

Four Memorials on the Enthronement of Consort Ŏm: An Annotated Translation

Translated by Joshua VAN LIEU

Introduction

In the wake of the assassination of Queen Min (Min-bi 閔妃, 1854-1895), King Kojong 高宗 (r. 1864-1907), fearing for his own life, fled to the Russian legation in February of 1896 where he and his entourage remained for a full year. He was accompanied by his concubine of humble origins, Lady Ŏm 嚴 (1854-1911), who bore him a son, Yi Ŭn 李垠, Prince Yŏng (Yŏngch'inwang 英親王, 1897-1970), conceived during their sheltering in the legation. Not long after the prince was born, debate arose at court as to what an appropriate title for Lady Ŏm might be, some being so bold as to suggest that she should be enthroned as empress (*hwanghu* 皇后) of the recently declared Great Han Empire (Tae Han Cheguk 大韓帝國).¹ This initial proposal for her enthronement failed, but the question arose repeatedly over the next ten years.² From 1898 to 1902, Lady Ŏm garnered a series of titles of increasing rank, culminating with “Imperial Noble Consort” (*hwanggwibi* 皇貴妃), stopping just short of

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¹ The first of these appears to be that of Yi Chaesin 이재신 of Ch'ungju 忠州 who presented a memorial calling for the installation of Lady Ŏm as empress on the basis of the precedents set by the Emperor Guangwu 光武 (r. 5-57) of Han 漢 having installed Lady Yin (Yin furen 陰夫人, 5-64) as his second empress and Emperor Zhaozong 昭宗 (r. 888-900) of Tang 唐 having installed Consort He (He Shufei 何淑妃, ?-906), a woman of low social background, as empress. So strongly did Yi feel about this that he prostrated himself before the palace for days after he submitted his memorial. See “Hwanghu kant'aek,” *Tongnip sinmun*, July 6, 1898, p. 2. See also note 21.

² In the spring of 1907, there was a report of a drafting committee forming with rumored support from unspecified backers in Japan. While the drafting committee formed, it does not appear to have actually drafted any memorials, due in all likelihood to the abdication of the Kwangmu Emperor in the summer of that year. This was the last attempt to have Consort Ŏm installed as empress. See “Hangsŏl nansin,” in *Hwangŏng sinmun*, May 18, 1907, p. 2.

empress. These promotions in rank attracted little resistance at court but from 1901 there were increasingly frequent attempts to move King Kojong, now reigning as the Kwangmu Emperor, to install Lady Ŏm as his primary consort (*bu* 后), the empress. Thousands of officials and scholars from the capital and the provinces signed memorials to the throne either calling for, or opposing, her enthronement. The petitions were at times so numerous that many were returned unopened. Hwang Hyŏn 黃玹 (1855-1910) wrote that memorials arrived at court by the wagonload and people were so obsessed with the issue that they could speak of little else.³

A facile reading of these memorials suggests little beyond a raw power struggle. The death of Queen Min created an opportunity for a new consort and her clan to dominate Korean politics as the Yŏhŭng Min clan (Yŏhŭng Min-ssi 驪興閔氏) had done for more than twenty years previously. Those proposing the installation of Consort Ŏm as empress understood this opportunity and submitted or signed on to memorials, perhaps in the hope of reaping the spoils when she ascended the throne, or perhaps under political pressure. Those opposing the installation of Consort Ŏm as empress may, in a similar vein, be read as defending the political interests of the Min clan and its associates. We thus might boil down these densely arcane documents to two positions: “Install Consort Ŏm as empress” and “Do not install Consort Ŏm as empress.”

While this understanding is not incorrect, to ignore the rhetorical argumentation in these memorials is to miss a much deeper context: the Korean imperial project and its critics. As I have argued elsewhere,⁴ those calling for the enthronement of Consort Ŏm as empress understood the Great Han Empire as the inheritor of the imperial tradition (*hwangt'ong* 皇統),⁵ beginning with King Wen of Zhou (Zhou Wen Wang 周文王, r. 1100-1050 BCE), if not earlier, and continuing on through the Han 漢, Tang 唐, Song 宋, and Ming 明 dynasties, after which it was preserved in Chosŏn until the final severance of the tributary relationship with the Qing Empire. The end of this relationship then allowed for the Chosŏn royal house to openly take on the imperial tradition that had been underground since the seventeenth-century fall of the Ming Empire. The supporters of the consort ascending the imperial throne thus couched their argumentation in a rhetoric that appealed to the larger imperial tradition stretching back through the Ming, Song, Tang, Han, and Zhou dynasties, with frequent appeals to the *Book of Odes* (*Shi jing* 詩經), the *Book of Changes* (*Yi jing* 易經), and imperial precedents to justify the installation of a new empress. Those in opposition, however, grounded their resistance squarely in the precedents of the Chosŏn state, and especially in the prohibition issued by King Sukchong 肅宗 (r. 1674-1720) against installing a concubine as a primary consort. They repeatedly called upon the Kwangmu Emperor to maintain his respect for his forebears, the

³ Hwang Hyŏn, *Maech'ŏn yarok* (Sŏul: Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, 1971), 284, 298.

⁴ Joshua Van Lieu, “On Reading Rhetoric: Lady Ŏm, Court Memorials, and the Imperial Korean State, 1897-1907,” in *2022 Keimyung International Conference on Korean Studies: Sources of Culture, Culture of Sources* (Taegu, South Korea: Academia Koreana, Keimyung University, 2022), 233-244.

⁵ For a superlative discussion of the imperial tradition, see Sixiang Wang, *Boundless Winds of Empire: Rhetoric and Ritual in Early Chosŏn Diplomacy with Ming China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023), 9-16.

Chosŏn royal line, with virtually no reference to the imperial tradition or any incantation of the Zhou-Han-Tang-Song-Ming lineage. In effect, the opposition was simply uninterested in the pretensions of the Korean imperial project. And indeed, this attitude went beyond mere disinterest and crossed over into contempt, as can be seen in the opposing memorial below.

The first three memorials here translated were submitted by No Yŏnggyŏng 盧泳敬, Wŏn Sesun 元世洵, and Chang Sŏksin 張錫璽 respectively in the autumn of 1906, and called upon the Kwangmu Emperor to install Consort Ōm as empress. In each case, the emperor issued a rescript in which he did not reject the suggestion outright but rather suggested that such important matters should not be considered in haste. The final ten-point memorial was submitted by Yun Hŏn 尹璉 and Kim Hŭisu 金喜洙 and was written in direct response to the three memorials by No, Wŏn, and Chang as well as to the emperor's non-committal rescripts. The Yun and Kim memorial is significant in that it appears to be the only surviving memorial in opposition to the enthronement. Moreover, its language and approach are both thorough and more than a little cheeky, which is surely why the newspaper *Taehan maeil sinbo* saw it fit to publish it in its entirety over six installments soon after it was first submitted.⁶

Translation: No Yŏnggyŏng Memorial of 1906⁷

We respectfully submit that we lowly men from Yŏngnam⁸ somehow dare to discuss the most important of ritual protocols so closely related to the imperial consort Unable to accomplish the smallest thing [by ourselves], we have trekked far and wide and called out to those nearby [to join us]. We respectfully wish for your consideration.

In general, where there is heaven and earth, there is also husband and wife. In heaven and on the earth, *ŭm* and *yang*⁹ arise and mature; human beings take this as their model. From

⁶ Van Lieu, "On Reading Rhetoric," 234. There is another version, slightly abridged and with minor variations, in Hwang Hyŏn, *Maech'ŏn yarok*, 391-394. For modern Korean translations of the Hwang version, see Hwang Hyŏn, *Wanyŏk Maech'ŏn yarok*, trans. Kim Chun (Sŏul: Kyomun sa, 2005), 688-93; Hwang Hyŏn, *Yŏkchu Maech'ŏn yarok ha*, trans. Im Hyŏngt'aek (Sŏul: Munhak kwa Chisŏng sa, 2005), 343-9.

⁷ Passing the civil service examination in 1877, No Yŏnggyŏng (1848-1929) was a prominent official who served in multiple higher positions in the Chosŏn court and provinces through the 1880s and 1890s and continued to serve in a variety of posts after the establishment of the Great Han Empire in 1897. He was the lead signatory of this memorial but it is unlikely that he personally composed it. Not long after his submission of this memorial, he was appointed as a special councilor to the Imperial Household Department (*kungnaebu t'ŭkchin'gywan* 宮內府特進官). See *Kukcho pangmok* (Kyŏngsŏng: Chosŏn Ch'ongdokpu Chungch'uwŏn, 1939), 300; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi: Kojong* (Sŏul: Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, 1970), 5:991 (*Kwangŏ* 3/4/23); *Kojong Sunjong sillok* (Sŏul: Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, 1970), 48:7b (*Kwangmu* 11/1/22).

⁸ Yŏngnam 嶺南 is an alternate term for Kyŏngsang 慶尙 Province. See Yun Kapsik, comp., *Han'guk chŏn'go* (Sŏul: Myŏngmundang, 1988), 673.

⁹ *ŭm* 陰 is the dark, cool, female energy of the cosmos, while *yang* 陽 is the bright, warm, and male energy of the cosmos. Here the memorialists draw a continuous line of connection between *yang* and *ŭm*, heaven and earth, and male and female as constant cosmic pairings to suggest that an emperor without an empress is at odds with the ways of nature. See Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy, Volume II*, trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 7.

the son of heaven down to the commoner, all follow the way of heaven and earth. For this reason, the *Book of Changes* begins with the heaven and earth trigrams¹⁰ and the *Book of Odes* begins with “Crying Osprey.”¹¹ How could this not be the sages’ revelation of human ethical order in its entirety?

We believe Your Majesty, our Great Emperor, has occupied the throne alone since Her Majesty passed into heaven in 1895,¹² and now it has been thus for nearly twelve years. And in that time we have been beset by the extreme urgency of anxious times and the vexing complexity of worldly events, but there has been no empress to aid in governance or oversee the offerings to previous sovereigns. For the subjects of this country, how could this not be distasteful to fundamental human duty and disruptive to the affairs of state? Ah, Her Majesty, Our Imperial Noble Consort,¹³ has managed the affairs of the palace of the empress, her influence permeates the capital and the provinces, she has given birth to Prince Yǒng,¹⁴ she has brought ample auspiciousness to the Imperial Ancestral Shrine, and she is of perfect virtue and sterling reputation, making her the correct sagely spouse.

And yet, we find ourselves in the current predicament in which elder statesmen have presented their joint petitions and esteemed scholars have pleaded in myriad memorials, yet all remain unread.¹⁵ The sincerity of our sighing sadness is due to the utter kindness and sheer care the Sagely Will has taken in regard to this, the most important of the Great Rituals. Thus, from the shallow viewpoint of our own stupidity, we are unable to stop [asking for this] ten-thousand times. Your Sagely Highness must not go even a single day without a spouse while ruling all under heaven. This is one reason [we cannot stop]. The infants [who are the people]

¹⁰ *The Book of Changes*, as both a divination text and an esoteric text of cosmology, begins with treatments of heaven and earth as the most fundamental of elements of the cosmos. Heaven and earth, being associated with male and female energies respectively, and are thus of similar cosmological significance both on their own and in relation to one another. See *Jian ben yi jing* (Shanghai: Hong wen shu ju, 1918), 1:1a-4b; “Yi jing cheng yi” in *Shi san jing zhu shu*, shang ed. Ruan Yuan (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1983), 13-19.

¹¹ The first poem of *The Book of Odes*, “Crying Osprey” (*Guanju* 關雎), is an account of the courtship of King Wen of Zhou (Zhou Wen wang 周文王, r. 1100 – 1050 BCE) and his consort Tai Si 太姒 (? – ?). King Wen laid the foundations of the Zhou state that enabled his successor, King Wu (Wu Wang 武王, r. 1050-1043 BCE), to defeat the state of Shang 商 at the battle of Muye 牧野 in 1046 BCE. The memorialists here suggest that the marriage of King Wen and Tai Si was at the foundation of the success of the Zhou state, specifically, and, in general, that the marriage of a monarch and his consort is the foundation of any successful state. Moreover, the invocation of King Wen and his statecraft invites the Kwangmu Emperor to see himself and his newly declared empire as the next iteration of the imperial tradition. See Zou Shengmai, ed., *Shi jing bei zhi* (Shanghai: Wen sheng shuju, 1904), 1:1a-2a; Kim Kihong, ed., *Mo sijön chuswaegwan* (Taegu: Chaejondang Söp’o, 1926), 3-10; Chu Hūi, *Sijön* (Söul: Pogyöng Munhwasa, 1983), 7a; “Mao shi cheng yi” in *Shi san jing zhu shu*, shang ed. Ruan Yuan (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1983), 269-276; Kwön Isaeng, *Sayo ch’wisön*, (Kyöngsöng: Hannam Sörim, 1918), 3:1a.

¹² This is a reference to the 1895 assassination of Queen Min, posthumously granted the title Empress Myöngsöng (Myöngsöng hwanghu 明成皇后).

¹³ “Imperial noble consort” (*hwanggwibi* 皇貴妃) refers to Consort Öm.

¹⁴ This is Ŭn, Prince Yǒng.

¹⁵ This is a reference to the memorials submitted in support of elevating of Consort Öm to the position of empress.

must not go even a single day without their national mother¹⁶ as they live out their lives in this land. This is another reason [we cannot stop]. Moreover, the wedding day of the crown prince is fast approaching and its every aspect, from first to last, from greatest to smallest, begins with the Imperial Ancestral Shrine.¹⁷ The expression of gratitude [to the spirits of the previous kings and queens] could take the form of either the sincere offering of duckweed and pond grass or of the arrogant dispatch of a proxy; the difference is glaring.¹⁸ How could [the court] adopt the temporary expedient of inferior rites? Why obstruct the great sages' illumination of virtue?¹⁹

How, then, to proceed? Emperor Jing of Han enthroned Lady Wang as empress.²⁰ Emperor Guangwu of Han enthroned Consort Yin as empress.²¹ If we use the past to

¹⁶ The national mother (*kungmo* 國母) here refers to the woman who holds the title “empress.”

¹⁷ The suggestion here is that offerings must be made at the ancestral shrine so that the spirits of the past sovereigns will bestow their blessings on the upcoming marriage of the crown prince.

¹⁸ In the *Book of Odes*, the first four poems from the chapter “Shao and the South” are concerned with customs of courtship and marriage. A wife, and in particular a new wife, was to perform sacrifices in the ancestral temple of her husband. Her sincerity in making these offerings was said to be such that even if she were to collect common weeds and prepare them as offerings for the altar to her husband's deceased ancestors, the offerings would be efficacious and the spirits would be pleased. Since Empress Myōngsōng had been dead for more than ten years, the memorialists suggest that there had been no one to properly perform these rituals at the imperial ancestral shrine. With the wedding of the crown prince looming, the memorialists contend that it was of critical importance that the rituals at the ancestral shrine be done correctly. Correctly here meant done by the wife of the emperor who, precisely because she would be the wife, would do the sacrifices with sincerity. If there was no wife to do the sacrifices, then a proxy would have to be sent, an act the memorialists deemed a cheap and arrogant expedient before the imperial ancestors. Since Consort Ōm had performed so nobly, as the memorialists claim in the previous paragraph, she should be granted the title of empress so she could perform the necessary sacrifices as wife of the emperor and thereby ensure that the imperial ancestors looked kindly upon the crown prince's wedding. See, Zou Shengmai, ed., *Shi jing bei zhi* (Shanghai: Wen sheng shu ju, 1904), 1:5b-6b; Kim Kihong, ed., *Mosi chōnju swaegwan* (Taegu: Chaejōndang Sōp'o, 1926), 25; Hong Sunp'il, ed., *Chōngbon sijōn chipchu* (Kyōngsōng: Chosōn Tosō Chusik Hoesa, 1927), 2-3; “Mao shi cheng yi” in *Shi san jing zhu shu*, *shang* ed. Ruan Yuan (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1983), 286-7; *Sijōn*, 1:6b-7a; Feng Lihua and Lu Hao, eds., *Jing jiao zuo xiu* (Shanghai: Hui wen tang, 1911), 1:6a-b, 18:20a; *Zuo Tradition*, trans. Stephen Durant, Wai-yee Li, and David Schaburg (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), 24-5, 1228-9.

¹⁹ Here the memorialists are asking the emperor not to violate the norms as laid out by the sages in the classics.

²⁰ The memorialists cite Lady Wang (Furen Wang shi 夫人王氏, ? – 126 BCE) because she became the second empress to Emperor Jing 景 (r. 157-141 BCE) and would thus serve as a precedent for Consort Ōm to become the second empress to the Kwangmu Emperor. On the life of Lady Wang and her promotion to empress, see Sima Qian, *Shi ji hui zhu kao zhenq* ed. Takigawa Kametarō (Taibei: Yin wen yin shu guan, 1961), 49: 14-18; Ssuma Ch'ien, *Records of the Grand Historian*, Vol. 1, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 386-9.

²¹ Like Yi Chaesin in 1898 (see note 1), the memorialists here cite Consort Yin (Guiren Yin shi 貴人陰氏, 5 – 64 CE) because she became the second empress to Guangwu 光武 Emperor (r. 25 – 57 CE) and would thus serve as a precedent for Consort Ōm to become the second empress to the Kwangmu Emperor. On the life of Consort Yin and her promotion to empress, see Fan Ye, *Hou han shu* (Taibei: Shang wu yin shu guan, 2000), 10-*shang*:9a-11b. This example may have held special significance since the Kwangmu 光武 Emperor of the Korean Han 韓 Empire had the same reign name as the Guangwu 光武 Emperor of the Chinese Han 漢 Empire. The shared reign name was not a coincidence but rather a comparison of the Guangmu Emperor who restored the imperial tradition after the interregnum of Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BCE – 23CE) and the Kwangmu Emperor who restored the imperial tradition after the fall of the Ming Empire. See Van Lieu, “On Reading Rhetoric,” 237-240.

consider the present, there is no shortage of such precedents worthy of adoption. Your Majesty, why are you afraid to act? What obstacle has you so immobilized? Day and night we gather and sigh in disappointment yet we do not dare to know [why you do not act]. We beg Your Sagely Brilliance to quickly issue an order to the court astrologers to immediately select a date to promote [the Imperial Noble Consort] to [the rank of] empress. And then, how fortunate would be the Imperial Ancestral Shrine and the Altars to Earth and Grain!²² How fortunate would be your subjects!

Rescript: I have fully considered your memorial. As this is the most important of rites, it is not yet appropriate to discuss.

伏以臣等嶺南疎踪也何敢與論於宮壺密邇之地莫重之禮典乎區區微衷有不能自己者故臣等跋涉千里仰籟咫尺伏願垂察焉蓋有天地則有夫婦焉天地有二儀生成之道而惟人則之自天子達于庶人皆有天地之道也故易弁乾坤詩首關雎此豈非聖人闢人文終始之大義乎惟我大皇帝陛下粵自乙年坤位賓天獨御九五皇極于茲十有二載矣縱有中間艱虞之孔亟庶事之叢脞壺助治之道闕焉先王主鬯之禮缺焉有國之爲臣爲民而彝倫何以不斲政教何以不紊猗我皇貴妃殿下協贊宮闈聲著中外載誕英王慶溢宗祊至德徽音允合聖配有是哉元老有聯筭之舉人士有萬疏之籟而尙未展齋鬱之誠者以 聖旨之所以敦哉慎哉乎莫重之大禮故也然以臣愚等淺見見之有萬不得已者存聖上不可一日闕壺位而臨于天下者一也赤子不可一日免國母而寄命茲土者一也且皇太子殿下之揀擇在卽而先後輕重自在宗廟蘋藻替行而報答之誠慢懸殊則安可以一時區區制節何以遏大聖人光明德教也蔽而言之漢景帝立夫人王氏爲皇后漢光武立貴人陰氏爲皇后則撫古論今不無規例之班班可據陛下何殫而不爲哉何礙而進退遲延也且臣等所以朝夕聚首咨嗟而不敢知者也伏乞聖明亟命太史亟目推擇以行陛下大禮則宗社幸甚臣民幸甚云云批旨省疏具悉莫重之禮有未可遽議²³

Translation: Wŏn Sesun Memorial of 1906²⁴

We respectfully submit that the *Book of Changes* reads, “How grand is Heaven, the beginning

²² In the memorial text, the reference to the Imperial Ancestral Shrine and the Altars to Earth and Grain are rendered *chongsa* 宗社, an abbreviation of *chongmyo sajik* 宗廟社稷. The Imperial Ancestral Shrine is where the emperor makes offerings to his ancestors to ensure their continued blessing of the imperial enterprise and the country at large while the Altars to Earth and Grain are where the emperor makes offerings to the spirits of the earth and grain to ensure plentiful harvests and the prosperity of the people. When combined, the phrase refers to the foundations of the state. See *Tongguk yŏji pigo* (Sŏul: Sŏul T’ŭkpyŏl-sisa P’yŏnch’an Wiwŏnhoe, 1956), 1:24, 26-7.

²³ “Pisŏgam ilgi,” (*Kwangmu* 10/9/7) in *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi: Kojong* (Sŏul: Kuksa P’yŏnch’an Wiwŏnhoe, 1970), 15:763. For a modern Korean translation, see “Hwanggwibi rŭl hwanghu ro samnŭn taerye rŭl haenghal kŏt ŭl ch’ŏnghaŭn chong-2 p’um No Yŏnggyŏng tŭng ŭi sangso,” trans. Yang Kyŏnghŭi (http://db.itkc.or.kr/inLink?DCI=ITKC_ST_Z0_A43_09A_07A_00160_2006_208_XML).

²⁴ Wŏn Sesun (1832-?) held a number of mid-level posts in the Chosŏn court during the Kojong reign and was among those who memorialized in support of the declaration of empire in 1897. Like No Yŏnggyŏng, Wŏn was the lead signatory but probably not the author of the memorial. See *Kojong Sunjong sillok* 36:25a-b (*Kwangmu* 1/10/21).

of all things! How perfect is the earth, from whence all springs!”²⁵ From this we know that heaven and earth each have their place. The sages writing of the Great Shun having shown his conduct²⁶ and of King Wen’s aid from within²⁷ are examples of this. We reverently submit that Our Sagely Mother Myōngsōng²⁸ was of perfect benevolence and abundant virtue, having shared her broad moral transformation for thirty years. She brought a generation to happiness and prosperity and gathered the myriad surnames²⁹ into great peace. For the past twelve years, having suddenly lost the blessed happiness and loving protection of [Her Highness’s] grace, we have been frantically fearful, day and night without respite.³⁰ How fortunate it is that Lady Sun³¹ passed through the court ranks, one by one, and has now risen to the position of imperial consort. Her pure and simple virtue is clear in dark cords of jade beads;³² [her] great good fortune is like unto a yellow robe.³³ And now at this time, subjects from the court and the provinces alike have submitted petitions repeatedly, earnestly begging for the designation of the title of the great position.³⁴ This represents the sincere sentiment of the entire country and yet [Your Majesty] has withheld the announcement, [causing] the people to lose hope and fall into despair. How could they not be like infants wailing for their mother’s breast?

²⁵ See “Zhou yi cheng yi” in *Shi san jing zhu shu, shang* ed. Ruan Yuan (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1983), 14, 18.

²⁶ When the legendary emperor Yao 堯 was seeking an heir, he learned of Shun’s 舜 reputation as a man of filial virtue. Thinking Shun might be a suitable heir, Yao sent his daughters Ehuang 娥皇 and Nuying 女英 to serve as his wives in order to see how Shun behaved. Shun acted properly and eventually came to inherit the throne after Yao. See Zou Shengmai, ed. *Shi jing bei zhi*, (Shanghai: Wen sheng shu ju, 1904), 1:2a; Namgung Chun, ed., *Sōjōn ku t’obae*, (Kyōngsōng: Yuil Sōgwan, 1912), 9-10; Kwōn Isaeng, *Sayo ch’wisōn*, 3:1a; Chi Songuk, ed., *Sangmil chusōk saryak ōnhae*, 1:13; Chūng Sōnji and Yō Chin, *Sipku saryak ōnhae* (Sōul: Hongmun’gak, 1982), 16a-17b; “Shang shu cheng yi” in *Shi san jing zhu shu, shang* ed. Ruan Yuan (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1983), 123.

²⁷ This is a reference to King Wen’s consort Tai Si and the role she played in supporting her husband during his reign. See note 11.

²⁸ This is a reference to Empress Myōngsōng.

²⁹ The term “myriad surnames” (*mansōng* 萬姓) is a reference to the common people.

³⁰ The sudden loss of blessings here is a reference to the 1895 assassination of Empress Myōngsōng.

³¹ Lady Sun (Sun-bin 淳嬪) is the title Consort Ōm held from 1900 to 1901. See Hwang Hyōn, *Maech’ōn yarak*, 257, 273.

³² In *Discourses of the States* (*Guo yu* 國語), Jing Jiang 敬姜 (?-?) tells her son Gongfu Wenbo 公父文伯 (c. 520 BCE-?) of the roles of the wives of the king and various ranks of the feudal lords in making the ritual clothing of the sovereign. The queen (*wang hou* 王后), as primary consort, personally makes the “dark cords” (*xuan dan* 玄紘) of jade beads that hang from the royal crown. The implication is that the primary consort plays a critical role in the ritual function of the sovereign, and thus in the successful functioning of the state. In the present memorial, this reference suggests that Consort Ōm is of appropriate virtue to make the “dark cords,” and by extension, to assist the emperor in his reign. See “Noō ha,” in *Kugō* (Taejōn, Hangmin Munhwasa, 1990), 5:12a; “Zheng lun hai” in *Gong zī jia yu* (Shanghai: Jiao jing shan fang, 1906): 9:14b-15a.

³³ This is a reference to a line from *The Book of Changes*, “A yellow robe [is of] great fortune” (黃裳元吉). The color yellow denotes a center or an interior while the robe here is specifically a garment for the lower part of the body. The image suggests that staying within the household and remaining in a lower role generates great good fortune. In the context of the present memorial, the petitioners are suggesting that Consort Ōm knows how to play her role at court and in doing so will bring great good fortune to the emperor’s reign. See Sōng Paekho, ed., *Hyōnt’o wanyōk chuyōk chōnūi* (Sōul: Chōnt’ong Munhwa Yōn’guhoe, 1999), 1:201-4.

³⁴ This is likely a reference not only to the current signatories but also to the many memorials over the previous ten years, especially from 1902 onward, petitioning the emperor to designate Consort Ōm as empress.

And now we respectfully hear of the wedding [plans] of the crown prince. The command has already been given [to make wedding preparations] and the happiness of the people is as great as heaven and earth, moving them to dance with clapping hands and stamping feet with a joy unrestrained.³⁵ If both the emperor and the empress take their places before the crown princess presents herself before the throne, then we too will be unable to keep ourselves from clapping our hands and stamping our feet in joyful dance. With all possible sincerity we again labor to respectfully express our wish that the Sagely Brilliance would look up in awe to the Imperial Ancestral Shrine and to the Altars to Earth and Grain, submit to the sentiments of the people, and quickly issue an announcement and command the appropriate agencies to select the auspicious date for the ceremonies to install the imperial consort as empress. Praying in earnest a thousand times, ten-thousand times, we cannot bear the extremity of our fear.³⁶

Rescript: I have fully considered your memorial. As these matters are of the utmost importance, how can it be acceptable to consider them in haste?

伏以易曰大哉乾元萬物資始至哉坤元萬物資生是以天地定位聖人作述大舜觀刑文王之助內者是也欽惟我明成聖母至仁盛德配贊洪化三十年濟一世於熙皞囿萬姓於泰平邇來十二年遽失响濡慈庇之恩遑遑栖栖不保朝夕何幸淳嬪由貫魚而陞皇妃儉德著於玄統元吉叶於黃裳于斯時也朝野臣民屢上封章亟請大位之定號不啻一再此乃舉國僉同之忱而尙靳允俞輿情失望抑鬱豈非乳呱之待母乎今伏聞太子宮揀禮已有成命臣民之懼天喜地手舞足蹈者乾坤定位宜在乎太子嬪幣見之前臣等尤不勝懼喜舞蹈齋誠更懇伏願聖明仰體宗社俯順民情亟降允俞仍命有司皇妃陞后儀節涓吉舉行千萬祈懇無任屏營之至云云批旨省疏具悉事體重大固何可遽議³⁷

³⁵ Mencius stated that when one hears of the flourishing of filial piety and respect for elder brothers, one begins to dance without even being aware of it. See “I Ru sang” in *Hyont’o sŏkcha kubae chipchu maengja*, ed. Hyŏn Ch’ae (Kyŏngsŏng: Taech’ang Sŏwŏn, 1913), 235-6. Yi Pŏngyu wrote of this joyful dance as a natural physiological response induced by increased blood flow from the emotional excitement of hearing of those who serve their parents and obey their elder siblings. See “Ri Ru chyanggu syang” in *Ŏnbae maengja chung*, trans. and ed., Yi Pŏngyu (Kyŏngsŏng: Munŏnsa, 1933), 101-4. Even reading *Mencius* could cause readers to dance unconsciously. See Lu Zuqian and Zhu Xi, comp., *Jin si lu ji zhu*, ed. Jiang Yong (Shanghai: Jiao jing shan fang, 1917), 3:5a-b; Chu Hsi and Lu Tsu-chien, comp., *Reflections on Things at Hand*, trans. Wing-tsit Chan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 103.

³⁶ This is a variation on a common set-phrase used at the end of memorials and other formal requests. The fear here is the fear of the emperor’s reply to the memorialists’ impertinent proposal. See “Pŏmnye” in *Yusŏ p’ilchi* (Chŏnju: n.p., n.d.), 3b.

³⁷ “Pisŏgam ilgi,” (*Kwangmu* 10/9/7), 15:763. For a Korean translation, see “Hwanggwibi rŭl hwanghu ro ollinŭn ūsik ūl kŏhaenghal kŏt ūl ch’ŏnghaŭn chong-2 p’um Wŏn Sesun ūi sangso,” trans. Yang Kyŏnghŭi, (http://db.itkc.or.kr/inLink?DCI=ITKC_ST_Z0_A43_09A_07A_00170_2006_208_XML).

Translation: Chang Söksin Memorial of 1906³⁸

We respectfully submit that in our deepest thoughts, we believe that the way of emperors and kings is the complete embodiment of the virtue of heaven and earth, and the harmonization of *ūm* and *yang*. It therefore can nurture all things and parent the common people. This is why among the sixty trigrams of Fuxi's *Book of Changes*, heaven and earth compliment and complete one another.³⁹ And of the three hundred poems of the *Book of Odes*, those included in the chapters "Zhou and the South" and "Shao and the South" truly form the foundation of the mandate of the state.⁴⁰ Which among the ruling houses of the past did not respect this? We humbly submit that since the passing of Empress Myöngsöng, the throne of the empress has long remained empty and must be made right. When the palace lacks regulated ceremony, the subjects are bereft of the blessings of morally transformative nurturing. This can be said to be the one imperfection in [an otherwise] sagely world.⁴¹

The wedding of His Majesty the crown prince is drawing near and various palace ceremonies should be determined in advance. It is a matter of our private thoughts, we respectfully submit, that from the times of antiquity, once an emperor has ascended the throne, there is no remarriage ceremony. For this reason, the matter was not included in the Han dynasty text *White Tiger Synthesis*.⁴² It is thus that there are many cases in the historical records in which a consort rose to the rank of empress without ever raising the suspicions of later generations. Presently, Her Majesty the Imperial Noble Consort is of a uniquely pure and placid virtue and for years now, the subjects of this land have looked up to her as infants look to their loving mother; the greatness of the yellow robe can be divined.⁴³ Unable to restrain our impertinence, we dare to present our foolish thoughts as we gaze up in reverence to the heavenly throne. We respectfully implore Your Great Imperial Majesty

³⁸ Having passed the civil service examination in 1894, Chang Söksin (1841-1923) was a prominent official during the Kojong reign and held a succession of posts in the censorate during the Kojong reign and was finally appointed as a privy councilor in 1901. Unhappy in official life, he left government service in 1902 and traveled through the Mt. Chiri (Chiri-san 智異山) region. He was among those who protested the 1905 protectorate treaty, just before he submitted the 1906 memorial. Once the Han Empire was annexed into the Japanese Empire in 1910, he settled in in the village of Ch'udong 楸洞 near Mt. Kaya (Kaya-san 伽倻山). See *Kukcho pangmok*, 246; *Kojong Sunjong Sillok*, 41:57b (*Kwangmu* 5/9/26); "Pisögam ilgi," (*Kwangmu* 10/9/7), 763; Yu Yöngnye, "Kwajae Chang Söksin ū Haedong akbusa yön'gu," in *Han'guk munbwa yön'gu* 26 (2014), 75-6.

³⁹ See note 10. Fuxi 伏羲 was the legendary author of the *Book of Changes*. See Chi Songuk, ed., *Sangmil chusök saryak önhae* (Kyöngsöng: Sin'gu Sörim, 1920), 1:2.

⁴⁰ These poems concern the virtues and duties of Tai Si, queen to King Wen of Zhou, and of lordly consorts in general. See notes 11 and 18.

⁴¹ The suggestion here is that everything else under the reign of the Kwangmu Emperor is perfect, save this one issue of the absence of a primary consort.

⁴² In 79 CE, Emperor Zhang 章 of Han (r. 75 – 88) held a conference at White Tiger Hall (Bai hu guan 白虎觀) in which the leading scholars of the day debated the classics in an attempt to unify the competing interpretations of different schools. *White Tiger Synthesis* (*Bai hu tong yi* 白虎通義), conventionally understood to have been compiled and edited by Ban Gu 班固 (32 – 92 CE), is an abridged record of the lectures and conversations of the conference. See Fan Ye, *Hou han shu*, 3:8b-10a.

⁴³ See note 33.

to enact the great virtue of initiative and quickly rectify the throne of the empress. Employ [Your] abundant and beautiful moral transformation and conform to popular expectation!

We have heard that recently a number of gentlemen have taken up this matter and submitted memorials. Among them are Nam Chǒngch'ŏl and Yun Taryŏng, who failed to present their position adequately and later attempted to clarify themselves.⁴⁴ Their words, however, were vague in the extreme. As we attempt to understand this, privately we are suspicious. If Wŏn Sesun and the other signatories are indeed as [Nam and Yun] suggest, it would be difficult [for Wŏn and the other signatories] to avoid the charge of falsifying records.⁴⁵ This being the case, why is it that Nam Chǒngch'ŏl *et alia* know only the signatories to the memorial but not the content presented therein? What could this mean? In what situation does one know the signatories of a memorial but not its content? Moreover, the memorial Wŏn Sesun and his co-signatories presented has been in circulation throughout the court and known to all. How could it be that these people like Nam Chǒngch'ŏl and Yun Taryŏng only know the names of the signatories but do not know any of the specifics [of the matter under discussion]? We must not allow the muddled arguments of Nam Chǒngch'ŏl *et alia* to sow doubt and delay in what is now a general consensus. That which cannot be denied is public opinion. That which cannot be shaken is great righteousness. Your Majesty, please bestow your considered judgement.

Rescript: I have fully considered your memorial. Major state rituals are not to be requested in such haste.

伏以臣等竊惟帝王之道克體天地之德陰陽調和故有能育萬物而子庶民也是以義易六十乾元坤元相資正位葩經三百周南召南實基配命歷古帝王之家孰不審謹於此道也臣等伏見明成皇后昇遐以後壺位久虛尚未正位宮闈無規範之儀臣民缺化育之澤此可爲聖世之一欠典也皇太子殿下嘉禮在邇而慈宮禮數宜先預定也臣等竊伏念自古皇帝御極以後則無再疊之禮故漢之白虎通義斷之者也是以陞貴人爲皇后者累見於記史而後世無有擬議現今皇貴妃殿下有貞靜專一之德舉國臣民如赤子之仰慈母者已有年所而可筮黃裳之吉臣等不揆僭妄敢以愚衷仰暴天陞伏乞大皇帝陛下克施大哉資始之德亟正坤位庸

⁴⁴ The details of the incident that inspired the ensuing criticism of Nam Chǒngch'ŏl 南廷哲 (1840 – 1916) and Yun Taryŏng 尹達榮 (1849 – 1916) are not entirely clear. A month earlier, on September 24, 1906, Chang Sŏksin, Hwang Chin'guk 黃鎭國, and Im Hanch'o 林翰楚 were the lead signatories on a joint memorial signed by scholars from across the country that called for the promotion of Consort Ōm to the position of empress before the upcoming wedding of the crown prince. While the memorial does not appear in the imperial court records, the newspaper *Mansebo* 萬歲報 noted that the text claimed that scholars throughout the country had, of their own volition, taken the position that Consort Ōm should be promoted to empress before the wedding. *Mansebo* also reported, however, that Nam Chǒngch'ŏl and Yun Taryŏng, both officers in the Imperial Household Department (Kungnaebu 宮內府), had refuted the arguments in the memorial and, in the course of their opposition, claimed that opinion in favor of the promotion was not a spontaneous expression of the nation, but rather a movement ginned up through a coordinated campaign by Yi Yongt'ae 李容泰 (1854 – 1922), special councilor to the Imperial Household Department, Yi Yongbok 李容復 (1841 – 1918), privy councilor (Chungch'uwŏn *ūigwan* 中樞院議官), and certain ministers (*lyŏpp'an* 協辦) *Mansebo* declined to identify by name. See “Sŏnghu sangso,” *Mansebo*, September 25, 1906, p. 2.

⁴⁵ This appears to refer to an earlier memorial not included in the imperial court records, not the text translated above.

闡懿化以副輿望焉伏聞近有縉紳之以此陳疏而其中南廷哲尹達榮等不分大義追後有自明疏其辭意極涉糢糊揆以事體臣竊惑焉元世洵等之聯名苟如其言固難免其冒錄之責然南廷哲等之但知其聯名之如何不知其所陳之爲如何事云者是何說也夫既知其聯名如何則寧有不知其所陳事之爲如何事之理也哉況又元世洵等疏陳之事通朝所共聞知者而獨此確知其聯名諸人之爲誰某如南廷哲尹達榮者寧有全不知其梗概之爲何件事之理也哉蓋此大同之論不可因一南廷哲等囹圄之說而有所携貳持難於其間矣莫沮者公議也莫搖者大義也惟陛下裁諒焉云云批旨省疏具悉國家大禮有非如是遽請⁴⁶

Translation: Yun Hŏn and Kim Hŭisu Memorial of 1906⁴⁷

Ten-Point Memorial Presented by Gentlemen of the Thirteen Provinces Concerning the Great Righteousness of Disallowing Promotion to Primary Consort

We submit that we of humble households are gripped by thoughts of gloom. This considerable worry for the state is only natural. Deep in the night we face the wall and weep, not knowing what else to do. Recently, we have humbly come to see the imperial rescripts issued in response to the requests to elevate Noble Consort Ōm to primary consort as submitted by No Yŏnggyŏng, Wŏn Sesun, and Chang Sŏksin. Although the rescripts do not grant an approval of their request, we fear that we are unable to eliminate the concern that there might be some further scheming. We feel that Your Sagely Virtue has not been able to make a firm decision, thereby opening a path for those with hearts of immoral opportunism.

Alas, the three criminals No, Wŏn, and Chang are entirely without care for the defense of the ritual protocols of this land⁴⁸ and dare to desire to violate the great bejeweled law that our King Sukchong the Great reported to the Royal Ancestral Shrine and bestowed to

⁴⁶ “Pisŏgam ilgi,” (*Kwangmu* 10/9/7), 15:763-4. For a Korean translation, see “Hwanghu rŭl sokhi ch’ŏnghal kŏt tŭng ŭl chindarhanŭn chŏn chungch’uwŏn ŭigwan Chang Sŏksin tŭng ŭi sangso,” trans. Yang Kyŏnghŭi, http://db.itkc.or.kr/inLink?DCI=ITKC_ST_Z0_A43_09A_07A_00180_2006_208_XML.

⁴⁷ As in the cases of No Yŏnggyŏng, Wŏn Sesun, and Chang Sŏksin, Yun Hŏn (1856-?) and Kim Hŭisu 金喜洙 (1861-?) were the lead signatories rather than the authors of the memorial. *Mansebo* reported that the authors originally tried to submit this memorial to the Imperial Secretariat on their own but the secretariat refused it on the grounds that it was a student memorial (*yusaengso* 儒生疏). The authors, presumably students, then approached figures of higher status, Yi Sŏngyŏl 李聖烈 (1865-?), Kim Hŭisu, Yun Hŏn, Kwak Chongsŏk 郭鍾錫 (1846-1919), and Chŏn U 田愚 (1841-1922), to ask them to act as lead signatories and submit the memorial to the secretariat. It seems that only Kim and Yun obliged. Their names appear in Hwang Hyŏn’s copy of the memorial in *Maech’ŏn yarok* but are absent in the version from the *Taehan maeil sinbo* here translated. Kim had served in multiple high-ranking posts during the Kojong reign, having served as third minister of personnel (*ijo ch’abŭi* 吏曹參議). He was a special councilor in the Imperial Household Department when he signed on to this memorial. Yun also had an impressive official career, including having once served as secretary (*sŏjanggwan* 書狀官) on a tributary mission to the Qing Empire. See “Sŭnghu pandae,” *Mansebo*, November 1, 1906, p. 2; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi: Kojong*, 12:197 (*Kwangsŏ* 18/*yun* 6/22, 7/2); “Pisŏgam ilgi,” in *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi: Kojong*, 14:137 (*Kwangmu* 3/10/18); *Sungjong Kojong sillok*, 23:39b.

⁴⁸ Here the memorialists contrast the “ritual protocols of this land” (*pangnye* 邦禮) with the various cosmological and foreign imperial references in the memorials of No Yŏnggyŏng, Wŏn Sesun, and Chang Sŏksin.

his sons and grandsons for myriad generations to come.⁴⁹ In applying the law of this land⁵⁰ to this attempt to deceive Your Sagely Brilliance with treasonous words, how can we avoid properly rejecting them with extra severity, thereby illuminating that which is good and that which is reprehensible so as to uproot the sprouts of insurrection?

Now, daring to examine the texts of the rescripts, we note that they are exceptionally gentle and smooth, as though the proposals might be adopted or that it is possible to enact them, but just not immediately. If this is indeed the case, Your Majesty has not yet issued a firm rejection. We do not dare to know, but in the sleepless hours of the night, does Your Majesty suddenly realize how shameful and shocking it would be to commit this crime against King Sukchong and incur the laughter of myriad generations to come? Deep in our hearts, we are terribly afraid of this.

When ritual propriety is lost, disorder ensues. When disorder reaches an extreme, it results in a situation in which the lord does not behave as the lord, subjects do not behave as subjects, fathers do not behave as fathers, and sons do not behave as sons. The state then collapses accordingly. Never has there been a case wherein this process did not have its origins in the collapse of the way of husband and wife. The evidence of this is so clear that even if we were not to speak of it, Your Majesty could not possibly be unaware of it. Moreover, in matters of state ritual and protocol, Your Majesty follows the distant precedents of the Ming court and adheres to the near precedents of the previous [Chosŏn] kings without daring to deviate from them, even by the width of the finest hair. It therefore seems that from the outset it will not be possible to avoid the intent of the advisors of state to examine past practice. We thus request to first present an examination of past ritual protocols as enacted by the Great Ming and the previous [Chosŏn] courts and then explain the current situation for Your Majesty as it troubles both Your Majesty and His Majesty the Crown Prince. This presentation is organized into ten points. We dare to beg Your Majesty to carefully examine them with peace of mind and then fully illumine and clarify [a course of action].

First Point

Emperor Taizu was the emperor who founded the Ming dynasty.⁵¹ For the decades after

⁴⁹ Amidst the intense political struggles in the wake of King Sukchong deposing Queen Inhyŏn (Inhyŏn wanghu 仁顯王后, 1667-1701) in 1688 and replacing her with his then-favored concubine Chang, Lady Hŭi (Hŭi-bin Chang-ssi 禧嬪張氏, 1659-1701), the king eventually reversed himself and restored Queen Inhyŏn to the throne in 1694. In 1701, he declared a prohibition on the enthronement of a concubine as primary consort. The opponents of the installation of Consort Ōm as empress were suggesting not only that such an action would violate King Sukchong's injunction, but it would also result in political upheaval similar to the clashes of the 1680s and 1690s. See Yi Kŏnch'ang, *Tangŭi t'ongnyak* (Kyŏngsŏng: Chosŏn Kwangmunhoe, 1912), 45; Sŏng Nakhun, "Han'guk tangjaengsa" in *Han'guk munhwasa taegyŏ II* (Sŏul: Koryŏ Taehakkyo Minjok Munhwa Yŏn'guso, 1972), 334-355; James Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyŏngwŏn and the Late Chosŏn Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 540.

⁵⁰ Yun and Kim again indicate their concern for Chosŏn precedent over ancient imperial precedents with this phrase "the law of this land" (*panghŏn* 邦憲). See also note 48.

⁵¹ Zhu Yuanzhong 朱元璋, Emperor Taizu 太祖, reigned from 1368 to 1398. On his accession to the throne, see

the passing of Empress Xiaoci,⁵² he never took another primary consort. There were many concubines and noble consorts who enjoyed his favor, but never did he raise a concubine to the rank of empress. The rule that should be followed today is to be found in the Great Ming. Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Second Point

Our King Sukchong the Great reported to the Royal Ancestral Shrine his prohibition of elevating a concubine to the position of primary consort and then instructed the myriad generations who followed to record it as a bejeweled law of the state.⁵³ The three criminals No, Wŏn, and Chang have dared to betray the former kings; how can their crime be allowed to stand? If Your Majesty fails to indict these three criminals, and instead adopts their recommendation, how will you show your face before the altar to King Sukchong the Great? What words of gratitude could you offer to the spirits of the previous twenty-eight great [Chosŏn] kings residing in heaven? As this is a matter related to the previous kings, it would truly be a severing of the great righteousness.⁵⁴ Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Third Point

King Yŏngjo was the most filial of all the kings and there was nothing he did not do to formally honor Yuksang Palace,⁵⁵ but never have we heard of any discussion of elevating [Lady Suk] to the rank of primary consort. King Sunjo made offerings at Kasun Palace⁵⁶ with the greatest of filial piety, but never have we heard of any discussion of elevating [Lady Su] to the rank of primary consort. This was a matter of respecting the report King Sukchong made to the Royal Ancestral Shrine [forbidding the elevation of a concubine to the rank of

Yang Jialuo, ed. *Xin xiao ben ming shi bing fu bian* (Taipei: Ding wen shu fu, 1975), 19.

⁵² On the life of Empress Xiaoci (Xiaoci huanghu 孝慈皇后, 1332-1382), see Kwŏn Isaeng, *Sajo ch'wisŏn*, 3:3a; Yang Jialuo, ed. *Xin xiao ben ming shi* (Taipei: Ding wen shu fu, 1975), 3505-8.

⁵³ The *Maech'ŏn yarok* text adds, "Your Majesty cannot cut this" (陛下不能誅此), a bold assertion to make before a putatively absolute monarch. See Hwang Hyŏn, *Maech'ŏn yarok*, 392.

⁵⁴ The suggestion here is that if the Kwangmu Emperor were to install Consort Ŏm as empress, he would be directly disobeying the previous kings and thereby sever the great righteousness of loyalty to previous generations of Chosŏn monarchs.

⁵⁵ Yuksang Palace (Yuksang-gung 毓祥宮) is the name of the shrine to Ch'oe, Lady Suk (Suk-pin Ch'oe-ssi 淑嬪 崔氏, 1670-1718), concubine to King Sukchong and mother of King Yŏngjo 英祖 (r. 1724-1776). Yŏngjo was deeply sensitive to her low status as a concubine and how it might reflect upon him, so he repeatedly bestowed posthumous titles of increasing rank upon her, her shrine, and her tomb. He did not, however, posthumously elevate her rank to that of primary consort. See *Chŏngbo munhŏn pigo* 60:2a-3b. For an account of the court politics surrounding the titles and rites for Ch'oe, Lady Suk, see JaHyun Kim Haboush, *The Confucian Kingship in Korea: Yŏngjo and the Politics of Sagacity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 53-63.

⁵⁶ Kasun Palace (Kasun-gung 嘉順宮) refers to Pak, Lady Su (Su-bin Pak-ssi 綏嬪朴氏, 1770-1822), concubine to King Chŏngjo 正祖 (r. 1776-1800) and mother of King Sunjo 純祖 (r. 1800-1834).

primary consort] as well as enacting rules unpublished yet transmitted [over generations].⁵⁷ Yuksang and Kasun Palaces⁵⁸ gave birth to great kings and were of lofty merit and virtue, even though they did not receive the great title [of primary consort]. Noble Consort Ŏm, however, is merely Your Majesty's concubine and is no more than the mother of Prince Yŏng – nothing else. If you now wish to elevate her title with honors that not even Yuksang and Kasun received, it will not only be an offense to [the spirit of] King Sukchong, but also of great distress to [the spirits of] Kings Yŏngjo and Sunjo. Not only would you defile their sagely virtue, but also, we fear it would be impossible to avoid the angry criticism of myriad generations into the future. Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Fourth Point

Respectfully examining the precedents of this dynasty, only Queen Hyŏndök,⁵⁹ Queen Ansun,⁶⁰ and Queen Chŏnghyŏn⁶¹ have been promoted from concubine to primary consort. Queen Hyŏndök was selected to enter the Eastern Palace.⁶² She gave birth to King Tanjong the Great and received the title “lady”⁶³ but, having died [soon thereafter], she [posthumously] received the elevated rank of primary consort.⁶⁴ Queen Ansun was selected to enter the Eastern Palace, but because Queen Changsun⁶⁵ passed away without giving birth to an heir, [Queen Ansun] was elevated to the rank of primary consort. Queen Chŏnghyŏn was selected [appropriately] to enter the palace precincts. She gave birth to King Chungjong the Great.⁶⁶ When the mother of Prince Yŏnsan⁶⁷ was deposed, Queen Chŏnghyŏn was elevated to the rank of primary consort. All three cases occurred before King Sukchong made his report

⁵⁷ The suggestion here is that it is a matter of basic decency that concubines are not promoted to the rank of primary consort, and thus the issue should not even need to be specified in statute.

⁵⁸ These are metonyms for Lady Suk and Lady Su, respectively.

⁵⁹ Queen Hyŏndök (Hyŏndök wanghu 顯德王后, 1418-41) was the primary consort to King Munjong 文宗 (r. 1450-2).

⁶⁰ Queen Ansun (Ansun wanghu 安順王后, ?-1498) was the primary consort to King Yejong 睿宗 (r. 1450-70).

⁶¹ Queen Chŏnghyŏn (Chŏnghyŏn wanghu 貞顯王后, 1462-1530) was the primary consort to King Sŏngjong 成宗 (r. 1469-1494).

⁶² “Eastern Palace” (Tong-gung 東宮) refers to the residence of the crown prince.

⁶³ The title “lady” (*pim* 嬪) was senior first rank, highest among the titled women of the palace (*naemyŏngbu* 內命婦). They did not rank above the royal consorts, who were not included in this category. See “Ijŏn,” in *Yŏkchu kyŏngguk taejŏn: Pŏnyŏk p’yŏn*, trans. Han Ugŭn (Sŏul: Choŭn Munhwasa, 2006), 1; “Ijŏn,” in *Yŏkchu kyŏngguk taejŏn: Chusŏk p’yŏn*, trans. Han Ugŭn, (Sŏul: Choŭn Munhwasa, 2006), 2-3; “Ijŏn,” in *Taejŏn boe’ong* (Sŏul: Kyŏngin Munhwasa, 2007), 55.

⁶⁴ The ill-fated King Tanjong 端宗 reigned only three years, from 1452 to 1455, before he abdicated the throne under duress. King Sejo 世祖 (r. 1455-1468) sent him into exile and later had him executed at the age of sixteen.

⁶⁵ Queen Changsun (Changsun wanghu 章順王后, 1445-1462) was primary consort to King Yejong.

⁶⁶ King Chungjong 中宗 (r. 1506-1544) came to power in a coup, removing the despotic Prince Yŏnsan (Yŏnsan-gun 燕山君, r. 1494-1506) from the throne. See Edward Willet Wagner, *The Literati Purges: Political Conflict in Early Yi Korea* (Cambridge: East Asia Research Center, Harvard University, 1974), 69.

⁶⁷ Prince Yŏnsan was a notoriously angry and violent ruler. See Wagner, *The Literati Purges*, 58-66.

to the Royal Ancestral Shrine. Moreover, even though they had the title “concubine,” they were all selected from renowned houses and entered the palace appropriately.⁶⁸ Only under extraordinary circumstances were they elevated to the rank of primary consort. There has been but one case of a woman born of a commoner household who became a lady-in-waiting⁶⁹ and then advanced excessively to the rank of primary consort: Chang, Lady Hŭi.⁷⁰ She was soon deposed, however, so clearly this unfortunate case cannot be taken as precedent. Moreover, when she advanced to the rank of primary consort, she had already given birth to [the future] King Kyōngjong,⁷¹ so she was already the private parent⁷² of the crown prince. King Sukchong so regretted this that he reported to the Royal Ancestral Shrine his injunction as a perfect law to be kept by succeeding generations of sons and grandsons. In addition, while there is no difference between Consort Ōm and Lady Chang in that they were both ladies-in-waiting, there is a difference between a prince and the heir apparent!⁷³ It seems, then, that there is indeed a difference between the current case and that of Lady Hŭi. Indeed, in the five hundred years of this dynasty, there has never been another who could compare to Lady Hŭi. Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Fifth Point

The memorials that we now see before Your Majesty argue that the wedding of the crown prince will soon be upon us. If in the ceremonies of the court presentation, the offering of jujubes, and the offering of dried meat,⁷⁴ there is no one in the position of empress, then, [the memorialists maintain], [the parents] will not receive the jujubes and dried meat together in the same hall on the same throne, and this would constitute a serious ritual oversight. Therefore, [the memorialists insist that Your Majesty] should first elevate [Consort Ōm] to the rank of primary consort and thereby rectify the position of empress. Just what sort of violation of regulation and transgression of propriety is this line of argument? The offering

⁶⁸ The term “concubine” (*bugung* 後宮) in this case is not a formal title within the system of ranks and titles of palace women and is absent in the Chosŏn state statutes.

⁶⁹ Lady-in-Waiting (*sanggung* 尙宮) was a title of the senior fifth rank, the highest ranking member of the queen’s household staff. See “Ijön,” in *Pŏnyŏk p’yŏn*, 2; “Ijön,” in *Chusŏk p’yŏn*, 3; “Ijön,” in *Taejön boet’ong*, 55.

⁷⁰ See note 49.

⁷¹ King Kyōngjong 景宗 (r. 1720-1724) was in poor health for the duration of his short reign and there was some suspicion that the next monarch, King Yŏngjo, was involved in his demise.

⁷² In this context, a “private parent” (*sach’in* 私親) is a concubine who has given birth to crown prince. See JaHyun Kim Haboush, *The Confucian Kingship in Korea: Yŏngjo and the Politics of Sagacity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 54.

⁷³ While this is ostensibly a historical reference, it is likely that the memorialists were worried that Consort Ōm’s son Prince Yŏng would replace the current crown prince, son of the deceased Empress Myōngsŏng.

⁷⁴ In these three ceremonies, the newly married princess presents herself at court (*chobyŏllye* 朝見禮), offers jujubes (*bŏnjorye* 獻棗禮), and offers dried meat (*bŏnp’orye* 獻脯禮) to her new in-laws after the wedding. The proponents of promoting Consort Ōm to empress appear to have suggested that these ceremonies would be unviable without the presence of an empress to accept the presentation and offerings together with the emperor.

of dried meat can be carried out at Kyŏnghyo Shrine, so why is it necessary to argue whether or not there is someone to fulfill the role of empress?⁷⁵ The offerings of jujubes and dried meat are among the most important of ceremonies. If the father-emperor⁷⁶ receiving the jujubes [and dried meat] by himself is a ritual oversight, then has there been no precedent in the past reigns wherein a royal consort receiving them by herself? The examples are indeed numerous and the present case of Your Majesty alone receiving the jujubes and dried meat would be no different. Moreover, if one were to argue that the rituals of the Son of Heaven⁷⁷ were different in the days of yore, then [consider] the Ming emperor Taizu. He had twenty-six sons, but Empress Ma⁷⁸ had passed away and the position of empress remained unfilled, so the cases in which he received the jujubes and dried meat by himself were indeed numerous. Let us also consider the ritual practice of private households. It is commonly accepted practice for a widower to hold a wedding for his son and receive the jujubes by himself. If this was a ritual oversight, then he would want to take his concubine and put her in the role of wife, but to make a son honor a concubine as his own mother – how could there be such a practice, anywhere in the world, past or present? Neither the rituals of the state nor the rituals of private households have any such precedent. Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Sixth Point

In the twenty-eight reigns since Emperor T'aejo,⁷⁹ there has never been a case in which a primary consort was not chosen from a renowned house. This is true not only of our country. If we consider the protocols of the Ming dynasty, from the beginning there were no cases of excessive promotion of a consort. And, it is not only the Ming imperial house that was like this. If we consider each state in the world, there has never been a case in which a queen or consort was selected from the classes below the nobility. Moreover, never has there been an adoptable precedent in which a palace lady was excessively promoted to the rank of primary consort. If Your Majesty were to inquire broadly and consult extensively, it would be clear to see that this line of argumentation is not without foundation. Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Seventh Point

⁷⁵ Kyŏnghyo Shrine (Kyŏnghyo-jŏn 景孝殿) housed the altar to the spirit of Empress Myŏngsŏng. The idea here is that if the ceremonies were held at Kyŏnghyo Shrine, the deceased empress would be able to receive the princess and her offerings in spirit, if not in body. See *Chŏngbo munbŏn pigo* 60:16b-17a.

⁷⁶ The father-emperor (*pubwang* 父皇) refers to the Kwangmu Emperor who is both father and emperor to the crown prince. See also note 81.

⁷⁷ This is a reference to the emperor.

⁷⁸ This refers to Empress Xiaoci, whose surname was Ma 馬. See note 52.

⁷⁹ King T'aejo 太祖 (r. 1392-8), the first king of Chosŏn, was posthumously elevated to the rank of emperor after the establishment of the Great Han Empire in 1897.

The imperial crown prince has now entered his thirties. If, one morning, he had to refer to himself as “lesser subject”⁸⁰ and bow four times below the throne of the empress and address as his own mother-empress⁸¹ the woman who for the last thirty years was Lady-in-Waiting Ōm, would this be, or not be, in accordance with heavenly principle, or even with basic human decency? If the spirit of Empress Myōngsōng, coursing through the heavens, were to know of this from beyond, how could she not be deeply saddened and lament it? That we have come to the point of having to speak of this, we painfully wail without end. Throughout all the world and across the myriad ages, there is nothing more important and august than ethical discipline. If one truly wishes to illuminate ethics and establish discipline, then it is necessary first to rectify names.⁸² Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Eighth Point

If Your Majesty were to enact this proposal, then the sovereigns of the next thousand years and the next ten-thousand generations would have to make offerings to the tablet of Empress Myōngsōng and the tablet of that former lady-in-waiting at the same altar in the Imperial Ancestral Shrine. How could the blazing spirit of Empress Myōngsōng not be consumed by rage and resentment? How could [her spirit] restrain the desire to reject the offerings of incense that are the same [as those presented to that lady-in-waiting]? How could human decency be like this? Why so besmirch the providence of the spirits? Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Ninth Point

Ever since the extreme disaster of 1895,⁸³ His Majesty the imperial crown prince has met with great pain and bitterness, and depended only upon Your Highness as both august father and loving mother. This gang of corrupt and conniving treasonous subjects who have taken this question of promotion to primary consort to test and probe [their political options] are now shamelessly causing all sorts of disturbances. We imagine Your Brilliant Mind and wonder what action the Great Court might take in dealing [with these criminals]. We have

⁸⁰ “Lesser subject” (*sosin* 小臣) is a diminutive first-person pronoun used when speaking to the sovereign.

⁸¹ If Consort Ōm were to become empress, she would serve as both mother and empress to the crown prince, hence the term “mother-empress” (*mobu* 母后). See also note 76.

⁸² The rectification of names (*chōngmyōng* 正名) is the process whereby the sovereign ensures that the names, titles, labels used in the state conform the realities they describe. For Confucius, this foundation of language in truth is the prerequisite for the proper functioning of the state and the people. The memorialists here invoke this phrase to suggest that the title “empress” would not be in accordance with the reality of who Consort Ōm really is: a concubine and not a primary consort. To grant her the title “empress” would constitute a form of fraud that would corrupt the state and the people alike. See “Nonŏ chipchu taejŏn” in *Kyōngsŏ* (Sŏul: Sōnggyun’gwan Taehakkyo Taedong Munhwa Yŏn’guwŏn, 1965), 312c-314b; “Nonŏ chipchu taejŏn” in *Taebak nonŏ* (Sŏul: Kyōngin Munhwasa, 1999), 13:4a-7b.

⁸³ This is a reference to the 1895 assassination of Queen Min, posthumously installed as Empress Myōngsōng.

difficulty in quickly speaking fully before the Most Lofty,⁸⁴ that is to say, difficulty in clearly castigating this gang of corrupt and conniving treasonous subjects as they surely roam free. If, in a moment of quietude, Your Highness considers whether or not this proposal is correct and then gently inquires at the Eastern Palace, then the peace or disturbance of Your Brilliant Mind would be able to fully comprehend [his] sincere feelings without any uncertainty! [Alas,] our words are helplessly stupid. Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

Tenth Point

The royal portrait of King Sukchong is already housed in the portrait hall. If Your Majesty honors the request of these treasonous subjects and the former Lady-in-Waiting Ōm becomes the primary consort and assumes the duty of making offerings, then how could the spirit of King Sukchong in heaven descend and bestow his perfect blessings? How could the Sagely Mind of His Majesty be at peace and without shame while gazing upward upon the visage of King Sukchong? The gang of treasonous subjects who have submitted these memorials are not only committing a crime against King Sukchong, they are also, in reality, committing a crime against Your Highness and against Empress Myōngsōng! It may seem that we have lost our minds in the extreme, but this is a matter of unwavering sincerity born of our complete loyalty. Reverently we implore Your Majesty! How fortunate would be the profound engagement of Your Sagely Will!

There is something more we wish to express beyond these ten points. It is our humble consideration that the rise of the Imperial Noble Consort from lady-in-waiting, to lady, and then to consort, the position of highest respect for a concubine, is neither damaging to [the system of] title and status nor excessive in honor. If [Your Majesty] brings into order with faultless virtue the Six Palaces,⁸⁵ [your] renown and beautiful precedent will shine throughout

⁸⁴ The term “Most Lofty” (*chijon* 至尊) here refers to the Kwangmu Emperor.

⁸⁵ The Six Palaces (*yukkung* 六宮) are the shrines housing the altars to the spirits of the two royal consorts and four concubines who gave birth to crown princes. The first is Chōgyōng Palace (Chōgyōng-gung 儲慶宮) which houses the altar to Kim, Lady In (In-bin Kim-ssi 仁嬪金氏, 1555-1613), concubine to King Sōnjo 宣祖 (r. 1567-1608) and mother of King Wōnjong 元宗 (1580-1619). King Wōnjong never ascended the throne but he was the father of King Injo 仁祖 (r. 1623-49), during whose reign he was posthumously elevated to the rank of king. The second is Taebin Palace (Taebin-gung 大嬪宮) which houses the altars to Chang, Lady Hūi (Hūi-bin Chang-ssi 禧嬪張氏, 1659-1701), concubine to King Sukchong 肅宗 (r. 1674-1720) and mother to King Kyōngjong 景宗 (r. 1720-24). The third is Yuksang Palace, discussed in note 33. The fourth is Yōnu Palace (Yōnu-gung 延祐宮) which houses the altar to Yi, Lady Chōng (Chōng-bin Yi-ssi 靖嬪李氏, 1694-1721), concubine to King Yōngjo and mother to King Chinjong 眞宗 (1719-1728). Chinjong never reigned as king but received the title posthumously. The fifth is Sōnhūi Palace (Sōnhūi-gung 宣禧宮) which houses the altar to Yi, Lady Yōng (Yōng-bin Yi-ssi 暎嬪李氏, 1696-1764) who was concubine to King Yōngjo and mother to King Changjo 莊祖 (1735-62). Changjo, better known as Crown Prince Sado (Sado seja 思悼世子), infamously suffered from mental illness and was put to death before ascending the throne. The sixth is Kyōngu Palace (Kyōngu-gung 景祐宮) which houses the altar to Pak, Lady Su (Su-bin Pak-ssi 綏嬪朴氏, 1770-1823), concubine to King Chōngjo 正祖 (r. 1776-1800), and mother to King Sunjo 純祖 (r. 1800-1834). After the death of Consort Ōm in 1911, Tōgan

one-thousand autumns of the history of concubines. How could this be but beautiful? We note, moreover, that praise of Prince Yǒng's maturation grows by the day. If he develops virtuousness through instruction in the perfection of righteous action, then in the future he will serve as a hedge and screen⁸⁶ of the imperial house and support the imperial rule. The beautiful achievements of Hagan and Tongpy'ōng are not only in the past!⁸⁷ The present question as to whether or not to promote [Consort Ōm] to the rank of primary consort has, from the very beginning, presented no damage whatsoever to the future honors due Prince Yǒng. Now, if [Your Majesty] does not [order the Six Palaces], it will inevitably be contrary to the laws of this land⁸⁸ and in opposition to public opinion. If [Your Majesty] were to err and bestow the wrong title and position upon the Noble Consort, then the status would be extravagant and the honor excessive. We fear this would not be the way of full restraint and complete prudence. Now, does the fact that the dizzying racket of this gang of liars continues on and on not show the serious [error] of ignoring it?

Our words come from our concern for the Imperial Noble Consort and from our concern for Prince Yǒng. If Your Sagely Compassion understands that our words truly come from outstanding love, then the state would be deeply fortunate. Alas! Husband and wife are the very origin of all human relationships. Only when husband and wife are correct is the way of lord and subject, father and son correct. Use it to serve heaven, and then the Lord-on-High bestows his aid. Use it to serve the Imperial Ancestral Shrine, and then sons and grandsons will be at peace. We have looked at the previous generations of the lords of others who have taken their concubines to be their wives and whenever there has been such an instance, not once has disaster not followed, thereby destroying the state and ruining the dynastic house. It is abundantly obvious that this is to be greatly feared.

We know steadfastly that Your Majesty is as brilliant as the sun and moon so, of course, [we] do not engage in the deception of wicked speech. Our foremost concern is to prevent ill fortune before it sprouts and thus we dare to take the chance that our stupidity may have, for once, produced something of use and, for the sake of Your Majesty, we have risked ten-thousand deaths to present it. We respectfully beg Your Majesty to look down and consider the consensus of the whole country and make the decision to quickly command the authorities to apply the law and strictly mete out punishment for the crimes of the treasonous subjects No Yǒngyǒng, Wǒn Sesun, and Chang Sōksin, thereby demonstrating that the determination of the Sagely Will does not waiver and causing treasonous subjects and petty bandits never

Palace (Tōgan-gung 德安宮), housed her altar and increased the Six Palaces to Seven Palaces (*ch'ilgung* 七宮). See *Tongguk yōji pigo*, 1:28-9; Yi Pyōngdu, *Tonghōn pigo* (Taejōn: Tonghōn Pigo Kansa, 1939), 8b, 11b, 12b, 14a, 16a.

⁸⁶ This phrase suggests that Prince Yǒng will be a defender and champion of the imperial house.

⁸⁷ "Hagan" 河間 and "Tongp'yōng" 東平 refer respectively to Zhang Yu 張玉, Prince Hejian (Hejian-wang 河間王, 1343-1401) and Zhu Neng 朱能, Prince Dongping (Dongping-wang 東平王, 1370-1406), two renowned generals loyal to the then-future Yongle 永樂 Emperor during the Ming succession crisis and resulting civil war of 1399-1402. The implication here is that Prince Yǒng will defend the throne against pretenders and other enemies, just as Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng did. See, Yang Jialuo, ed., *Xin xiao ben ming shi*, 4082-8.

⁸⁸ "The laws of this land" (*pangjōn* 邦典) again calls attention to No, Wǒn, and Chang's dependence on ancient Chinese precedents. See notes 48 and 50.

again to dare to violate the great righteousness of Our King Sukchong in this matter. Having been swathed in the abundance of the great virtue of our state, we wish to repay [this debt] and so dare to speak that which others dare not speak. To accept us or indict us, this is purely a matter of Your Sagely Judgement. Unable to endure the rage [of Your Majesty], we fearfully quake in the extreme.⁸⁹

十三道摺紳章甫等聯陳不可陞后之大義十條上疏草本

伏以臣等⁹⁰伏窮廬萬念灰冷惟是斷斷憂國出於天性中夜統壁有淚無從而已即者得伏見盧泳敬元世洵張錫蓋等所請嚴貴妃陞后疏批旨下者雖無允從之意而臣等竊不能無過計之憂或慮聖德之不能固持以啓奸細覬覦之心也噫彼盧元張三賊者罔念邦禮之大防敢欲違犯我肅宗大王告廟垂教子孫萬世金石之大典爲此亂逆之言以眩惑聖聰者揆以邦憲合置何辟所宜嚴加斥絕明示好惡以杜亂萌也今伏觀批辭優游巽軟若在或可爲而不可遽爲者然是則陛下亦未嘗以爲大不可也臣等未敢知陛下於丙枕無寐之時倘能念到於得罪肅廟貽笑萬世爲大可驚大可愧者乎臣竊大懼焉夫禮失則亂亂之極而至於君不君臣不臣父不父子不子而國隨以亡者始未嘗不由於夫婦道壞之故其昭然之跡臣縱不言陛下豈不知哉且陛下凡於國家典禮遠追明朝近述先王毫髮不敢違而惟於此一着似未免有左右顧盼之意臣等請推言大明及先朝已行之典禮而次及於陛下及東宮殿下難安之事勢爲陛下陳之而其所陳凡十條伏乞陛下安心細察洞然垂燭焉其一明太祖高皇帝以勦業之帝孝慈高皇后馬氏崩後數十年永不再娶然後宮貴妃承寵既多而無以後宮陞爲皇后者陛下今日所當法者即在大明矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚其二我肅宗大王以後宮不得陞正位事上而質告太廟下而垂教萬世著爲國家金石之典彼盧元張三賊者之甘自背馳於先王者其罪何居陛下尙不能罪此三賊而又或曲從其言則將以何顏入肅宗大王之廟乎亦以何辭謝二十八世先大王在天之靈乎事關先王宜斷以大義矣伏乞陛下深留聖意幸甚 未完⁹¹

十三道摺紳章甫等聯陳不可陞后之大義三⁹²條上疏草本⁹³續

其三英祖大王孝冠百土凡於毓祥宮典禮靡不用極然未聞有追崇之議純祖皇帝躬奉嘉順宮孝養備至而亦未聞有陞以正位之議蓋所以欽遵肅廟朝告廟及垂數以爲不刊之典故也 毓祥宮嘉順宮者皆親誕大王功德巍巍猶不得受大號況嚴貴妃即陛下之後宮也不過爲親王之母而已則今欲加之以毓祥宮嘉順宮所未行之典禮者不但得罪於肅廟而已抑無難安於英廟純廟乎非徒大累聖德萬世之譏恐不可無矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚其四謹稽 國朝惟顯德王后安順王后貞顯王后以後宮陞正位然顯德王后選入東宮誕端宗大王而奉嬪既廢之故追冊爲王后矣安順王后亦選入東宮因章順王后昇遐而無嗣育故陞正位矣貞顯王后選入大內誕中宗大王而適有燕山母廢黜之舉故陞正位矣然皆肅廟告廟及垂教以前事矣且名雖後宮皆揀選名門備禮入宮而因不得不然之故乃陞正位矣以民家女爲尙宮者濫陞正位獨張禧嬪

⁸⁹ See note 36.

⁹⁰ This is a typo in the original text and probably should read *chôn* 踰.

⁹¹ “Sipsamdo chinsin changbodung yŏnjin puga sŭnghu chi taeü sipcho sangso ch’obon,” *Taehan maeil sinbo*, November 6, 1906, p. 3.

⁹² This appears to be a typo and should read *sip* 十 rather than *sam* 三.

⁹³ This is a typo in the original text and should read *pon* 本, rather than *pon* 本.

而已然未久還奪位號不詳之舉不可援以爲例明矣況禧嬪陞后時已誕生景廟則猶是儲君之私親也肅廟猶悔是舉至於告廟及垂教以爲子孫世守之成典且況嚴貴妃之當初爲尙宮與禧嬪不異而所生之親王與儲君大有別焉此則猶有異於禧嬪而國朝五百年以來禧嬪之外更未有可擬之人矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚 未完⁹⁴

十三道摺紳章甫等聯陳不可陞后之大義三⁹⁵條上疏草本⁹⁶續

其五今之嘗試陳奏於陛下者必曰今太子宮嘉禮在前其於朝見禮獻棗獻脯禮也無坤位則不得并獻棗脯于一堂同御之座誠爲欠典此嘉禮未行之前⁹⁷先陞后而正坤位是何不經無禮之說也獻脯之禮自可行于景孝殿何可復論其坤位之備不備耶夫獻棗獻脯其爲莫重之禮一也若以父皇獨受獻棗之禮爲此典則列聖朝以來大妃殿之獨受獻脯之禮曾無其例乎已行之例非止一二則今此陛下之獨受獻棗之禮宜無異同且以天子之禮自別於前日云則明太祖有嫡庶二十六子而馬皇后崩後坤位永曠然於其婚禮獨受獻棗之禮者亦不止一二矣日以私家通行之禮言之喪配而獨處者有子當婚獨坐受棗便是例事若或以此爲欠事而必以妾爲妻使其子恭執子禮於其庶母者古今天下寧有是理揆之公私俱無可援之例況我邦禮亦無不得獨坐受棗之文彼左右嘗試之輩如或繼此爲怪鬼之論以搖動宸聰者宜亟施誅斥無假借矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚其六太祖高皇帝以下二十八聖朝王后廟主都無非揀選而陞爲王后之廟主此非但我國爲然雖以明朝典禮言之十六朝皇后初無爲此者非但明朝爲然雖以世界各國言之以貴族以下初無選后妃之例況自宮女而濫陞后位者初無一例可援乎陛下若以此廣詢博訪則可燭是說之非架空矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚其七我皇太子睿齡已過望四旬之年而對三十年之前日嚴尙宮一朝稱以小臣呼以母后鞠躬四拜於坤榻之下則其在天理人情安乎否乎明成皇后陞降之靈有知於冥冥之中則亦豈不惻然而矜憐之乎言之及此萬萬痛哭夫天下萬世之莫重莫嚴者倫紀也苟欲明倫立紀必先正名矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚其八陛下若行此舉則陛下千秋萬世後明成皇后廟主將與其平昔侍女尙宮之神位一室同奉子太廟矣明成皇后豈不赫然震怒忿恨抑塞不欲同受苾芬之享乎人情安然後神理亦安故若是其瀆陳矣伏 陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚其九東宮殿下自乙未罔極之變以後忍痛含冤而所依恃惟父皇陛下以嚴父兼慈母而已今於宵小賊臣輩之以陞后事嘗試罔測者種種紛聒無憚而伏想睿衷惟俟大朝處分之如何有難遽然告達於至尊之前亦難顯然叱斥於宵小之輩其必徊徨於安中矣 未完⁹⁸

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⁹⁴ “Sipsamdo chinsin changbodŭng yŏnjin puga sŭnghu chi taeüi sam[sic]jo sangso ch’obon sok,” *Taehan maeil sinbo*, November 7, 1906, p. 3.

⁹⁵ This appears to be a typo and should read *sip* 十 rather than *sam* 三.

⁹⁶ This is a typo in the original text and should read *pon* 本, rather than *pon* 本.

⁹⁷ This is a typo in the original text. While the intended character is unclear, it is possible that it was supposed to have read *üi* 宜. This phrasing is missing altogether in the Hwang Hyŏn text. Compare with Hwang Hyŏn, *Maech’ŏn yarok*, 393.

⁹⁸ “Sipsamdo chinsin changbodŭng yŏnjin puga sŭnghu chi taeüi sam[sic]jo sangso ch’obon sok,” *Taehan maeil sinbo*, November 8, 1906, p. 3.

⁹⁹ This appears to be a typo and should read *sip* 十 rather than *sam* 三.

¹⁰⁰ This is a typo in the original text and should read *pon* 本, rather than *pon* 本.

陛下若於燕閒之暇以陞后事當否從容詢于東宮則睿衷之難安尤可以悉燭而無怪乎臣言之至愚矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚其十肅廟朝御真奉安于真殿矣陛下若或聽許賊臣之請以前日嚴尙宮爲皇后而主其蘋蘩之薦則肅廟朝在天之靈豈肯陟降洋洋錫以純嘏乎陛下聖心亦豈能晏然無愧于仰瞻肅廟御真乎然則今此疏讀陞后之賊臣輩者非但爲肅廟之罪人也實陛下之罪人也明成皇后之罪人也臣等之言極涉狂妄而斷斷危忱惟在盡忠矣伏乞陛下深留聖意千萬幸甚臣於十條之外更有所仰陳者竊念皇貴妃自尙宮而爲嬪爲妃至于後宮極尊之位於名義無害矣於福祿不濫矣攝理六宮淑德無愆則其令名可以生輝于千秋後宮之史矣豈不微哉且念英親王穎悟夙就譽聲日播幸加教以義方成就德性他日可以藩屏帝室夾贊皇猷河間東平不得專美于古矣今此陞后與否初無損益於英親王之他日福祿今若不此之爲必違邦典而拂公議妄加以不稱當之名位於貴妃則濫分過福恐非持盈戒滿之道今奸細輩之紛聒不已者不亦不思之甚乎 未完¹⁰¹

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臣等此言亦出於爲皇貴妃之地也爲英親王之地也以陛下之聖慈諒臣之言實出憂愛則國家幸甚嗚呼夫婦人倫之始也夫婦正然後君臣父子之道正以之事天而上帝顧佑以之事宗廟而子孫安寧臣等觀前世人君以妾爲妻者或有之而皆莫不與禍相隨以之亡國敗家者歷歷可數甚可懼也臣固知陛下明並日月必不爲妖言所惑然慮患貴在先防絕惡必於未萌敢以一得之愚爲陛下冒萬死陳之伏乞陛下俯察舉國大同之公議廓揮乾剛亟命司法嚴治賊臣盧永敬元世詢張錫蓋等之罪犯以示聖志之牢確不擾使亂臣賊子無復敢違犯我肅廟大義焉臣等荷蒙我國家大德厚澤圖所以報答萬一敢言人之不敢言矣知臣罪臣惟在聖裁臣等無任痛憤震懼之至 完¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ “Sipsamdo chinsin changbodŭng yŏnjin puga sŏnghu chi taeü sam[sic]jo sangso ch’obon sok,” *Taeban maeil sinbo*, November 9, 1906, p.3.

¹⁰² This appears to be a typo and should read *sip* 十 rather than *sam* 三.

¹⁰³ This is a typo in the original text and should read *pon* 本 rather than *pon* 本.

¹⁰⁴ “Sipsamdo chinsin changbodŭng yŏnjin puga sŏnghu chi taeü sam[sic]jo sangso ch’obon sok,” *Taeban maeil sinbo*, November 11, 1906, p. 3.

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