended not to know about the matter and the Crown Prince was so terrified that he did not know what to do, therefore if I had showed jealousy in addition, it might have worsened his illness, which was my great concern.

On 31 August (14d 7m) in that year (1754) I gave birth to Ch'ŏngyŏn. King Yŏngjo rejoiced saying, "for the first time of about one hundred years, a Princess (Kunju)<sup>2</sup> is born. "This is

<sup>1</sup> The others were inability to produce a son, adultery, disobedience to the husband's parents, scolding, stealing and serious disease. This list was drawn from the I-Li.

<sup>2</sup> Kunju; a daughter of the legal wife of the Crown Prince.

something very precious". But when Chin, the brother of In was born, the Prince did not receive such a stern reprimand, probably because it was the second time. His malady was taking more and more hold of him, just as water is absorbed into a piece of paper. He went for the morning greeting less and less, and could not keep up with his studies. His mental illness caused him to moan very often, and he seemed to be wasted away by the sickness. So when the King called for an Official of the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince and questioned the Crown Prince about his learning, the latter was very frightened. There was a rebellion<sup>1</sup> in March/April 1755 (2m Ūlhae) and the King in person questioned and tortured traitors at the Court until June (5m) of that year. The King used to send the Crown Prince to attend when the traitors were condemned to death. All the government officials would be standing there in rank. It used to be after 8 or 11 o'clock at night and sometimes 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning when the King came back from questioning these traitors, but he never failed even once to say, "Call for the Crown Prince!" and ask, "Have you had your dinner?" After he heard the Crown Prince's answer, he would depart immediately. And this was just to let the Crown Prince answer the first words of the King after the latter had been conducting the interrogation upon such evil matters, so that the King could wash off the evil. In fact, the Crown Prince was never allowed to attend good and happy functions but only unpleasant and ominous ones. Even a man who was extremely filial and not sick would be very depressed when

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<sup>1</sup> Yun Chi, a son of a merchant of Naju and some colleagues plotted against the Court. The Governor of Chŏlla province, Cho Un-gyu detected this and reported it to the King. Yun Chi and his colleagues were arrested and interrogated. CWS v.43, p.559.

forced to answer the same question, nothing but, "Have you had dinner?" every night without fail, as if the King wanted to wash off the ill savour of his experience. It would have been better if the King had asked anything else, whether it were something worth asking or not. When I thought of the Prince's illness, I used to expect him to fly into a temper and say, "Why do you call me, sire?" Instead he would suppress his mental disturbance and answer the same thing each time without fail, waiting for the King to call upon him. This shows his innate filial piety very well. To my surprise, it was only myself and the children who exerted ourselves (to help him overcome his illness), while the eunuchs and court maids lived in fear both day and night. Even his mother was not well informed about his sickness, so how could it be expected that the King would know the details of it. For the Prince was normal whenever he saw the King or any of his subjects. This made me feel frustrated and sad for I hoped that when he was serious, he would reveal his illness to others and everyone, from the King down to the royal instructors, however shocked they might be, could (understand and) forgive the symptoms of his illness. I cannot describe how oppressed I felt by these tremendous anxieties concerning the King and Crown Prince.

Round about December, Lady Sŏnhŭi was sick and the Crown Prince went to see her at Chippok-hŏn. But King Yŏngjo did not like him staying near Princess (Hwawan) and flew into a temper, saying, "Go back immediately!" So he came back hastily, jumping out of the window, and on that day the King instructed him most firmly to stay in Naksŏn-dang, and not to go to the Ch'ŏnghŭi Gate but to read the sections on T'ai-chia in the

Book of Documents, with the commentary<sup>1</sup>. The Crown Prince was so resentful and sad at being treated like this when he simply went to see his sick mother and did nothing wrong that he was going to kill himself; however he calmed down later. The relationship between father and son was now worse than words can tell.

On New Year's Day, 31 January 1756 (Pyōngja), the King received the honorary title,<sup>2</sup> but he did not invite the Crown Prince to attend (the ceremony). The Prince's sickness was getting even worse and he now stammered when reading. He used to stay in one of the outer kitchens of the Ch'wisōn-dang a lot saying it was deep and quiet. It was this sort of thing which always made me worry and fret about him. Sure enough in June (5m) that year, the King suddenly came to see the Crown Prince at Naksōn-dang after holding audience at the Sūngmun-dang. He found the Prince very untidy - he had not washed himself or brushed his hair properly, and he was wearing his royal robes in such a disorderly way that the King suspected he might have been drinking; a thing which was strictly prohibited. He flew into a rage and shouted "Fetch the one who served wine!" He asked the Crown Prince very sternly about who had served the wine, but of course no one had, and in fact the Prince was not

<sup>1</sup> T'ai-chia was the second (or fourth) sovereign of the Shang dynasty in China, who is said to have come to the throne young, and to have been temporarily deposed by the minister Yi Yin because of his misconduct. After three years he reformed and was restored to the throne. In the present text of the Book of Documents there are three sections describing T'ai-chia and Yi Yin's admonitions. All three are ancient forgeries, although the first two contain some fragments of the genuine T'ai-chia document. Mencius 5A, 6, and 7A, 31.

<sup>2</sup> King Yōngjo received the honorary title of Ch'yech'ōn kōn'gūk sōn'gong sinhwa. CWS v.43, p.606.

drunk. Ah, wasn't this strange! Whenever the King questioned the Prince out of some suspicion about something, the Prince used to confirm these suspicions subsequently, as if by fate. On that day, the King sternly questioned the Crown Prince who was standing in the courtyard. Though he never drank wine, he was so scared of his father that he could not defend himself against the accusation, and being questioned so urgently he could not help saying, "Yes, I had some". Then the King asked, "Who gave it to you?" But the Prince had no one to point out, and simply said, "Hũijǒng, the senior court maid of the outer kitchen did, sire". The King bitterly rebuked him, gesticulating and saying "You behave in such a disorderly manner, getting drunk when such a thing is strictly forbidden". Then Governess Ch'oe humbly said, "It is really dreadful to say that the Prince is drunk, so please smell his breath Your Highness, and find out whether he smells of alcohol or not." She said this because she felt very resentful, knowing that wine was never brought into the Court, and so he could not have drunk any. But the Prince blamed her in front of the King saying, "Whether I drank it or not, how dare you contradict me when I have said I did! Please leave us!" Normally he was very hesitant and could not even speak properly in front of the King, but that day he spoke very well, probably because he was unjustly accused. I thought it was fortunate for him to say that, though I was uneasy and fearful then. Of course the King got even angrier, and shouted, "How dare you blame the governess in front of me when you shouldn't even scold a dog or a horse in front of your elders!" The Prince did his duty as a junior very well by answering with very humble expression, "I did so, Sire, because she ventured to come forth and exculpate me". The King eventually exiled

Hũijǒng to a distant place and ordered the Prince to have an audience with the ministers and the officials under them. The Instructors of the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince were the first to be sent in. On that day, the Prince was so resentful and sad that he became violent, to the point where he could have pushed up heaven, and very ill, which he had not shown in his appearance before. But when the royal instructors came in, the Prince, for the first time, yelled at them, "None of you have tried to improve relations between my father and myself, and now when I have suffered such unfairness, none of you dare to explain the truth. How dare you come in now". One of the royal instructors was Wǒn, In-son, but I cannot remember the other. He said something to the Prince and did not go out straight away, whereupon the Prince got very angry and chased him away saying, "Get out right now!" Then the candle holder which was beside them fell over, touching the south window of a room in the Naksǒn-dang and setting it alight. The fire soon became serious with no one to keep it in check, but the Prince chased the royal instructor out through the gate of Naksǒn-dang which led to the Tǒksǒng-hap. Those guests who had an audience with the King at the Sǔngmǔn-dang used to take a roundabout way to the Kǒnyang<sup>1</sup> passing in front of the Simin-dang, the Chiphyǒn Gate being closed, and thus they would pass by the Tǒksǒng-hap where the King discussed the Classics with the officials of Royal Institute, and then through the Pohwa Gate. Just when the royal instructor was chased out, some guests were passing the front of the Tǒksǒng-hap and the Prince yelled at them saying, "You don't even try to improve the relationship

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<sup>1</sup> Kǒnyang Gate; the east gate of Ch'angdok Palace. See Map III, E.

between father and son by advising the King, but are only concerned with your salaries! Now I suppose you are going to have an audience with the King - you useless bastards!" and he chased them off. His outburst of anger was incredible. In the meantime, the fire had become very serious. The Royal Grandson was then in the Kwanhi-hap, which was in line with Naksŏn-dang and only about 360 cm. apart from it. I was so flustered by the sudden fire that I jumped from a stone step about 90 cm. high and rushed down to get the baby, being then five or six months pregnant with Ch'ŏngsŏn. I woke up the sleeping baby, sent him to Kyŏnch'un-jŏn in the arms of his governess, and thought that we could not save the Kwanhi-hap, being so helpless. But strangely enough the fire did not reach the Kwanhi-hap which was within a foot of the flames, but turned its course towards the Yangjŏng-hap, although the tile roof of the latter was not even in contact (with the Naksŏn-dang). I wondered whether it was not really because a baby who would eventually be King was in that place. But because the fire was so unexpected, King Yŏngjo thought the Prince must have lit it out of anger, and became ten times more furious than before. The King summoned all the ministers to Hamin-jŏng,<sup>1</sup> called in the Prince and said, "Are you a brigand? How did it happen that you set fire (to the palace)?" The Prince was once again so overwhelmed that he could not vindicate himself and explain that it came about through the candle-holder falling over; instead he pretended that he was guilty just as in the case of the wine, which rent my heart and made me feel as if I was choking. That day the Prince was so overcome with anger, because of suffering this unfairness, that he could only calm himself

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<sup>1</sup> A pavilion in the Ch'an'gyŏng Palace. See Map II, H.

down and raise his spirits by restorative pills. He tried to drown himself in the well in the front courtyard of the Chōsŭng-jŏn, saying, "I can't bear to live any longer for anything in the world". It was extremely sad, frightening and dangerous. People made every effort to save him, and the Prince finally came out to Tōksōng-hap.

In March (2m) of that year, my father was appointed the Governor of Kwangju and went out to his province. Whenever my father served in the provinces, the Prince used to feel as if he had no one on whom he could rely. Then my father was summoned to have an audience with the King in connection with these events. The King told him all that had happened while he was away, speaking with the deepest concern, while the Prince talked about the unfairness of both the wine and fire incidents and said, "I feel so resentful and sad that it is hard for me to live any longer". My father seemed to feel how terrible it was to hear all these things and told the King repeatedly, "Your Highness, please do not abandon your affection for him", while he urged the Prince in tears, "Please improve upon your filial devotion as time passes". Generally the Prince's outraged feelings used to calm down when his father-in-law advised him, and this time also he eventually managed to do so.

I was very sad at losing my mother in Autumn of this year, at a time when anxiety was piled on anxiety because the symptoms of the Prince's sickness were getting worse. Moreover, since I had suffered such unfairness on top of all this, I was flustered when my father came to Court. I remember so clearly how we embraced each other and wept. For the Prince was so frightened by the events of this June (5m) that his illness worsened and

he frequently behaved outrageously in front of his mother. He studied the classics less and less, merely forcing himself to collect his energy for the Regular Administrative Board Meetings, and (even then) without showing any interest. For he could not bear to be so depressed, and when the King was on royal processions, he used to go to a courtyard to the rear of the palace, shoot with a bow and arrows, and ride a horse. And he also practised weapons and played with the eunuchs who even played trumpets and beat drums for him.

The 70th birthday of Queen Dowager Inwŏn fell in August/September (7m) of that year (1756). A special State Examination for those 60 years old and over (Kirogwa)<sup>1</sup> was held at the Court, while the King gave audience to all the government officials in the rear courtyard. Strangely enough, the Prince was allowed to attend this function and was very happy to get through the audience without any trouble. Judging from this, if the King had felt sorry for him and treated him with calm affection so that the Prince's endurance was not over-taxed, the Prince's unfortunate circumstances need never have arisen. It seemed as if both the father and the son could not help behaving in this way, as if it was the heavenly will - to my utmost sorrow.

At the age of 22, the Prince had still never accompanied the King to the royal tombs, although he had been anxious to go for a long time. Having no opportunity of doing this, he had

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<sup>1</sup> Kirogwa; one of the Yi dynasty State Examinations. The King Yongjo held this examination for the first time in 1756 to celebrate Queen Dowager Inwŏn's 70th birthday anniversary. The King held an audience with his subjects and royal relatives and the next day held this examination for candidates of 60 years and over. CWS v.43, p.626.

become very sad and depressed. On 27 July 1756 (1d 8m Pyŏngja), he was allowed to accompany the King for the first time to Myŏngnŭng<sup>1</sup> which made him feel so refreshed and happy. He had purified himself as best he could and fortunately finished his homage at the royal tomb without difficulty. While he was away, he wrote to Queen Dowager Inwŏn and Queen Chŏngsŏng, Lady Sŏnhŭi and even to the children, a letter which I still have kept. If one saw him acting in this way, he gave no appearance of being sick and was very happy to complete paying homage without any trouble and return to the palace. For the time being, after he had made this visit to the tombs, the Prince was able to escape major reprimands because his sister, Madame Chŏng gave birth to a girl at the end of August 1756 (beginning of 8m) and the King was too happy to bother him. It would have been quite natural for the Prince to have resented his sister because the King loved her so much, while he did not pay any attention to his son. But instead he always treated her in a brotherly way and congratulated her on giving birth without complications. Apparently it was Madame Chŏng who asked the King to take the Prince to the royal tombs with him, after Lady Sŏnhŭi had requested her to get permission from the King. Lady Sŏnhŭi had pointed out that even the people would think it strange that the Prince had never accompanied the King to the royal tombs; "So please advise your father to give permission".

In September/October 1756 (intercalary 9m) of the year, Ch'ŏngsŏn<sup>2</sup> was born. But this time the Prince never came in to

<sup>1</sup> Myŏngnŭng; the tomb of King Sukjong (r. 1674-1720), the 19th King of the Yi dynasty. In Koyang-gun, Kyŏn'gi Province. CWS v.41, p.139.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

see the child as he had always done with great pleasure when I gave birth earlier. From this it can be seen how sick he was. Not long afterwards my father was appointed Governor of P'yŏngan Province and left immediately in spite of his anxiety about our situation worsening every day. At the end of December 1756 (middle of 11m of that year), the Prince caught smallpox and came out in a rash. Though his symptoms were mild, the rash was so serious that I was very concerned, but it was eventually cured and the Prince recovered. It was very fortunate that the Prince had recovered so well from smallpox at the age of 22, when he had had a raging temperature. Lady Sŏnhŭi came and worried over him night and day, while the Royal Grandson was sent to Kongmok-hap to avoid the contagion and I myself stayed with the Prince, nursing him in a very narrow room. It was bitterly cold then and the steam was frozen all around the walls, but the Prince managed to get over this serious sickness without too much trouble, to the boundless blessing of the State. The King never came to see his invalid son, while my father was at far away P'yŏngan Province (Kwansŏ), so I alone cared for him making tremendous and indescribable efforts. After he got rid of the spirit of smallpox, the Prince came to Kyŏngch'un-jŏn and recuperated there.

But on 1 April 1757 (13d 2m Chŏngch'uk) the deepseated illness of Queen Chŏngsŏng suddenly got worse, so that her hands and feet turned bluish green, and she vomited a chamberpot full of blood which was not red but strangely black. Her sickness must have been accumulating for many years, perhaps from childhood. I had a terrible fright, but I went to see her first of all, and the Prince followed soon after, while the Queen was in a very critical condition after losing so much blood. The

Prince wept with tears streaming, holding the utensil into which Queen Chōngsōng had vomitted her blood; everyone was moved. He went in person to the Secretarial Office of the Queen's palace with someone holding the pot and he showed it in tears to the court physician, before anyone had yet had the chance to inform the King. Although he had received the warmest affection from the Queen, there might have been some distance in his attitude towards her, since he was not her own child. But he acted like this of his own accord, for he was born with a good and filial nature. No one would imagine that he was sick when he behaved like this. That night, Queen Chōngsōng kept on telling him, "Please go (back to your palace)", for she thought the Prince should not stay awake at night so soon after recovering from such a serious illness himself. At last the Prince came back to Kyōngch'un-jōn at about 1 o'clock in the morning, but before long, at dawn, the court maid came and said, "The Queen has fallen into a coma and does not answer however many times we call her". The Prince was shocked to hear this and went to see her. The Queen had fallen into a coma, and lay as if in a deep sleep, nor did she reply to the Prince's persistent address. The Prince called her ten thousand times saying, "I came (to see you)", but the Queen did not know. The Prince wept in agony which was beyond expression. It was the morning of the following day and the King who had now been informed, came to see her. Although relations between the King and the Queen were not particularly good, the King came to see her, simply because the Queen was so critically ill. The Prince once again became terrified to see the King, and stopped lamenting over the Queen, bowing deferentially without being able to lift his head. The Prince had been so deeply concerned over the Queen's condition, and wept over her failure to answer.

He called her name in such agony that those around him had been moved to tears. If he had been able to show this sorrow in spite of his fear of his father the King, and help the King feed Queen Chǒngsǒng ginseng (insam) tea while explaining the symptoms of her illness, it would have been better for the King to see him. But instead he threw himself down on his knees with fear in that small room when things were in such a flurry. Of course the King could not understand that the Prince was so sad with tears a short while before. The King criticized him for the way he wore his royal robes, even the way he wrapped his legs in putties saying, "How dare you conduct yourself like this when the Queen's condition is so critical!" I felt so choked with my emotions that heaven and earth seemed to be torn apart at seeing his utmost devotion lying hidden, but I could hardly say that he had not been like this a moment before. The King simply thought the Prince was not devoted and behaving very impolitely. The Lady Sǒnhŭi and I felt incomparable pain and were agonized at what happened. Unfortunately, just then the Royal Son-in-law, Ilsǒng-wi<sup>1</sup> was critically ill and the Princess Hwawan was sent back to him. So the King was very worried and more distracted than words can express. In the meantime, the Queen was getting worse and she died at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon on 3 April 1757,<sup>2</sup> to our utmost grief. The Crown Prince came to announce the death at the outer chamber of the Kwalli-hap and I also was going to announce the death, invoking the spirit of the deceased. But at that time the King was telling a number of court ladies how he had seen the Queen and how she died; he

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<sup>1</sup> The husband of Princess Hwawan, Chǒng Ch'i-dal.

<sup>2</sup> Queen Chǒngsǒng died at Kwalli-hap on 3 April 1757 (15d 2m Chǒngch'uk) at the age of 66. CWS v.43, p.640.

talked so long that it was getting dark. The Crown Prince was in extreme agony beating his heart with his hand, not being able to announce the death when it was already very late. The news of the death of the Royal Son-in-law, Ilsōng-wi, reached the Court and the King became so sad that he wept bitterly and went in procession out of his palace. And so the announcement of the Queen's death, an event which took place at about 4 o'clock, was not made until after dark, which was extremely flustering. It was thus on the 4th (16m) that the dead body was washed and clothed, after waiting for the King to return to his palace. The Crown Prince rolled on the floor kicking his legs and calling upon Heaven and now and then looking at the Queen's body, weeping bitterly and shedding floods of tears. Even her own son would not have lamented more than this! If the King had seen this sorrow he might have been moved. But when the King returned to the palace and saw him, he again prostrated himself before the King, so that the King could not see him weeping which made me feel so strangely depressed. Queen Chōngsōng used to live in a room (of the lady of the house) at the Taejo-jōn, but normally slept in a room opposite particularly when she had a minor illness, such as a cold. So when her sickness became critical, she hurried off to the Kwalli-hap, the west wing of the main palace, saying, "How could I presume to end my days at such an important place as the Taejo-jōn", and there she died. After they had washed the dead body and clothed it in a shroud, they moved it into Kyōnghung-gak,<sup>1</sup> placed it in a coffin and kept it there until the funeral. The Okhwa-dang was appointed as mourner's hut for

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<sup>1</sup> A pavilion in the Ch'angdōk Palace. See Map III, F.

the Crown Prince for 5 months, and he offered wine and fruits every morning and evening before the funeral. (After the funeral) he attended every ritual after the morning and evening offerings and on some days he carried out the ceremonial wailing six times<sup>1</sup> while I stayed in Yun'gyōng-hōn in front of the Kwalli-hap.

Queen Dowager Inwōn was then over seventy and very weak. Though she lamented the death of Queen Chōngsōng after the state funeral, she did not seem to know exactly how sad it was, as if she was in the midst of a mist. And at the middle of April 1757 (end of 2m), her symptoms grew worse and, after some fluctuations, she took to her bed in the secretarial rooms of the palace of the Queen Dowager and died there on 13 May (26d 3m),<sup>2</sup> to our utmost grief. Moreover, King Yōngjo, now in his declining years, almost sixty-one, and sick, mourned more than words can tell, when faced by this great calamity, which made me greatly distressed. Queen Dowager Inwōn's virtue was outstanding - since it was owing to her suggestion that the regulations of the Court were made so strict. She had an infinite and sincere affection for the Crown Prince, and showed me such great love from the time I came to Court, that it is impossible to set down all the favours she had shown me. She devoted herself to the Crown Prince with her whole heart, very often herself preparing rare side-dishes which were sent to us; for the food

<sup>1</sup> Early morning, morning, noon, evening, night and midnight.

<sup>2</sup> Queen Dowager Inwōn, Lady Kim, died at Yōngmo-dang on 13 May 1757 (26d 3m Chōngch'uk) at the age of 71. CWS v.43, p.643. Yōngmo-dang; a residence in Ch'angdōk Palace. See Map III,G.

at the palace of Queen Dowager Inwŏn consisted of the most delicious and rare dainties of all the food of the Court. When she heard of the constantly growing difficulties between the King and the Prince, she was very anxious and used to say to me each time she saw me, "Isn't it very sad?" And whenever she saw the Crown Prince in mourning robes, she used to worry, very often saying, "To see him dressed in this manner saddens me to tears". She laid down a very strict rule in the Court that the princesses of concubines (Ongju) should not venture to sit together with the wives of the princes' in a small room. Lady Hwasun lived within her gates (of the palace of Queen Dowager Inwŏn) as she was an invalid, and so Hwayu alone followed me everywhere. Once she sat together with me in a small room (where Queen Dowager Inwŏn was sick in bed), at which the Queen Dowager felt resentful, saying, "How dare you sit side by side with the Prince's wife; don't you realize her rank!" She really made me admire her firm authority even in her serious illness.

Queen Chŏngsŏng used to be very sad and felt choked with resentment at the King's maltreatment of the Prince, and whenever she heard of the Prince's eccentric behaviour, she became very worried over state matters, going to see Lady Sŏnhŭi very often, and talking with her in sincere concern. When both Queen and Queen Dowager died one after another in successive months, the Court seemed vast and empty, and such strict regulations were suddenly abandoned - to my disappointment and distress. For the Prince owed so much to the Queens' favour that he mourned very deeply. If only the relationship between the father and the son had been normal, things might have been much better.

The dead body was washed and clothed in Yǒngmǒ-dang,<sup>1</sup> taken to Kyǒngbok-jǒn<sup>2</sup> and laid in state in T'ongmyǒng-jǒn until the funeral. At the end of the month, the body was put into a coffin, the white top panel of the coffin being covered with a white silk wrap, and the eunuchs of the palace of Queen Dowager Inwǒn bore her bier through Yosǒ Gate which the Queen used when she went to the rear apartments of the palace. The funeral looked like a wedding procession, which affected me so much I could not watch. They appointed the Ch'ewǒn-hap as mourner's hut for the King. King Yǒngjo had been very worried and anxious when Queen Dowager Inwǒn was sick and had served her sincerely. And for five months before they buried her he did not fail even once to offer wine and fruit to the dead, and mourn six times a day. He was sixty-four then and it was amazing that he sacrificed himself with such sincere and tremendous energy. Since he behaved like this, he imagined his son was wicked and behaved wrongly, not knowing the Prince's inner sincerity. Now, as both Queen and Queen Dowager were no longer alive, matters got worse and my hopes grew dim.

There was a reason why the relationship between father and son worsened at this time; in about December 1751 - January 1752 (midwinter of Sinmi) Lady Hyǒnbin<sup>3</sup> died. King Yǒngjo was extremely sad at losing his most devoted daughter-in-law, and came in person to the palace where she died to attend to

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<sup>1</sup> See note 2 on p.125.

<sup>2</sup> A house in the Ch'angdǒk Palace where Queen Chǒngsun, the second wife of King Yǒngjo died. Since demolished. See Map III, H.

<sup>3</sup> See BI, Queen Hyosun.

everything with the utmost sincerity. In the meantime, he met a court lady of that palace, the woman Mun.<sup>1</sup> He had relations with her and made her pregnant. The King favoured her brother, Mun Sŏng-guk, royal body guard, while he continued to pay special favour to her, and the lady gave birth to a princess in April 1753 (3m Kyeyu). At this time most people were very agitated, and it was said that the brother and sister would pretend that she had borne a son, showing somebody else's child, in case she herself was unable to give birth to a prince. Such strange rumours spread, and some even said that her mother was a former Buddhist nun who had returned to secular life and who came to Court at her daughter's delivery. Mun Sŏng-guk was a most malicious and utterly wicked fellow, plotting against the Crown Prince out of the perversity of his heart. The King showed both brother and sister special affection, promoting Mun Sŏng-guk to royal body guard and spending all his nights with the woman Mun. The King installed her in the Kosŏ-hŏn,<sup>2</sup> situated below the Kŏnggŭk-dang.<sup>3</sup> It was in the Kŏnggŭk-dang that King Yŏngjo had spent his childhood, and he had later bestowed this palace upon the Crown Prince Hyochang, which was why Lady Hyŏn had lived there, and indeed died there in 1751 (Sinmi). It was in the Kosŏ-hŏn that the woman Mun had given birth (to her first child), and to another princess in 1754 (Kapsul). The King appointed Chŏn Sŏng-ae as Court Secretary to this woman, with his office in the rear

<sup>1</sup> One of the concubines of King Yŏngjo. She was given the title of Sugŭi but was demoted from it later. That is why the authoress mentions her as woman Mun. She had two daughters. Sugŭi. See GOT, Naemyŏngbu.

<sup>2</sup> An enclosed balcony in the Ch'an'gyŏng Palace. See Map II, I.

<sup>3</sup> The hall in the Ch'an'gyŏng Palace. See Map II, J.

yard outside the courtyard gate. The King used to meet (Mun) Sǒng-guk at that place and the latter, of course, exploited this opportunity. Knowing the difficulties between the King and the Prince, he used to report every single thing the Prince did, agreeing with the King's hostile opinion of the Prince. Even if there was no one else who dared to report to the King what the Prince was doing, this Sǒng-guk, without any fear, relying on his powerful position and being a friend of all the workmen in the Court, was able to hear very detail of the Prince's behaviour and report it to the King. The woman Mun also informed him of everything she heard inside the Court. Therefore the King, who was very suspicious of the Prince even when he did not know many details of the Prince's misbehaviour, felt as if he was choked, hearing these things every day. It was very sad that this malicious man and woman sprang up, and it was to the misfortune of the State.

Although I knew that the brother and sister informed the King of everything they heard about the Prince, I did not know exactly what they reported. In about 1756 (Pyǒngja), having no court maids to help me, I tried to obtain the daughters of a workman and of a royal body guard at the Prince's palace. This was not the Prince's idea but I suggested this choice, for I had no one to help me. So one morning I chose the daughter of the workman Kim Wan-su and that of the Deputy Supervisor of Workmen. And already by noon the King had been informed of this, and called for the Prince and rebuked him a great deal, saying, "How dare you choose court maids without letting me know!" I was shocked to hear this. Kim Wan-su was a very close friend of Sǒng-guk and probably asked his help so that his daughter should not be selected, for

he did not want to send his daughter off to the Court. It was therefore obvious that Sŏng-guk must have informed the King of the affair.

The Prince had been overtaken by such major calamities (the deaths of the two Queens) not long after he himself had been sick with smallpox, so that having suffered great sorrow, he wore out his mind, and thus his illness and eccentric behaviour grew worse and worse. Moreover, Sŏng-guk informed the King of every single incident he discovered, and worsened the relationship between father and son. While the King was staying in the mourner's hut, he used to stop by the Okhwa-dang (mourner's hut of the Prince) on his way to Kyŏnghŭng-gak in order to mourn there, and rebuke him, picking on whatever he found wrong there. And whenever the Prince went to T'ongmyŏng-jŏn, he was blamed, causing his anger to flare up like a fire. The King would always criticize the Prince's faults before a crowd of people or when a great number of court servants were gathered together. In the extreme heat of July and August/September (6m and 7m), the King rebuked the Prince very often at T'ongmyŏng-jŏn, while many court servants of the palace of Queen Dowager Inwŏn were gathered, so that his inwardly raging anger and illness grew worse. From this time he started to beat the eunuchs more and more. Compared to his lofty behaviour and lamenting at the beginning of the mourning, these excesses, such as beating people, especially while he was in mourning, were wrong of the Prince. Since 1757 (chŏngch'uk) his obsession about wearing court costume started, something which is really too much for me to describe. He had gone through difficult times during these five months and that July/August (6m) when they buried Queen Chŏngsŏng on the mountain, the Prince lamented just as

much as he had done at the beginning of mourning. He followed the state funeral bier outside the city, wailing and lamenting so that all the government officials and the people of the country were moved to tears. This was how he behaved when in his right mind, but the King never understood this. When the Prince came back from bewailing the dead and went forward to receive the ancestral tablet after the funeral, there was some trouble which I cannot now recollect. At that time there was the calamity of a drought and the King rebuked the Prince so much that, in furious anger, the Prince wanted to kill himself while wailing at the courtyard of Töksŏng-hap and looking up at the Hwinyŏng-jŏn,<sup>1</sup> something far too affecting for me to describe. Since July/August 1757 (6m of this year), these symptoms of his anger grew worse, and he started to kill people. First of all he murdered the eunuch then on duty, Kim Han-ch'ae, and brought his head on the top of a stick to show the court ladies. I was so unutterably shocked to see for the first time in my life the head of a murdered human being. It seemed his anger calmed down after he killed people. From that first occasion onwards (first experience of murder) a great number of court maids were hurt (killed) which made me feel so overcome that I asked Lady Sŏnhŭi "What should I do, for he is behaving like this, and his illness is getting worse?" At which Lady Sŏnhŭi was so shocked that she retired to bed without eating, and worried a great deal. She was going to intervene in this problem, but I calmed her down saying "I cannot but inform you

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<sup>1</sup> The hall in Ch'an'gyŏng Palace where Queen Chŏngsŏng's spirit was venerated. Crown Prince Sado was killed in the courtyard of this hall. It was on the east of Sŏngmŏn-dang but has since been demolished. WGS pp.72-77.

of this, for I feel as if I am choked if I do not tell you the terrible things I know. But I do not know what to do, since if you do what you intend and the Prince finds out who told you, he will not forgive me." How can I set it all down here, and tell how I exerted myself more and more for nothing that can be particularly described - but I too wished to forget everything and put an end to myself.

Queen Dowager Inwŏn's burial took place in August/September (6m) and it rained very hard when the King followed her to the royal tomb and then took her ancestral tablet home, which showed the utmost filial piety in him. As for the Prince, though he was filial, his illness was getting more and more serious every day, and ever since he started to kill people most of those around us were terrified to death, which really was an incredible state of affairs. My father returned to Court from Kwansŏ that June/July (5m), and the King was very glad to see him and lamented over the state of things (at Court). My father also met the Prince, then suffering from serious distress, and confronted by major tragedies: he was consequently very sick. Father and I wept together, holding each other's hands, oppressed by worry and terror.

On October/November 1757 (9m of that year), the Prince brought in Ping-ae, a seamstress of the Queen Dowager Inwŏn's palace, later the mother of Hyŏn-ju, as he had her in mind for many years. The Prince's deep-seated irritations being inflamed more and more, and having nothing in which he could take an interest, he brought this court lady into (his palace), arranged apartments for her, furnishing them with everything you can think of, and supposing that, since the Queen Dowager

was dead, no one would inform the King. Before that he had sexual relations with various court ladies, and if they did not obey his demands, he used to hit them, so as to tear their flesh and then have relations with them afterwards, so that none of them wanted him. Although there were many girls with whom he had such relations, he did not seem serious about any of them. It seemed only as if he were passing the time, and he did not even pay any attention to Yangjae, who gave birth to his child. But he made a great fuss over this one, who was very malicious. The Crown Prince had very little money of his own and started to spend the Palace Treasury (Naesusa)<sup>1</sup> funds, which was really embarrassing. Although the officials of that board did not inform the King, he naturally found out the truth, and moreover (Mun)Sōng-guk must have informed him of it. The Prince had brought in Ping-ae during October/November (9m) 1757, but the King found out on 21/22 December 1757 (the winter Solstice 11m of the year), and was furious. He called the Prince in and rebuked him time after time, saying, "How dare you do such a thing!" You can imagine how much the King rebuked the Prince at that time, because even when there was not anything particularly wrong with the Prince's behaviour, he used to blame him ceaselessly. The King's towering rage reached such a pitch that he demanded that that particular court lady should be brought in front of the King. But the Prince was so captivated by her that he forced her not to go to the King at the risk of her life. The King insisted that she should be brought in front of him, and still the Prince would not send her to the King, threatening her with death if she went to the King, so the

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

situation became critical. Since the King did not know her by sight, the Prince took one of the young seamstresses to the King and said. "Here is Ping-ae sire."

The King had always loved me, especially since my marriage, and even when he was displeased with his son he never involved me or my children in his hatred, as would have been natural. Instead he treasured us as if we had not been the wife and children of that hated son, which I appreciated very much. But because of this affair, I had so much anxiety that I do not know how to put it down here. For the first time in the fourteen years I had served the King, he rebuked me very sternly, saying, "You must have known that the Prince had brought Ping-ae in and yet you did not tell me. How is it that even you deceived me?" I know you loved your husband so much that you were not jealous at all, even at his affair with Yangjye, and moreover you looked after their child, something I thought more than human, and I felt very sorry for you. But when he did such a thing, bringing in this court lady of the Queen Dowager's palace, yet still you did not tell me and even now when I am asking you, in full knowledge of the matter, you do not answer immediately. I never imagined you would behave like this." He rebuked me so much, stamping the ground in anger, that, although I was terrified and flustered, I said to the King, "How could I dare to report what my husband did to Your Highness? This is not the way a wife should behave." At that answer the King rebuked me even more, to my extreme fear, for he had always loved me and it was the first time that I was ever reprimanded so sternly. Meanwhile, they hid the court lady Ping-ae and sent her to Madame Chǒng's house, accompanied by another court maid. Madame Chǒng lived outside the Court, and they asked her to hide the

girl there. That night the King called the Prince to his mourning hut, Kongmok-hap, and rebuked him so much that the Prince was very depressed, and went straight to the well of Yangjǒng-hap and fell into it, which was a sight too much for me to bear. Fortunately the well was full of ice and contained very little water and so the hut guard Pak Se-gun got him up on his back out of the well without much trouble. But the Prince felt so overcome, and had also so injured himself, that matters got worse and worse so that I can hardly find words to describe them. The King, who was already very upset, was even more furious to see the Prince's insane behaviour of falling into the well, and then all the ministers and the government officials ranking under them came to have an audience with the King and witnessed this sight. The President of the Council at that time was Kim Sang-no,<sup>1</sup> who was wicked enough to pretend to please the Prince when he saw the Prince but gave a look of great grief to the King when he saw the King, which was very vicious. My father, from his utmost loyalty toward the King and deep concern over the country, said to His Majesty, without considering his situation, "As an old saying has it, a subject is very anxious if he is unable to get royal favour. Moreover royal favour should be much more expected when it coincides with the natural relationship between father and son. He became like this after passing through so much, therefore I wish Your Highness would consider the details." For since they understood each other to a degree that has rarely happened since ancient times, my father was never questioned about what he had done or said. But this time the King was so furious at what he said, on top of my previous answer, which had upset him earlier, that he dismissed

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<sup>1</sup> See BI.

him from his government office. So my father hurried out of the city in fear and stayed in Wölkwaye. For the violent actions of both the King and the Prince were such that all the subjects of the State relied on my father solely, and were naturally extremely flustered, while I myself stayed in a retirement room in immense fear, having been rebuked so sternly for the first time. But, after a long while, he forgave my father, reappointed him and called me in, showing me his usual affection. Though it happened in such terrifying circumstances, to my extreme dismay, yet I will never be able to pay for this utmost royal favour even by pulverizing my bones and breaking my body.

CHAPTER III

Though the King was ill at the beginning of 1758 (Musin), the Prince did not go to see him, as he was ill himself. The situation was thus extremely difficult. Whenever I saw the King, my heart and spirits seemed to dissolve into thin air, and it became very hard to go on living from day to day and month to month; more so than I can describe. In February/March (1m) of that year, Wōlsōng-wi<sup>1</sup> died. Princess Hwasun, who had no child, showed her deepest loyalty to her husband by starving herself for seventeen days after his death, out of a foolishly sincere affection, and thereby bringing about her own demise. Although this was a great honour for the royal family, the King was furious, saying that it was an act of impiety on her part to die leaving her aged father behind, and going contrary to his advice. Therefore the King refused to allow the erection of a red gate in honour of the virtuous princess. I thought it was impressive that the Prince admired her virtuous behaviour at a time when he was very ill which was extraordinary. After the incident of the December 1757 (11m of the previous year), the Prince stayed in Kwanhi-hap. In March/April 1758 (2m Muin), the King was once more upset about something and went to see the Prince who to the King's amazement was dressed very untidily. The King came to Sūngmūn-dang and summoned the Prince there, and they met each other for the first time since that incident of the December 1757 (11m of the previous year). The King rebuked the Prince about various matters and questioned him about the people he had killed. The King evidently seemed to know

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<sup>1</sup> See BI.

about these things and was waiting to see whether he would confess the truth. Although the Prince knew that if he did so he would get into great trouble, to my amazement, he used to confess the truth, probably due to his innate earnestness. On that particular day when he was questioned, he answered, "If I kill people or animals when I am very depressed from nervous anxiety, it relieves my pent-up anger, sire".

The King asked, "Why is that so?"

"Because I am hurt" answered the Prince.

"Why are you hurt?" the King asked.

"I am saddened because you do not love me and also, to my intense distress, I am terrified of you because you rebuke me all the time, Sire". So, answering in this way, he confessed the correct number of those he had killed; telling in detail what had happened. Then the King was probably moved by a momentary fatherly emotion and felt very sorry for his son. He calmed down somewhat saying, "I won't act in that way any more". And then the King came to see me at Kyōngchun-jōn and said, "I shall not be as I was any more because the Prince behaved like this. Do you think it will be all right?"

It was the first time the King had referred to his relationship with his son in such a way. When I heard such things suddenly and unexpectedly, I was truly delighted and moved to tears, saying, "Of course, it is more than right, Your Highness. Ever since childhood, the Prince has been frightened again and again by not being able to get your favour, which eventually brought on his mental illness and changed him into what he is now, Sire".

The King said, "The Prince told me that it happened because he was hurt".

I said, "Yes, he has been deeply wounded, but if Your Highness loved him he would not be so".

To which the King replied, with a pleased expression, "Then tell him I will do so, and that I have enquired how he sleeps and eats".

It was 4 April 1758 (27d 2m Muin). When I saw the King going to Kwanhi-hap, my courage dissolved, thinking that some awful thing was going to happen, and I was in an agony of anxiety. But when I heard these unexpected words from the King I was moved to tears and said, smiling, "How nice it would be if you could bring him back to his right mind like this". So saying I bowed and prayed with my hands clasped.

But the King seemed suddenly to feel disgusted at my behaviour, changed his expression and went off saying, "I will do so". I could not understand clearly what he meant - it was as if it was all a dream - but the Prince asked me to come and see him. I went to him and said, "Why did you tell the King something about which His Majesty did not enquire, and for which you are bound to blame someone else later, overwhelming me with dismay".

He answered, "Because the King asked me about things of which he already knew".

I asked, "What did he say?"

He answered, "He told me not to do so any more".

I asked again, "Since the King instructed you in this way, do you think relations between you and your father might improve?"

At which the Prince lost control of himself completely and said, "Do you believe what he said simply because you are a daughter-in-law whom the King favours? He is just pretending to be kind. This is why I cannot believe him; eventually I shall be put to death".

When he said this, he did not look at all sick. When the King had spoken as he did I was moved to tears by the momentary kindness of his words. Yet I also wept when I heard the Prince express his opinion, perceptive even in the midst of his mental affliction. For Heaven had made relations between father and son such that, even if the King tried not to hate his son, it was as if someone forced him to do so; while the son, whenever he met his father, was unable to hide any thing, but out of his innate sincerity confessed to all his misdeeds. If the King treated him in anything approaching a normal way, how would the Prince have done such things? Why had Heaven appointed such a strange tragedy to be the affliction of our country. It was indeed sad.

At this time, to my sorrow, the Prince's obsession with dressing was getting worse. But this obsession was so strange that I can hardly find a word for it. For example, when he wanted to put on one suit of clothes, we had to prepare 10 or sometimes 20 or 30 suits of clothes; and then he would sometimes burn clothes as an offering to a spirit-figure which he erected, before he was lucky enough to put on a suit of clothes successfully. If his valet made even the slightest error when helping him to get dressed, he would be unable to wear that costume, and would get very worked up, so that eventually someone would suffer for it. What a dreadful illness! Sometimes they had to prepare so many suits that even cotton cloth was

in the Prince's household. If they could not prepare them in time or get the material ready on time, the life of those responsible hung on a thread. For this reason I exerted myself to get everything ready in time. My father, hearing this, not only worried about the Prince but was also so concerned about my exerting myself, and the ordeals of those round about the Prince, that he himself supplied the material for the royal robes. For six or seven years this illness persisted, becoming sometimes extreme and then again easing. After such torment over wearing the royal robes if, with the favour of Heaven, he was able to put them on at last, he became somewhat calmer, and would feel so relieved that he would wear that particular robe till it got dirty. What a strange disease it was! Since there was never such an affliction as this difficulty of wearing clothes among the hundreds and thousands of diseases recorded from ancient times, why did such a precious Prince fall a victim to it? Though I cried to Heaven, there was no way of finding out the reason.

After the first anniversary of the deaths of Queen Chōngsǒng and Queen Dowager Inwǒn, we spent two months comparatively free of serious trouble. Since the Prince could not otherwise pay his homage to Hongnǔng,<sup>1</sup> the King could not help but allow him to accompany him. There was a long and tiresome rainy season that year, and on the day of the King's procession to the royal tombs it rained so heavily that the King claimed that (it showed Heaven's displeasure) at his having brought the Prince with him, so that, before they reached the royal tombs, he ordered the Prince back, and only the King's palanquin went

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<sup>1</sup> The tomb of Queen Chōngsǒng in Koyan, the present Hongnǔng. CWS, V.43, p.641.

forward. So the Prince was unable to fulfil his intention of paying homage to the royal tombs, something which must have distressed all the government officials, soldiers and civilians. When I heard this extraordinary piece of news as I sat with Lady Sŏnhŭi, I was stunned, as well as very anxious and flustered, thinking that the Prince would flare up when he reached home. You can imagine how he felt when he had to come home in such heavy rain, after going out in vain! His anger burnt so fiercely that he could not come straight home, instead he stopped in the Capital Garrison (Kyŏngyŏng)<sup>1</sup> and came home after he had overcome his anger. When he came home he looked dreadful, due to his extreme depression. As far as this matter was concerned I thought that anyone, unless he were sick or were the great Shun himself, famous for his filial devotion, would have been similarly saddened. Thinking of the Prince, Lady Sŏnhŭi and I wept, holding each other's hands. The Prince himself also said "There is no way I can go on living now". Later to my distress he thought that it happened because he had worn his royal robe wrongly, and from that event his clothes phobia intensified.

In January 1759 (12m of that year), the King fell so seriously ill that he could not take part in person, in the rites at the ancestral shrines on the first day of the New Year. I was very worried about the Prince's going to ask after the King's health. Even if the Prince went to see the King, the latter would not be able to look on the Prince without rebuking him, and the Prince also was very sick, so that he had a terrible

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<sup>1</sup> See GOT.

appearance, and did not want to go and see the King. While he was sick the King felt sad and hopeless. The President of the Council at that time was Kim Sang-no who used to appear very sorry for the Prince's unavoidable difficulties and talked treacherously in such a way that the Prince felt very grateful towards him. Because of this the Prince said he had been one of those who had helped him since the Incident of December 1757 (11m Chōngch'uk)<sup>1</sup>. As the King was very ill at this time, and worried about being unable to attend to State business, which he frequently remarked to his minister, everyone else found it difficult to know where they stood, as a result of the problem (of relations between father and son), so that it was extremely awkward for them to convey messages between the King and the Prince. But Sang-no would talk very smoothly to the Prince, currying favour with him, and yet would present a very sad face to the King, weeping as if to show himself in accordance with the royal opinion. Although he wanted to tell his true mind to the King, Lady Sōnhŭi was in the royal bedroom attending the King day and night, and the attendant court ladies were there all the time, so that he could not talk. There were two bedrooms in the mourners' hut, Kongmok-hap, and the King lay next to the door of the inner room, while the three proctorial ministers (Chejo)<sup>2</sup> and the royal doctor presented themselves in the outer room. The President of the Council would prostrate himself just by the place where the King placed his head so that he could whisper secrets very quietly. But he was afraid of Lady Sōnhŭi, who served the King in the inner room, and would scribble something on the floor with his hand. When he read what Sang-no wrote, the King would strike the threshold (in exasperation) and sigh, while Sang-no would prostrate himself, weeping. Of

<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on page 68.

<sup>2</sup> See GOT.

course any President of the Council would cry bitterly in such circumstances as that, but Sang-no was wickedly making mischief between the King and the Prince, which was inhuman conduct. Since she was always there, Lady Sŏnhŭi saw him scribbling on the floor to convey his message to the King, and felt deeply mortified, saying that he was very wicked.

While the King was sick, Ch'ŏngyŏn was also dangerously ill with smallpox, but the disease eventually proved amenable to treatment. The King also recovered after the New Year and came to see Ch'ŏngyŏn himself, which was an occasion for great celebration. In March/April 1759 (3m Kimyo), the King honoured his grandson by bestowing the title of Royal Grandson upon him, and the Royal Grandson went to the Hyosŏ-jŏn<sup>1</sup> and the Hwinyŏng-jŏn to pay homage. The Crown Prince, though he was sick, was very pleased as well as proud of the title Royal Grandson being bestowed upon his son. Though he hardly cared about his wife and children when he was seriously ill, yet he treasured the Royal Grandson immensely and never let the princesses dare to compete with him, causing those of lower birth to look up to him by defining their duties very firmly and clearly. When he acted like this, he did not seem at all ill.

On May 31st (6d 5m), the ceremonies connected with the three years' mourning having been completed, the ancestral tablet of Queen Dowager Inwŏn was placed in the Royal Ancestral Temple for the last time, which made me feel indescribably desolate. Before this, the Ceremonies Board asked the King's permission to select a new Queen and so the King reported this to the Hyosŏ-jŏn and decided to select a wife. The state wedding took place in June/July (6m), when the symptoms of the

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Queen Dowager Inwon's shrine.

Crown Prince's illness were getting worse, which caused great concern though it was not discussed. Lady Sǒnhŭi told me that since Queen Chǒngsǒng had passed away, it was right for the King to hold a state wedding and provide a Queen. She congratulated King Yǒngjo with utmost sincerity and prepared the state wedding in person. Her virtuous conduct in serving and protecting the royal person was really exalted. On the day after the wedding, when the Crown Prince and I had audience with both the King and the Queen at the Queen's palace (Chun'gung-jǒn)<sup>1</sup> the Crown Prince behaved with utmost care lest he give the impression of unfilial behaviour, showing in this his extraordinary innate sincerity and filial devotion.

In July/August (Intercalary 6m) of this year, the Royal Grandson celebrated his appointment as heir to the Crown Prince at the Myǒngjǒng-jǒn<sup>2</sup>; he was then eight years old, and appeared solemn and very outstanding. Superficially it seemed that since the Crown Prince was deputising for the King, while his son at the age of eight was celebrating his appointment as the Royal Grandson, the power of the State should have been as lofty and secure as Mount T'ai,<sup>3</sup> and there should have been no cause for anxiety. But favourable prospects at Court were constantly difficult to preserve; nor was there any point in asking Heaven for explanations. Over that Autumn and Winter, the King was naturally so busy after his wedding that he presented us with few difficulties. So we managed to get through that year, but

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<sup>1</sup> The palace of Queen Chǒngsun.

<sup>2</sup> The Royal Audience Chamber of Ch'an'gyǒng Palace where the government officials paid homage to the King. See Map II, K.

<sup>3</sup> Mt. T'ai in the west of Shantung Province, China.

in 1760 (Kyōngjin), the Crown Prince's illness became even more serious, and the King's rebukes grew more and more severe every day, so that the Prince's temper flared up more and more, and his obsession with clothes became extreme. Suddenly he started to say that he could see people, who were not in fact there, passing by outside, and he used to send out a servant beforehand to stop them from going past (while he was putting on his robes). But if there was someone who could not get away quickly enough and the Prince caught even the faintest glimpse of them, he would not keep that robe on, and felt forced to have it taken off. If he wanted to wear a silken military uniform, they had to prepare a number of them and then he would burn several before he could put on one. This was why, in 1759 (Kimyo) and 1760 (Kyōngjin), he burnt so many silk military uniforms that many chests of silk were wasted. Since they were all of the finest quality, I felt my heart torn into pieces.

It seemed strange to me that the Prince's birthday, on the 21st day of the first month, was never celebrated in a peaceful atmosphere. Instead the King would hold a Regular Administrative Board Meeting on that day, or call for the royal instructor and ask about the Crown Prince's progress - which (always) made the Prince very sad. He got more and more depressed and anxious as time went by, so that he was never able to have the evening meal on his birthday in a normal atmosphere. He came to insist on going without dinner on that day, so that the whole Court would be flustered. Alas, why was such an awful fate appointed for him! He was so enraged on his birthday in 1760 (Kyōngjin) that he could not force himself to use reverent language of devotion towards his parents; instead he began to abuse them from that day on. He was so resentful

and sad that he did not seem to be able to distinguish heaven from earth. Thinking that there was no point in living any longer, he used a great deal of vulgar language to Lady Sǒnhǔi, and screamed at the children when they came to make their greeting, saying, "How do you expect me to be aware of my children when I am not aware of my parents. (When I cannot fulfil my duty as a son, how can you expect me to do it as a father?). Go away!" The children, who were then nine, seven and five years old, wearing dragon figured silk robes, crowns and belts, in order to salute their father as he celebrated his birthday, were all frightened out of their wits by his fierce shouting. It was such an awful scene to describe. Generally, although he was now ill, he used to plague only me, and did not dare to offend his mother. But Lady Sǒnhǔi, who did not fully believe what I had told her about the Prince's illness and thought I was exaggerating, now saw such things for the first time, and was terrified and could not utter a word. For the Prince seemed unaware of his seventy-year old mother and even forgot his affection for his children. Lady Sǒnhǔi and the frightened children turned as pale as ash. The whole sequence of events was just terrible, and the sadness cut into my heart to the point where I was ready to kill myself. But I could not, so I no longer had the appearance of a normal human being at all.

Throughout the spring of this year, the Prince's illness was getting worse, so that I was anxious day and night. Then the King was very concerned over the drought of that summer, saying that it was owing to the Crown Prince not cultivating virtue. And so the King rebuked the Crown Prince tremendously with words too terrible to hear, and the Prince, who was very

sick, could not endure it, so that anxieties were endless and it was impossible to go on even one more minute in this state. Day and night I simply wanted to die.

Though Madame Chǒng<sup>1</sup> later behaved basely toward the Royal Grandson, she never refused to help the Crown Prince obtain a request, whatever it might be. If there was anything to blame in her conduct at this time, it was that she did not try to soften the King's feelings by sacrificing herself. From the time his condition began to deteriorate markedly, in 1760 (Kyǒngjin), the Prince began to tell Madame Chǒng to obtain various articles (from the King) for him, saying, "Get me as much as you can!" Before this he would only ask her quietly to get quantities of things for him. Since his anger and sadness had increased so immensely, he seemed to think that it was somehow through Madame Chǒng that he was unable to enjoy the King's affection as she did, so his deep-seated resentment broke out and he shouted, "Make sure that everything works out well for me!" At which Madame Chǒng was frightened as well as flustered, although she managed to prevent the situation becoming critical. According to what she told me, she was never quite sure of the King's reaction if she begged straightforwardly for whatever the Prince asked her to get, and she would devise various ways till she found the right way of getting it without any trouble, so as to content the Prince. The Prince also asked her to prevent the King from calling him in to an audience, so that he might avoid the King's comments. And because the Prince was worried in case something might happen while she was away from the Court, he would shout out fearfully, "I will not see you

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<sup>1</sup> See BI.

again (if you go to your home and stay away from the Court)". So Madame Chǒng was not allowed to go home for the time being, and could not even go home to celebrate her adopted son, Hu-gyǒm's<sup>1</sup> coming-of-age celebration at the end of July 1760 (middle of the 6m). The Prince's condition was deteriorating every day, likewise his inability to face the King was growing, so that he could not think of any way of enduring to be in the same palace with the King and wanted the King to move into another palace, for he thought that he himself would then be able to get rid of his feelings of resentment by exercising with weapons in the rear courtyard. And so he suddenly decided upon this and asked Madame Chǒng to tell the King, "I do not think I can live in the same palace with him, so please take the King to the upper palace<sup>2</sup> by any means you can, such as telling him that you want him to have a look at the upper palace or something like that." When he was thinking this, he asked me first to tell Madame Chǒng that he wanted to see her to ask her to do this for him. When he told me this he threatened me in such a terrifying manner that my life seemed to hang by a thread! But the princess managed to devise some way of persuading the King to move into the other palace and he chose 18 August 1760 (8d) as an auspicious day for doing so. It was on 16 August 1760 (6d) when the Prince had called her and said with his hand on his sword, "From now on if anything happens to me, I will slash you with this sword". Lady Sǒnhŭi, who also came together with her daughter, for she was afraid that the Prince might have harmed the princess, saw this sight and stood shocked and amazed. The princess also wept and begged him: "Please spare my life, for I will do anything you ask from now

<sup>1</sup> See BI, Chǒng Hu-gyǒm.

<sup>2</sup> Kyǒnhŭi Palace. See Map I,C.

on". The Prince said, "Because I feel as if I am suffocating staying in this palace all the time, will you persuade the King to allow me to go to Onyang? (famous for its hot spring). You know that my feet get boils on them from the humidity during Summer". The princess answered, "Yes, sire" and went off. The King moved into the other palace<sup>1</sup> and gave permission for the Prince to proceed to Onyang. The princess must have made a fuss so that things went smoothly, otherwise how could the King have moved into the other palace so suddenly, and ordered the Prince to proceed to Onyang; something quite unprecedented. If she had tried earlier to sacrifice herself like this so as to improve relations between father and son, it might have been better. But then, what could we do? It was Heaven's will.

I was unable to go and make my farewells when the King moved out, because the Prince had thrown a chessboard at me and struck me above the left eye, so hard that my eyeball almost came out. Fortunately it cleared up, but left a dreadful bruise, and the eye itself was very swollen. I could not face Lady Sŏnhŭi for the same reason. The incident must have shocked her, and made her feel hopeless at the prospect of the royal departure. I could no longer do anything to ease the situation, and it seemed impossible to go on living. I wanted to die but I could not do so, since I could not abandon the Royal Grandson. So many critical complications occurred time after time that I can scarcely record them all here.

When the King moved into the other palace, he ordered preparations for the trip to Onyang and the Prince set out on 23 August (13d 7m). Lady Sŏnhŭi was so anxious about his safe

<sup>1</sup> King Yŏngjo moved into the Kyŏnghŭi Palace on 18 August 1760 (8d 7m Kyŏngjin). CWS v.44, p.40.

return - out of motherly affection, from his trip to Onyang and missed him so much that she would prepare food parcels and send them to him all the time. Her nephew, Yi In-kang was a general in charge (Yǒngjang) of Kongju and she would ask him to send her news of how the Prince was getting on. She seemed to be thinking of him very much, as was natural. When the Prince left, the King was advised to allow him to go without saying farewell to him. The Prince's progress to Onyang took place in a most desolate atmosphere. Although the Prince wanted to have a number of guards proceeding in advance and to have the cavalry orderly make a lively sound with a military band playing magnificently for his procession, since the King only reluctantly allowed him to go, how could he make such preparations? While as far as his own men were concerned, none of them ever dared to say anything about relations between father and son. Though I treasured my husband especially, in my mind I was most glad not to have to see him because he was a cause of utmost calamity and deep fear to me, so much so that I found my life might have been brought to an end any day by some mischance. Therefore I felt fortunate when he went away to Onyang. I can hardly express the extent of my father's deep concern over this, nor the awkwardness it caused in relations between my father and the Prince. My father and I were eaten up with anxiety day and night in a pathetic dismay which future generations might easily imagine. While the Prince was away in Onyang, the Royal Grandson asked that his youngest uncle, Hong Nag-yun and cousin Su-yǒng should be summoned. Since my own life was liable to end any morning or evening, my relatives, brothers and their wives, came (to Court) to say farewell.

When the Prince was going to leave for Onyang, he looked as if his last hour had come, but when he got out of the city gate, his fury seemed to calm down so that he ordered that none of (his train) should disturb people along the way, and he bestowed favors on people as well as displaying his dignity. So the people cheered him, calling him 'brilliant prince'. After he settled in the royal lodge (at Onyang) he influenced the people there by his virtue. The whole town became very peaceful and secure, and the people admired and invoked the Prince's virtue. I thought his illness must have disappeared in the face of this feeling of being re-invigorated and that his sickness had given place to his innate (goodness of) nature. But though he went all the way to Onyang, he found the town so small and without scenery; much less magnificent scenery! After staying there for about ten days he again felt oppressed, and returned to his palace on the 14 September 1760 (6d 8m). Then he said that he would like to go to P'yŏngsan because Onyang was stifling. But it was impossible to ask the King's permission for a further move, so I persuaded him not to go, telling him that P'yŏngsan was narrower and more cramped than Onyang. He always felt suffocated with the royal instructors and subordinates continually writing to him, "Please have an audience with the King". And yet he was not fit to see the King, and this indeed caused me great concern. The King kept the Royal Grandson near him a great deal. The King was concerned about everything and would talk only of his anxieties at Council meetings. Therefore the King naturally praised the Royal Grandson and had confidence in him for the sake of country and intended to entrust him with the Kingdom. The King expressed his affection for the Royal Grandson very often, for he was precocious and clever

and his response and behaviour suited the King's disposition. The Crown Prince used to ask the Court Analyst to record the speeches made at Council meetings for him, and read them to him. But when he came upon such phrases as, 'the King praised and made much of the Royal Grandson saying, "I will entrust the Royal Grandson with the most important responsibility of the State",' he was extremely disturbed. The Crown Prince loved the Royal Grandson, but since relations between father and son in the royal family had never been easy from the beginning, when the Crown Prince realized in his illness that the King praised only the Royal Grandson, while he himself had from childhood not once received the King's affection, he became sick with resentment. His anger grew until it became more than I can express. Since the life and death of the country depended on the Royal Grandson and it was necessary to ensure his well-being for the safety of the kingdom, I worked out a way to keep him secure. This was by preventing the Crown Prince reading the reports. But since it was impossible to prevent the Prince from reading any of them, I sent a message to the eunuchs to tell them to alter any parts of the royal speeches where the King praised the Royal Grandson before the Prince could read them, or sometimes when it was urgent I myself asked the eunuchs to cut out such passages. I told my father about this and asked him, "Please find some way to preserve the Royal Grandson's safety". My father, acting out of the deepest sentiment of loyalty towards the State, arranged very carefully that such phrases should not be included when reports of the Council meetings were written. Confronted with this most difficult situation, my father tried to repay the royal favour (he had received) by protecting the Royal Grandson without jeopardising the Prince. When his burning anxiety was

too much for him, it upset his nerves so much that he became continually sick. Whenever he saw me, he prayed to Heaven for the peace of the country and above all that the Royal Grandson should be saved so that he could succeed the Kingdom; for which it was essential that the Crown Prince should not read such phrases. Concerning this point my father and I were naturally extremely anxious, and our agonized sincerity was plain to all. For if the Crown Prince had seen the King's expressions of praise for the Royal Grandson in the original, you could never imagine what dreadful things might have happened.

In 1761 (Sinsa), the Prince's illness got worse. Ever since the King had moved into the other palace, the Prince spent his days riding and exercising with weapons in the rear courtyard. But after August 1760 (7m of this year), he was tired of doing this all the time and unexpectedly started to go into town in disguise - which shocked me so much at first that there are no words to describe it. When he was in the grip of his illness he could not help hurting (i.e. killing) people. Hyōnju's mother (Pingae, the Prince's concubine) used to take care of the Prince's robes and in 5 February to 6 March 1761 (1m Sinsa) just as he was going to change his robes in order to travel incognito, his mental disorder broke out, and he beat (Pingae) so severely that he injured her fatally. He went out soon afterwards. Pingae died at the palace not long after. It was not only a pity for Pingae herself but her children were so wretchedly bereaved! Since the King might come in any day we could not keep the dead body in the palace even for a little, and indeed barely managed to keep it overnight. We sent it out in the

morning and arranged the Yongdon-gung<sup>1</sup> for the funeral, giving plenty of money for the funeral expenses. When the Prince came home and heard about this, he said nothing. He seemed to be completely absent minded and everything he did was just too awful to describe. He spent the whole of 7 March to 4 May (2m and 3m) roaming about incognito and came in and out very frequently. I became extremely terrified and cautious. In April/May (3m) the Royal Grandson entered the Institute of the Royal Grandson and celebrated his coming-of-age at Kyŏnghŭi Palace. However much I wanted to attend the celebration, since the Crown Prince was not fit to go, I was not brave enough to go on my own, and so stayed away, saying that I was sick.

During 24 February and 23 April (2m and 3m of this year), the President of the Council Yi Ch'ŏn-bo<sup>2</sup> and two Vice Presidents of the Council Yi Hu<sup>3</sup> and Min Paek-sang,<sup>4</sup> killed themselves one after the other.<sup>5</sup> Then the King was ill and there were no

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<sup>1</sup> A royal residence built in King Myŏngjong's reign (1131-1202). The first son of King Myŏngjong was invested as Crown Prince here. Later this residence was moved to Sujin-dong village, where the present Sungmyŏng Girls' High School is located. Han'gŭl Hakhoe, *ibid.*, p.221.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

<sup>3</sup> See BI.

<sup>4</sup> See BI.

<sup>5</sup> The President of the Council, Yi Ch'ŏn-bo, the Senior Vice President of the Council, Yi Hu, and the Junior Vice President of the Council, Min Paek-sang bore the responsibility for the Crown Prince's misconduct, which had led to wild rumours around the country. They got into such a dilemma over whether to report this to the King that they poisoned themselves. Yi Ch'ŏn-bo killed himself on 9 February 1761, Yi Hu on 8 April 1761 and Min Paek-sang on 21 March 1761. CWS v.44, p.56, 58, 59.

ministers, so my father was appointed the President of the Council. When he thought of his situation and the circumstances of the State, he was by no means willing to take up office. But realizing that the State had no one to depend on, he assumed office in February/April (3m) in conformity with his habit of accepting alike the pleasures and the difficulties of his station. So firmly was his determination to serve his country that he was prepared to do his best even if it meant his death and was therefore extremely anxious as well as terrified.

On about 4 May 1761 (last day of 3m) the Prince travelled incognito to P'yŏngyang. The then Governor of P'yŏngan Province was Chŏng Hwi-ryang, the uncle by marriage of Princess Hwawan, therefore the Prince guessed that his action would not be reported to the King. The Governor knew the Prince would not inform him that he was coming, but how could the Governor remain calmly in his Provincial Office. He presented himself outside his Provincial Office and offered the food and whatever else the Prince required for his stay. People say that the Governor was so concerned that he vomited blood. He was a very cautious man and since Ilsŏng-wi was already dead, he was terrified because he knew that the King loved Princess Hwawan more than any of his other children. He must have been incredibly agitated. After the Prince left for P'yŏngyang my anxiety became unbearable; moreover my father was so anxious and flustered that he sought news of the Prince from the Governor in secret and stayed in the palace all the time, now and then going home to sit in his front hall through the night. He must have felt dreadful. He could not for all the world report the Prince's doings to the King and was therefore unable to remonstrate. If the

circumstances had allowed him to expostulate with the King, he certainly would have done so. But even had he remonstrated with the King, the King would not have listened and my father's offence might have jeopardised my life and even the security of the children. So it was not as if he did not want to remonstrate about the matter, but in fact, since the Crown Prince was hopelessly sick, he struggled above all to protect the Royal Grandson. People who did not understand the situation blamed my father for not leading the King in the right direction, but he could not explain the situation to anyone else at all. It was really sad that he had to face such opposition.

In about 20 days since the Prince left for P'yŏngyang sometime after 24 May 1761 (20d 4m) the Prince returned. After experiencing such extreme anxiety, I felt rather relieved. While he was away in P'yŏngyang, they pretended that the Prince was sick and persuaded one of the eunuchs to imitate him; thus this eunuch, Yu In-sik, lay in bed in the Prince's inner chamber, and imitated the Prince's voice, while Pak Mun-hong did as he was told in everything. This terrified me, and what happened was too awful to be recorded here. At length a letter of complaint was sent to the Court by Yun Chae-gyŏm.<sup>1</sup> Though it was right for the minister (her father) to remonstrate with the King on the letter, the Prince was not in a fit condition to discuss the matter. If the King was told, anything could have happened. So the minister was unable to remonstrate.

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<sup>1</sup> On 17 June 1761 (15d 5m Sinsa), Changyŏng, Yun Chae-gyŏm's memorial to the King reported that the Prince had gone incognito to P'yŏngyang for amusement, and recommended that the person who had induced the Prince to do so should be punished. CWS v.44, p.65. Changyŏng. See GOT.

Since coming back from his trip to P'yŏngyang, the Prince seemed to control himself rather more and attended the Regular Administrative Board Meeting and even resumed his studies. I hoped that he might calm down after all; but it was pitiful to have such hopes. Later on at the Regular Administrative Board Meeting, Kye-hŭi<sup>1</sup> mentioned something (of the Prince's misconducting himself) at which the Prince rebuked him firmly, citing the example of Chiang Ch'ung.<sup>2</sup> Therefore my father thought that the Prince might have recovered from his illness and came with joy to tell me what had happened at the Regular Administrative Board Meeting. After 12 June 1761 (10d 5m of that year), for the first time, the Prince went to the Kyŏnghŭi Palace and paid homage without any trouble, thank Heaven. So I also went to the Kyŏnghŭi Palace with the Royal Grandson to see the King and Lady Sŏnhŭi in the middle of that month. Lady Sŏnhŭi was so upset that she could not find anything to say to me.

From the spring of this year the Prince had suffered from malaria for several months and was upset and disturbed all the time. I thought that it was due to the abuse he had inflicted on his royal body, travelling incognito since the same Spring when he contracted this disease. If he had died from the disease then, I would have had to experience simply the agony of losing him, whereas (surviving it), he was to experience so

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<sup>1</sup> He was the Chehak Hong Kye-hŭi.  
Chehak. See GOT.

<sup>2</sup> Chiang Ch'ung took part in a plot to convince Emperor Wu of Han that his son and heir had been involved in magical practices against him. The unfortunate prince was put to death with his children on 30 September 91 B.C., after he had himself killed Chiang Ch'ung on 1 September. Wang Hsien-ch'ien, Han shu pu:Ch'ien Han, v.45, pp.39-40 (double leave).

many disasters unparalleled since ancient times. It may sound inhuman to talk in this way, but (if he had died at this time) the distress of the children and myself, the terrible upheavals, and attendant suffering and resentment of my own family, would never have reached the proportions they did. I cannot understand how Heaven works.

The Prince recovered from malaria in August/September 1761 (8m) and on September/October 1761 (9m) the King came to our palace, having found out about the Crown Prince's trip to P'yŏngyang, about which Sŏ Myŏng-ŭng had memorialised to the King.<sup>1</sup> It was thus recorded in the Diary of the Royal Secretariat which the King read and in that way found out the facts. Now for the first time the King made this discovery and although we experienced some upheaval, thanks to Chŏng Hwi-ryang's help, we avoided a major calamity. Since the King was about to proceed to the Ch'angdŏk Palace and had to put the administration of the eunuchs in order, he had no time to do anything more than reproach the Prince. As experience since childhood had shown me, the King would examine insignificant matters very closely and fastidiously, but if the trouble was too serious to be dealt with by simply making a fuss, he used to be less furious than he was over minor problems. Just as when he was told that the Prince had killed people, he comforted him instead, saying he acted like that because he had been hurt.

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<sup>1</sup> On 10 June 1761, the Taesasŏng Sŏ Myŏng-ŭng sent the memorial to the King reporting the Crown Prince's trip to P'yŏngyang and asked the King to investigate this matter which was unknown only to the King but talked about by everyone in the country.

CWS v.44, p.65.

Taesasŏng. See GOT.

So after he found out about the Prince's trip to P'yongyang, instead of flying into a rage and punishing him terribly, he deplored it less than might have been expected. I thought that it was probably too serious to matter.

Then a royal procession was announced and the Prince put away all his weapons which had been scattered about the place. He was then staying in the Hwanch'wi-jǒng<sup>1</sup> and since he believed that he would not be safe (from the King), he spoke to me with an affection which he had not shown for many years, asking me what he should do, because he felt himself to be in danger. Feeling overcome, I answered "However frustrating it is, (the King) will hardly do something so drastic". He said "Not so! The King loves the Royal Grandson and even if he finishes me off, it would not make any difference to him, since he still has the Royal Grandson". I answered, "Since the Royal Grandson is your son, happiness and misfortune should be the same for the father as for the son, shouldn't it?" He said, "You are not thinking straight. The King hates me so much that things are getting very difficult; he will destroy me and make the Royal Grandson the (posthumously) adopted son of Crown Prince Hyojang and there is nothing we can do about it." When he said this, he did not look ill, but he spoke so sadly that I felt very depressed and said, "It is hardly possible". He said, "Wait and see! Though you belong to me, the King has treated you and the children quite normally, but he has hated me, and me alone, so much that I have fallen into this sickness, and therefore it is hardly possible that he will let me live".

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<sup>1</sup> A pavilion in Ch'an'gyǒng Palace which was on the west of Chagyǒng-jǒn, since demolished. See Map II, M.

I was so sad to hear these words that I wept, and when I experienced that utmost resentment and the pain of the event of 1764 (Kapsin)<sup>1</sup> I remembered what the Prince had said and thought it was very strange that he had foreseen the future so clearly in those words. Therefore I was again extremely resentful (of what happened to him) knowing that he was really gifted with penetrating insight. But the King was unable to make the procession then, which calmed the Prince's frightened mind to some extent, although each time he experienced such a situation, his illness worsened and so about October/November 1761 (10m) he was worse again which was a great sorrow.

It was at this time that the selection of the wife of the Royal Grandson was fixed. My father once told me that he had seen the future Queen as a child when he had been invited to the 60th anniversary of the mother of the Board Minister, Kim Sŏng-ŭng<sup>2</sup> and that even then he had thought of her as having an exceptional character. The Crown Prince saw the name of the daughter of the Deputy Board Minister, Kim Si-mok<sup>3</sup> on the list of the daughters of eligible government officials and was very much inclined to select her. He sent a message to the princess to say, "See to it that the King selects her, otherwise you will get into trouble". But the King as well as the opinion of Court inclined to the daughter of Yun Tŭg-yang. Since the Crown Prince was not able to attend the selection, I too was unable to go which was truly distressing and inhuman for a

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<sup>1</sup> On 22 March 1764 (20d 2m Kapsin), the King ordered the Royal Grandson to be regarded as the posthumously adopted son of Crown Prince Hyojang.  
CWS v.44, p.159.

<sup>2</sup> See BI.

<sup>3</sup> See BI.

mother with exceptional affection (for her son) over and beyond that which an ordinary mother naturally feels. The Crown Prince was very anxious as to whether (his plan would be successful) but was quite delighted when he was told that the decision had been made in her (i.e. Kim Si-mok's daughter's) favour. Soon after the Second Selection, the wife-to-be of the Royal Grandson caught the measles and not long afterwards the Royal Grandson got it, but recovered at about 4 January 1762 (ap.10d 12m). The King was delighted at this, since he had been anxious over the illness, and the Prince also was so glad that he behaved carefully as if he was not ill any longer. I prayed in secret with my hands clasped to the gods of heaven and earth that they might save him from the serious disease through my own special affection, and my father showed his utmost sincerity, doing night duty in the palace and exerting himself both day and night more than words can say. By the help of the royal ancestors both the Royal Grandson and his wife-elect recovered without much trouble. She was put forward for the Third Selection on January 1762 (12m)<sup>1</sup>, an immensely happy event. For they could not but show the girl to the parents of the Royal Grandson and the King called for the Crown Prince and me. I was very glad to be able to see the wife-elect of the Royal Grandson, but on the other hand I was very worried as to how the Prince would face this occasion. And so of course it turned out just as I feared. The Prince used to put on several sets of robes, one after the other, destroying each set which he had decided that he could

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<sup>1</sup> On 16 January 1762 (22d 12m Sinsa), the Ceremony was held for the Third Selection of the wife of the heir apparent, the Royal Grandson.  
CWS v.44, p.89.

not wear, after his usual fashion, and he did the same thing with his hats. Therefore he went to the ceremony wearing two jade beads appropriate to an official of the third rank on his hat strings, instead of the strings with jade befitting a senior official, which we could no longer afford. The King and Prince met at Sahyŏn-hap<sup>1</sup>. Of course I knew that the meeting between them would not go off without trouble, but the King had summoned him there, so that he would be present at a major event in the life of his own son. When there were much more serious issues at stake, why should it have mattered so much if his jade ornaments were too big and ugly, like those of a military officer, even if it made him hardly look like a Crown Prince? The King was so upset with him on account of the beads that he told him to go back without seeing the girl, and even before she came in, at which I was downcast. I felt that the King should have acted differently. The Prince must have felt terrible going back without even being able to see his daughter-in-law, and I wondered how could he manage to return so obediently without his anger being aroused. I myself decided to see the wife of the Royal Grandson before I went back, even at the cost of my life. So I managed to see the Third Selection, but I thought it was too cruel for the Prince not to be able to see it. Also, things could have become very uneasy, so I told the Queen, Lady Sŏnhŭi and the princess, "Since the way to the Detached Palace is through the Ch'angdŏk Palace I am fearful that I will take her and introduce her to the Prince without telling the King". But they all agreed, and so I told the eunuchs who were in attendance, "When you pass the lower palace, bring her palanquin in together with mine". So I took her to the Prince who had been staying there in an unhappy mood having

<sup>1</sup> A pavilion in Kyŏnghŭi Palace.

returned even without being able to see his daughter-in-law. He was lying resting in the Tōksōng-hap dumbfounded and sad. I said, "I have brought the Royal Grandson's wife-to-be, sire". He rejoiced to see her, and caressed her happily and did not send her to the Detached Palace until nightfall. The situation was so desperate, I brought her to see the Prince but I was very regretful at having to deceive the King.

The Prince was getting more and more depressed and his condition was deteriorating every day, so much so that the disrespectful way in which he referred to the King was incredible, and really embarrassing. My heart was so disturbed that I spent day and night in fear, uncertain how long I could keep my life, and I wanted the state wedding to hurry on. The New Year<sup>1</sup> came round and the state wedding was fixed for 25 February 1762 (2d 2m). While I was worrying about how we would get through the state wedding without trouble, some time after 3 February (10d 1m) suddenly the Prince's tonsils became infected; an unusually serious symptom which caused me tremendous anxiety since it came about when the state wedding was drawing near. But he got better immediately after having acupuncture, which was really fortunate. The wedding date drew on and the King sent first for the Royal Grandson. So he went first and the Prince left soon after that for Kyōnghyōn-dang,<sup>2</sup> resting outside of the Sunghyōn Gate<sup>3</sup>. So the Royal Grandson went through the wedding ceremony at Kyōnghyōn-dang where three generations, grandfather, son and grandson were gathered together in one

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<sup>1</sup> The new year began on 25 January 1762.

<sup>2</sup> A hall in Kyōnghŭi Palace.

<sup>3</sup> The south gate of the Kyōnghyōn-dang, a hall in Kyōnghŭi Palace.

hall. Having celebrated his grandson's wedding, the King sent him to the bride's home for the wedding rites,<sup>1</sup> a very happy and solemn occasion, as well as an immensely joyful event. After the wedding ceremony, the wedding reception was held at Kwangmyōng-jōn<sup>2</sup> and the Prince stayed in Chūphūi-dang, while both the Royal Grandson and his wife spent the night at Kwangmōng-jōn. Next day when the King, Queen, the Prince and myself had an audience with the Royal Grandson and his wife, both the King and Queen sat on chairs on the northside wall of the Kwangmyōng-jōn while the Prince's seat was placed on the east side and mine on the west so that the King and the Prince sat in front of each other for quite a long time, while the Royal Grandson's bride made her way with some difficulty, since she was too young to manage her heavy coiffure and formal costume for the court wedding. The King did not like to sit in front of the Prince, but put up with it, although he looked most unhappy about it, because he could not find any excuse to blame the Prince. I was mentally praying that the King should not say anything (to him), and went out to hurry her in, urging forward the preparation of the food (Choyulban and hasuban)<sup>3</sup> which was then served to both the King and the Queen - very fortunately without incident. The Crown Prince felt awkward there, but did not want to leave until he had stayed for the three days that the Royal Grandson and his bride were in residence and indeed, his illness was not apparent at this time, so that if he had been treated better, he could still

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<sup>1</sup> A wedding rite in which the bridegroom presented a goose to the bride at the latter's house. HMT vol.4, pp.314-316.

<sup>2</sup> A hall in Kyōnghūi Palace where important ceremonies were held.

<sup>3</sup> The court food; rice cooked with dates, chestnuts, etc. and the rice specially prepared to foster long life.

have improved himself - but the King, who was obliged to allow the Prince to attend such an important ceremony as the royal wedding reception, ordered him to leave, but to keep me staying on for three days even after the audience had been completed. However, since there were numerous factors that made it very awkward for me to stay on, I managed to make some excuse and leave soon afterwards, following the Prince. The Royal Grandson and his wife came to Ch'angdŏk Palace after three days, and the Prince, who was waiting for them, rejoiced to see them and took the royal daughter-in-law to Hwinyŏng-jŏn to pay homage to the Ancestral Shrine. He himself was moved a great deal. When he did such things, his true self seemed to come back and he favoured this daughter-in-law so extraordinarily that although she was still very young when the Prince died, she lamented greatly and cherished his memory more and more as time went by, weeping each time the Prince was mentioned, not only because she had received the Prince's infinite favour but because she was very loyal.

In these days the Prince never met his father-in-law privately but when my father left for North Hamgyŏng Province to pay homage to one of the royal tombs for the King, the latter told me to tell my father to see the royal grand daughter-in-law before he left. So when my father went to the lower palace, the Prince met him for he was feeling better that day and, moreover, he wished to boast of his daughter-in-law. From his earliest years, the Prince had never had relatives whom he could meet privately, except the royal assistant or the royal instructors. Therefore he was never intimate with anyone outside the Court until he met my father after his marriage, and so showed great friendship for him. Though my father used to come

to see the King at the beginning and the middle of every month, he came to see us only when the King instructed him to do so and even when he came, he did not stay long, saying "Since the palace is a place of strict regulations, a commoner should not stay too long". But whenever he had audience with the Prince, he would advise him wholeheartedly to study hard and earnestly instruct him in history, frequently citing passages from the writings of men of former times. If the Prince wrote some composition and sent it to him, he would criticise it for him, so that the Prince learnt a lot from my father. His earnestness in praying for the Prince to be a good and wise King with a long and peaceful reign was such that any other subject of the realm could hardly equal even a millionth part of it. Because he loved him immensely he always helped him towards the right way. Other relatives now and then gave him toys to play with, but my father never did so; instead whenever he saw the Prince he would say constantly, "Please improve your filial piety!" or "Please study hard!" Other than these two phrases, he would hardly say anything, so that the Prince treasured him and looked up to him, as well as being very careful with him. Therefore though he was getting worse he did not say anything to his face and when things were very hard to endure, I wrote to my father saying, "Since it is getting difficult for him, please help him out; I will trust you to do so." But the Prince himself never wrote, and when his life hung in the balance because of his clothes-fixation, it was I who asked my father to get the material, and the Prince never begged it from him. Although he took from Kǔmsǒng-wi and Madame Chǒng, he never begged from my family. When he started to travel incognito, it might have seemed natural to go to my home first, but he would go to Kǔmsǒng-wi's and prepare himself there, never to my home.

He never treated my father rudely but instead showed him deference and avoided him. Indeed, since he was strangely and greatly changed, and felt embarrassed about his secret trips, he could not face my father and talk to him. Though the Prince had an audience with my father at the Regular Administrative Board Meeting, or in place of the King when the latter was ill, he did not see my father in private for many years. But on that day my father was very glad to have audience with the Prince, and congratulated him on obtaining a daughter-in-law while still so young himself, and being able to enjoy the happiness of having his son and his wife, at which he was very pleased. And the Prince entertained my father with his whole heart as he used to do (before), and his illness did not show itself at all, which was very strange.

In March/April 1762 (3m) he was again rebuked a great deal, which led to his illness deteriorating until his condition was hopeless. How can I write it down? When his temper flared up, he would force the court maids and eunuchs to call out things which could be hardly said for all the world. But because they feared for their lives, they dared to shout out such immoral words in a loud voice. It was so difficult for me that I wanted to die rather than go through it all. The Prince never drank wine before this and was very resentful about the wine incident of 1756 (Pyŏngja), but since the King had said to him then that wine was strictly prohibited in the palace, he began to have wine brought in a great deal until that wine, which he could not drink very well as his drinking capacity was quite poor, stood about inside the royal palace, and this was a source of great anxiety.

After 1760 (Kyǒngjin), the Prince harmed (killed) a great number of court maids and eunuchs, I cannot remember all their names, but one who remains in my memory is Sǒ Kyǒng-dal, the Palace Treasurer. The Prince killed him because he did not carry out the Prince's orders (to supply him with necessities) quickly enough. He also killed many eunuchs who were successively on duty and even one of the court maids of Lady Sǒnhŭi's palace, so that life became very difficult.

The Prince brought a nun back with him from his trip incognito in 1761 (Sinsa), also a kisaeng<sup>1</sup> when he went to P'yǒngyang, and kept her in the Court. And when he held a party with them, servant girls and other kisaengs came in from outside to share in his orgies - a sight which had never been seen in all past history. At the end of March 1762 (2m) the Crown Prince had asked the princess (Madame Chǒng) to come, and he made free with her whenever he wanted to, saying that it was because his illness made him so depressed. At this the princess, who was frightened and embittered, swore at him. I did not dare to listen or pay any attention, being terrified to death. Once the Prince held a party at T'ongmyǒng-jǒn for himself and the princess. The places he selected for such a party were always either the courtyard of the rear of the palace or the T'ongmyǒng-jǒn, and the place in which they stayed (overnight) was sometimes the Hwanch'wi-jǒn. So March/April (3m) passed in anxiety, and the April/May (4m) came on. Nothing in his quarters looked appropriate to a living person. It was something like the apartment where they keep a dead body before burial.

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<sup>1</sup> Kisaeng; High-class female entertainer.

He set up a red flag which looked like the flag with an inscription of the name and the rank of a dead person, and made a place which looked like a bier, and slept in it. When it was late at night after the party, high and low would be all exhausted and go to sleep, leaving the table full of food, so that the messy sight reminded one of the aftermath of a feast by ghosts. Since Heaven had brought this about, there was nothing one could do.

The Prince sometimes put to death even the blind fortune-tellers who, when they were asked to tell his fortune, foretold something unlucky. He also killed royal physicians, translators and court workmen, or else maimed them, so that every day several dead bodies were carried out of the Court. Because of this, everyone inside and outside the Court was both terrified and resentful so that people were as if standing on tiptoe, not knowing when they might be killed. Though his natural disposition was truly lofty, the Prince had lost his good nature and now turned completely bad, in fact more than I can tell. Suddenly in May/June 1762 (5m) he dug up the ground and built a house with three rooms, putting in slide doors between each room so that it looked just like the inside of the hollow for a coffin. He put the door on the ceiling, giving some space for the people to creep in between the top panel and the door, and covered the top panel with grass so that there was no sign of the house built underneath. He thought that the whole thing was exquisitely made, suspended a jade lamp and sat in the house. This construction was built simply to hide weapons and even horses in case the King came to see him and investigate what he was doing, but there were numerous other most incredible rumours about it. He displayed such ominous behaviour as if a

spirit was driving him which human power would never be able to control.

That month for the first time since the Royal Grandson's wedding, Lady Sǒnhǔi came to the lower palace partly to see her granddaughter-in-law (and partly to see us). The Prince was very pleasant to her and treasured her, treating her indeed much too well. Probably he guessed that this would be his last meeting with her, so the daily meal and the banquet table were very sumptuous, with the fruit piled very high; even ginseng cake was made, and he composed a poem on the theme of long life and poured wine for her. Thus she received every possible entertainment you can think of, and when she was taken to the courtyard at the rear of the palace, the Prince prepared a palanquin like that of the King and forced Lady Sǒnhǔi to mount inside. A flag (like that used to indicate directions in the army) was attached to the front of the palanquin, and they blew trumpets and beat drums, which the Prince thought was showing the utmost filial piety. But Lady Sǒnhǔi was extremely shocked, realizing that there was less hope every day, and that things would eventually reach a completely unbelievable state. Therefore whenever she saw me she could not help shedding tears, and was frightened saying, "What will happen to him?" She barely managed to stay for several days with us, and then went back to the upper palace, weeping. Her son also felt very sad, probably because it was the final farewell, and I felt as if cut to the heart to think that I might not be able to see Lady Sǒnhǔi alive in the midst of the growing danger and disturbance in the State.

At this time the President of the Council was Sin Man<sup>1</sup> who had just finished his mourning and taken up his post as President of the Council. The King, who had been unable to see him for three years, was as glad as if he was seeing him for the first time, and talked only about the Prince, showing great bitterness from beginning to end. The Prince, who knew that his faults were discussed, avoided Sin Man and grew afraid of him, saying, "The President of the Council is unlucky; I hate him". He gnashed his teeth, suspecting that Sin Man might have laid a false charge against him to the King, and because of that his anger grew worse and worse until it was beyond expression. I felt so dreadful that I did not know what to do and then quite unexpectedly<sup>2</sup> the Na Kyōng-ōn Incident<sup>2</sup> occurred. My cousin (from my mother's family) Yi Hae-jung was then a secretary (Ch'amūi)<sup>3</sup> of the Punishment Board. That wretched Sang-ōn (brother of Kyōng-ōn and a court guard) did an awful thing (Na Kyōng-ōn Incident) out of ambiguous malice and this made matters worse. The King questioned Kyōng-ōn and summoned the Prince, who went to the upper palace on foot in a hurry,

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<sup>1</sup> See BI.

<sup>2</sup> Na Kyōng-ōn ūi Sangbyōn; this Incident occurred on 14 June 1762 (22d 5m Imo) when Na Kyōng-ōn, a steward of Yun Kup, the Minister of the Punishment Board sent a memorial to the King informing him of the misconduct of Crown Prince Sado. The accusations in the memorial were that he had clubbed to death the concubine that gave birth to one of his sons; had violated the court regulations by bringing a nun into the Court and cohabiting with her; had visited P'yōngyang, the chief amusement centre in disguise; and had frequented the village outside the North Gate of Seoul which was famous as a community of female shamans. When Na Kyōng-ōn was questioned about this memorial and tortured to ascertain who had persuaded him to write it, he named Yun Kup, Kim Hang-gu and Hong Kye-hŭi. Though King Yōngjo tried to relieve Na Kyōng-ōn, Nam T'ae-jye and Hong Nak-sun persuaded the King to put him to death for disloyalty to the Crown Prince. CWS v.44, pp.98-99.

<sup>3</sup> See GOT.

presenting an indescribable spectacle. On top of everything else, that wicked man (Sang-ŏn) worsened the Prince's illness and harmed relations between father and son. Kyŏng-ŏn was condemned to death, while the Prince had Sang-ŏn seized and brought in to be tortured in the Sŏnji-gak courtyard in the Simin-dang, to make him reveal the name of the man who had instigated him to report the affair to the King - which however he refused to do. So the Prince came to hate Sin Man more and said "I will seize Royal Son-in-law Yŏngsŏng-wi, bring him in and kill him for what his father did". Then the situation became extremely dangerous, so that the servants told the Prince that they would bring Yŏngsŏng-wi today, and then the next - but Yŏngsŏng-wi, who probably was not fated to die then, was not brought in soon enough. Lady Sŏnhŭi, who viewed with despair the Prince's growing wildness of conduct, now thought that she could not help him any more. Moreover, the letter he sent to the princess (Madame Chŏng) because she did not do what he wanted was so horrible that no one could repeat the words in it for the world, and he also said that he would get to her at the upper palace by going through a gutter. He was increasingly determined to kill Yŏngsŏng-wi. But they could not bring Yŏngsŏng-wi into the Court and only brought his official robe, his ceremonial robes for his audience with the King, his military uniform, utensils of daily use and even ceremonial strings with jade for his ceremonial robe and a gold crown and belt. Then he (the Prince) burnt and destroyed them all. Yŏngsŏng-wi's death seemed not far away. Not because Lady Sŏnhŭi wanted to save Yŏngsŏng-wi's life but because the Prince's actions had reached an extreme which admitted no argument whatsoever, (she decided to advise the King to put him

to death) while she exerted herself in distress. Between 2 and 3 July 1762 (11d and 12d Intercalary 5m), the Prince tried in vain to get to the upper palace through a gutter, and came back. Then of course frightful rumours went around, going well beyond the facts. He was so disturbed that all his actions were the product of madness and thus when he lost his senses and was possessed by anger, he insisted that he had to do it and said "I would go and do so with the sword in my hand".<sup>1</sup> I do not think he would have behaved like this even for one minute had he been in his right mind. His fate was so strange and rough that he had to experience things which were hitherto unknown, even from ancient times, and so was not able to live out his preordained span. Did Heaven create such a wicked disaster to make his body suffer like that? Oh Heaven, how do you inflict such things on the world? Lady Sǒnhŭi did not dare to blame his sick son nor was able to rely on him. But since he was the only son she had and could have relied on, she would not have done such a thing as this for all the world if the situation had not reached such a point. First of all he became like this because he could not receive the King's favour and the King was not able to change himself in this, and this was Lady Sǒnhŭi's lifelong agony. Even though the symptoms of his affliction became so extreme that he could not recognise his parents, she hesitated and put off advising the King (to take final measures) because of her own feelings towards the Prince. In the meantime, she was afraid that he might cause an utterly unimaginable disaster,<sup>2</sup> being completely unaware of what he was

<sup>1</sup> What he had to do is not clearly stated, but the narrative implies that he was again determined to force his sister.

<sup>2</sup> The word disaster probably implies that he intended to kill his brother-in-law, Yǒngsǒng-wi, the husband of Princess Hwahyǒp and to force his own sister, Princess Hwawan.

doing because of his critical condition. What then would have happened to the 400 year old dynasty? So she thought it was right to protect the King, even if it meant that the Prince should not continue to live, because his illness was desperate and the Royal Grandson was a blood relative (to continue the line) of the three royal ancestors.<sup>1</sup> This is why she concluded that there was no other way to protect the Kingdom, although she loved the Prince infinitely.

On 4 July 1762 (13d) she wrote me and said, "Since the rumours about what happened last night were so much worse (than anything which has happened before) I would rather have killed myself than lived to hear them. If I must live, it is only right for me to protect the kingdom and save the Royal Grandson, although I do not think I shall be able to face you again for the rest of my life". Since this was all she wrote, I wept, holding her letter in my hand, not knowing the great tragedy that would happen that day. In the morning of that same day the King was in the Kwan'gwang-ch'ōng at Kyōnghyōn-dang<sup>2</sup> and was just going out to sit on the throne to hold audience. Then Lady Sōnhŭi went to him and said weeping, "Since (the Prince's) serious illness has become both critical and hopeless, it is only proper that you should protect Your Majesty and the Royal Grandson so as to keep the Kingdom in peace. I request that you should get rid of (the Prince), even though this humble person should not make such a suggestion for all the world, because it goes against humanity". She also said, "It would be

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<sup>1</sup> King Hyojong, King Hyōnjong and King Sukchong.

<sup>2</sup> On this day, the Crown Prince was dethroned and locked into a grain box. He died on 12 July 1762 (21d Intercalary 5m Imo) after seven days of confinement.  
CWS v.44, pp.101-102.

terrible for the father to do this in view of the bond of affection between father and son; but since the cause is (his) illness, how can you blame him? Though you get rid of (him), please extend your benevolence to save the Royal Grandson and let him and his mother live in peace". As the Prince's wife, for all the world I could not admit that she was right, but the situation was completely hopeless and it would have been right for me to have followed him in death, although I could not decide to do so because of the Royal Grandson, and could only lament the difficulty and cruel necessity of continuing to live. When the King was told, he did not either put off or judge (her advice) by himself, but hurriedly ordered a progress to Ch'angdŏk Palace. Lady Sŏnhŭi, who had cut off her affection and endured such an agonizing sacrifice at the supreme call of duty to the State, was sorrowing almost to death, beating her breast with her hands. She came to Yangdŏk-tang where she used to live, and lay there without food, presenting an example of suffering rarely seen since ancient times. Traditionally there were two ways for the King to proceed to Sŏnwŏn-jŏn<sup>1</sup>; when he passed through the Manan Gate it meant that there would be no trouble, but when he took the way through the Kyŏnghwa Gate, it always indicated that something unpleasant would happen. On that day, he ordered his procession to pass through the Kyŏnghwa Gate. The Prince had got himself soaking wet on the night of 2nd (11d), going to and fro from the upper palace through the gutter, and on the 3rd (12d) day,

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<sup>1</sup> The hall in Ch'angdŏk Palace where the portraits were kept of the 12 Kings, T'aejo, Sejo, Wonjong, Sukchong, Yongjo, Chŏngjo, Sunjo, Ikchong, Hŏnjong, Ch'ŏlchong, Kojong and Sunjong. See Map III, J. WGS p.58.

<sup>2</sup> See Map II, I.

he had stayed in the T'ongmyŏng-jŏn. One of the beams of that building made a great noise as if it was going to break. The Prince, who heard this, sighed saying, "What is the matter? Perhaps I am going to be killed". My father who was President of the Council had been dismissed from his post on June (5m) 1762<sup>1</sup> and given firm instructions that he should remain in the eastern suburbs for about a month.<sup>2</sup> The Prince, who might have sensed danger, asked his bodyguard Cho Yu-chin to send a message to fetch former Junior Vice President of the Council Cho Chae-ho<sup>3</sup>, who was then in Ch'unch'ŏn. When he did such a thing, he did not look at all sick. How strangely Heaven brings things about! Now the Prince was terrified to hear of the King's arrival and ordered that his weapons and horses should be put out of sight as he had planned, and went to the back of the Kyŏngch'un-jŏn in a palanquin, telling me to follow him there. At that time, whenever he saw someone, he might do something to harm (i.e. kill) them, therefore he had a cover put on the palanquin and hung curtains round on all sides whenever he went anywhere. To the royal instructor and others, he pretended that he was suffering from malaria. It was about noon when the Prince asked me to come to Tŏksŏng-hap, when suddenly a great number of magpies surrounded the Kyŏngch'un-jŏn, cawing. What sort of omen was this! I felt strange, and moreover the Royal

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<sup>1</sup> On 14 June 1762 (22d 5m Imo), the President of the Council Hong Pong-han was dismissed from his post in connection with the Na Kyŏng-ŏn Incident. He tried to protect the Crown Prince and accused Na Kyŏng-ŏn of disloyalty towards him. CWS v.44, p.99.

<sup>2</sup> According to CWS, Hong Pong-han was in fact reappointed Senior Vice President of the Council on 28 June, only a fortnight after his dismissal. He thus held a senior ministerial post at the time the Crown Prince was put to death, a fact which his daughter here glosses over. cf. below pages 182 and 183.

<sup>3</sup> See BI.

Grandson too was away in Hwan'gyōng-jōn. Although I myself was deeply agitated, I was very concerned about what might have happened to the Royal Grandson and so went to him and said, "Whatever may happen, please do not be frightened. Instead, show yourself very strong!" I asked him to take care of himself over and over again, not knowing what else to do. The King's procession was somehow delayed and it was announced that he would come to Hwinyōng-jōn after 3 p.m. In the meantime, the Prince urged me to come to the Tōksōng-hap. When I went there I found him sitting, leaning against the wall and meditating with his head bowed. He looked frightened and pale. I had imagined that when he saw me, he would have flown into a passion, and certainly ill-treated me. This was why I had warned the Royal Grandson to look after himself, thinking that I might have been killed (by the Prince) that day. Instead he spoke and appeared quite other than I had expected, saying, "I have a strange feeling that they will let you live. All their intentions are so horrible!" I was sitting quietly with my mind full of all sorts of preposterous thoughts, tears in my eyes and my hands catching at each other as I heard this. Then it was announced that the King had come to Hwinyōng-jōn and asked the Prince to present himself. To my amazement, the Prince did not say, "Let us go and hide!" or "Let us run away!" Without throwing himself about or any fit of anger, he asked me to bring the royal robe straight away. While he was wearing it, he said, "Bring the winter cap of the Royal Grandson, because I am going to say that I caught malaria". I asked one of the court maids to bring his winter cap, for I thought the Royal Grandson's cap would be too small for the Prince. At which the Prince suddenly and unexpectedly said, "You are really a horrible person! Just because you want to go on living for a

long time beside the Royal Grandson, you hesitate to give his winter cap to someone who is going to be killed. Of course I can guess your resentment." Being unable to guess that he would be put in such a desperate situation, I could not imagine that he would be killed. I felt anxious lest my own life and my son's might have been put in jeopardy for some imaginary reason. But I felt most depressed at hearing such utterly unexpected words from the Prince, and so I brought him the winter cap of the Royal Grandson, saying, "Since you have taken it in a way which was far from my thoughts, please wear this one". When he said, "No I won't. Why should I wear something which you resented giving to me?", this hardly sounded like the words of a sick man at all. Why did he go so obediently - to my utmost sorrow! Heaven must have made him do so!

Meanwhile, it was getting dark and he went in a hurry to where the King was sitting in Hwinyŏng-jŏn grasping a sword in his hand. And he eventually took that decision (to kill the Prince) beating the floor. It is far too much for me to describe the sight here. Alas! It was really sad! As soon as the Prince went out, I could hear the angry voice of the King, so that I sent a person under the wall of Hwinyŏng-jŏn which is not far from the Tŏksŏng-hap (where I was), who reported to me that the Prince was already prostrating himself, with his royal robe taken off. I immediately understood that it was a situation of the utmost gravity and felt my heart was torn to pieces. Since it was useless to stay there, I went to the Royal Grandson. Neither of us knew what to do and we remained embracing each other. At about 4 o'clock, it was said that a eunuch came to ask for the large grain box from the kitchen outside the Taejo-jŏn. This was hard to understand and put us in such a

fluster that we could not obey the order. The Royal Grandson, who guessed that matters had reached a climax, went inside the gate to the King and said, "Please save my father!" The King said very sternly, "Go away!" Upon this the Royal Grandson came out and sat down in the Prince's anteroom. My own feelings and situation were such as had hardly been known since ancient times anywhere in heaven and earth. After I had seen the Royal Grandson out, I felt as if heaven and earth touched each other and the sun and the moon turned black, so that I did not want to stay in this world any longer. Though I tried to kill myself with a sword, I could not succeed - there were people around me who snatched it away. When I tried a second time it was also fruitless, since I could not get anything sharp enough. Though I went under the Kōnbok Gate which leads to Hwinyōng-jōn through Sūngmun-dang, I could not see anything, but could only hear the King banging his sword (against the floor) and the Prince saying, "Father, father, please do not do this! I know I did wrong but from now on I will do reading and whatever you have told me to do. I will do just as you wish!" I felt my heart torn into pieces and, hearing this, my sight failed me. It was no use struggling, beating my breast with my hands. Even if he was forced to go into the box, why did not he refuse to do so with his physical courage and manly strength? Instead he eventually allowed himself to be put in. At first he tried to run out, but he could not fight his way out, especially when he found himself in such circumstances. How could Heaven bring him to this! Though I was wailing under the gate, experiencing such a bitter and unheard of sorrow, there was no response. Since the Crown Prince was already dethroned, his wife and children would not be able to stay in Court at their ease. And also I was scared and nervous of keeping the Royal Grandson out

there, in case something might have happened. Therefore, sitting at the gate, I wrote a memorial to the King saying, "Since you feel like this, it is too awesome for us to stay on in the Court at our ease and also it is fearful to keep the Royal Grandson, who is guilty (because of his father), out here; therefore we would like to go to the house of my family and also I beg Your Highness to extend your favour and protect the Royal Grandson". I barely managed to find a eunuch, and told him to hand the note to the King. Before long, my brother came and said, "Since you are demoted to commoner status, you will not be able to stay in the Court, and you have been instructed to go back to your home. Therefore we brought the palanquin for you and another palanquin without a top for the Royal Grandson to go home in". We cried, bitterly embracing each other, and I was carried on the back of a helper through Ch'ŏnghwi Gate to the Chŏsŭng-jŏn where the palanquin was put at the guard gate. Governess Yun got into the palanquin with me, the court guards carried the palanquin and a numerous number of senior and lower court maids followed us crying bitterly, an unheard of sight. I had fainted when I got in the palanquin but was revived by Governess Yun massaging me. When I came home, they lay me in a room opposite the main room, my uncle and brother escorted the Royal Grandson home and the wife of the Royal Grandson and Ch'ŏngyŏn were brought home in a palanquin which was sent from her home. The sight of all this was so awful that I did not know how I could survive! Since I could not succeed in killing myself and things had become hopeless, when I reconsidered the whole thing, I thought that I could not leave the Royal Grandson to endure such agony for there would be no one to help the Royal Grandson to fulfil his promise. I endured over and over again the pain of keeping my cruel life and calling on Heaven. I do

not think there has been any life so cruel since ancient times. When I and the Royal Grandson met each other out at my home, I saw him in an utmost sorrow experiencing such an awful sight while still so young.

Because I was so worried that the Royal Grandson might have fallen sick from shock, I dissimulated my own awful state of mind and said, "Though this is really terrible, it has been done by Heaven. So look after yourself carefully, and be good so that the State will accordingly be peaceful, and likewise you will be able to recompense royal favours. So, although I know you must be very sad, please take care of yourself so that you come to no harm."

Since my father could not leave the Court,<sup>1</sup> and my brother still frequented the Court being occupied with his government post, there was no one there but my uncle (father's brother) and two of my mother's brothers to attend the Royal Grandson. So they protected him, attending on him day and night, while my youngest brother, who used to play with the Royal Grandson whenever he came to the court as a child, slept in the male guest room together with the Royal Grandson. After seven or eight days, the Board Minister, Kim Si-mok and his son Kim Ki-dae, came to visit us at home. Since our house was quite cramped and all the senior and junior court maids of the Royal Grandson and his wife were there, we rented the house of Yi Kyōng-ok, the official of the Hongmun'gwan (Kyori)<sup>2</sup>, which was outside the

<sup>1</sup> Hong Pong-han was reappointed to a government post as the Senior Vice President of the Council on 28 June 1762 (7d Intercalary 5m Imo).  
CWS v.44, p.100.

<sup>2</sup> See GOT.

south wall of our house and Madame Kim of the Board Minister came there with her daughter-in-law to attend upon the wife of the Royal Grandson. They opened the hole in the fence and came and went through it. Then my father who had been removed from office and stayed in the eastern suburb for a time while the King disposed of the Prince's body, was restored to the Senior Vice President of the Council<sup>1</sup> when the situation became completely hopeless.<sup>2</sup> My father, who heard the news about the Prince, ran into the Court in a rush with utmost and frightened agony, and fainted on reaching there. The Royal Grandson who was in the attendance room of the Prince heard this and sent tranquilising drugs for my father to take. When he regained consciousness, he also did not want to live any longer, but like me, he was concerned to protect the Royal Grandson so sincerely that he could not follow the Prince and his utter devotion to save the Kingdom was such that the gods of heaven and earth can bear correct witness of it. Though his fate was so harsh and unfortunate that his life still continued, it was impossible for him to bear what had happened and so he was tortured with agony. Ŏ Yu-sŏn and Pak Sŏng-wŏn came outside of our gate and asked the Royal Grandson to prostrate himself on a mat to ask for punishment. Of course it was right for him to do so, but he was too young to do this and so stayed in the retirement room instead. Since I came home, I had been unable to see my father which made me feel even worse, but the next day my father came home with the royal instructions. My son

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<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on page 182.

<sup>2</sup> According to CWS, Hong Pong-han had been restored to office before the Prince was put to death, and above (p.182) his daughter speaks of him as detained at court. Her account of this aspect of the Incident is naturally somewhat inconsistent. See note 2 on page 177.

and I broke into bitter tears holding my father, who delivered the King's instructions that I should protect and look after the Royal Grandson. Though I was in such a terrible state, I was moved to tears at hearing this royal edict. I congratulated the Royal Grandson on having been able to receive the King's favour, covering his head and saying "As your father's wife and son, both of us have borne up against this disaster. So we should never reproach or blame anyone else, but only lament our own misfortunes. It is the royal favour alone that has saved our lives at this time, and the King is the only one on whom we can rely in the future. Therefore I wish you may do your best to obey the King, repay his favour and do your filial duty to your father by steadying your mind and being a good person, which is the most important thing." I expressed my gratitude for the royal favour, and told my father, weeping, "Please tell the King that the rest of my life is the one he gave me and therefore I will follow his royal commands". I did not say these words out of a false heart, because it was sad that the Prince started to be like that at the beginning but how could we help that he gradually reached such a condition. For I had no grudge against the King and never dared to blame him.

When my father came home from the Court he wept bitterly, clasping the Royal Grandson and comforting him, saying, "For the King is right, please be wise and sage so that you can repay his royal favour, and perform your filial duty to your father". And he went back into the Court.

As day went by, I could not imagine the horrible situation (of the Prince) and I lay in bed in a vague and flustered state of mind. They said that on 6 July (15d), the King went back to

the upper palace leaving (the Box) very tightly shut and buried very deep (under the grass) and then that was the end of it. For there was no way of getting the material from the Court, my father prepared the clothing of the deceased for burial (with such sincerity) that there was not any grudge lingering. Earlier, while the Prince suffered from his grave illness, my father supplied him with clothes innumerable for many years, and this time he prepared all the clothes for the dead as a final act of sincerity for the Prince. On 11 July (20d) at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, it rained heavily and there was the sound of thunder. I remembered that the Prince was scared of the crash of thunder and wondered what would have happened to him but could not imagine for all the world. Though I often wanted to starve or drown in deep water, felt the towel (to choke herself) or held the knife in my hand many times, since I was weak, I could not make a firm decision. So I managed to survive, even though I did not eat anything or drink even water or thin rice gruel and on the night of 11 July (20d) I was told that the Prince was finished.<sup>1</sup> When I thought that he was nearly dying when it rained, I just could not imagine how he endured such a death, and my whole body was tortured by resentment. It was really cruel and hard to survive. Though Lady Sōnhūi could not but advise the King to take such measures and the King disposed of him, I had expected that they could have felt sorry for him, and bestowed on him the favour of keeping to the traditional mourning attire. But the King even after that final step was still very angry so that he condemned the

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<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on page 182. According to the CWS, the Prince died at about 4 p.m., 12 July 1762 (21d Intercalary 5m Imo), one day after that recorded in the above narrative.

kisaeng with whom the Prince had been intimate, as well as the eunuch, Pak P'il-su, court guards, workmen and shamans, as indeed was proper and nothing that I would dare to criticize. The only thing I really resent was that, seeing that the Prince used to try on so many clothes until he put on one, perhaps a cotton one, because of his cloth phobia, and on that day also he was wearing a raw cotton cloth, the King who was used to seeing the Prince in ceremonial or royal robes, (with dragons embroidered at front and back), saw the Prince in a raw cotton robe for the first time and, not knowing the illness of the Prince, said, "How dare you wear the raw cotton mourning robe. Are you going to kill me?" He thought that there was no excuse left (for the Prince to be forgiven) and asked them to bring all his belongings which he used to use. There was not anything you could not find among them including a military flag. Even at a state funeral, people are supposed to have only one mourner's stick but to my amazement the Prince had several made. By chance he made something which looked like a mourner's stick and he used to carry it with him. He once showed it to me and I was really shocked to see that grim thing. It was amongst the things which they brought out, having been unable to throw it away and kept it till then. The King was horrified and upset to see this so that no one could discuss the traditional system of mourning with him in connection with the Prince. Since he did not know anything about the Prince's illness, the King attributed everything to the lack of filial piety which was a cause of deep resentment. At first the court ministers and officials were going to follow the traditional mourning but they could not do so either. Anyway it was the heavenly favour (of the King) to save the Royal Grandson. Though he was pre-disposed to do so because of his illness, it would have been

virtuous of the King if he and all his subjects had followed the traditional system of mourning attire, since the Prince had been acting for the King for fourteen years, but it was very sad that this was not done. On 11 July (20d) they said (the Prince) became hopeless (died) but since the King did not posthumously restore him to his former rank, they still could not prepare the various articles for the period from the death of the Prince till his burial. Though it was not the King's intention not to do so, he hesitated to restore him to his former rank and follow the usual custom, but on the night of 12 July (21d) he restored him as Crown Prince,<sup>1</sup> and the court ministers came in to the Court and arranged the whole procedure for his funeral. At first the King suggested to appoint the Yongdong-gung as the place to keep the dead body. Then my father who witnessed the horrible disaster was terrified that he might have gone against the King even a hairsbreadth by a little mistake, for the royal anger then was like a flame, he would have exterminated my family. More than that, it would have been very difficult to keep the Royal Grandson safe. Therefore my father did his best in loyalty and sincerity not to upset the King or to turn his back on the Prince or arouse the resentment of the Royal Grandson, by arranging everything. Afterwards, the King granted a posthumous title, fixed the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince for the dead body and barely managed to permit three temporary offices of government (Sam-togam)<sup>2</sup> to be set up. My father himself

<sup>1</sup> According to CWS v.44 p.102, the King restored his son as Crown Prince with the posthumous title of Crown Prince Sado 12 July. But Chōsen Sōtokufu, Chōsen shi (Keijō, 1932-1940), v.5, pt.9, p373 gives this date as 13 July 1762 (22d Intercalary 5m Imo), which must be the correct date for this event.

<sup>2</sup> Sam-togam; Pinjōn-togam; the office in charge of the apartment where corpses were laid in state, Kukchang-togam; the office in charge of state funerals, and Sannūng-togam; the office in charge of entombments. Togam. See GOT.

became a minister of these offices and looked after everything (concerning the funeral) in person; even the etiquette at the tomb was taken care of. If it had not been for my father's help, no one would have dared to say a word to the King or make the King change his mind.

On that day, my father kept the corpse at the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince, came home early in the morning, and, when he sent us back to Court, he held my hands in his in the middle of the courtyard and said, weeping bitterly, "May you live long with the Royal Grandson and enjoy immense happiness in old age!" Then my sorrow was such as never existed from the ancient time. After we came back to Court, I announced the death at Simin-dang and so did the Royal Grandson at Kōndokhap while the wife of the Royal Grandson and (Princess) Ch'ōngyōn also did the same standing beside me, a sight which had never existed between heaven and earth! They prepared all the robes which they needed for the corpse from the beginning to the end of the funeral, and dressed the corpse. They said that although it was extremely hot then, the Prince's body was not in the least offensive.

It is too much to recollect how sad I was then. After they washed and clothed him and before they bound him with hemp-cloth, I presented myself and felt a sorrow such as rarely been equalled throughout the ages and incomparable to any one else. Then I remembered the words spoken by the Prince in sorrow, and lamented infinitely calling upon Heaven and feeling distressed at being still living. Since the other world and this world are apart, I could not feel that robust strength of his which could hold the heaven and so the feeling of resentment

at being alive was something I could not explain. I was extremely depressed throughout the funeral especially since the junior officials could not follow the traditional mourning, all the officials of the main palace and eunuchs being all clothed in pale blue sacrificial robes. Though they performed the sacrificial rite at the outer palace (the palace where the deceased were kept), we were afraid of performing it at the inner courtyard and were waiting for the chance to do so, for we received no notice from the King again about performing such a ritual. So we offered the morning and evening sacrificial meal and performed the sacrificial ritual on the first and fifteenth day of the month as usual. Since for all the world we could not let the Royal Grandson and his wife and princesses see the deceased before he had been placed in the coffin, we let them come in at first day for wearing mourning (which is the fourth day after the death) and mourn there. The Royal Grandson mourned with such agony that everybody was moved. The burial took place in September 1762 (7m)<sup>1</sup> and before that Lady Sǒnhŭi came to see me. She faced the room where the deceased was kept and cried bitterly beating her head and breast with her hands. Her sorrow was infinite.

At the burial the King came to the tomb and wrote the letters on the tablet in person. I could not imagine how would their relation be now the Prince and his father lived in two different worlds. That same month, the Royal Institute of the

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<sup>1</sup> The burial took place on 10 September 1762 (23d 7m Imo). The King visited the tomb, naming it Yǒngu and its shrine Suñ. CWS v.44, p.108.

Crown Prince was established and the Royal Grandson became the Crown Prince.<sup>1</sup> Though it was the royal favour, it also showed my father's meritorious effort to protect the Royal Grandson with such utmost loyalty and sincerity.

In September/October (8m) the King came to Sŏnwŏn-jŏn for the simple sacrificial rites and though I felt awestruck to see him, I decided to go to Sŭpch'wi-hŏn near Sŏnwŏn-jŏn, and meet him. Though my inner sadness was ten thousand times more than I could show, I said to him "It was thanks to Your Highness' royal favour that mother and children have been preserved". The King Yŏngjo grasped my hands in his and said weeping, "Since I did not think you would behave like this, it was very hard for me to decide to see you. But you are very good to make me feel at ease like this". I felt as if my heart was choking even more and it felt cruel to be alive hearing these royal words. I again said, "I wish Your Highness would take the Royal Grandson with you to Kyŏnghŭi Palace and teach him". The King asked, "Do you think he can bear to live apart from you?" I answered, "It is a small thing to feel sad because of living away from me, whereas it is very important for him to study in the company of Your Highness". For as I said this I had decided to send the Royal Grandson away, although it was far too much for us, mother and child to bear living apart. It was hard for the Royal Grandson to leave me and he departed in tears, which made me feel as if my heart was slashed and yet went on living. In the meantime, great royal favour and love were showered upon the

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<sup>1</sup> On 11 September 1762 (24d 7m Imo), the King invested the Royal Grandson with the title of Crown Prince and ordered the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince be established. CWS v.44, p.108.

Royal Grandson and Lady Sŏnhŭi also transferred her love for her son to the Grandson so that she protected him with utmost sincerity, not being able to satisfy herself about his daily behaviour and food, which was natural for Lady Sŏnhŭi then. Since the Royal Grandson had been devoted to studying the Classics since four or five years of age, I did not worry that he might not concentrate on learning, though we lived in separate palaces. But he missed me more and more as the time went by. His yearning for his mother was so earnest that he used to wake up early in the morning, write to me and set his mind at rest so as to get my answer before he started his studies. During that three years of our separation, he was like that all the time, which was unusually precocious of him. And as I was very often sick during those three years, he discussed my health with the royal physician and prepared the medicine for me like an adult in a distant place which was of course his innate filial piety but even so I was really moved to see him managing all this at only a little more than ten years of age. On the Prince's birthday that year, I did not feel like moving, but could not avoid going to the upper palace in obedience to the royal commands. The King saw me and was more sympathetic to me than before so that he gave the name of Kahyodang to the low hut which was on the south side of Kyŏngch'un-jŏn, where I lived while I was in mourning, writing the name on the board in person and asking them to put it up on top of the door, saying, "I am writing this to recompense you for your filial piety". I suppressed my tears and felt uneasy at mind not being able to dare to receive it. My father was deeply grateful to hear this and said, "Since the King wrote the letters of Kahyodang on the board to put up over the door, today it will be a treasure for

our descendants. I admire both the benevolence of the King and your filial piety in holding the royal favours in great esteem". In order to show compliance with this royal favour, my father had our family use that title on family letters. I was so deeply grateful that it was engraved in my bones. The King had the Chagyŏng-jŏn<sup>1</sup> built for me, but then my situation was not such as to allow me to live in such a high and grandiose residence. However, I was moved by the royal favour and so obeyed him earnestly. For I thought I would spend the rest of my life there, I moved the board Kahyodang to the south gate of the upper room in Chagyŏng-jŏn so that I could always remember the King's supreme benevolence, and compassion. In January/February 1763 (12m of that year) an envoy came from China, the King came to the Crown Prince's shrine together with the Royal Grandson to receive the Imperial edict (of China) and on the way back, he was going to take back the Royal Grandson. But when he saw the Royal Grandson crying because he was so sad to leave his mother, said "Because the Royal Grandson did not like to leave you for the world, I will leave him with you". Because I thought the King might feel offended when although he loved his grandson so much, the boy neglected the royal favour out of yearning for his mother, I said, "If he should come to me, he will miss Your Highness; if he goes to Your Highness, he will miss me. But since, if he comes back to his palace he will feel just like this about being away from Your Highness, please take him". At which the King was very pleased and with a relaxed countenance took the Royal Grandson with him saying,

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<sup>1</sup> The residence dedicated by King Yŏngjo, to his daughter-in-law, the authoress, in 1777. WGS p.84. See Map II, N.

"I will do so then". The Royal Grandson went back with the King, crying terribly for he was so saddened by his mother forcing him to leave inhumanely (as it seemed) and this made me feel dejected. However it would be out of personal regard if he got off the palanquin then, whereas it was right for him to escort the King (to the palace), succeeding to the office and duties of a son which his father had been unable to fulfil, and being trained in affairs of State. This is why I cut myself off from his emotions which came from having to leave me behind and sent away. This was because I regretted what had happened and wanted to let the Royal Grandson do his best in filial piety toward the King, as his father had failed to do. Also it was because I was concerned that the Royal Grandson might go against such benevolent royal favour even in the slightest, not only out of my own personal feelings for him, but because the future security of the Kingdom depended entirely on the Royal Grandson. So Heaven would have seen my concern as right. Of course it was not only my idea, but my father guided me (and urged me) not to allow my trivial personal feeling as a woman (to influence me) but rather to face up to the demands of duty. No one could imagine exactly how my father exerted and devoted himself to the Royal Grandson and his Kingdom.

Everyone used to be moved by the sound of the Royal Grandson's lamentation whenever he visited his father's shrine and wept bitterly. The ancestral tablet which used to stand there all alone seemed to be very glad to see his son come and lament over his death and the solitary shrine used to be lightened and comfort the mourner instead. What would have happened to the Kingdom if I had not given birth to the Royal Grandson? Of course there was the Happy Event of 1752 (Imsin) year after

I gave birth to a child in 1750 (Kyōngo), to preserve the falling Kingdom.

The Imo Incident was an event such as had never occurred since ancient time, and indeed the Crown Prince was extremely unlucky to finish his life in such a way, yet left his son behind him to succeed. And the King's favour towards the Royal Grandson and the latter's filial piety toward his grandfather, were joined so closely that I never imagined there would be any further problems. But the King's action of March 1764 (2m Kapsin) was such an utterly unexpected one that nothing could be compared with the terrible feeling I experienced then, though as a subject I should not complain of what the King (Yōngjo) did. I really resented having to survive through the Incident without being able to kill myself. Though I wanted to kill myself at once, I could not do so and endured what took place as if it had happened through my own will. Therefore, the grievous resentment was not less than the one which I experienced in a certain year and the Lady Sōnhŭi's bitter mortifying was beyond my description.

Having suffered such agony as a very young child and experiencing calamities such as a royal family should never have suffered, the Royal Grandson was extremely sad and cried so bitterly when he took off his mourner's robe, so (after he had finished his mourning) that his crying penetrated to heaven and earth. His sorrow then was not less than the extreme sorrow he showed at first over his father's death. The Royal Grandson, being two years older than at that time, was feeling more resentful as time went by, and that made me feel my heart torn to pieces. So that I wanted to kill myself straight away, but I could not do it for I could not bear imagining how sad the

Royal Grandson would be then. If it were not for me, the Royal Grandson would be left all alone and very insecure and so, at that stage the most important thing for me to do was to protect the Royal Grandson. I kept my mind very firm and comforted the Royal Grandson saying, "The more you feel sad, the better you should protect your precious self so that though you feel various resentments, be good and pay for your father". Thus I calmed the Royal Grandson, instructing him in every way. He would not eat that day, and wept all day long, endangering his health, and making me feel so sorry for him that I let him sleep beside me comforting him and helping him get to sleep. Yet he could not sleep and it was indescribable. The day was 13 March 1764 (11d 2m) and I still wonder why the King had done such a thing. On that day, King Yǒngjo suddenly proceeded to Sǒnwǒn-jǒn, stayed there quite a while and came to see me. I, of course, did not dare to say anything but, "Since it is royal favour that we, the mother and child are still alive, I should not complain, although you have done such a thing". The King said, "It is right of you to think that way". It would have been better for me if I had not had to experience this further resentment on top of my grief. As time went by my life was more and more ill-fated so that I wanted to hit myself, but what is the use of it! From ancient times no one ever experienced such things.

Lady Sǒnhŭi came during May/July (7m) to perform the ritual (after the second anniversary of the death of the Crown Prince) and promised me that she would surely come and discuss the King's action after the Autumn, while she stayed with us. However, she suddenly developed a tumour on her back and passed away on 23 August (26d 7m) which plunged me into the deepest grief. The sorrow I experienced then was not like the one which

might have been expected from the normal relationship of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. For the sake of the Kingdom, Lady Sōnhŭi had taken the most awful step that a mother can do. Although she did it for King Yōngjo, her utmost agony was beyond description. She used to say, "Since I did such a thing, a thing which I should never have dared to do, even the grass will not grow on my grave" or "Although I did it for the Kingdom and King himself, I was so cruel and terrible. What will the Royal Grandson and his sisters think of me, even though you may perhaps understand me". With such words in her mouth, she hardly slept at night, instead she would sit on the east side of the veranda, looking up to the east and grieving, thinking that the Kingdom might have been saved even if she had not taken such action - perhaps by mistake. And then she would tell herself that, no, it should be just a weak woman's opinion to think in that way and she must have done the right thing. Whenever she came to the shrine, she would call upon the Prince and wept bitterly which eventually caused an illness in her heart leading to her death. Alas! it was really sad to think of it.

Is there anyone today who knows what happened in that terrible year better than I do, or whose sadness can be compared to mine or King Chōngjo's who has devoted himself or herself so sincerely and utterly to the Prince? No one. So it was that I always told King Chōngjo, "Though you are a son of the Prince, since you were quite young when this Incident occurred, you can hardly know as much as I know. So please ask me anything about it; do not put your faith in various rumours. Even though people collect such stories and report them to you as if they are great discoveries so as to get your favour for a while,

please do not trust them, for they are groundless". Then King Chǒngjo used to answer, "Mother, of course I know it; but since they always accuse me of not being sincerely devoted to my father, in order to avoid blame, or just as the son of the victim, I have followed them, without ever being able to assert that they were wrong, honouring those whom they recommended or giving them posthumous titles, so that I could not force myself to be such an uncertain person, though I knew clearly that they were wrong". It is too much for me to imagine the extreme agony of King Chǒngjo.

On the whole, there are two different stories about the Incident and both of them are dishonest and false. One is that it was fair and just for King Yǒngjo to do what he did so that it might be justified before heaven and earth. Those who take this view have no pity on the Prince at all; instead they admired King Yǒngjo's action as an example of flourishing virtue. This assumes that the Prince was guilty of unfilial conduct to his father so that King Yǒngjo's action is considered as something like devastating an enemy country or suppressing a rebellion. This puts both the Prince and King Yǒngjo in an unreal situation, and is very unfortunate for both of them in its effects. The other argument is that, in fact the Prince was not sick at all, but King Yǒngjo took extreme measures against him, placing reliance upon a false charge. Therefore they tried to persuade King Chǒngjo to take revenge in order to clear his father of that disgrace. Although it may have sounded as if they wanted to clear the Prince of that disgrace, this argument means that King Yǒngjo proceeded against the Prince when the latter was not guilty, but simply accepted the false charges. In such a case, King Yǒngjo would appear to have lost his virtue. So I

say, both stories are untrue, and would make all three, King Yǒngjo, the Prince and King Chǒngjo, extremely sad. That was why my father said several times that because the Prince's illness had become so very serious, the King and the Kingdom were in immense danger so that their life and death hung on a breath. This was why King Yǒngjo had to take such a step, whereas the Prince, while he was sane, might have felt concerned over his immorality and felt as if he were choked, but he did not understand what he was doing, losing his true self. In the first place, the fact that he became sick was a total disaster. For it was said that even a saint cannot avoid being sick, so how could anyone accuse the Prince as immoral even in the slightest. Since it was so, it should be seen fairly so that King Yǒngjo's action should be justified and inevitable, though it was very unfortunate. While the Prince became so sick, to his misfortune, and could only put an end to himself in this way. So King Chǒngjo ought to have distinguished his agony from his sense of duty and viewed the Incident for what it was so that he should be reasonable about his sense of duty. But the previous two arguments make King Yǒngjo lose his virtue and the Prince immoral, thus putting King Chǒngjo in a dreadful situation. Some of those who have discussed it say that King Yǒngjo's action was glorious but my father was guilty for offering King Yǒngjo the Thing (grainbox). I will not explain the details here again, for I already have put it on record. Those who speak like this could neither be sincere to King Yǒngjo nor loyal to the Prince. Because they know that as far as that Incident was concerned, King Chǒngjo would listen to anybody with any criticism, not being able to refute them, so they misused the Incident by forging a false story and affair, thereby harming the

people with pretensions of being loyal as they pleased. There was never such a thing from ancient times. For 40 years that Incident confused loyalty and treachery, right and wrong, so that even yet it has not been sorted out. Nothing could have helped the Prince's illness. King Yǒngjo's action was inevitable. The final scene King Yǒngjo himself devised. The agony and the sense of duty of King Chǒngjo and myself should be strictly limited to us, so that we should be grateful for the royal favour which preserved us and eventually maintained the Kingdom so long free from disaster. I feel unhappy when I think that the later generations misunderstood the Incident by imagining the words which the government officials of that time repeated in an unavoidable situation. As far as the Incident is concerned, no one should be allowed to mention any comment be he King or subject. Although I did not want to record the details of the Incident for all the world I am recording this because I am concerned lest King Sunjo should not know the Incident clearly so that he would not be able to tell the right from wrong. But there are so many things I have not written here, for they are the most awful things that could be written. It is utterly amazing how cruel, tough and evil human beings can be; when I think that I have been able to record all this in my old age with white hair and little left of my life, I simply resent my fate, weeping bitterly and calling upon Heaven.

GLOSSARY OF OFFICES AND TITLES

Aekchōng-sō (掖庭署) - a court office of the Yi dynasty which is responsible for various duties, including the provision of messengers, writing equipment and supervision of palace workmen, etc.

Ch'ambong (參奉) - an official post of the Yi dynasty with Lower Ninth Court rank. This office was connected with the Bureau of Royal Parks and Tombs.

Ch'amch'an (參贊) - an official title of the Yi dynasty indicating the 2 Junior Councillors with Upper Second Court rank. These two Junior Councillors were divided into the Junior Councillor of the Left (senior) and the Junior Councillor of the Right (junior).

Ch'amch'an'gwan (參贊官) - an official title of the Yi dynasty which used to belong to the Kyōngyōn (經筵), the Royal Institute, with Upper Third Court rank. The fixed number of officials at the Royal Institute was seven, and they were held either by Sūngji or by Pujehak as an additional post.

Ch'amp'an (參判) - an official title with Lower Second Court rank given to each of the Deputy Ministers of the Six Boards.

Ch'amŭi (參議) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Upper Third Court rank given to each Secretary of the Six Boards.

Changnyōng (掌令) - an official of the Fourth Court rank at the Board of Censors.

Ch'ansǒng ( 參成 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty indicating the two Senior Councillors with Lower First Court rank. These two councillors were divided into a Senior Councillor of the Left (senior) and Senior Councillor of the Right (junior).

Chinsa ( 進士 ) - a title given to those who passed the second test of the Minor State Examination which was called Chinsasi ( 進士試 ).

Ch'umbang ( 春坊 ) - See Seja Sigangwǒn.

Ch'umban'gwan ( 春坊宮 ) - an official of the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince: the Royal Instructor.

Chwach'amch'an ( 左參贊 ) See Ch'amch'an.

Chehak ( 提學 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Lower Second Court rank in the Hongmun'gwan or the Yemun'gwan and also the officials of the Lower Second or First Court rank of the Kyujan'gak.

Chejo ( 提調 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Lower First Court rank or Second Court rank, given to a protocol minister.

San'gung ( 尙宮 ) - a court lady of the Upper Fifth Court rank : the Governess.

Hongmun'gwan ( 弘文館 ) - one of the Government Offices of the Yi dynasty in which were kept the Confucian classics, historical books and Government documents. It housed the Royal Advisors. Only civil officials were appointed to this Office and they also had the duty of lecturing to the royal heirs on the Confucian Classics and history.

Kamsa ( 鹽司 ) - See Kwanch'alsa

Kangsŏwŏn ( 講書院 ) - See Seson Kangsŏwŏn.

Kun ( 君 ) - an honorary title given to the Royal family in the Yi dynasty. It was given to a prince born of a royal concubine; the eldest son and the grandson of a royal prince and his legal wife; and all the younger sons and grandsons of a Crown Prince. It was also given to meritorious subjects whose grades ranking from the Upper First to the Lower Second Court rank. A deposed King was given this title, such as Yŏnsan kun and Kwanghae kun.

Kwanch'alsa ( 觀察使 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty given to a Provincial Governor.

Kyŏngyŏn ( 經筵 ) - a place for the exposition of the Classics by official interpreters for the King in the Court; the Royal Institute.

Kyŏngyŏng ( 京營 ) - Capital Garrison consisting of soldiers stationed at various places about the capital, for military training, defence of the capital and its fortress etc.

Kyori ( 校理 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Upper Fifth Court rank in the Hongmun'gwan.

Moksa ( 牧使 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with the Upper Third Court rank given to a Sub-Provincial Governor.

Naemyŏngbu ( 內命婦 ) - Women of the Court with official rank.

Those who had relations with the King had the titles of Pin ( 嬪 ), Kwiin ( 貴人 ), Soŭi ( 昭儀 ), Sugŭi ( 淑儀 ), Soyong ( 昭容 ) Sugyŏng ( 淑容 ), Sowŏn ( 昭妙 ), etc. These ranged from the Upper First to the Lower Fourth Court rank. These women had no official duties at the Court. The Governess of the Upper Fifth Court rank and her inferiors (down to the

the Lower Ninth Court rank had official duties at the Court and could not be promoted above the Fifth Court rank.

Naesusa ( 內需司 ) - a government office of the Yi dynasty in charge of Court provisions as well as slaves.

Öyöngtaejang ( 御營大將 ) - a military title whose bearer held the Lower Second Court rank, given to the commander of a military establishment in Seoul (Öyöngch'öng).

P'ansö ( 判書 ) - an official title with Upper Second Court rank given to each of the chief ministers of the Six Boards.

Pin ( 嬪 ) - See Naemyöngbu.

Pongjoha ( 奉朝賀 ) - a title of the Yi dynasty given to retired government officials of Upper Second Court rank and above for life with a pension depending on their rank.

Pujehak ( 副提學 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Upper Third Court rank in the Hongmun'gwan. Officials with this title at the Hongmun'gwan were limited to one at a time. This post was one rank above the Chikchekhak ( 直提學 ) and one rank below the Chehak ( 提學 ).

Puwi ( 副尉 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty bestowed on men who had married royal granddaughters through the Üibinpu. This title was equivalent in status to a government official of the Upper or Lower Third Court rank.

Puwön'gun ( 府院君 ) - See (Puwöndaegun)

Puwöndaegun ( 府院大君 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Upper First Court rank given to a royal father-in-law.

Saekjang nain (色掌内人) - a court lady in charge of the maids of court and formal visits connected with the inner palaces (palaces of Queen, Princess etc.)

Saengwŏn (生員) - a title given to those who had passed the first test of the Minor State Examination, which was called Saengwŏnsi (生員試).

Sajik (司直) - a title of a military official of the Yi dynasty with Upper Fifth Court rank, but given to retired civil as well as military officials.

Sangsŏ (尙書) - See P'ansŏ: the Chief Ministers of the Six Boards.

San'gung: Governess.

Seja Iggwisa (世子翊衛司) - a Yi dynasty Court office of Royal Bodyguards for the Crown Prince.

Seja Sigangwŏn (世子侍講院) - the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince where officials taught the Classics and histories to the Crown Prince and gave him moral guidance.

Seson Kangsŏwŏn (世孫講書院) - the Institute of the Royal Grandson where officials taught the Classics and histories to the Royal Grandson.

Sigangwŏn (侍講院) - a general term for the Seja Sigangwŏn, Wangt'aeja-gung Sigangwŏn (王太子宮侍講院); the Royal Institute of the Crown Prince. See Seja Sigangwŏn.

Sirang (侍郎) - See Ch'amp'an: the Deputy Ministers of the Six Boards.

Sojo ( 小朝 ) - the Crown Prince deputizing for the King.

Sōnggyun'gwan ( 成均館 ) - The Confucian Academy: since the whole government of the Yi dynasty was based on Confucian studies, this Academy specializing in these studies played a key role. There was an office in this Academy charged with the publication of Confucian texts, and as the highest institution of learning, the Sōnggyun'gwan trained candidates for the examinations in the Confucian Classics, as a preliminary to holding government posts.

Sūngji ( 承旨 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Upper Third Court rank given to the Royal Secretary in charge of royal edicts. The fixed number of officials with this title at the Royal Secretariat was six.

Sūngjōngwōn ( 崇政院 ) - a government office of the Yi dynasty in charge of drafting royal orders and decrees. It consisted of six secretaries, one for each ministry: the Royal Secretariat.

Taegan ( 臺諫 ) - the general term of the officials of the Censorate (Sahōnbu) or Supreme Censorate (Saganbu).

Taejehak ( 大提學 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty given to the officials of the Hongmun'gwan or the Yemun'gwan, with Upper Second Court rank.

Taesasōng ( 大司成 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with Upper Third Court rank given to the Chief Official of the Sōnggyun'gwan.

Togam ( 都監 ) - a government office of the Yi dynasty which was set up temporarily to meet the state major event such as

state funeral or state wedding.

Ton'gun ( 東宮 ) - The Crown Prince.

Ŭibinpu ( 儀賓府 ) - a government office of Yi dynasty in charge of the affairs of the royal relatives.

Ŭigũmbu ( 義禁府 ) - a government office in charge of investigating serious offences.

Uijõngbu ( 議政府 ) - the highest government office of the Yi dynasty: the Council. It supervised all government affairs, which were administered by the Six Boards.

Ŭn'gyo ( 應教 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty. It belonged to officials either of the Hongmun'gwan or the Yemun'gwan with Upper Fourth Court rank.

Wangseson - See Wõnson.

Wi ( 尉 ) - an official title of the Yi dynasty bestowed on men who had married royal princesses through the Ŭibinpu. This title was equivalent in status to a government official of the Upper or Lower First and Second Court ranks.

Wõnson ( 元孫 ) - the prospective heir to the throne, usually the first son of the Crown Prince: the Royal Grandson.

Yemun'gwan ( 藝文館 ) - a government office of the Yi dynasty where royal edicts and instructions were recorded.

Yõngũijõng ( 領議政 ) - the highest official title of the Yi dynasty with Upper First Court rank given to the head of the Council: President of the Council. There were two Vice Presidents under him; Senior Vice President of the Council

(Chwaũijǒng 左議政) and Junior Vice President of the Council  
(Uũijǒng 右議政).

Yukcho (六曹) - the Six Boards of Government:

Ijo (史曹) - the Civil Office Board

Yejo (禮曹) - the Ceremonies Board

Hojo (戶曹) - the Revenue Board

Pyǒngjo (兵曹) - the War Board

Hyǒngjo (刑曹) - the Punishment Board

Kongjo (工曹) - the Public Works Board

Yusu (留守) - an official title of the Yi dynasty with  
Upper Second Court rank who governed the old capitals such as  
Kwangju (廣州), Kaesǒng (開城), Kanghwa (江華),  
Suwǒn (水原) and Ch'unch'ǒn (春川) etc.

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

This is an index of the principal characters mentioned in the text. For the reader's convenience, names of particular persons are entered under one name following the entries in the Encyclopedia of Korean History and standard Korean histories. In the original text, several alternative names are often given for the same person, but in such cases only the standard name has been given, as above. Women in Korea officially had only one name (surname) which was their maiden name, that they kept after their marriage. But they are sometimes referred to in the text by surname and name of origin. Origin refers to the attributed origin; Koreans of the same surname thought of themselves as belonging to the same clan, as they still do to some extent, and each clan was believed to have originated in a particular place, the name of which was always associated with the clan name. However some surnames, like Kim, Yi, Choi etc. are exceptional. Instead of all belonging to the same clan, they belong to several different ones (Andong Kim, Kyŏngju Kim, Kimhae Kim etc.) Hence in this index, all such additional names will be given under the following headings:

Origin	.....	attributed place of origin
pen.	.....	penname
court.	.....	courtesy name
post.	.....	posthumous title
sur.	.....	surname
first.	.....	first name

Lady Chang Hŭi 張禧嬪 ?-1701 (<sup>first</sup>/<sub>So-ŭi</sub>)

She was the mother of King Kyŏngjong and royal concubine of King Sukjong. For a long time King Sukjong had no son, so when Lady Chang gave birth to his child Kyun in 1688, the King tried to appoint him Crown Prince. But the Westerners (Sŏin) which had a firm grasp on political power at that time did not agree with the King, saying that since the Queen was still young, it would be better to wait longer. With the help of the Southerners (Namin) however, the King appointed Kyun Crown Prince and elevated Chang So-ŭi to Lady Hŭi in 1689. In the same year, the King dismissed Queen Inhyŏn and appointed Lady Chang Hŭi Queen. But later the King regretted that he had dismissed Queen Inhyŏn, and in 1694 he restored her and demoted Lady Chang to her former position as Lady Hŭi. After the death of Queen Inhyŏn, it was learnt that Lady Chang had built a shrine to the west of Ch'wisŏn-dang where she had prayed for the Queen's death. She was condemned to death for this.

Crown Prince Changhŏn 莊獻世子 - See Crown Prince Sado.

Cho Chae-ho 趙載浩, 1702-1762. (<sup>court.</sup>/<sub>Kyŏng-dae</sub> <sup>pen.</sup>/<sub>Sonjae</sub>)

Origin: P'unyang

Career:

1744 Passed Higher Civil Service Examination

1761 Junior Vice President of the Council.

Tried in vain to save Crown Prince Sado from being punished by death, was exiled and then poisoned.

He was the son of Senior Vice President of the Council,

Cho Mun-myŏng.

Madame Chǒng 鄭妻, 1738-? (Also known as Princess Hwawan (和緩翁主)).

Ninth daughter of King Yǒngjo by Lady Sǒnhŭi. She married Chǒng Ch'i-dal and was widowed without a son when very young. She adopted Chǒng Hu-gyǒm as her son but spent most of her time in the palace after her husband's death and enjoyed the King's special favour.

She was later dismissed from the royal family, sent into exile to a remote place and then poisoned on the orders of King Chǒngjo, her nephew. This was why the authoress described her as Madame Chǒng instead of Princess Hwawan. The authoress hinted at incest between her husband, the Crown Prince and her sister-in-law Madame Chǒng which I believe was the main causes of King Yǒngjo's decision to kill his son, the Crown Prince, and later King Chǒngjo's decision to poison his aunt to death. King Chǒngjo thought it was unfair that only his father was punished by death, and not his aunt.

Chǒng Hu-gyǒm 鄭厚謙 (Court. Paeg-ik)

Career: Passed the Higher Civil Service Examination and became Deputy Minister of a Board.

Until he became powerful in the government Hong Pong-han and Hong In-han had a firm hold of state power and appointed and dismissed government officials at will. But when Hu-gyǒm became powerful in the government, Hong In-han sided with him and together with Princess Hwawan plotted against the ministers, dismissing them from the government.

But when King Chǒngjo succeeded to the throne, he sent Hu-gyǒm into exile. His mother Princess Hwawan was also poisoned.

He was originally the son of a commoner, but was adopted by Princess Hwawan.

King Chǒngjo 正祖, 1752-1800 (First. court. pen.  
Sǒng Hyǒngun Hongjje)

Origin: Chǒnju, Son of Lady Hong, the authoress and Crown Prince Sado.

Career: 1776-1800 period of reign, 22nd King of the Yi dynasty.

He was the grandson of King Yǒngjo and the second son of Crown Prince Sado and the authoress.

After his father's tragic death, he succeeded King Yǒngjo and ruled the Kingdom impartially following King Yǒngjo's principles. He was not interested in politics but absorbed in learning and entrusted the government to the Chief Royal Secretary (Tosǔngji) Hong Kug-yǒng. He established the Royal Research Institute, Kyujan'gak where the scholars of the State gathered to discuss the Classics and histories of ancient China. With his encouragement they published the following books:

Taejǒn t'ongp'yǒn, Muye tobo t'ongji, Munwǒn pobul, Chongju hwip'yǒn, Kyujang chǒngun, Chǒnun okp'yǒn, Tongmun hwigo, Ch'ugwanji, Oryun haengsil. He himself supervised the publishing of the P'alcha paekson, the Chusǒ paeksǒn and the Ogyǒng paeksǒn and published his own work, Hongjae chǒnsǒ. He was very resentful of his father's tragic death, and in his memory built

a new city wall around Suwŏn, promoted it to a minor capital, and made regular visits to it.

See also Introduction pp. 14-16.

Princess Chŏngmyŏng 貞明公主, 1603-1685

The first daughter of King Sŏnjo and Queen Inmok and great great great grandmother of the authoress. She married Yŏngan-wi, Hong Chu-wŏn.

Queen Chŏngsŏng 貞聖王后, 1692-1757 ( $\frac{\text{Sur}}{\text{Sŏ}}$ .)

Origin: Talsŏng

First Wife of King Yŏngjo. She was a daughter of Talsŏng-puwŏn'gun, Sŏ Chŏng-jye, married King Yŏngjo in 1704 and became Queen in 1724. She was childless.

Queen Chŏngsun 貞純王后, 1745-1805 ( $\frac{\text{Sur}}{\text{Kim}}$ .)

Origin: Kyŏngju

The second wife of King Yŏngjo. She was a daughter of Ōhŭng-puwŏn'gun, Kim Hang-gu. She married King Yŏngjo and was given the title of Queen in 1759. She was childless, did not get along well with Prince Sado, and maligned him a great deal. Her father Hang-gu instigated Na gyŏng-ŏn to report the misbehaviour of Prince Sado to King Yŏngjo, causing his disgrace. She always supported the Pyŏkp'a Faction against the Sip'a Faction in their confrontation. The Sip'a Faction was sympathetic to the Crown Prince, while the Pyŏkp'a Faction was against him. When the young Sunjo succeeded to the throne after the death of King Chŏngjo she manipulated the government from behind the scenes. She plotted against the Sip'a Branch of the Namin Faction and the Catholic religious faction of

Sinsŏp'a. She ordered the Decree Banning and Suppressing the Roman Catholics, Taegumamnyŏng.

Princess Ch'ongsŏn 清馨郡主, 1756-

The second daughter of the authoress and the Crown prince and married Hŭngŭn-puwi, Chŏng Chae-hwa.

Princess Ch'ŏngyŏn 清衍郡主, 1754-

The first daughter of the authoress and the Crown Prince. She married Kwangŭn-puwi, Kim Ki-sŏng.

Lady Hong of Hyegyŏng Palace 惠敬宮洪氏 1735-1815

Origin: P'ungsan

The authoress of this book and the wife of Crown Prince Sado. She was the daughter of the President of the Council Hong Ponghan and mother of King Chŏngjo. Later she underwent the tragic experience of the Imo Incident which led to the death of her husband. Married the Crown Prince at the age of ten. In King Kojong's (r. 1863-1907) day, her husband Crown Prince Sado was posthumously conferred King Changjo and accordingly she was also elevated as Queen Kyŏngŭi. When King Chŏngjo succeeded to the throne, he honoured his mother with the title Hyegyŏng-gung. She had a son and two daughters.

Hong Chu-wŏn 洪柱元, ?-1672 ( court. pen. post. )  
Kŏnjung Muhadang Munŭi

Origin: P'ungsan

He was the royal son-in-law of King Sŏnjo. He married Princess Chŏngmyŏng, the eldest daughter of King Sŏnjo and was given the title of Yŏngan-wi.

He was the great great great grandfather of the authoress.

Hong, Hyŏn-bo 洪鉉輔, d. 1740 (court. pen. post.)  
(Kungŏ Sujae Chonghŏn)

Origin: P'ungsan.

Career: 1718 - passed the Higher Civil Service Examination and later held the post of Deputy Minister of the Civil Office Board and the Minister of the Ceremonies Board.

He was the grandfather of the authoress.

Hong In-han 洪麟漢, 1722-1776 (court.)  
(Chongyŏ)

Origin: P'ungsan.

Career: 1753 - passed the Higher Civil Service Examination. Later became the Junior Vice President of the Council and then its Senior Vice President.

He used his power unduly together with Chŏng Hu-gyŏm and his mother (Princess Hwawan; Madame Chŏng) relying on his family authority, which incurred the Crown Prince's (King Chŏngjo) enmity so that as soon as he succeeded to the throne, he sent him into exile, where he died.

He was an uncle of the authoress and was designated a rebellious minister in the late Yi dynasty. He was a son of Hong Hyŏn-bo and a younger brother of Hong Pong-han.

Hong Nag-in 洪樂仁, 1740-1777 (court.)  
(Sukto)

Origin: P'ungsan

Career: 1769 - passed the Higher Civil Service Examination. The Chief Secretary of Royal Secretariat and Deputy Minister of a Board.

He was once arrested as a traitor. He was found not guilty but died soon after his release.

He was the authoress' elder brother and son of President of the Council, Hong Pong-han.

Hong Pong-han 洪鳳漢, 1713-1778 ( court. pen. post. )  
 Iggikjae Iggyō Ikchong)

Origin: P'ungsan

Career: 1744 - passed the Higher Civil Service Examination.

1754 - Councillor of the Frontier Defence Command  
 (Pibyōnsa)<sup>1</sup>

1761 - President of the Council

- Removed from Office in connection with the  
 suspicions of the King towards Crown Prince Sado.

1763 - Reappointed Senior Vice President of the  
 Council, but later resigned and was given the title  
 of Pongjoha.

He was the father of the authoress. He died in 1778 after he  
 had been demoted from Pongjoha.

Hong Sang-han 洪象漢, 1701-1769 ( court. post. )  
 Unjang Chōnghye)

Origin: P'ungsan

Career: Passed the State Examination for the status of Chinsa  
 with distinction.

1735 - Passed the Higher Civil Service Examination.  
 Joined the Royal Institute and lectured as a royal  
 instructor.

He was the Chief Secretary of the Royal Secretariat  
 and was the instructor of the Royal Grandson.

He was the Governor of P'yōngan Province and Minister  
 of the Ceremonies and Punishment Boards.

He reached the high office of Sūngnok taebu (civil  
 official of the First Court rank) and was honoured  
 with the title of Pongjoha before his death.

He was given the title of President of the Council  
 posthumously.

<sup>1</sup> Pibyōnsa. See Introduction on pp.2-3.

He was the authoress' uncle, a cousin of her father and the son of Hong Sŏk-po.

Princess Hwahyŏp 和協翁主

She was the seventh daughter of King Yŏngjŏ by Lady Sŏnhŭi. Though she was exceptionally beautiful, she was never favoured by her father like her brother, Crown Prince Sado. She married Yŏngsŏng-wi, Sin Kwang-su.

Princess Hwap'yŏng 和平翁主, ?-1748

She was the third daughter of King Yŏngjo by Lady Sŏnhŭi. She was one of the daughters King Yŏngjo loved most. She married Kumsŏng-wi, Pak Myŏng-wŏn but died in child birth in 1748.

Princess Hwasun 和順翁主

The second daughter of King Yŏngjo by Lady Yŏnu and married Wŏlsŏng-wi, Kim Han-jin.

Princess Hwawan See Madame Chŏng

Crown Prince Hyojang See Prince Kyŏngŭi

Lady Kasun 嘉順宮, 1770-1882 ( post. sur. )  
Hyŏnmok Pak

Origin: Pannam

She was the mother of King Sunjo and concubine of King Chŏngjo.

Queen Hyosun 孝純王后, 1715-1751 ( sur. post. )  
Cho Hyosun

Origin: P'ungyang

1727 - invested with the title the Consort of the Heir Apparent, Crown Prince Hyŏjang and married him.

1735 - bestowed the title Lady Hyŏn.

1752 - bestowed the posthumous title Hyosun.

She was childless.

Queen Hyōui 孝懿王后, 1753-1821 ( $\frac{\text{sur.}}{\text{Kim}}$   $\frac{\text{post.}}{\text{Hyōui}}$ )

Origin: Ch'ōngp'ung.

She was the wife of King Chōngjo. She was a granddaughter of the Minister of the War Board, Kim Sōng-ūng and the daughter of Ch'ōngwōn-puwōn'gun, Kim Si-mok. She married King Chōngjo, then the Royal Grandson, when she was ten, and was extremely loyal to the authoress gaining King Yōngjo's praise. She was childless.

Queen Inhyōn 仁顯王后, 1677-1701 ( $\frac{\text{sur.}}{\text{Min}}$ )

Origin: Yōhūng

The second wife of King Sukjong. She was the daughter of Yōyang puwōn'gun, Min Yu-jung. She married King Sukjong and became Queen in 1689. The same year, when the Kisahwan'guk Incident took place in connection with appointing Kyun, later King Kyōngjong, as the Crown Prince, she was dismissed from being Queen and became a commoner for a while because of the false charges of Lady Chang Hūi. But she was restored as Queen in 1694 when Lady Chang Hui was removed from her position in the Kapsul Oksa Incident. She was childless.

Queen Inwōn 仁元王后, 1687-1757 ( $\frac{\text{sur.}}{\text{Kim}}$ )

Origin: Kyōngju

The third wife of King Sukjong and step-mother of King Yōngjo. She was a daughter of Kyōngūi-puwōn'gun, Kim Chu-sin. She was childless.

Ilsōng-wi, Chōng Ch'i-dal, 日城尉鄭致達

The Husband of Princess Hwawan.



of the royal son-in-law of King Sonjo, Kumyang-gun,  
Pak Mi.

King Kyōngjong 景宗, 1688-1724 (first. pen.  
Kyun Hwisō)

Origin: Chōnju, 20th King of the Yi dynasty.

Career: 1690 - appointed Crown Prince.

1720-1724 - period of reign.

He was advised by his President of Council, Kim Ch'ang-jip to appoint his brother Prince Yōngin, later King Yōngjo, as Crown Prince to deputize for the King. This led to the Sinim Incident when the Soron Faction attacked Kim Ch'ang-jip of the Noron Faction.

He was the son of King Sukjong and Lady Chang Hŭi. His wife was the daughter of Ch'ōngun-puwōn'gun Sim Ho, Queen Tanŭi who died before the King succeeded to the throne. His second wife was the daughter of Hamwōn-puwōn'gun, Ō Yu-gu. He was constantly ill and did not produce an heir.

Kyōngmo-gung See Crown Prince Sado

Prince Kyōngŭi 敬義君, 1719-1728 (first. court. post.  
Sōn Sōnggyōng Hyojang )

Origin: Chōnju, first son of King Yōngjo

Career: 1725 - Invested with the title Crown Prince

Died at the age of ten.

Min Paek-sang 閔百祥, 1711-1761 (court. post.  
Iji Chōnghōn )

Origin: Yōhung

Career: 1740 - passed the Higher Civil Service Examination.

1761 - became the Junior Vice President of the Council

He was the grandson of the Junior Vice President of the Council, Min Chin-wōn and the son of the Provincial Governor, Min Hyōng-su. He bore the responsibility for the Crown Prince's trip to

P'yŏngyang for amusement together with President of the Council Yi Ch'ŏn-bo and the Senior Vice President of the Council, Yi Hu. He poisoned himself.

Lady Pak of Kasun Palace 嘉順宮洪氏, 1770-1822 ( pen.  
Hwigyŏng

post. )  
Hyŏnmok

Origin: Pannam

The mother of King Sunjo and concubine of King Chŏngjo. The wife of King Chŏngjo, Queen Hyoŭi was childless.

She was the daughter of the Governor of P'andongnyong, Pak Chun-wŏn. She was elevated to the Lady (Pin) of King Chŏngjo in 1787 and gave birth to King Sunjo and Princess Sukson.

The Royal Grandson See King Chŏngjo

Crown Prince Sado 思悼世子, 1735-1762 (court. post.)  
Sŏn Sado

Origin: Chŏnju, second son of King Yŏngjo by Lady Sŏnhŭi.

Career: 1735 - appointed Crown Prince

1749 - Rules the Kingdom on behalf of his father, but fell sick and behaved eccentrically.

1762 - Killed by his father who locked him in a grain box.

Later the King regretted this and conferred the posthumous title of Crown Prince Sado on him. When Crown Prince Sado's son, King Chŏngjo, took over the reign from his grandfather, he changed his father's title from Crown Prince Sado to Crown Prince Changhŏn. Later King Kojong (r. 1852-1919), honoured him with the posthumous title of King Changjo. His shrine was named Kyŏngmo-gung which is at present the Medical School of Seoul National University. The authoress usually mentioned her husband by the name of this palace.



However King Sunjo made a major contribution to social reform, and to the development of Korean culture and institutions in the later Yi period. He was surrounded by officials whose authority was based on their family background and power, so that every important national policy formulated in this period took their interest, and the maintenance of their power into account. Kim Cho-sun of Andong Kim exercised power causing disorder in the Court and misery among the people.

Queen Sunwŏn 純元王后, 1789-1857 ( $\frac{\text{sur}}{\text{Kim}}$ )

Origin: Andong

Career: 1802 - married King Sunjo and was appointed Queen.  
(The second year of King Sunjo's reign).

1834 - appointed Queen Dowager, when King Sunjo died.

1853 - appointed Great Queen Dowager (in the 4th year of King Ch'ŏljong).

When King Ch'ŏljong succeeded to the throne, she interfered in politics from behind the scenes.

When King Ch'ŏljong married the daughter of Kim Mung-gun the Kim of Andong, she wielded considerable power.

She was the daughter of Yongan-puwŏn'gun, Kim Cho-sun, the mother of King Ikchong (1809-1830) and the grandmother of King Hŏnjong (r. 1834-1849).

Wolsŏng-wi 月城尉

The Husband of Princess Hwasun.

Lady Yi of Hansan 韓山李氏

The authoress' mother and a daughter of Yi Chip, the Governor of Hwanghae Province.



objective non-partisanship". He amended the recruitment of officials of the Office of Study Promotion from the system of recommendation to one of voting. Before re-applying the short-lived universal military service tax, he went out of the palace gate and asked the opinion of officials, literati, soldiers and peasants. He then reduced the military service tax of two p'il of cloth by half, and ordered this deficiency supplemented by taxes on fishing, salt and increased land tax. He also re-organized the State's revenue and expenditure by adopting an accounting system. He minted coins to encourage the circulation of currency.

His concern for the improvement of peasant life was manifested in his eagerness to educate the people by distributing important books in Korean script, such as "Standards of Behaviour", Samgang haengsil, and "A Compendium of Agriculture" Non'ga chipsŏng. He also reinstated the drumbeat appeal for spontaneous petitioning. Further, he eliminated medieval types of punishment and torture. He warned the Yangban against luxurious living and stopped the accumulation of wealth by excessive exploitation. He also established a special State Examination for old people (Kirogwa). Literati and soldiers of 60 years and above sat for this Examination and those who passed were appointed government officials. He ordered the compilation of "Teachings of the Royal Ancestors" Chohun, "The Collection of Edicts and Decrees" Sugyo Chibyo, "The Supplement to the Grand State Code" Sok taejŏn, and "The Supplement to the Illustrated Arts of War" Sokpyŏng-jang tosŏl. Under him the pluviometer was again manufactured in quantity and distributed to local officials to encourage agricultural efficiency. He also undertook public works,

mobilizing 200,000 persons for two-month period to dredge river beds. This work was made into a regular public service by the establishment of the Office of Dredge Works. All his efforts and policies were intended to reassert the Confucian monarchy and humanitarian rule. His reign together with that of his grandson Chǒngjo, was the golden age of the latter Yi dynasty. However, his reforms aimed at preserving dynastic rule could not succeed against the tide of rapidly changing society. Nevertheless, his reign was the longest of all the Yi dynasty Kings. See also Introduction pp. 14-16.

Yǒngsǒng-wi (永城尉)

Princess Hwyoŏp's husband. He was son of the President of the Council, Sin Man.

MAPS

Seoul, the Capital of the Yi dynasty, had five Royal Palaces, the Ch'an'gyōng (昌慶宮), Ch'angdōk (昌德宮), Kyōngbok (景福宮), Tōksu (德壽宮) and Kyōnghŭi (慶熙宮) Palaces. Four of them still exist although so much changed that it is very difficult to visualize their original structure.

Out of these five palaces, only three are mentioned in the text, the Kyōnghŭi<sup>1</sup> Palace, Ch'angyōng<sup>2</sup> and Ch'angdōk<sup>3</sup>. The Kyōngŭi Palace was built in 1616 but has completely disappeared. It was a great palace of more than a hundred separate buildings. After 1910, it was dismantled by the Japanese, and most of the buildings either became Japanese shrines, private property or were destroyed. The Japanese High School, now the Seoul High School, was built on the site of the demolished section of this palace.

The Ch'an'gyōng Palace was originally built in 1419 and called the Sugang Palace. It was given its new name when rebuilt in 1483 and became used as a zoo and a botanical garden at the end of the Yi dynasty.

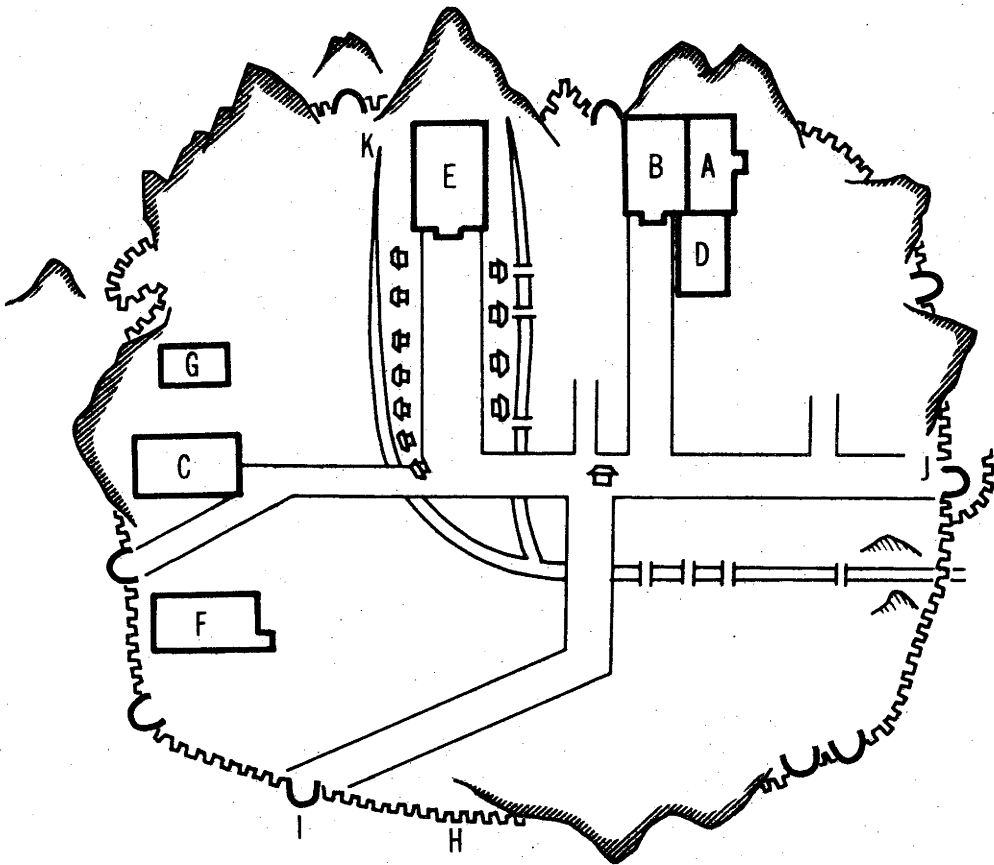
The Ch'angdōk Palace was built in 1404. It was completely burnt down by the Japanese invaders in 1592 except for the Tonhwa (敦化門) Gate. It was rebuilt in 1611.

In addition to these Royal Palaces, there were two important temple compounds often mentioned in the text: the Ancestral Temple of the Yi dynasty Royal Family (宗廟) and the Seven Temples (七宮), where the ancestral tablets of royal mothers without the title of Queen were kept. Map I shows the location of these two palaces and two shrines. Map II shows the location of separate buildings of the Chan'gyōng Palace. Map III shows the same details of the Ch'angdōk Palace. As a result of its destruction, no map can be provided of the Kyōnghŭi Palace.

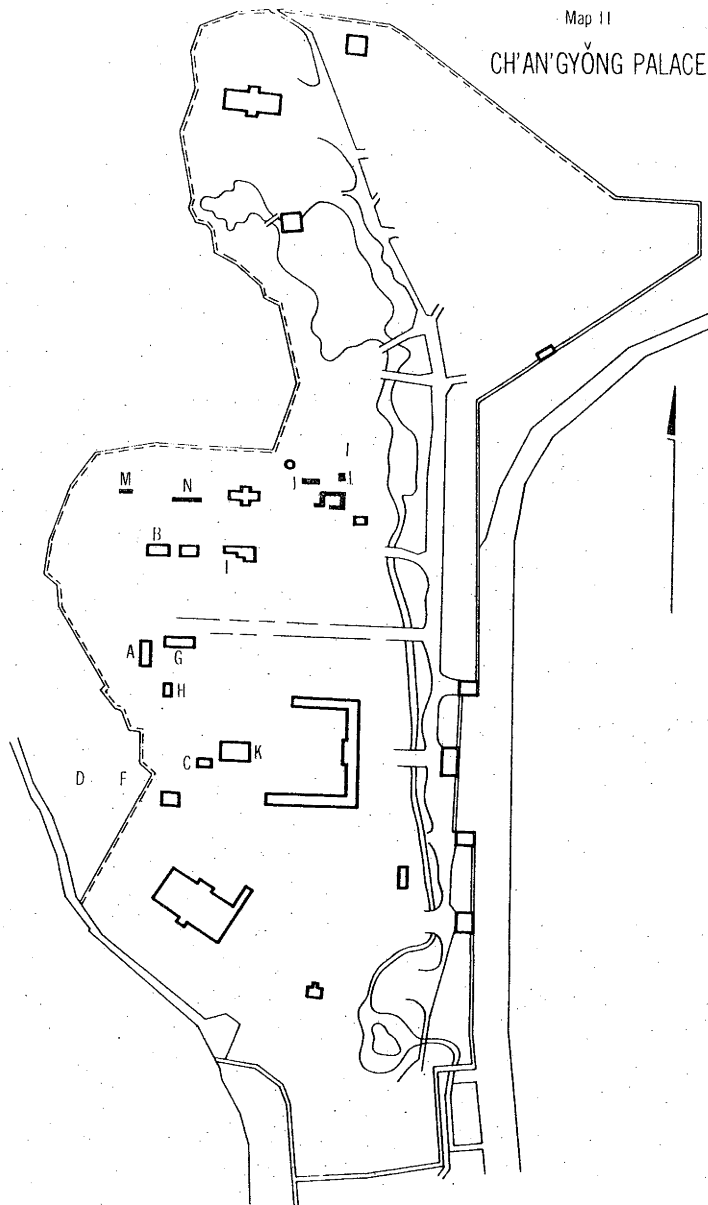
Map I

## OLD SEOUL

Five Royal Palaces, Royal Ancestral Temple,  
National Shrine and Capital Fortress

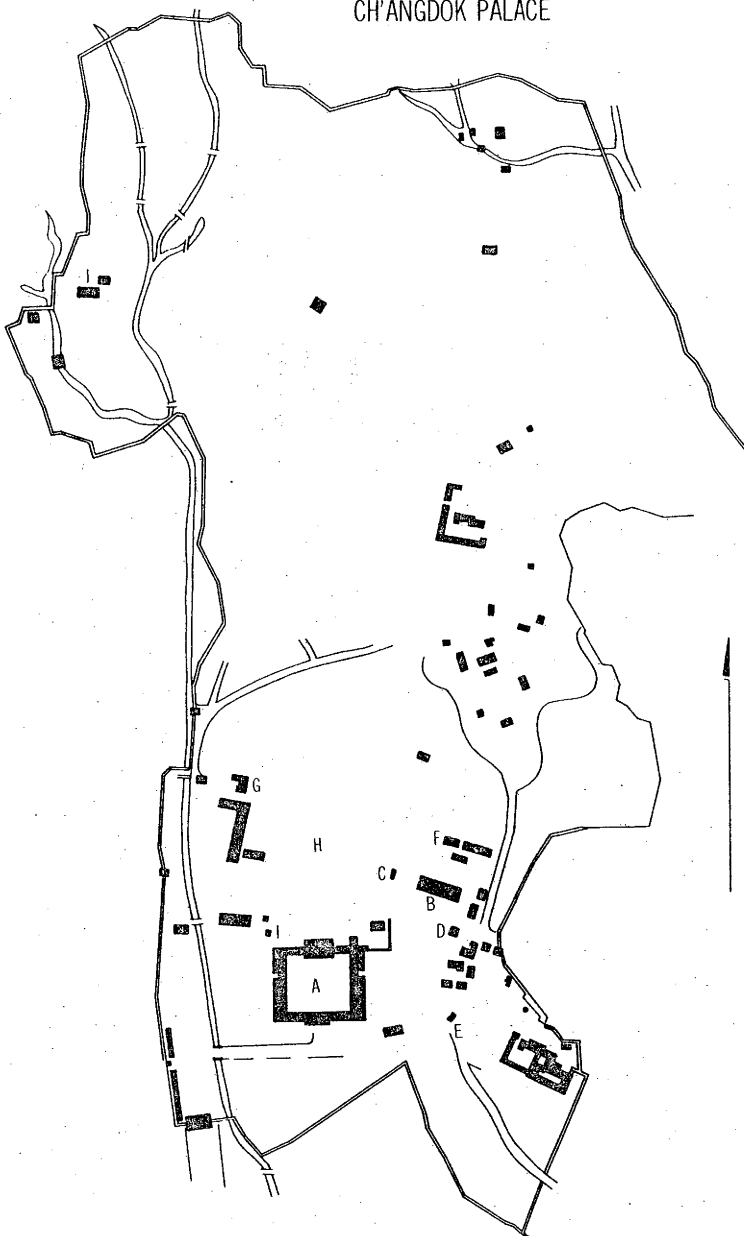


- A. Ch'an'gyŏng Palace
- B. Ch'angdŏk Palace
- C. Kyŏnghui Palace
- D. Royal Ancestral Temple
- E. Kyŏngbok Palace
- F. Tŏksu Palace
- G. National Shrine
- H. Capital Fortress
- I. Sŭngnye Gate (present South Gate)
- J. Hŭngin Gate (present East Gate)
- K. Seven Temples



- A. Kyŏngch'un-jon
- B. T'onmyŏng-jŏn
- C. Sŏngmŭn-dang
- D. Old Chŏsŏng-jŏn site
- E. Chippok-hŏn
- F. Naksonjae
- G. Hwan'gyŏng-jŏn
- H. Hamin-jŏng
- I. Kosŏ-hon
- J. Kŏn'guk-dang
- K. Myŏngjŏn-jŏn
- L. Nanhyang-gak
- M. Old Hwanch'wi-jŏn site
- N. Old Chgyŏng-jŏn site

Map III  
CH'ANGDŎK PALACE



- A. Injŏng-jŏn
- B. Taejo-jŏn
- C. Yun'gyŏng-jŏn
- D. Hŭijŏng-jŏn
- E. Old Kŏnyang Gate
- F. Kyŏnghŭng-gak
- G. Old Yŏngmo-dang site
- H. Old Kyŏngbok-jŏn site
- I. Manan Gate
- J. Sŏnwŏn-jŏn

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