

## Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt and the Return of Im Kyŏngŏp

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### Introduction

In the spring of 2007, a novel entitled < Namhan Fortress (*Namhan sansŏng*)> was published. This novel is unique in that it perfectly captures the dilemma faced by Chosŏn at the time of the Second Manchu Invasion (*pyŏngja horan*). More to the point, Chosŏn found itself having to choose between continued adherence to its perceived moral obligations and the reality on the ground. In this regard, the main protagonists of this story are King Injo, who sought refuge within the walls of Namhan Fortress, Ch'oe Myŏnggil, an advocate of the taking of a reconciliatory course of action, and Kim Sanghŏn, a member of the group that rejected all forms of heterodoxy. The story of the life of King Injo, who had come to the throne after having overthrown his uncle the Kwanghaegun, is without a doubt an interesting one. In the novel, King Injo is described as a tragic character who consistently agonized over the need to strike a balance between his kingdom's moral obligations and the reality on the ground. One even feels a certain sense of sympathy for Injo who was forced to accept personal dishonor in order to save his beloved kingdom. The revealing of this side of King Injo has caused the traditional perception of this monarch to undergo certain changes.

The fact that the majority of the studies conducted on this period have

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focused on the Kwanghaegun has resulted in the emergence of a traditionally negative image of Injo.<sup>1</sup> In this regard, the poisoning of his own son, Crown Prince Sohyŏn, has helped to cement Injo's image as a cruel-hearted father who was willing to kill his own sons, daughters-in-law, or grandsons in order to hold on to power. In addition, Injo's refusal to adopt the foreign policy of neutrality of his predecessor the Kwanghaegun has also led to him being stigmatized as an incapable king who led Chosŏn into wars it could not win. All of this has resulted in the Injo Restoration of 1623 (仁祖反正, *Injo panjŏng*) being evaluated by most as having been little more than a successful *coup d'état*.

However, the fact that this act of treason toward a sitting king was labeled within Chosŏn, a country in which loyalty to the king was regarded as an absolute value, as the act of redressing order by deposing the wicked king provides a strong hint that justification for the overthrowing of the existing king must have existed in the first place. Moreover, the argument that the *Injo panjŏng* was little more than a successful coup is severely weakened by the fact that all other attempts to overthrow the monarchy ended in failure.

Having come to power on the wings of a successful coup launched by the anti-Kwanghaegun forces, Injo found himself with little other choice but to go against the political course of action followed by his predecessor.<sup>2</sup> Injo decided to discard the Kwanghaegun's policy of neutrality in favor of a new pro-Ming and anti-Qing diplomatic outlook. The result of this foregoing of the diplomatic path undertaken by the Kwanghaegun was Qing's invasion of Chosŏn. In other words, Injo and his people caused a war which could have been avoided by simply continuing to adhere to the policy adopted by the Kwanghaegun.

However, the Injo regime remained intact despite its ill-advised diplomatic course of action, and the devastating war that resulted from it. Because of their refusal to break with their perceived moral obligation to reject the Qing and all other forms of heterodoxy, the people of Chosŏn suffered greatly. The two wars with the Manchus, which emerged shortly after Injo's rise to power, had the effect of further ravaging the lives of the

masses who had yet to recover from the immense damage caused by the Imjin War (1592-1598). In this regard, the following question must be posed: did the principle of rejecting Qing that served as the justification for the advent of the Injo regime and the ensuing wars truly mean anything to the Chosŏn people?

This study attempts to answer this question by analyzing the manner in which the people of Chosŏn reacted to the return of one of the leading anti-Qing figures, Im Kyŏngŏp, based on one of the revolts that emerged after the Second Manchu Invasion of 1636, namely Sim Kiwŏn's revolt of 1644.

### **Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt of 1644 and the rumors of King Injo's appearance before the royal court of Qing**

Sim Kiwŏn (?~1644), was an individual whose clan seat was located in the Ch'ŏngsong (青松) area, and whose personal name (*cha*, 字) was Suji. (遂之), Sim's father, Sim Kan, had held the position of magistrate. Sim, who was at the time a student of Confucianism, actively participated in the Injo Restoration of 1623. Subsequently elevated to the status of meritorious subject, Sim found himself being granted the honorary title of *Ch'ŏngwon puwŏn'gun* (靑原府院君). Sim's active role in the suppression of Yi Kwal's revolt helped cement his status and power as a close confidante of Injo. Sim was subsequently appointed to the post of *Togŏmch'alsa* (都檢察使, Royal Inspector) for the provinces of Kyŏnggi, Ch'ungch'ŏng, Chŏlla, and Kyŏngsang. He found himself once again playing a key role during the First Manchu Invasion of 1627 (*Ch'ŏngmyo horan*) when he escorted the Crown Prince to relative safety in the Chŏnju area. Meanwhile, during the Second Manchu Invasion, he protected Seoul in his capacity as the *Yudo taejang* (留都大將, general responsible for the defense of the capital). Sim was elevated from the post of *Uŏijŏng* (右議政, Third State Councilor) to that of *Chwajŏng* (左議政, Second State Councilor) in 1642 (20<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo). While still

-serving as *Chwaŭijŏng*, Sim found himself also being appointed to the post of *Suŏsa* (守禦使, protector) of the Namhan Fortress in 1644 (22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo).

During Sim's tenure as the *Suŏsa* of Namhan Fortress and *Chwaŭijŏng*, the government was made aware of a plot to place Prince Hoeŭn on the throne. Hwang Ik, who participated in this plot, confessed that while the participants had hoped that the kingdom would forge an alliance with the Ming forces that had gathered around Chosŏn, and begin a sweep that would take them all the way to Shenyang, their distrust of King Injo and the Crown Prince had caused them to take the extreme step of trying to place Prince Hoeŭn on the throne. While King Injo was blamed for not having any intention to exact revenge on Qing, the Crown Prince was perceived as not having any feasible plan to do so.<sup>3</sup> To everyone's surprise, Sim Kiwŏn was also actively involved in this plot.

Sim was brought in for questioning the day news of his involvement in the plot was released. During his interview with the authorities, Sim stated that upon hearing the news of the Ming naval ships heading towards Chosŏn, he had ordered that a military drill be conducted. This measure, he added, had been taken as a means of preparing for any potential uprising which could arise from the growing instability at home and abroad. He then went on to claim that his intention had been to be ready to respond to whatever came of the Ming naval forces' movement towards Chosŏn. Sim also claimed that while he was ready to revere Injo as the *Sangwang* (上王, High King), he felt that it might be better for the future of Chosŏn if the throne was passed on to the Crown Prince. To this end, Sim stressed the fact that his intention had been to advise King Injo to abdicate the throne in favor of the Crown Prince, and not Prince Hoeŭn.

As such, the difference of opinions over who should be placed on the throne that emerged between Sim Kiwŏn and the coup plotters appears to have been rooted in the two sides' differing perceptions of the policy line that should be followed. For his part, Kwŏn Ŏk, who had actively participated in the plot, asserted that the plan had been to wait until the return of the Crown Prince before proceeding with the murder of the royal

envoy from Qing and the seeking of open cooperation with the Ming forces. He then went on to add that he and his co-conspirators had been unsure of how King Injo would react to this denouement. In this regard, Kwŏn Ŏk's mindset is clearly revealed in the following statement:

*“Clearly frightened by Qing’s longstanding threats, the king would have been gravely concerned that he would be the one called upon to assume full responsibility for the killing of the barbarian general. Moreover, this plan had no chance of success if the Crown Prince did not go along with it.”*<sup>4</sup>

As such, the insurgents had expected King Injo and Crown Prince Sohyŏn, both of whom they regarded as being fearful of Qing, to respond in a lukewarm fashion to their plan to initiate war against Qing. As a result, there emerged the belief amongst some segments of the coup plotters that a completely new person should be placed on the throne.

The Chosŏn government promptly responded to this attempted coup by carrying out a thorough investigation of all those who were believed to have been involved. Officials from both the Office of the Inspector-General (司憲府, *Sahŏnbu*) and the Office of Special Counselors (司諫院, *Saganwŏn*) asserted that the confession of Sim, who they identified as the leader of the plotters, should be sought. As soon as the news broke, scores of subjects began to call for the immediate execution of Sim.<sup>5</sup> In the end, King Injo heeded these calls and ordered the execution of Sim Kiwŏn. The coup attempt in which Chwaüjŏng Sim Kiwŏn had been involved was promptly dealt with the very day that news of the coup broke.<sup>6</sup> To this end, the Office of Trial Processes (推鞠廳, *Ch’gukch’ŏng*) was never asked to investigate the exact details surrounding this act of high treason.<sup>7</sup>

In a move that seemingly ran contrary to what appeared to be a concerted effort to rapidly sweep the incident under the rug without ever revealing the actual facts of the case, King Injo decided to follow a magnanimous course of action in the aftermath of the execution of the coup leaders. For one, Injo allowed Sim Kiwŏn’s family to recover his body so that he

could be granted a proper burial.<sup>8</sup> Injo also ordered the cancellation of the death sentence that had been leveled against the military officials in Sim's unit on the grounds that he could not condone the punishment of those who had been forced to participate in the revolt.<sup>9</sup>

The Qing government immediately responded to the revolt that had taken place in Chosŏn. As Sim Kiwŏn and his co-conspirators had intended to induce Im Kyŏngŏp, who was at the time one of the leaders of the anti-Qing group, to join them in the formation of an alliance that would also involve elements of the Ming navy,<sup>10</sup> the Sim Kiwŏn Revolt represented much more than a simple act of treason. In this regard, the plotters' adoption of an anti-Qing platform inevitably raised great interest within Qing as concerned the manner in which the Chosŏn government handled the incident.<sup>11</sup> To this end, the Qing government praised Chosŏn's prompt handling of what appeared to be an anti-Qing movement in the following manner:

*"A serious, unprecedented incident recently occurred in Chosŏn. Although the king of Chosŏn was ill at the time and was in all likelihood caught off guard by this event, the incident was resolved in a timely manner. He and his people deserve to be warmly congratulated for their actions."*<sup>12</sup>

Involved in a protracted war with Ming, the Qing government was naturally highly sensitive to news of any potential alliance between its erstwhile rival and Chosŏn. It was against this backdrop that discussions were held on the possibility of having Injo be taken as a hostage by the royal court of Qing in exchange for the return of Crown Prince Sohyŏn from captivity in Shenyang. News of these discussions was brought to light by an individual by the name of Chŏng Myŏngsu who served as an interpreter between Chosŏn and Qing. Chŏng stated that he had told the leaders of Qing that the royal court of Qing's act of taking the Chosŏn king hostage could very well create a power vacuum within Chosŏn, and greatly increase the potential for open revolt. In the end, the Qing officials

agreed with Chǒng, and no further discussions were held on the topic. Chǒng later concluded, and not without a certain degree of personal satisfaction, that the emergence of Sim Kiwǒn's Revolt all but ensured that no further discussions would be held on the thorny subject of King Injo's being taken to Shenyang as a hostage.<sup>13</sup>

The hurried manner in which the Chosǒn government handled Sim Kiwǒn's Revolt was closely related to the atmosphere that had been created by news of King Injo's possible appearance before the royal court of Qing. Although Crown Prince Sohyǒn had been living in Shenyang as a hostage since the Second Manchu Invasion of 1636, the Qing government decided to further increase the pressure being applied to the Chosǒn government by playing the 'Injo as a hostage' card.<sup>14</sup> In other words, the Qing government purposefully started rumors about Injo's appearance before the royal court and the return of Crown Prince Sohyǒn as a means of further turning up the heat on the Chosǒn government. Upon hearing about the manner in which Sim Kiwǒn's Revolt had been handled, the Qing government dispatched the following royal communiqué.

*"I have been informed of the fact that Sim Kiwǒn and other meritorious subjects were executed for their role in a revolt against the king. The king's ability to eliminate these miscreants was made possible by the fact that he enjoys the protection of the Son of Heaven. ... As Chosǒn represents an integral part of our territory, there is no need to proceed with the summoning of its king..."*<sup>15</sup>

The Qing government which had heretofore made frequent mention of the possibility of summoning Injo to appear before the royal court of Qing thus suddenly changed stances and stated that such a step would no longer be required. Viewed from this standpoint, it becomes evident that the Chosǒn government used Sim Kiwǒn's Revolt as a means to diffuse the growing talk within Qing of summoning Injo to appear before the royal court.<sup>16</sup>

Sim Kiwŏn was a political ally of Injo who actively participated in the Injo Restoration of 1623. The anti-Qing incident in which he was involved was rooted in the principle of revering the Ming and rejecting the Qing (崇明反清, *sunḡmyŏng panch'ŏng*) that had served as one of the justifications for King Injo's coup. Although King Injo could not have openly supported such a stance, the fact that a high-placed official such as Chwaũijŏng Sim Kiwŏn was involved in an anti-Qing movement indicates that there existed a clear anti-Qing stream within the Chosŏn government. In fact, there were many anti-Qing groups active outside of the government, many of whose adherents went as far as to refuse to work for a government that had established a relationship with Qing. These groups constantly pleaded with the government to exact revenge on Qing for the humiliation it had caused the people of Chosŏn. It was under such circumstances that central figures within the government were revealed to have been plotting an anti-Qing revolt involving military action taken in conjunction with Ming naval forces.<sup>17</sup> The Chosŏn government used Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt as a vehicle through which to transform the existing political mood, while simultaneously stepping back from the possible abyss of having Injo taken hostage.<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, Qing used Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt as an opportunity to confirm Chosŏn's willingness to adopt a pro-Qing stance.

Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt was an act of treason that was based on a pervasive anti-Qing mentality within a ruling class that was strongly opposed to King Injo's pro-Qing policy. Having been forced to choose between the reality on the ground and moral obligations, Injo had hesitatingly opted for the former. That being the case, the question thus becomes: was this anti-Qing mentality established only amongst the ruling class? In this regard, rumors began to spread during the period that immediately preceded the outbreak of Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt that the return of Im Kyŏngŏp, who had sought refuge in Ming, was imminent. These rumors served as an opportunity to encourage the formation of anti-Qing mentality amongst not only the ruling class, but also the common people as well.



## The Return of Im Kyōngōp and the ensuing public disturbances

The year 1644 (22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo) saw Qing enter Beijing and complete its conquest of Central China. For its part, Ming, by this point barely hanging on, was forced to seek refuge in the south. Nevertheless, a movement to revive the fortunes of Ming that revolved around the members of the Han nation continued unabated.<sup>19</sup> Ming military ships, or so-called Han ships (*hansōn*), often appeared along the west coast. Such sightings of Ming military vessels inevitably caused shockwaves throughout Chosŏn by creating the impression that the restoration of Ming was imminent. The public became even more agitated once rumors began to spread of the activities of the Chosŏn general, Im Kyōngōp, who had sought refuge in Ming. This shakeup in turn spawned a number of domestic disturbances, the largest of which was An Iksin's Revolt of 1646 (24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo).<sup>20</sup>

An Iksin's Revolt was brought to light following the governor of Kongch'ōng province Im Tam's<sup>21</sup> reporting of Lieutenant Yi Sōkyong's part in a plot to overthrow the government. It was subsequently revealed that a man by the name of Yu T'ak had hatched a plot with the Seoul-based Literary Licentiate Kwōn Taeyong to lure as many people and soldiers to their side as possible by spreading rumors that Im Kyōngōp was planning to return and lead a coup on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The fact that reports also surfaced about plans for joint uprisings by the people of Chōlla and Kyōngsang provinces indicates that the rebellion, while centered on Ch'ungch'ōng province, had spread to the Chōlla and Kyōngsang areas as well.<sup>22</sup>

Based on the fact that the participants in this revolt included local rebels from Ch'ungch'ōng province who had risen up the year before, and that plans had also been made to attack Chōnju, the Minister of Military Affairs (*Pyōngjo p'ansō*) and Commander of the Northern Approaches (*Ch'ongyungsa*) Yi Sibae became concerned that a large rebel force had in fact been amassed.<sup>23</sup> Yi appears to have been aware of signs of an imminent revolt centering on Ch'ungch'ōng province for some time.

Furthermore, the participation of lieutenants (*ch'ogwan*) from Kongju in the revolt indicate that a significant portion of the military brass in the Ch'ungch'ŏng area was in actuality involved in this uprising.

It was amidst such circumstances that the central government reached the conclusion that the failure of a report (*changgye*) from the governor of Ch'ungch'ŏng province to arrive on time officially signaled that Ch'ungch'ŏng province had fallen into the insurgents hands.<sup>24</sup> However, the report soon reached the central government. To this end, this report stated that while Yi T'ak had been arrested at Nisan, Kwŏn Taeyong had been grabbed in Chŏnju. Meanwhile, the assumed leader of the revolt, An Iksin, who was believed to have no more than 50 rebels under his command, had fled as soon as he caught wind of the arrest of Yu T'ak.

While the rebel group was revealed to be much smaller than expected, the central government nevertheless gave the task of repelling these renegades to Yi Sibaek and 500 of his men. Meanwhile, Hong Chŏn was dispatched to the Mun'gyŏng area of Kyŏngsang Province and heralds (*Sŏnjŏn'gwan*) were also dispatched to Ch'ungch'ŏng, Chŏlla, and Kyŏngsang provinces in order to ensure the cooperation of the local military bases in the suppression of the rebels. In addition, palace guards (*ŏyŏnggun*) were mobilized to guard the palaces in Kyŏnggi province. On the following day, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the central government positioned military aides (*Abyŏng*) within Namhan Fortress as part of its efforts to be ready to properly respond to any contingencies.

However, the government's response appears to have been excessive and somewhat ill-planned when we consider that by this point the rebels had already been arrested or dispersed. More to the point, it appears that King Injo, feeling growingly insecure in the aftermath of the death sentences meted out to Crown Prince Sohyŏn's wife and her family in March 1646, acted before even taking time to investigate the actual facts surrounding the revolt. Injo immediately jumped to the conclusion that rebels from local provinces had formed an alliance with a group within the capital, and ordered that the local militaries in the eight provinces be activated in defense of the nation.<sup>25</sup> This course of action can as such be

understood as having been motivated by the general mood that prevailed in the aftermath of the death of Crown Prince Sohyōn's wife.

The next day the government released an announcement in which they offered the rebels clemency should they surrender.<sup>26</sup> The situation began to return to normal from April 4<sup>th</sup> onwards as the Office of Trial Processes (推鞠廳, *Ch'ugukch'ōng*) started to question the rebels who had turned themselves in. However, the great majority of these rebels were uneducated farmers who claimed to have participated in the rebellion because they had heard that Im Kyōngōp was gathering forces.<sup>27</sup> As such, most of the participants in this revolt had simply come along because of the rumors that Im had returned to Chosōn and was in the process of gathering troops. In other words, the mere rumor that Im had returned and was gathering people to attack Qing was enough to agitate the populace.

While the actual extent of his involvement in An Iksin's Revolt is unclear, Im does appear to have been a central figure within the anti-Qing movement that existed at that time. A look at the records of the questioning of the leaders of An Iksin's Revolt reveals that the plans for the revolt revolved around the return of Im Kyōngōp. For instance, Yu T'ak revealed the following during the investigation conducted by the *Ch'ugukch'ōng*:

*“Stories related to the death of Im Kyōngōp are all lies. It is truly unfortunate that Sim Kiwōn died before his rebellion could be completed... Our plan was to have the two generals leading Im's soldiers in P'yōngan and Hwanghae provinces begin to foment upheavals in these areas, while Im himself secretly travelled southwards via Kangwōn province to Chōlla and Kyōngsang provinces in order to gather more forces. The eventual goal was to have both groups meet up during an attack on Seoul.”*

Yu T'ak asserted that the rumors of Im Kyōngōp's death were unfounded. On the contrary, he stated that Im was not only alive, but that he had

established a plan to gather troops in the Chŏlla and Kyŏngsang areas for an eventual attack on Seoul. However, special attention must be drawn to the fact that Yu T'ak appears to lament the failure of Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt.

As we have seen above, Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt was premised on the participation of the Ming army and Im Kyŏngŏp. In this regard, the participants in An Iksin's Revolt also intended to amass followers by using Im Kyŏngŏp, who stood as a symbol for the anti-Qing movement. As such, the people of Chosŏn were expected to gladly follow General Im Kyŏngŏp. This line of reasoning becomes even clearer when we analyze records related to the confession of another coup leader, Yi Chihyŏm:

*“When asked whether the public in the three southern provinces would side with a general like Im Kyŏngŏp who attempted to gather troops in order to foment a rebellion, Yi answered that even the women would follow him.”<sup>28</sup>*

A closer look at these and other statements reveals that those who opposed King Injo and the government's failure to adopt an anti-Qing policy used Im Kyŏngŏp to foment rebellions. It is clear that those who led such revolts intended to use Im Kyŏngŏp to gain the public's support for their own causes. As such, the majority involving such revolts participated on the premise that Im Kyŏngŏp was involved in the coup. In turn, this phenomenon can be understood to reflect the anti-Qing mentality that prevailed amongst the masses at that time. King Injo tried to play down the importance of An Iksin's Revolt by claiming that those involved were nothing more than hooligans from the countryside and the lowborn offspring of concubines of government officials. However, there can be no denying that the news of the imminent return of Im Kyŏngŏp to Chosŏn along with remnants of the Ming army to gather troops electrified the masses.

King Injo pondered at length over the manner in which those who participated in the revolt should be punished. In this regard, Injo responded to Kim Chajŏm's suggestion that all of the rebels be executed

by stating that he just could not bring himself to do that. His hesitation was based on his alleged fear that certain people could have been simply caught up in the coup against their will.<sup>29</sup> In the end, Injo ordered that those who were from the *sajok* class be sent to Seoul for punishment, and that the others from the lowborn class be dealt with by the provincial governments.<sup>30</sup>

Once the determination had been made that a government slave like An Iksin could not have been the leader of the rebels, the central government turned its attention to another core member of the revolt, Kwŏn Taeyong. While Injo remained convinced that the main agitator was someone from the capital area, However the entire incident became shrouded in mystery following the death of Kwŏn Taeyong during his trial.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, Injo attempted to bring the affair to a rapid conclusion by releasing a royal edict in which he congratulated his forces for having suppressed the rebels a mere month after the emergence of the revolt.<sup>32</sup>

The central government subsequently punished the hotbeds of this particular rebellion by changing the name of Kongju-mok (town) to Kongsan-hyŏn (prefecture), integrating Nisan, Yŏnsan and Ŭnjin into Ŭnsan-hyŏn, and degrading the status of Kŭmsan-kun (county) in Chŏnnam province to Kŭmsan-hyŏn. In addition, to bring public sentiment back to their side, the government pardoned all criminals except those who were accused of serious crimes such as moral offenses or acts of treason. Meanwhile, local government officials saw their status upgraded, while those who occupied the highest echelons of the local power structure were provided with compensation.<sup>33</sup>

On June 17<sup>th</sup> of that same year Im Kyŏngŏp returned to Chosŏn. A few years earlier, Im had escaped from the forces of Qing while on his way to Shenyang to defend Chosŏn's position regarding the Ming military ships<sup>34</sup> that had appeared on the coast of Chosŏn.<sup>35</sup> Im Kyŏngŏp had been joined in his escape by his older brother Im Sŭngŏp, who had been a lieutenant commander in the Kwangju area, and his younger brother Im Chunŏp, who served as the magistrate of Hŭich'ŏn.<sup>36</sup> Im Kyŏngŏp had initially disguised himself as a monk and hid in a temple for some time before

seeking refuge in Ming. Qing had long suspected that Im's seeking of asylum in Ming had been unofficially facilitated by the Chosŏn government.<sup>37</sup>

After his daring escape to Ming, Im Kyŏngŏp found himself being detained by the Ming military. However, once his status in Chosŏn was revealed, he was allowed to participate in the war against Qing alongside Ming generals such as Huang Fei and Song Ji. However, Im was subsequently captured by the Qing military after having been betrayed by a Ming general. Thereafter, he was repatriated to Chosŏn after the government intervened on his behalf to Qing. The demand for the repatriation of Im Kyŏngŏp appears to lend credence to the theory that Im had been involved in the revolts that rocked Chosŏn. Nevertheless, Im continuously refused to admit to any involvement with Sim Kiwŏn and died during the investigation.<sup>38</sup>

The death of Im Kyŏngŏp, who had gained the admiration of the Chosŏn people for his daring achievements in battle against Qing, also came as quite a shock to King Injo. Seemingly unable to believe the sudden death of Im Kyŏngŏp who had spent most of his life on the battlefield, Injo is said to have repeatedly asked, "Did Im really die?" Injo frequently mentioned to those around him that he had wanted to give Im every opportunity to prove his innocence during the investigation. Injo firmly believed that Im had been used and was unaware of what has transpired in Chosŏn, and as such instructed his people to prosecute him for having sought refuge in a foreign country rather than treason. In much the same manner as he had been hesitant to believe that Sim Kiwŏn had been involved in a coup against him, King Injo proved unwilling to accept Im's involvement in these rebellions.

## Conclusion

Regarding the Kwanghaegun's confinement of his mother and execution of his brother and his policy of close ties with Qing at the expense of Ming

as immoral actions, King Injo and his group launched a coup that resulted in his seizing of the reins of political power. Upon his ascension to the throne, Injo embarked on a political course that was to be rooted in Neo-Confucian based ethics. He abandoned the policy of neutrality that had been pursued by the Kwanghaegun in favor of one that was based on open hostility towards Qing. As a result of this policy, Chosŏn found itself being attacked by Qing and subsequently forced to establish a new relationship that was based on the notion of the traditional relationship between king and subject. As a result, the group that had used the anti-Qing banner to seize political power faced a situation in which it had little other choice but to adopt a pro-Qing policy in order to maintain their position.

Although Injo had little other choice than to follow the course of action he pursued, the movement against the pro-Qing policy, which was led by intellectuals from the *sallim* (rustic literati) branch of the *Sŏin* (Westerner faction), remained strong. A series of rebellions launched under the anti-Qing banner soon emerged. The most representative of these incidents was the revolt involving *Chwaŭijŏng* Sim Kiwŏn. The coup plotters intended to remove Injo, whom they regarded as having shamefully prostrated himself before Qing, in favor of either Prince Hoeŭn or Crown Prince Sohyŏn. The fact that a high-ranking governmental official such as Sim Kiwŏn was involved in this anti-Qing movement clearly indicates that an anti-Qing atmosphere also pervaded within the Chosŏn government.

Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt was dealt with in an expeditious manner. More to the point, Sim was questioned and executed by the government on the same day that news of the planned revolt first broke. The prompt handling of Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt was closely related to the Qing government's frequent threats to take King Injo hostage that surfaced in the aftermath of the Second Manchu Invasion. Qing attempted to keep Injo and the Chosŏn government under its thumb by repeatedly stressing the fact that it might be willing to place Crown Prince Sohyŏn, who had been living in Shenyang as a hostage, on the throne of Chosŏn and take Injo as a hostage instead. It was amidst such circumstances that this revolt that involved the

forging of an alliance with Ming naval vessels in order to remove a king that was seen as having pro-Qing tendencies was hatched. The Chosŏn government quickly identified this revolt as an anti-Qing political occurrence and aggressively used it as a tool with which to turn the tide in terms of the threat to take Injo hostage. For its part, the Qing government used this revolt as an opportunity to confirm Chosŏn's pro-Qing position.

Anti-Qing mentality was not limited to the ruling class, but rather was also rampant amongst the masses of Chosŏn. This phenomenon is clearly on display in the incident known as An Iksin's Revolt, which saw people from Chŏlla, Ch'ungch'ŏng, and Kyŏngsang provinces rise up after having been aroused by rumors that a general by the name of Im Kyŏngŏp was going to return to Chosŏn with the Ming military. In this instance, mere mention of the possible return of Im from Ming, where he had sought refuge a few years before, proved to be enough to spur the people to participate in an anti-Qing movement. As such, the majority of those who participated in An Iksin's Revolt did so based on their belief in the return of Im Kyŏngŏp.

This incident clearly reflects the anti-Qing mentality that existed amongst the Chosŏn public. King Injo tried to play down the importance of An Iksin's Revolt by claiming that those involved were nothing more than hooligans from the countryside and the lowborn offspring of concubines of government officials. However, there can be no denying that the news of the imminent return of Im Kyŏngŏp to Chosŏn along with remnants of the Ming army to gather troops with which to attack Qing electrified the masses. As such, the anti-Qing mentality was a common emotion that not only existed among the group who had led the Injo Restoration of 1623, but also amongst the public. In this regard, it was the presence of this universal anti-Qing mentality that had allowed Injo and his supporters to successfully launch their coup against the Kwanghaegun in the first place.

Recent studies have revealed that the Kwanghaegun's policy of neutrality was based on a realistic awareness of the international order at that time. However, he was eventually overthrown in accordance with the principle



of Pro-Ming and anti-Qing. The collapse of the Kwanghaegun regime led to two wars that caused immense damage to the people of Chosŏn. Be that as it may, Injo and his supporters were nevertheless able to hold on to the reins of power. This ability to hang on to power was rooted in the deeply engrained anti-Qing mentality that had formed amongst the masses.<sup>39</sup> Although the Kwanghaegun followed the most rational path, his failure to understand the prevailing sentiment of the day led to his downfall.

Meanwhile, Injo appears to have astutely understood this universal emotion that had formed amongst the public. For instance, his decision to select Prince Pongnim as his successor rather than Crown Prince Sohyŏn was based on his desire to ensure that his anti-Qing stance be continued. Injo's successor King Hyojong (Prince Pongnim) dreamt of exacting revenge on Qing for 10 years, and desired to justify the Injo Restoration. As part of this process, Hyojong adopted a policy of marching north (*pukpŏl*) in order to appease intellectuals from the *sallim* (rustic literati) branch of the *Sŏin* (Westerner) faction such as Song Siyŏl that had opposed his enthronement.

The intellectuals from the *sallim* (rustic literati) branch of the *Sŏin* (Westerner) faction, which possessed a thoroughly anti-Qing mindset that was based on the notion of Chosŏn as the guardians of Chinese civilization played an important role in the formation of public opinion in Chosŏn. The emergence of this *sallim* group as the dominant political group caused Chosŏn to adopt a policy line that involved the rejection of the new international order that had formed around Qing. More to the point, this can be regarded as the period in which the Janus-like characteristic of displaying a submissive attitude on the surface while rejecting such notions internally was formed. As a result, Chosŏn lost an opportunity to establish a prevailing sentiment that reflected the circumstances of this new era.

**Key Word :** An Iksin, Sim Kiwŏn, Im Kyŏngŏp, Injo, The Manchu Invasion of 1636, anti-Qing mentality

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 Notes :

- 1 For more on the Kwanghaegun and his government, please refer to Han Myŏnggi, *The Hideyoshi Invasions and Korea-China Relations (Imjin waeran 'gwa hanjung kwan 'gye)*, Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 1999; *Kwanghaegun, Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa*, 2000
- 2 Thirty-six reasons were given to justify the *Injo panjŏng*. The most important in this regard were that the Kwanghaegun had confined his mother and executed his own brother, and that he had abandoned Ming in favor of Qing. The Injo government attempted to justify its overthrowing of the sitting monarch by promoting itself as the main advocate of Neo-Confucian ethics, and also broke off diplomatic relations with Qing in order to display its severing of the diplomatic course set by the Kwanghaegun. *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, March 14, 15<sup>th</sup> year of Kwanghaegun (1623); *Injo sillok*, March 14, 1<sup>st</sup> year of King Injo (1623)
- 3 *Injo sillok*, March 21, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 4 *Injo sillok*, March 21, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 5 *Injo sillok*, March 21, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 6 *Ch'uan'gŭp kukan* (推案及鞫案) is a series of books that contains details pertaining to the investigations, judicial decisions, and sentences associated with important incidents that occurred from the 34<sup>th</sup> year of King Sŏnjo (1601) to the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Kwangmu (1905). More to the point, this book dealt with matters such as acts of treason that were related to the security of the nation and attempts to change the political power structure. As the statements made by those involved in such incidents are written in a *verbatim* fashion, this book represents a very important source of information as pertains not only to the actual facts of such cases, but also in terms of the mindset of the ringleaders. While Books 12-65 were compiled during the reign of King Injo, no mention is ever made of Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt.
- 7 As the investigation and actual execution of Sim Kiwŏn and the other alleged masterminds of the plot were carried out on the same day that the actual incident first came to light, the records pertaining to the handling of this incident are for the most part dated from March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1644 (22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo).

- 8 *Injo sillok*, March 21, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 9 *Injo sillok*, April 8, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 10 The Qing government was particularly interested in the rumors of possible involvement by Ming military ships. *Letters from Shenyang* (瀋陽狀啓, *Simyang changgye*), 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1642), August 18; September 14; March 3
- 11 Qing's interest in this case is evidenced by the fact that it required that all of those who were involved with Sim Kiwŏn's Revolt be executed. *Injo sillok*, April 27, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 12 *Injo sillok*, April 23, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 13 *Injo sillok*, April 24, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 14 Yi Hwaja, "The debate over the king of Chosŏn's appearance before the royal court of Qing (*Ch ōngjo chosŏn kukwang ipchosŏl*)", *Chŏnbuk sahak*, Vol. 30, Chŏnbuk Historical Association, 2007
- 15 *Injo sillok*, April 26, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 16 Already embroiled in a war with Ming, Qing was painfully aware of the fact that its ability to seize Central China was premised on its control of the nation of Chosŏn that was widely regarded as Ming's rear base. Thus, based on its desire to bring a Chosŏn government within which the anti-Qing mood had yet to dissipate to heel, the Qing government began to circulate rumors regarding the possibility of Injo being summoned to appear before the royal court of Qing. The possibility of using King Injo rather than the Crown Prince or other princes as a hostage proved to be enough to bring King Injo and the rest of the Chosŏn government into line. Moreover, many government officials were also concerned that they might be used as hostages. Kim Sanghŏn, who opposed the establishment of amicable relations with Qing, stated, "... once the justification for such an action has been established, they will repeatedly make such demands and justify it on the grounds that it represents an integral part of the traditional relationship between king and subject ... Once the king walks out of the fortress gate, it will be difficult for the rest of us to avoid the humiliation of being forced to march north". *Injo sillok*, January 18, 15<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1637)
- 17 In the aftermath of the second Manchu Invasion, a number of incidents involving sightings of Han military ships along Korea's west coast were reported by the magistrate of Ŭiju, the governor of P'yŏngyang, and the governor of Chŏlla Province. The manner in which these Ming military

- vessels should be handled soon became a diplomatic issue between the governments of Chosŏn and Qing. The dispatch of a document signed by the Governor-General of Ming to the Chosŏn government during the 16<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo resulted in a widespread debate as to whether the government should inform Qing or not about the existence of such a document. Another diplomatic row occurred during the 19<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo when the governor of P'yŏngyang Chŏng T'aehwa was found to have provided the crew of Ming military vessels with food. *Injo sillok*, April 17, 16<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1638); *Injo sillok*, February 20; August 22; September 16; February 24, 17<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1639); *Injo sillok*, August 23, 19<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1641); *Injo sillok*, October 18, 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1642); *Injo sillok*, August 8, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644); *Injo sillok*, October 16, 25<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1647)
- 18 King Injo appears to not have believed the fact that Sim Kiwŏn's intention was to raise a revolt. During a meeting with Hwang Hŏn, the king kept asking what reasons Sim would have to launch a coup and place Prince Hoeŭn on the throne. *Injo sillok*, October 27, 22<sup>nd</sup> year of King Injo (1644)
- 19 The movement to restore the fortunes of Ming continued until the reign of King Sukchong. Example included the Revolt of the Three Feudatories (三藩之亂, *Sanfan zhiluan*) launched by the likes of Wu Sangui in 1681. Kim Hüiyŏng, "The establishment of Southern Ming", *Chinese History (Iyagi chungguksa)*, Ch'ŏna Publishing Co. 2006, pp. 283-306; History of the Chinese People (中國人史綱, *Zhongguoren Shigang*), Bo Yang, translated by Kim Yŏngsu, "The 17<sup>th</sup> century – the resistance of the Han nation and the Revolt of the Three Feudatories", *The True Face of Chinese History (Maen ōlgulŭi chungguksa)*, Ch'anghae Publishing Co., 2005, pp. 68-75
- 20 <*Injo sillok*> did not deal with An Iksin's Revolt at any length. While the conclusion was eventually reached that the revolt had been organized by the aristocrat Kwŏn Taeyong and not the government slave An Iksin, the incident, in keeping with the record found in the <*Ch'uan'gŭp kukan*>, nevertheless became known as An Iksin's Revolt. A full account of An Iksin's Revolt would require an in-depth study of the <*Ch'uan'gŭp kukan*>.
- 21 A plot hatched during the 6<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo resulted in Ch'ungch'ŏng province being renamed Kongch'ŏng province. Key figures such as the governor, military commanders, naval commanders, and magistrates, were also replaced. *Injo sillok*, February 13, 6<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1628)

- 22 *Injo sillok*, March 28, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 23 *Injo sillok*, April 1, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 24 *Injo sillok*, April 1, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 25 *Injo sillok*, April 2, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 26 *Injo sillok*, April 3, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 27 *Injo sillok*, April 4, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 28 *Ch'uan g'ŭp kukan*, Vol. 6, Asea munhwasa, 1983, p. 256
- 29 The Minister of Rites (*Yejo p'ansŏ*) Chŏng T'aehwa and his brother, as well as the magistrate of Milyang Chŏng T'aeje (Kang Sŏkki's son-in-law) were named as possible conspirators during the investigation of An Iksin's Revolt. In this regard, while Injo ordered no action to be taken against Chŏng T'aehwa and his brother, he authorized the banishment of Chŏng T'aeje. In addition, false accusations were also leveled against individuals such as Kuk Sŏngyu. *Injo sillok*, April 4; April 6; May 23, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 30 *Injo sillok*, April 5, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 31 *Injo sillok*, April 10, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 32 92 people, including An Iksin, were executed. *Injo sillok*, April 4, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 33 *Injo sillok*, May 1, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 34 *Injo sillok*, June 13, 19<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1641); *Injo sillok*, October 23, 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1642)
- 35 *Injo sillok*, November 6, 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1642)
- 36 *Injo sillok*, November 7, 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1642)
- 37 Studies pertaining to Im Kyŏngŏp have for the most part been conducted by those involved in Korean literary circles. More to the point, much of this focus has been on an ancient novel entitled <*Im Kyŏngŏp Chŏn* (Story of Im Kyŏngŏp)> Im Kyŏngŏp emerged as the center of the anti-Qing movement in the aftermath of the Second Manchu Invasion. He subsequently received a posthumous title during the reign of King Chŏngjo. In this regard, further studies should be conducted in order to shed light on the full extent of his activities both at home and abroad.
- 38 *Injo sillok*, June 17, 24<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo (1646)
- 39 Ancient novels such as the <Story of King Injo (*Injo taewang silgi*)>, <Story of Im Kyŏngŏp (*Im Kyŏngŏp chŏn*)>, and <Story of Lady Pak (*Pakssi puin chŏn*)> which were written with the Second Manchu Invasion as a backdrop have contributed greatly to the general public's internalization of the thoughts

of the ruling class. The narration in these novels helped to create a certain image that contributed to the formation of a common sentiment that linked together the ruling class and the masses. In this regard, the author of this paper hopes to conduct a study of the 'perception of history created by narration' that focuses on war novels which have heretofore been generally ignored by historians.

〈국문초록〉

## 심기원의 역모사건과 임경업의 귀환

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인조와 반정세력은 광해군정권의 ‘폐모살제(廢母殺弟)’와 ‘배명친청(背明親淸)’을 패륜적 행위로 간주하고 반정을 일으켜 정치권력을 장악하였다. 왕위에 오른 인조는 성리학적 윤리관에 입각한 정치를 회복하고자 하였으며, 광해군 정권의 증립외교를 청산하고 청나라와 외교노선을 재설정하였다. 그 결과, 청나라의 침략을 받았으며, 군신관계로 상징되는 새로운 관계를 맺었다. 반청을 명분으로 집권한 반정세력은 권력을 유지하기 위해서 ‘친청(親淸)’의 길을 걸어야 하는 자기 모순적 상황에 놓이게 된 것이다.

인조로서는 불가피한 선택이었지만, 서인 산림계 지식인들을 중심으로 친청 노선에 대한 반발은 좀처럼 사그라들지 않았고, 반청을 기치로 내건 역모사건이 일어났다. 그 가운데 가장 대표적인 사건은 좌의정 심기원이 연루된 역모사건이었다. 역모세력은 명나라 군대와 연대하여 청나라의 위력에 굴복한 인조를 대신 하여 회은군 혹은 소현세자를 추대하려고 하였다. 조선 조정에서는 이 사건을 ‘반청적인 정치사건’으로 규정하여, ‘인조 입조’라는 최악의 상황을 탈피하기 위한 국면전환용으로 적극 활용하였으며, 청의 입장에서 조선의 친청적 의지를 확인하는 계기로 삼았던 것이다.

이러한 반청의식은 당시 지배층에게서만 확인되는 것은 아니다. 조선의 인민들에게도 반청의식은 내재되어 있었다. 그것을 잘 보여주는 사건이 안익신의 역모사건이다. 명나라에 망명한 임경업이 귀환하여 명나라 군대와 연계하여 청나라를 공격한다는 소문에 동요되어 전라, 충청, 경상의 백성들이 반청운동에 나섰던 것이다. 이런 점은 일반민들의 반청정서를 반영하는 것이라고 생각한다. 반청의식은 인조반정을 주도한 세력에게만 있었던 것이 아니라 일반 백성들에게 내면화되었던 당시의 ‘시대정서’였던 것이다.

두 차례 전쟁을 겪은 후에도 인조정권은 자신들의 권력을 유지할 수 있었던 것은 일반 백성에게 내재되어 있던 ‘반청(反淸)’을 조장하고 강화하였기 때문이

라고 생각한다. 인조는 이런 보편적 정서를 제대로 읽었기에 소현세자의 직계를 배제하면서 반청명분을 계승할 후계구도를 구상하면서 봉림대군을 후계자로 결정하였던 것이다. 인조의 뒤를 이어 왕위에 오른 효종은 재위 10년간 복수설치(復讐雪恥)를 꿈꾸며 누구보다 반청명분을 충실히 구현하고자 하였다. 그 과정에서 효종은 자신의 왕위계승을 부당하다고 생각하였던 송시열 등 서인 산림계 지식인들을 끌어안기 위해 '복별'이라는 정책을 내세웠다.

주제어: 심기원, 임경업, 인조, 병자호란, 안익신, 반청의식