

International Situation in East Asia and Changes in Goguryeo's Foreign Policy

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An inquiry into the development process of Goguryeo's foreign policy was made in this paper while the synthesis of international order in East Asia and the internal conditions of Goguryeo were taken into consideration. And the fact that Goguryeo actively negotiated with the Chinese dynasties as well as Baekje and Silla south of the Korean peninsula, the Japanese across the sea, and various tribes in the northern regions can be verified through this inquiry. The development process of Goguryeo's foreign policy can be understood in terms of three periods: First to the third century, fourth to the mid-sixth century, and late sixth century to mid-seventh century.

Goguryeo expanded its territory toward the East Sea and other areas by utilizing the pacifying foreign policy of China's Later Han dynasty. But an unstable international relationship was maintained through the "safeguarding of the right to existence" and "returning to the China-centric control and order" as Goguryeo repeatedly went through confrontation and investiture with the Later Han dynasty. This aspect continued even during the regime of the Gongson clan (公孫氏) and the relationship with Wei China in the third century.

The unitary China-centric international order collapsed in early fourth century due to the fall of the Western Jin, and a pluralistic international order developed in its stead. At this juncture, Goguryeo pursued a foreign policy of forming peaceful diplomatic relations with the Chinese dynasties to stabilize the western borderlands on the one hand while establishing its territorial rights in the eastern region. Thus, Goguryeo was able to establish a great empire in the fifth century that spanned from the middle to southern regions of Manchuria to the middle and northern regions of the Korean peninsula.

The international order in East Asia changed once again due to Sui dynasty's unification of China in the late sixth century. Goguryeo had no choice but to confront Sui dynasty China head-on because of Sui's unitary pursuit of China-centric international order. As such, Goguryeo prepared for the Sui invasion from the northwest while attempting to rebuild its territorial

rights by invading the southern regions of the Korean peninsula. Such foreign policy was maintained even after the founding of China's Tang dynasty.

As mentioned above, Goguryeo responded flexibly to the changes in the international conditions of East Asia and commanded diverse foreign policies, resulting in territorial rights in the northeastern region in the fifth to sixth century. However, Goguryeo brought on the alliance between Na and Tang troops in the middle of the seventh century by pursuing a firm unilateral foreign policy. Moreover, Goguryeo fell when it was jointly attacked by the Na-Tang allied troops amidst intensification of the internal power struggles among its aristocrats.

Keywords: East Asian international situation, Goguryeo's foreign policy, tributary-investiture Relationship, autonomous power, the pluralistic nature of international order, China-centric unitary international order.

Introduction

The middle area of the Amnok River, which was where the Goguryeo dynasty first originated, was also the outer area of Gojoseon (古朝鮮), the first ancient dynasty that appeared in Korean history. The area also provided access to the Buyeo (夫餘) area located at the Songhwa River (松花江) basin and the Chinese Han commanderies (漢郡縣) of the Liaodong (遼東) area. Due to this geographical feature, Goguryeo was able to taste advanced cultures from Gojoseon, Buyeo, and the Han commanderies early on. But those entities also served as political obstacles for the Goguryeo people. In such circumstances, the Goguryeo people developed an ancient state far earlier than those of Baekje or Silla. In the following periods, Goguryeo demonstrated relentless foreign expansion and established diplomatic relationships with not only the Chinese dynasties but also with Baekje, Silla, Gaya in the Southern area of the Korean peninsula, as well as with invaders from Japan. And Goguryeo had also negotiated issues with northern tribes, such as the Seonbi (鮮卑, nomadic people in the northern region), the Turks (突闕), and the Malgal (靺鞨) tribes.

Goguryeo had a very diverse relationship with its neighboring entities, and historical studies of such relationships had to deal with many issues to accommodate the scope of the theme (Shin Hyeong-sik, 1981; Noh Jung-guk 1985;

Yeo Ho-Kyu 2003). For the past decades, Goguryeo's foreign policies and relationships have mostly been approached from three distinctive perspectives, and those perspectives were respectively developed into theories of their own, namely the theory of the investiture system, the theory of a tributary relationship, and the theory of a power-play relationship.

The investiture system theory suggested the concept of an East Asian community based upon the unitary authority of China, and then perceived the appointer-appointee relationship established between the Chinese emperors and other lead figures of neighboring countries as a determinative force and motivator of the East Asian international order (Nishijima Sadanori 1962; Kaneko Shuichi 2001). This theory heavily emphasized the Chinese part of the equation and tended to underestimate or outright neglect the independent diplomatic functions of nearby regions, and the nature of reciprocal relationships that usually happen among countries.

In response to this theory, the Tributary Relationship theory was developed in order to view the East Asian international order in terms of the voices of no other than the neighboring countries which presented tributary items to the Chinese government (Jeon Hae-jong 1966; Seo Yeong-su 1981). Supporters of this theory usually do not recognize the potential ideological meaning or a previously-suggested determinative authority, in the action itself of presenting tributary items. They have rather emphasized the independent position of Goguryeo, Baekje and Silla. In the meantime, the Power-play theory was developed as well, saying that foreign diplomatic policies among several countries in the regions were defined according to perceived superiority and inferiority (Noh Jung-guk 1981a; Noh Tae-don 1984). This theory tends to view the international order in terms of power balances and practical necessities, and it suggested the concept of a very changeable nature of foreign policies, and also the independence factor generated by all the involved countries.

So it should be safe to say that, historical studies of Goguryeo's foreign policies and relationships have been composed of distinctly different perspectives clashing with each other, either emphasizing the determinative authority of China as the final voice of matters regarding the East Asian international order, or emphasizing the involved countries' independent voices instead. Usually, factual details are also examined through a perspective heavily emphasizing only one side of the situation, instead of being examined through a perspective which would let the researchers view the situation with more balanced opinion. This kind of attitude is also not unrelated to the casual perspectives of considering the international order as a concept merely bordering upon an "exterior factor,"

when it comes to analyzing the history of a certain group of people.

Yet, a certain foreign policy of a certain group of people, devised in a specific time period, can not be established separately from the international order of that time period. And usually, a policy of a certain government can not be developed without any kind of independent functions on the government's part. A diplomatic incident, however trivial it might seem, should mirror the international situation of the time, and also the fashion of diplomatic functioning involved. So, in order to properly understand both the content and historical meaning of Goguryeo's foreign policies and relationships, we should account for not only the East Asian international order at the time, but also the domestic conditions of Goguryeo as well.

In this paper, such research mentioned above will be attempted firsthand. Yet unfortunately, due to page restraints, the changes occurred in Goguryeo's foreign policy amidst the most rapid changes of the East Asian community will be examined in more particular detail.

Formation of the Dynasty in the Early Days of Goguryeo and Its Foreign Relationships

During its transformation into an ancient state, Goguryeo received advanced cultural influences both from Gojoseon and the Chinese Han dynasty, but Goguryeo was also forced to endure diplomatic pressures imposed upon it by them as well. In that regard, the formation of the Goguryeo dynasty as an ancient state was a process of growth to become a political entity in terms of domestic politics, and also a process of deflecting foreign pressure and hostility. Hence the versatile nature of Goguryeo's foreign relationships with neighboring countries. First, we shall examine Goguryeo's foreign relationships during the time it was forming an ancient state.

The inhabitant groups residing around the middle area of the Amnok River first experienced the merits of Iron Culture around the second to third centuries B.C., and managed to establish a unique cultural heritage discernible from those of nearby areas by developing its own unique fashion in terms of tomb design, now called the Jeokseok tomb (積石墓) fashion. Around the middle of the second century B.C., a powerful group now referred to as the "Na," was formed around the middle area of the Amnok River.¹ And at the same time, Gojoseon had expanded its range of influence and reached this area. Gojoseon had already been

subduing nearby political entities and formed a formidable authority from the beginning of that century, and during the latter half of that same century it barred neighboring countries from establishing a diplomatic channel with the Chinese Han dynasty. The Gojoseon people were intent upon monopolizing the channel which would hugely benefit them by serving as a window of importing advanced cultural items. Faced with these restraints, the Na Group evaded Gojoseon's blockade, consolidated itself under the leadership of a person named Nam Ryeo (南閩), and voluntarily submitted themselves to the control of the Han dynasty's Liaodong County (遼東郡) with the intention of securing imports of valuable goods including iron-based items from the Han dynasty (Yi Byeong-do 1975).

At the time, the Han dynasty was ready to drop its appeasement policy and replace it with a stronger one involving armed expansion. Han dynasty China gave Nam Ryeo a title called "the ruler of Ye County" (濊君), which meant "the leader of the Ye people," and established a new local unit titled "Changhae County" (蒼海郡) in 128 B.C., around the middle area of the Amnok River and alongside the coastline area to the East Sea. But Changhae County was placed too remotely from the inland areas and was also in a rocky mountainous area; the cost of establishing transportation roads was considered too high. In addition to that, there was a fiscal crisis that the Han dynasty government was facing at the time because of the various campaigns the dynasty was running, and several new local counties that were being established. Eventually, Emperor Wudi (武帝) closed the Changhae County along with the Southern Nam-ih (西南夷) commandery in 126 B.C. in order to concentrate upon defending the border from the Northern Hyungno (匈奴) tribes.²

Ye County Nam Ryeo's surrender to the Liaodong County and the establishment of the Changhae County left some lasting effects. The Na Groups located around the middle area of the Amnok River started to unite, as they were left with no choice but to resist the blockade policy of Gojoseon. The Chinese Han dynasty was also given an opportunity to get detailed information on those groups by having direct contact with them. As a result, the resident groups located in the area started to be recognized with a group image as being the "Guryeo" (句麗) people, instead of being merely considered as part of Yemaek society.

1. See Yeo Ho-Kyu 1996 for Goguryeo's transformation into an ancient state.

2. "Pyeongjunseo" (平準書) 8, No. 112, Gongsonhong, Vol. 30, *Historical Records* (史記); Sikhwaji (食貨志) 4, Part 2, Vol. 24-2, *History of the Han Dynasty* (漢書).

In 108 B.C., the Chinese Han dynasty defeated and destroyed Gojoseon and placed new commanderies in the area that was previously occupied by Gojoseon and other areas. In 107 B.C., the Han dynasty established the Hyeonto County (玄菟郡) around the middle area of the Amnok River, and placed headquarters for every counties and prefectures at critical traffic junctures in order to effectively rule local resident groups. The entire middle area of the Amnok River was placed under the Han dynasty's direct control, and the economical extraction perpetrated by the counties and prefectures delayed the local group's development of political power. Some of the Na Groups that sided with the Han commanderies embraced the advanced culture of China and had their own influence imposed upon other local resident groups, but most of the local inhabitants were strongly against the commanderies' exploitation.³

During the last days of Emperor Wudi's reign, the financial condition of the Han dynasty was revealed as seriously drained because of the long campaigns and the emperor's own lavishness. Recognizing the problem, instead of only resorting to armed campaigns, the emperor turned to a gentler approach regarding foreign policies. The next emperor, Shaodi (昭帝), also adopted policies designed to stabilize the public's condition, albeit after a brief campaign policy adopted at the very start of his reign proved devastating to the already drained fiscal condition of the dynasty and also to the moral stability of the public. Such a turn to more moderate policies directly concerned the local areas, and eventually motivated the residents in those areas to start launching even more aggressive resistance. After a while, the ruling power of the commanderies began to fluctuate considerably. As a result, the Han dynasty was forced to close down the Dami County (儋耳郡) commandery of the South Nam-ih (西南夷) area and also the Imdun County (臨屯郡) and Jinbeon County (眞番郡) of the Eastern regions in 82 AD. And around this time, the Ohwan (烏桓) tribe rose up against Han rule and attacked the dynasty from the northwest area of the Liaodong region.

Encouraged by the turnabouts in the Han dynasty's foreign policy and also the rise of the Ohwan tribe, the local resident groups around the middle area of the Amnok River launched an armed assault upon the Hyeonto County. As a response to this attack, the Han dynasty decided to concentrate its forces upon the Ohwan front and moved the Hyeonto County to the Northwest area of the Amnok River in 75 A.D. (establishing Hyeonto County, Phase 2).⁴ But the Han

3. See Kwon Oh-jung 1992 for the general ruling of the Han commanderies.

dynasty was also aware of the fact that it could be put in a vulnerable position if the local resident groups at the Amnok River's middle area decided to advance their forces up to the Liaodong area, so Han reinforced the defense capability of that area (Kwon Oh-jung 1995) and established a defensive posture by constructing the Hyeonto-seong fortress at the shore area of the river basin of Sojaha (蘇子河) (Tanaka Toshiaki 1994). Such military changes and facility relocations resulted in practically freeing the local resident groups around the middle area of the Amnok River from the Han commanderies' direct rule. The Na group (那集團) in this area started to transform itself into political entities, which could be referred to as the Na states.

Then, around 75 A.D., when the condition of the Ohwan area was being stabilized, Emperor Xuandi (宣帝), who succeeded former Emperor Shaodi, devised a new foreign policy combining both resolute (or armed) and moderate measures. Under the new emperor's leadership the Han dynasty attempted to regain control over the eastern areas, including the middle area of the Amnok River. At the time, the Sono group (消奴集團) was the most prominent entity located that area, but it did not have the power to rule the entire area. Taking advantage of the situation, the Han dynasty decided to bestow presents like drums, flutes and musicians to the leader of the Sono group, recognizing the group as a representative figure in the area, while also bestowing official uniforms and ceremonial clothing (朝服 and 衣幘) to other factions as well, demonstrating a divisive strategy towards its ultimate goal of subduing all the groups.⁵ Emperor Xuandi's reign marked the re-stabilizing of the Han (Former Han) dynasty, and the resistance of the nearby areas was dealt with by using both strong and moderate measures. The Hyeonto County resurrected its separative control of the middle area of the Amnok River, so political developments had to wait, again.

As time went on, the resident groups continued to establish respective relationships with the Hyeonto County, and such an environment forced those groups to engage in power plays among themselves. And as a result, a major political entity, which was practically a conglomerated version of the pre-existing Na-guk states located around the middle area of the Amnok River, was finally established (Yim Ki-hwan 1987: 44-56). Then, the Jumong group (朱蒙集團,

4. See Dongokjo (東沃沮), "Dongijeon" (東夷傳) Vol. 30, *The History of the Three Kingdoms* (三國志).

5. Goguryeo (高句麗) "Dongijeon" (東夷傳) Vol. 30, *The History of the Three Kingdoms* (三國志).

a.k.a. the Gyaeru group, 桂婁集團) migrated from the Buyeo area and allied themselves with the local resident groups to form an even bigger alliance, and eventually subdued the Sono group, replacing it by becoming the new leader in the region. Around the same time, an official named Wang Mang (王莽), who destroyed the Han (Former Han) dynasty and founded a new dynasty of his own, Shin (新), decided to adopt radical and intimidating foreign policies (任仲嫻 1995). Wang Mang demoted the title ranks granted to the leaders of nearby areas and launched a series of campaigns to subdue the Hyungno tribe. The neighboring countries all resisted this radical turn of events, and China was suddenly embroiled in a domestic chaos.

The Gyaeru group mobilized the Goguryeo infantry and repelled Wang Mang's plot to conquer the Hyungno tribe, and also resisted Hyeonto County's policy of separative rule. Yet even with the chaotic mess continuing during the ending days of Wang Mang's regime, the situation of the northeastern area was still rather stable and settled, and the relationship between the Han (the Later Han) dynasty and other areas was still on good terms (Kwon Oh-jung 1993). So the environment for the Gyaeru group's outright refusal of phase-two of the Hyeonto County's separative ruling policy was still not that well established. Then, after the Later Han dynasty reunified China, Emperor Gwang Wu-di (光武帝) announced that he would be adopting a more gentle and moderate foreign policy, and his plans were actualized by the rapid downfall of the Hyungno groups around 46 A.D. Later Han dynasty dismantled their military bases along the border, and pacified the neighboring countries by handing out official presents. Such appeasing policies were implemented in the northeastern area as well, and tribes like the Ohwan and Seonbi (鮮卑) tribes submitted themselves to the Later Han dynasty after receiving such gifts (Yi Chun-sik 1995: 194).⁶

When the Later Han dynasty changed its foreign policy and mitigated its level of rule over the border areas, the Gyaeru group managed to establish a rather firm control over several local groups located around the middle area of the Amnok River, and resisted the separative ruling policy of the Hyeonto County. A reference in a historical text refers to Gyaeru group's escalating resistance against the Han presence.⁷ The reference mentions that when it had

6. Shisae-jo in the year of Geonmu (建武), "Gwangmujegi" (光武帝紀) 1, Part 2, Vol. 1-2, and "Ohwan seonbijeon" (烏桓鮮卑傳) Vol. 90 of the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* (後漢書).

7. Goguryeo (高句麗) "Donggijeon" (東夷傳) Vol. 30, *The History of the Three Kingdoms* (三國志).

become apparent that numerous local groups residing around the middle area of the Amnok River were not going to pay a visit to the Hyeonto County anymore, Hyeonto County had a small fortress (called Chaekguru, 幘溝婁) constructed and stocked certain items and goods there for the Goguryeo people to get. Records of such arrangements is a clear signal that the Gyaeru group was blocking the local resident groups from having direct contact with the Hyeonto County, and at the same time blocking the Hyeonto County from establishing access to the local groups. So the local groups had to conduct diplomatic contacts through a unified channel referred to as Chaekguru, and the Gyaeru group became a central power body controlling the entire middle area of the Amnok River (Noh Tae-don 1977: 152-155; Kim Ki-heung 1987).

Goguryeo successfully evaded Gojoseon's blockade, vigorously resisted the Han commanderies' rule, and finally succeeded in developing an ancient state. The founding group of Goguryeo had been keeping a close eye upon the international situation since their very early days and utilized the information in repelling neighboring major countries. They repelled the Hyeonto County in 75 B.C. when the Former Han dynasty was switching to a more moderate foreign policy, and also resisted the separative ruling policy of phase-two of the Hyeonto County when Emperor Gwang Wu-di of the Later Han dynasty was trying to adopt a more appeasing foreign policy. So, with this accumulated experience in taking advantage of the situation, it would only be natural to assume that Goguryeo would have continued to gain information of the ever-changing international condition, responded to such accordingly, and adopted diverse foreign policies as they saw fit in given situations.

After the ancient state was founded and established, Goguryeo's foreign policy was developed into two directions. First, Goguryeo expanded its realm to areas where the control of the Later Han dynasty did not reach, in a time when the Later Han dynasty was only content to resort to passive borderline control and moderate foreign policies. This side of Goguryeo's foreign policy had already been shaping up since the old days when the dynasty was being founded. In the early half of the first century A.D., Goguryeo subdued the Manri group (萬離集團) which was a branch group of the Seonbi tribe,⁸ and the Yang-

8. 11th year of the reign of King Yurimyong (瑠璃明王), "Goguryeo bongi" (高句麗本紀), Vol. 1, *Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms* (三國史記); Jejunjeon (祭遠傳) "Yeoljeon" (列傳) No. 10, *History of the Later Han Dynasty* (後漢書), Vol. 20.

Maek tribe as well located at the upper reaches of the Taeja-ha (太子河) river.⁹ Goguryeo also expanded itself to the Hamgyeong-do province area and subdued entities such as Haengin state (荇人國), Gaema state (蓋馬國), Guda state (句茶國), and also North Okjeo (北沃沮) located at the lower reaches of the Duman River.¹⁰ As we can see from all this, Goguryeo was already engaged in subduing neighboring middle and minor class political entities or ethnic groups during its stage of dynasty foundation. But admittedly, the internal system of the newborn dynasty was not completely furnished, so firm administrative control over those subdued groups or tribes was yet to be established, and for the time being the subdued entities were just being assimilated into under the Goguryeo territory (Yeo Ho-Kyu 1992: 56-58).

When the administrative system was firmly established, Goguryeo embarked upon the task of active foreign expansion. At the time, the Later Han dynasty was reducing local Hyeon units and also dismantling the Dowi (都尉) station of the local Gun units, signaling the continuation of a passive local control policy (30 AD). The eastern Dowi headquarters of the Nangnang County was overseeing the eastern coastal area, and the dismantling of it resulted in a significant drop in the level of Later Han dynasty's local rule.¹¹ Responding to this change, Goguryeo not only accelerated its domestic shake down, but also subdued Okjeo (沃沮) and Dongyae (東濊), which were located in the eastern coastal area. By subduing those two regions, Goguryeo was able to secure a vast economical base, rich in human and material resources (including seafood).

Second, Goguryeo mobilized its troops and launched an all-out assault upon the Han commanderies. Around the final days of the 1st century and the opening of the second, Goguryeo repelled the Hyeonto County from the original Soja-ha area and forced it to relocate to the Hon-ha (渾河) area (where it established itself as the third Hyeonto County) (Ikeuchi Hiroshi 1941 and 1950). In the early half of the 2nd century, Goguryeo continued to attack Hyeonto County and Liaodong

9. 33rd year of the reign of King Yurimyong (瑠璃明王), "Goguryeo bongi" (高句麗本紀), Vol. 1, *Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms*.

10. 6th and 10th year of the reign of King Dongmyeongseong (東明聖王) and the 29th year of the reign of 2nd King Daemosin (大武神王), "Goguryeo bongi" (高句麗本紀), Vol. 1, *Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms*.

11. Jejunjeon (祭遵傳) "Yeoljeon" (列傳) No. 10, *History of the Later Han Dynasty* (後漢書), Vol. 1-2, "Gwangmujegi" (光武帝紀) 1, Part 2, June of the 6th year of Geonmu (建武), Sisaegi (是歲條); Dongyejo (東濊條) 75, "Dongijeon" (東夷傳) Vol. 85.

County. In those attacks, Goguryeo not only used its own troops, but also military forces of the previously subdued regions such as Yemaek or Seonbi. In the year 105, Goguryeo attacked the Liaodong area and occupied six *hyeon*. In 121, Goguryeo mobilized 8,000 troops of Seonbi soldiers and attacked Yodae (遼隊), which was a strategic traffic juncture located at the Ryaoho River area. In 146, Goguryeo also attacked West Anpyeong (西安平) area which was located at the mouth of the Amnok River, killing the Ryeong official of the Daebang County and taking the family of the Taesu official of the Nangnang County.

But Goguryeo could not maintain aggressive approaches all the time. When the response from the Later Han dynasty's part became equally aggressive or simply overwhelming, Goguryeo would also stop its attacks and willfully declare its submission to the Han commanderies. Such cases occurred in 111, 122, and 169.¹² In the second century, Goguryeo demonstrated a pattern of continuously switching from attacking, then to willful submission, and back to attacking for a while, and that was a very distinctive characteristic of the foreign policy maintained by Goguryeo at the time, which was meant to be practical in guarding itself from the Later Han dynasty's pressure and simply, to survive. Also, unlike the campaigns in the eastern coastal area, the attacks upon the Han commanderies were more plundering operations aiming to obtain both men and equipment. This was mostly because the Han commanderies were still strong, and also because Goguryeo at the time was not ready to rule the area with its relatively young, new-born ruling power. At the time Goguryeo was also rivaling Buyeo, which had maintained close relationships with the Han commanderies as well (Yi Jong-uk 1987).

In the latter half period of the second century, the Later Han dynasty finally collapsed, and China was divided into three vast sections, the renowned Wei (魏), Shu (蜀) and Wu (吳) dynasties. These new dynasties launched active assaults in their nearby border areas and also intended to manipulate the others' rear areas, both in order to stabilize their own and to occupy a better position rivaling their counterparts (Yun Yong-gu 1999). As a result, their foreign policies became much more offensive and aggressive compared to the relatively moderate approaches of the Later Han dynasty. And in addition to these three dynasties, several factions also came into the picture. A Gongson clan (公孫氏) regime established itself in the Liaodong area very close to Goguryeo territory,

12. Goguryeo (高句麗) "Dongijeon" (東夷傳) Vol. 85, *The History of the Three Kingdoms* (三國志).

influencing the northwest area of the Korean peninsula and also the Shandong (山東) peninsula. And in the Liaoxi area, the Seonbi tribes had arisen and attacked the Hwabuk and Liaodong areas. The Gongson clan House regime was establishing diplomatic relationships with the Wu and Shu dynasties and was waiting for the opportunity to strike Goguryeo.

This kind of change was devastating to Goguryeo as previously it only had to deal with the Han commanderies. To make matters worse, a royal family member named Balgi, who lost in a royal conflict which broke out after King Gogukcheon's death over the issue of determining the next King, willfully submitted himself to the Gongson clan regime in 197. Uncertainties were coming out of the shadows from all sides. Answering to this crisis, Goguryeo declared the fortress Hwando-seong (which was previously a military installation) as a temporary capital, and entered a dynasty-wide state of emergency in 209. At first, Goguryeo continued to either attack or cooperate with anyone as the situations would warrant, but entering the 230s, Goguryeo also began trying to establish diplomatic relationships. First in 233, it tried to open a channel to the Wu dynasty, which was not on the best terms with the Gongson clan house at the time.¹³ And then in 234, Goguryeo strengthened its relationship with the Wei dynasty, as Wei was engaging itself in active eastward expansion. Thanks to those efforts, and with a joint assault coordinated with the Wei dynasty, Goguryeo was able to destroy the Gongson clan House regime in 238. But the amicable relationship with the Wei dynasty did not last long either. In 242, Goguryeo attacked Seoanpyoeng, but the attempt backfired and only called for a retaliatory strike in which Wei dynasty General Guan Quijian (田丘儉) invaded Goguryeo, and destroyed its capital city in 244.

As we can see, during the early half of the third century, Goguryeo established various kinds of diplomatic relationships with the Gongson clan House regime, or the Wei and Wu dynasties in order to face the cold and fluctuating reality of international society. But Goguryeo's extremely limited diplomatic experiences led to its failing to properly predict and understand the nature of its enemies' foreign policies, and because of such shortsightedness the capital city fell under enemy attack, not once, but twice. This also led to significantly dwindled future foreign activities, not to mention the public's morale falling apart. The damage done by Gwangugeom's invasion was the most primary reason for that, but

13. Ohseo (吳書) No. 2, "Ohjujeon" (吳主傳), *The History of the Three Kingdoms* (三國志), Vol. 47.

another reason of a similar magnitude was the domestic shake down in progress at the time, in terms of administrative rule. That process continued through the mid-third century. So, until the end of the third century, Goguryeo concentrated upon tuning the dynasty's administrative ruling system, defended itself from the sporadic attacks of Wei and Jin (晉) dynasties, and after the 290s, it also tried hard to establish a defense plan against the Seonbi Moyong-bu (慕容部) tribe's attacks.

In conclusion, after the dynasty was founded, Goguryeo continued to extend its reaches to areas including the eastern coastal area which were not inside the realm of Chinese influence, and devised foreign policies which would assure Goguryeo's survival under the Han commanderies' oppression. For example, an unstable foreign relationship was established between Goguryeo and the Later Han dynasty, featuring continuous switch-backs from conflict (to survive), to surrender (to the China-based international order). This kind of foreign policy was repeated in Goguryeo's relationships with the Gongson clan House regime and also the Wei dynasty. There was no other choice for Goguryeo, which had to survive the aggressive intentions of the powerful factions located in China and the Liaodong area.

Diversification of Goguryeo's Foreign Policies, and the Establishment of Its Own Realm

In the early fourth century, Western Jin (西晉) collapsed, and the East Asian international order shifted into a whole new direction. Jin (晉), which was a dynasty based upon the Han (漢) ethnic group Chinese culture, was forced to relocate to the Southern areas of China in 317, and established itself as Eastern Jin (東晉) there in 317. In the meantime, the northern area of China was newly occupied by non-Chinese tribes that were previously residing in the outer areas of China, namely Hyungno, Seonbi, Jeo (氏), Gang (羌), and Gal (羯). An era of division of an unprecedented magnitude, which is referred to by the scholars today as the "Era of Five Barbarian Races and Sixteen Kingdoms," was approaching (Tanikawa Michio 1971; Bak Han-je 1988a). This state of flux on China's part resulted in a dramatic drop in the level of China's ruling authority over the eastern areas. Seeing all this, Goguryeo re-launched its foreign campaigns with their upgraded military forces, developed by a series of administrative shake downs in the dynasty's local system and military administration that had been continuing since the latter half period of the third century (Yeo Ho-Kyu 1998a).

At the time, the primary targets of Goguryeo's foreign expansion policy were the Liaodong region, the northwest areas of the Korean peninsula, and the Buyeo area around the Songhwa River river region. In 311, Goguryeo first secured the West Anpyeong area, and in 313 and 314 it also obtained the Nangnang County and Daebang County, advancing to the northwest regions of the Korean peninsula. By acquiring the cultivated areas in those regions, Goguryeo was provided with a guarantee of significant economic stability. It also established access to the advanced culture of Gojoseon that had accumulated over centuries, which would enable Goguryeo to rise to another level of development.

After subduing the northwest of the Korean peninsula, Goguryeo attacked the Hyeonto County area which was located at the southern shore area of the Hon-ha river, and actively engaged itself in conquering the Liaodong area. But while Goguryeo was still engaged in the Korean peninsula front, the Seonbi Moyong-bu faction, which was also called the Former Yan (前燕), had already established a powerful presence in the Liaodong region. Until 320, Goguryeo continuously attacked the region but was unable to subdue the enemy, and it was left with no other choice but to extend an offer of friendship, requesting an alliance. By that offer, Goguryeo practically granted dominant authority to the Former Yan in the Liaodong area, and chose to devise new plans accommodating the shifting Chinese situation.

When Goguryeo and Former Yan were rivalling over the Liaodong region, in the Hwabuk area the Later Zhao (後趙) dynasty had arisen, destroyed the Former Zhao (前趙) dynasty, and conquered Northern China in 329. Facing this tremendous change in China, Goguryeo sought for an amiable relationship with Later Zhao, and also maintained close ties to Seonbi Umun-bu (宇文部) factions, intending to prepare a joint attack upon Former Yan. At the time in 333, Former Yan was facing internal disruptions. And Goguryeo was finally able to obtain the Buyeo region at the Songhwa River area (Yeo Ho-Kyu 1995: 20), meaning to use it as a frontline base for its advances into the northwest regions. Such kind of posture was undoubtedly targeted at Former Yan.

Conflicts between Goguryeo and Former Yan were escalating. After dealing with its own internal disruptions, Former Yan prepared itself for its advances into China and to defeat Goguryeo. Goguryeo also renewed its close relationship with Later Zhao and the Umun-bu faction, planning to launch a full scale attack upon Former Yan. Former Yan first attacked Goguryeo one or two times, and in 342 finally launched a major attack mobilizing 50,000 troops. At first, Goguryeo was concentrating upon defending the Buyeo front when it was surprised by the

sneak attack of Former Yan, and eventually lost the capital city to the invading forces. Goguryeo's plans to launch a joint assault upon Former Yan effectively ended as a result of this defeat, and Goguryeo had no choice but to dispatch an emissary to the Former Yan government in 343, officially submitting itself as a vassal (稱臣) of the Former Yan dynasty.¹⁴

As we can see, Goguryeo was taking advantage of the shifts in the international situation happening during the early half period of the fourth century, and extended its reaches to the northwest regions of the Korean peninsula and also the Buyeo area, further consolidating its own basis for development. But Goguryeo failed to obtain the Liaodong region which was the central core of Northeast Asia because of its defeat in the conflict with Former Yan. Goguryeo's relationship with Former Yan in the early fourth century shows a familiar pattern of continuing attacks or joint assaults and then suddenly turning to requests or offers mentioning the forming of an alliance. Its relationships with the China-based dynasties were still shaky, and Goguryeo's dealing with Former Yan in the fourth century was still based upon a mentality and assessment formed and hatched in the earlier periods.

Then, as the era of significant divisions had begun, the international order of East Asian society shifted immensely. Independent factions started to launch campaigns of their own, and formed coalitions or alliances of their own as well. Diverse relationships resulted in new hierarchies forming everywhere. The unitary, China-based international order was gone. Independent factions publicly declared themselves as empires, and a distinctively plural international atmosphere was created. Independent factions calling themselves empires, and inferior entities under their control, also formed multi-layered hierarchy structures. In this kind of plural and diverse situation, the international relationships between factions, entities or dynasties were to be defined and determined by the involved players' respective military power and authority. This kind of situation also changed the way appointed titles were prepared and bestowed. Until the Han dynasty period, appointment titles were bestowed with an intention to consolidate the China-based, unitary international order through such action. Then after the fourth century, Jijeol-ho (持節號) titles and Janggun-ho (將軍號) titles, which indicated the level of authority in military leadership, or Dodok Jae-gunsa-ho (都

14. See Ji Bae-seon 1986, Kim Yeong-ju 1997, Yi Gi-dong 1996, Kang Seon 2001, and Gong Seok-guk 2003 for the relationship on Goguryeos with Former Yan.

督諸軍事號) titles and titles of the local officials, which indicated the range of authority of a particular post, came to be created and bestowed (Eom Gyeong-mang 1963: 87-136; Kim Han-gyu 1997: 319-329) more dominantly.

As we can see, the international diplomacy among the dynasties of East Asian societies during the early half period of the fourth century was conducted based upon a very plural, multi-layered international order. Using this kind of environment wisely and effectively would mean that a particular dynasty or faction could in the meantime establish peaceful coexistence with other rival factions or dynasties, and pursue internal development or exert external ruling power during peaceful times. For example, Seongreuk of the Later Zhao dynasty served the Former Zhao dynasty for a long time, gained strength in the meantime, and finally declared the foundation of an empire and destroyed Former Zhao.¹⁵ Former Yan also served Later Zhao, and allied itself with Later Zhao with Later Zhao's attack on Danbu (段部) thereby destroying it, and then rivaled with Later Zhao and took all the credit of the joint operation against Danbu. Former Yan also served Eastern Jin, then later in 352 declared itself as an empire and alienated its former superior dynasty.¹⁶

From all these events, we could say that Goguryeo was not that well aware of the new, flexible nature of the international order at the time. Goguryeo only viewed the procedure of submitting itself as a vassal to a larger enemy (稱蕃) as a "temporary strategy" which could be utilized in crisis situations, and not for the long term. It did not consider the matter as an effective tool of establishing a peaceful relationship which could buy them precious time for internal development. Goguryeo was not fully realizing the true nature of the fourth century, and was still depending upon the memories and experiences from earlier times.

Then after the 350s, the international situation of East Asia changed again. Former Yan, which was trying to extend its reaches to the central core of China, was finally able to take control of the northern half of China in 352, when Later Zhao was suffering internal chaos. Former Yan immediately declared itself as an empire, and moved its capital to northern China. But Former Yan still had to worry about a big opponent sitting behind it, and that was Goguryeo. With the

15. Seongreukjaegi (石勒載記), *Records of the Jin Dynasty* (晉書) Vol. 104-105; Seongnok (石勒 Hujorok (後趙錄), *Sipryukguk chunchujipbo* (十六國春秋輯補) Vol. 11-13.

16. Moyonghwang (慕容皝), Moyongjungjaegi (慕容儁載記), *Records of the Jin Dynasty* (晉書) Vol. 109-110; "Jeonyeonrok" (前燕錄) *Sipryukguk chunchujipbo* (十六國春秋輯補) Vol. 23-26.

Buyeo area under its control, Goguryeo was in a perfect position to pose a considerable threat to the security of Former Yan. That situation remained a constant threat to Former Yan when it had to deal with Eastern Jin or FormerJin (前秦). But it was a dangerous status-quo for Goguryeo as well, as Goguryeo was not ready to withstand an all-out attack from Former Yan either. So both dynasties had no other choice but to accept the reality and form a diplomatic relationship based upon that reality.

Goguryeo dispatched an emissary to Former Yan in December, 355, and acknowledged Former Yan's newly declared status of its empire. And in return, Former Yan also granted and bestowed titles such as Yeongju Jae-Gunsa (營州諸軍事), Jeongdong Dae-Janggun (征東大將軍, East Campaign General), Yeongju Jasa (營州刺史, Yeongju Prefect), Nangnang-gong (樂浪公, Duke of Nangnang), and King of Goguryeo (高句麗王) to King Gogugweon, and recognized its realm. Both dynasties established a tributary-investiture relationship based upon the new international order that had been forming since the beginning of the fourth century, and both sides recognized the status of their opponents accordingly: Former Yan as an empire, and Goguryeo with its own realms of power. The key factor in this agreement was the issue of controlling the Buyeo area. Former Yan acknowledged Goguryeo's authority and control over the area, and Goguryeo agreed not to challenge Former Yan's status or attack it as long as Goguryeo's control over the Buyeo area was duly recognized (Yeo Ho-Kyu 2000a).

By this new agreement Goguryeo was finally able to end its unstable and shaky relationship with China, which was an endless repeat of conflict and surrender, and replaced it with a more solid and stable one, thus stabilizing the western border area. Such stable foreign conditions let Goguryeo concentrate on reinforcing its authority and actual power throughout the Eastern region, just like the Chinese dynasties like Later Zhao or Former Yan did. During the latter half of the fourth century, based upon its newly achieved amiable relationship with Former Yan or FormerJin, Goguryeo first attempted to extend its reaches to the Southern areas of the Korean peninsula. Its initial attacks upon the Baekje dynasty failed, but diplomatic operations upon Silla were successful, resulting in subduing Silla as a subordinate entity under Goguryeo's solitary influence. Silla's representative was attached to the Goguryeo emissaries when they were dispatched to Joen Jin in 377 and 381, serving to heighten the level of Goguryeo's recognized international status. And a Silla official was taken into official custody of the Goguryeo government in 392, as a symbol of Goguryeo's superiority to Silla.

After the late fourth century, Goguryeo took advantage of the newly estab-

lished stable tributary-investiture relationship with the Chinese dynasties, and based upon such a stable relationship succeeded in establishing a solid realm of control, authority, and rule in its own area. The frequent and active campaigns launched during the reigns of Kings Gwanggaeto and Jangsu (Cheon Gwan-wu 1979; Seo Yeong-su 1982; Seo Yeong-su 1988) were vivid demonstrations of such foreign policies. During the early days of King Jangsu's reign, Goguryeo extended its reaches to the northern and middle areas of the Korean peninsula and also to the Manchu area, subdued Silla and Buyeo, and influenced the Northern Khitan or Su-chen tribes with its power.

In the meantime, Goguryeo also established a unique perspective viewing the outer world (天下觀) based upon their own traditional belief perceiving themselves as an entity related to the Sky (天孫族), and that such a perspective both mirrored and justified Goguryeo's extensive reaches in territorial terms and the level of control it achieved in the inner areas of those reaches. They chose to believe that the Goguryeo people carried the sacred bloodline of the Sky spirits and that Goguryeo was indeed the center of its own universe. All the other inferior entities had to acknowledge Goguryeo's superiority, and pay tribute to Goguryeo (Yang Gi-seok 1983; Noh Tae-dong 1988). But Goguryeo did not believe that "all" the neighboring countries had to do likewise. The Goguryeo people established a certain perimeter which encompassed only countries, dynasties and entities that bore relevant blood relationships or cultural similarities with the Goguryeo people, and defined that circle as the range of its own universe. Campaign efforts or diplomatic assimilation was only targeted at areas inside that range. Yet there were also exceptions; northern tribes like the nomadic Khitan or the Su-chen hunter tribes were included in the list of campaign targets, and Japanese invaders were considered an evil faction trying to disrupt the international order centered upon Goguryeo.

As we can see, after the fourth century Goguryeo adopted different diplomatic strategies to deal with different types of opponents, and successfully established its own realm of power in northeastern Asia by diversifying its foreign policies. Later, in various situations, the Chinese dynasties which became weak to the level of being considered rather "toothless" from the view of the Goguryeo government, also became Goguryeo's potential targets. For example, Goguryeo established a tributary-investiture relationship with the Later Yan dynasty in 396, but when Later Yan rather lost its supposed situation and power as an arguably legitimate dynasty due to internal disruption, Goguryeo attacked Later Yan without hesitation and extended its reaches to the Liaodong area in 400-402 (Yeo Ho-Kyu

2000b). During the early half period of the sixth century, Goguryeo also attempted to advance into the Liaoxi area when the Northern Wei dynasty, which maintained a long-term tributary-investiture relationship with Goguryeo, started to suffer chaotic disruptions inside (Yi Seong-je 2001; Inoue Naoki 2001).

Also, the Chinese dynasties that were not yet in any serious problem, and dynasties that were upon apparently good terms with Goguryeo based on the aforementioned tributary-investiture relationship, were neither immune nor safe from Goguryeo's exploitation of the situation. Goguryeo's rivalry with Northern Wei over the issue of the Northern Yan dynasty is a good example. At the time, Northern Wei was attacking Northern Yan and was attempting to advance into the eastern areas. Then Goguryeo entered the situation in 436, and despite its tributary-investiture relationship with Northern Wei, it supported Northern Yan, rescued their leadership, and escorted the head of the Northern Yan leadership Pung Hong (馮弘) back with them. This was because Goguryeo needed to repel the Northern Wei's attempt of extending its eastward reaches (Yi Seong-je 2004). Goguryeo's actions brought heightened tension to the dynamics between Goguryeo and Northern Wei and all diplomatic links between those two dynasties were severed. Compensating for that diplomatic loss, Goguryeo strengthened its relationship with Song in Southern China (Yi Seong-je 2003), and also sent signals of friendship to Yuyeon of the Mongol plains. Such efforts were designed to let Goguryeo play the role of an intermediary, and also to have Northern Wei in constant check under a diplomatic radar (Gong Seok-gu 1996).

Then in the mid-fifth century, the international situation surrounding Goguryeo shifted again. The main catalyst of such changes was the rapidly changing situation of the southern area of the Korean peninsula. Silla and Baekje formed a joint front to resist Goguryeo's advance, and Gaya also participated in those efforts. From Goguryeo's point of view, the betrayal of Silla was an unacceptable action (Noh Jung-guk 1981a). So Goguryeo immediately reopened dialogue with Northern Wei in the hope of reestablishing an amicable relationship. Embroiled in conflicts with both Song and Yuyeon, Northern Wei as well was in no condition to refuse Goguryeo's offer of friendship. So both dynasties renewed their tributary-investiture relationship in 462. After that, with a secured rear area in its pocket, Goguryeo attacked Baekje and conquered its capital in 475, and also subdued the nearby areas of the Silla capital in 481, showing the residents of the Korean peninsula's southern regions that they were under control of the Goguryeo dynasty (Inoue Naoki 2000).

Goguryeo also maintained its foreign policies to check and restrain Northern

Wei even after it renewed its relationship with them. Goguryeo was still maintaining a closer relationship with the Southern Chinese dynasties and Yuyeon, and also politely but without hesitation refused a marriage offer from Northern Wei in 466, as such a marital relationship would potentially serve as a breach of security. In the meantime, Goguryeo joined forces with Yuyeon, blood enemies of Northern Wei, and attempted to establish a divided occupation of the Jiduwu (地豆于) area located in the southeast area of the Daeheungan mountain range (大興安嶺山脈), in hope of extending its reaches to the northwest region. Such diverse foreign policies maintained by the Goguryeo government helped it to establish an independent power block throughout Northeast Asia in the late fifth century, and also to establish various levels of diplomatic relationships with nearby countries and dynasties (Noh Tae-don 1984).

In the end, Northern Wei and other Chinese dynasties had to recognize and acknowledge Goguryeo's level of power and range of influence. Northern Wei prepared the most highest level of title for the Goguryeo king, and treated the Goguryeo emissary with diplomatic protocols second only to the Southern dynasty league's emissary. Moreover, in 504 when Goguryeo dispatched an emissary to Northern Wei and asked the emperor to excuse them for not bringing Buyeo gold and Seobra (涉羅, Silla) jade because of the intrusions of Mulgil and Baekje, Emperor Sae-jong of Northern Wei, recognizing Goguryeo's position as a huge liquor jug with numerous smaller jugs beside it, told the emissary in no uncertain terms to subdue the factions that were causing trouble and to continue to bring the tributes of Buyeo and Silla to him.¹⁷ This conversation practically confirms the fact that Northern Wei was publicly and officially acknowledging Goguryeo's status in the Northeast Asian community (Misaki Yoshiaki 1982; Bak Han-je 1988b).

As we can see, the divisions that had been forming since the beginning of the fourth century brought very plural and multi-layered sets of international situations to East Asia. Numerous entities with their own power and voices were in constant state of conflict and restraint that were ultimately producing a status-quo. In the early half of the fourth century, Goguryeo was still not fully aware of this situation, but began to grasp the merits of such condition in the latter period of that same century. Following such realization, Goguryeo established a series of tributary-investiture relationships with the Chinese dynasties which helped it

17. "Chronologies of Goryeo" (高麗), *Book of Northern Wei* (魏書), Vol. 100.

stabilize the northwest border areas, and adopted diverse foreign policies in its dealings with several neighboring countries to expand its outer reaches. Taking advantage of the division of China, Goguryeo maintained a peaceful relationship with the Chinese dynasties and established its own power circle throughout the Northeast Asian region.

Unification of China, and Changes in Goguryeo's Foreign Policies in Later Periods

Coming into the sixth century, there were slight changes happening in the East Asian situation involving Goguryeo. In the northern areas, the Mulgil (勿吉) tribe, which had been continuing to expand its reaches into the middle area of Manchu since the 470s, finally began to press Goguryeo. And in the southern areas, Baekje and Silla were reinforcing their alliance and were desperately resisting Goguryeo's southward expanse. All this resistance significantly challenged Goguryeo's advance efforts. There is a historical reference as a good example, showing us that in 521 King Muryeong of Baekje sent an emissary to Liang (梁) and said that "We defeated Goguryeo several times, and finally became a great country again." Goguryeo's superiority was still intact, but new challenges were presenting themselves from both north and south.

Answering to these new challenges, Goguryeo dispatched emissaries to Northern Wei in 504 and made sure that Northern Wei was still recognizing Goguryeo's own realm of authority. Goguryeo also newly established a diplomatic relationship with Japanese invaders in 516 (Ju Min-don 1995). After that, Goguryeo responded to the challenges from Baekje and Silla with violent military operations, and also managed to weaken the Mulgil's advance as well. During the 520s, Goguryeo also tried to extend its reaches to the Liaoxi area while Northern Wei was in internal trouble (Inoue Naoki 2001).

After all those efforts, the exterior look of Goguryeo seemed like it was regaining stability. But internally, the situation was far from stable. Conflicts between the nobles were becoming worse. In 531, King Anjang was assassinated. In the winter of 544, an armed conflict over the succession of the throne resulted in more than 2,000 casualties (Yi Hong-jik 1971). And to make matters worse, the insurrection of Ganjuri broke out at the Gungnae Fortress in 557.

While the Goguryeo nobles were still fighting each other over power, the international situation of the East Asian society was changing rapidly. Northern

Wei was suffering massive internal disruptions, and was finally split into Eastern Wei (東魏) and Western Wei (西魏) in 534. Later, in 550, Eastern Wei collapsed and Northern Zhai (北齊) was established instead. The Northern Zhai Emperor Munxuandi (文宣帝) conquered the Gomakhae (庫莫奚) area, marched into the Liaoxi area, and threatened Goguryeo in 552. Surprised by Northern Zhai's pressure, Goguryeo agreed to return 5,000 households that were previously captured during the ending days of Northern Wei (Yi Seong-je 2001). Most of all, one year before all of this, in 551, the allied forces of Baekje and Silla defeated the Goguryeo forces and finally took the Han-gang river area from Goguryeo. It was a devastating blow to Goguryeo, meaning it lost the critical middle area of the Korean peninsula. And before Goguryeo was even prepared to swallow that kind of loss, it was hit upon by another enemy called Northern Zhai as mentioned above. Crises were forming, literally everywhere. In 552, one of Goguryeo's long-term, close friends Yuyeon was defeated and destroyed by the Turks. After that, the Turks conquered the Northern plains in 555, and attacked Khitan after it came over the Daeheungan-ryeong mountain range, and finally started to threaten Goguryeo (Yi Yong-beom 1959).

These crises, from both north and south, forced Goguryeo to devise special plans which would help it out of the situation. First, Goguryeo formed a secret pact with Silla, offering a cease-fire while also granting Silla the authority over the eastern coastal area. Agreeing to the contents of the pact, Silla launched a surprise attack upon the Baekje forces in 553, occupied the entire Han-gang river area exclusively, then extended its forces to the Yeongheung-man region of the eastern coastline, and stopped right there with no more northward advance. As we can see, Goguryeo was able to secure and stabilize the Southern border area by granting partial regional control to Silla (Noh Tae-dong 1976). But the crises were far from over, and the problems were far from being resolved. The Turks were gaining speed and power as time went on, and the Goguryeo nobles were still fighting each other. The Goguryeo nobles moved the capital to Pyeongyang city and constructed a strong fortress (Tanaka Toshiaki 1985). Also, in fear of their conflicts with each other might result in the collective destruction of the entire noble society, they also established a nobility coalition which required the highest ranking official - the Daedaero minister - to be elected every three years (Yim Ki-hwan 1992). This brought some reconciliatory stability to the situation, and flexible responses to the international conditions were to be devised based upon this new status-quo.

At this time, the condition of China was yet again shifting. Eastern Wei and

Western Wei was transformed into Northern Zhai and Northern Zhou (北周) in 557, and these two were again engaged in violent conflicts. After Northern Zhou destroyed Northern Zhai in 577, Northern Zhou was yet again replaced by Sui (隋) in 581. And in the meantime, the Turks were still rapidly developing of their power, to the extent that the Northern Zhou and Northern Zhai were both trying to please the Turks by sending presents or offering young princesses for marriages. The Turks advanced eastward, conquered Khitan, and finally reached Malgal, which was located at the Northern area of Goguryeo (Noh Tae-dong 1999).

The international condition surrounding Goguryeo had been in constant flux since the early days of the sixth century, and then a monumental and also permanent change arrived in 589. Sui finally destroyed Jin (陳), and reunited China, which had been divided for over 300 years. After reuniting China, Sui refused to accept the plural nature of the pre-existing international order, and pursued to re-establish the unitary nature of the international order, undoubtedly centered upon a united China. It was only a matter of time before Goguryeo faced full-scale conflict with China as Goguryeo was supporting a plural international order. The diplomatic relationship with both dynasties reveal how Goguryeo modified its foreign policies as China continued on its path to reunification.¹⁸

The diplomatic relationship between Goguryeo and Sui seems to show three distinctive periods or phases, with 581-589 being one period, and 590-598 being the next, and 598-614 being the final one. During each period, the cycle of calling a truce, then experiencing a decline in the once-amicable relationship, and then resorting to warfare, was periodically repeated. The beginning of phase two, which marked the resolution of the previous phase's conflict, was made possible as Goguryeo decided to file an official apology when it received the letter from the Sui Emperor Wen (文帝). Sui accepted the apology and so a new period of peace was opened. The beginning of phase three was also enabled by Goguryeo's apology in 598, and Goguryeo dispatched an emissary for celebration (賀正使). Those were the key points, apologies and entitlements (investitures). But what exactly was it that Goguryeo had apologized to Sui for, and what kind of assurances did Sui make to Goguryeo so they would apologize?

In that regard, the letter (璽書) that Sui Emperor Wen had sent to King Pyeongweon in 590 should be noted. It contained three important parts. In part 1, he mentioned the reason for investiture of the Goguryeo king, and according

18. This article is from Yeo Ho-Kyu 2002.

to him it was because he wanted to appoint the Goguryeo king so that the king could embrace Chinese instructions and continue doing his job. In part 2, he mentioned examples of Goguryeo's various violations of its assigned duties, with some of them directly involving Goguryeo's actions regarding Sui, but also some of them related to Goguryeo's relationship with other entities like Malgal (靺鞨驅逼) or Khitan (契丹固禁). And in part three, he forgave Goguryeo for all its faults because apparently China and Sui were not free either from being the reason of such infringements, as clearly China failed to set proper standards for Goguryeo to follow. In the end, the emperor also instructed the Goguryeo king to stabilize the region, and said in no uncertain terms if the Goguryeo king failed to do that, the dynasty will be punished.¹⁹

The Sui Emperor was saying that Goguryeo failed to fulfill its role as an investiture country, partly because Sui was not able to provide it with proper instructions (訓導不明). "Proper instructions" would mean "proper definition of its duties." But Goguryeo had been maintaining a tributary-investiture relationship for centuries since the old Han dynasty days. So it becomes clear that Goguryeo and the Sui Emperor were viewing the concept of such a relationship very differently. Apparently Sui had been trying to impose its version of that relationship upon Goguryeo and also trying to force Goguryeo to accept it, yet without success. And that seems to be what the Sui Emperor was referring to in his remarks.

Then, how different were both entities' views upon the aforementioned tributary-investiture relationship? As said earlier, Goguryeo had been considering such a relationship as part of a diplomatic procedure of having its own political realm of power recognized since the mid-fourth century. And Goguryeo's dispatching of an emissary to the Sui dynasty in December 581 must have been out of such consideration, no more, no less. In fact, such considerations were not entirely without basis. In the same year Baekje and Malgal also dispatched emissaries to Sui, but the title that the Goguryeo King Pyeongweon received was the highest one (Jeong 3-Pum). Malgal was not even provided with an appointing entitlement, and Khitan, Silla and Japanese invaders did not even dispatch an emissary. Considering the fact that Goguryeo received the highest honor from Sui (Kaneko Shuichi 2001), especially compared to other nearby dynasties and countries, it can be said that Goguryeo indeed had achieved its goal.

Then, what was the position of Sui? In his letter of 590, Sui Emperor Wen

19. "Chronology of Goryeo" No. 46, *History of the Sui Dynasty* (隨書) Vol. 81.

made it clear that he would not allow any more attempts on Goguryeo's part to subdue nearby areas and to expand its reaches, almost citing such attempts as capital crimes. Around 590, the views of both Goguryeo and Sui regarding the traditional tributary-investiture relationship were clashing with each other. At first, when Sui was initially founded, ideologically it pursued a unitary order centered upon China, and sent out *hungwan* (勳官) and *jakho* (爵號) titles which were different in fashion compared to the ones of earlier dynasties. Yet China was not yet unified, so such an ideological aim could not be implemented in real life situations. At the time, Sui also granted the highest title to the Goguryeo king, in a gesture seemingly acknowledging the magnitude and nature of Goguryeo's own realm.

Yet around 583, there were massive changes occurring in the northwest regions. Sui disrupted the Turks, and established a relationship with East Turks as their superior in 585. Sui also allied itself with the Khitan, and attacked the Turks. When the Khitan emissary Makhahul (莫賀弗) visited the Sui Emperor, he bestowed the title Grand General (大將軍), which carried similar weight to that of the title granted to the Goguryeo king. It was a message that Sui was no longer recognizing Goguryeo's relative superiority to Khitan, and Sui was considering the Khitan as a strong and valuable partner. This message also made it clear that Goguryeo and Sui were not viewing the traditional relationship at the same level anymore. Normal diplomatic functions were becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. But the international condition around 583 and 584 was not entirely bad for Goguryeo either; even though Sui was expanding its influence in the Liaoxi area and denouncing Goguryeo's position overall, the power of the Turks faction was significantly reduced, and the Sui dynasty's ruling power was still not that well established.

So, Goguryeo stopped sending emissaries to the Sui government in March 584, and reopened their efforts to extend their reaches toward the Malgal and Khitan (this can be confirmed by the letter of 590, as these two specific tribes were mentioned in Sui Emperor's remarks). Goguryeo was "threatening" Malgal with massive military operations, while also "restraining" the Khitan, an ally of the Sui dynasty, but on both fronts trying to block them from having direct access to Sui. Goguryeo was still maintaining superior authority throughout northeast Asia, and Sui was only passively checking their progress.²⁰

20. After 586, a Khitan Byeolbu (契丹別部) official named Chulbok (出伏) betrayed Goguryeo

But due to the Sui dynasty's reunification of China in 589, Goguryeo's foreign policy had to go through some changes. Goguryeo could not continue its expansion at the risk of facing an all-out conflict with the Sui dynasty. There were, though, contingency plans in the works, but then the letter of Sui Emperor Wen had arrived. He expressed his regrets of not properly leading or instructing Goguryeo and letting Goguryeo commit a misbehaviour, and warned Goguryeo not to do it again, and also not to subdue any more nearby entities. Goguryeo had no choice but to accept this "regret," as it was indeed a tempting offer considering the situation. And it was also expected that Goguryeo would be able to maintain its current boundaries, as, according to the Emperor's remarks, advances had already been made were supposedly not to become an issue.

That was the reason why Goguryeo decided to apologize for its "misbehaviour." King Yeongyang received a title which was one level lower than the previous one (Sanggaebu Uidong Samsa 上開府儀同三司, and Duke of Liaodong County 遼東郡公). This title was actually a lower one than that received by the Khitan emissary Makhahul, and was at the same level with the one received by Baekje King Wideok. Sui was making it very clear it would not acknowledge Goguryeo's superiority over anything. And it was also a strong message for Goguryeo to stop "messing around" with smaller entities. After the diplomatic relationship between Goguryeo and Sui was restored, Malgal, previously under control of Goguryeo, started to dispatch emissaries of their own again in December 591. That action was clearly triggered and enabled by Sui dynasty's ordering Goguryeo not to interfere, and to fully cooperate. By allowing the Malgal emissary to proceed, Goguryeo was practically saying that Goguryeo would no longer try to expand its reaches subduing nearby countries.

So as we can see, the diplomatic relationship, based on a revised tributary-investiture relationship between Goguryeo and Sui that was reestablished in the 590s, was containing promises, requiring Sui to ensure the independence of Goguryeo and therein requiring Goguryeo to withhold power expansion. Compared to the previous situation, a stable diplomatic relationship with China remained the same, but the part of Goguryeo's taking advantage of the situation and pursuing development and expansion was partially changed.

Then after the 590s, the northeast Asian international order was again devel-

and surrendered to Sui. Sui accepted him, and placed him at the North area of the Galhaenahl (渴奚那頡) region ("Khitans," *History of the Sui Dynasty* Vol. 84).

oped in a direction that was not so favorable for Goguryeo. The Sui dynasty's influence over the West Ryaoho River area and the Daeheungan-ryeong mountain range was vastly reinforced (as seen from the fact that Khitan, Hae (奚), Seub (霫) and Silwi dispatched emissaries to the Sui government, in January 593). And in 595, an official named Wichung (韋沖), who was newly assigned to the post of the Yeongju prefect, started to send friendly messages to the Khitan and Malgal tribes while also winning over Hae and Seub, and finally started to press Goguryeo. An establishment of Sui influence throughout the region would mean Goguryeo being severed from the Mongol plains due to roadways being blocked by Sui, and it was also being challenged in its controlling of the Malgal tribes.

Sui did not attack Goguryeo directly, but it was clear that the letter of 590, which guaranteed Goguryeo's previous status including its independence and security, was long rendered obsolete. And as the guarantee was thrown out of the window, Goguryeo was no longer held responsible to live up to the agreement as an "investiture entity" anymore. Goguryeo ceased dispatching emissaries to the Sui government in January 592, and in July 593 ordered the Malgal tribes not to send anymore personnel to Sui as well, in fear of letting them continue to dispatch personnel as usual might lead to permanently losing the Malgal tribes to Sui (Hinozaki Saburou 1949: 41-43, and 1991). It was a serious situation for Goguryeo.

Yet, after a while, the uncertainty factor led Goguryeo to decide to send officials to Sui in 597, and to check the possibility of renewing the earlier guarantee, while also collecting information regarding the internal condition of the Sui dynasty. The final conclusion, extracted from all the information and data gathered, indicated that the crisis situation was in no way to be resolved by merely reinstating the traditional tributary-investiture relationship. So Goguryeo swiftly ended all its official relationships with Sui and launched a preemptive strike against them in 598 (Yi Seong-je 2000).

But both dynasties, after resorting to a full-scale conflict and altogether dragged into a probable future of both sides being destroyed, agreed to return to the earlier tributary-investiture relationship. Yet again, Sui was not offering any guarantee anymore. Sui was in the middle of a conflict with the Turks factions at the time, so it was in no position to maintain a tasking Goguryeo campaign for an extended period of time. Then, a man named Doli Gahan, who was overseeing the eastern areas of the Turks, temporarily moved himself to the Grand Wall area, and then personally visited the Sui government and received a title named

Gyaemin-gahan (啓民可汗) in 599. The Sui dynasty used this person in its campaigns conquering other Gahan (可汗) figures, and heavily reinforced its control over the region of the Turks in 602.

This turn of events made it virtually impossible for Goguryeo to expand its influences to the northwest area or form any new alliances with any factions. And Emperor Yang, who succeeded the previous Emperor Wudi, immediately engaged himself in a massive foreign campaign. In 607, he embarked upon a series of northern campaigns, reached the territory of the Turkish Gyaemin Gahan, and started to conquer several regions including Toyokhon. And for sure, Goguryeo was not off the list of targets. It was clear that the traditional tributary-investiture relationship was becoming obsolete again, and Goguryeo's independent status was being seriously threatened, again. The previous foreign policies based upon that were to be severely revised, again.

So, Goguryeo continued preparations to deflect the invading Sui dynasty forces at the northwestern front, and also started to actively attack the southern areas of the Korean peninsula. In 603, Goguryeo attacked the Bukhan-sanseong fortress of Silla, and also key areas along the northern perimeters of Baekje and Silla. The strategic objective of the Goguryeo forces was well said in the famous General Ondal's (溫達) remark, "We will not return before we reclaim the Gyaerib-hyeon (鷄立峴) and the Western area of the Juk mountain range (竹嶺)." Ondal was on a campaign aiming to reclaim the Han-gang river area, which was lost to Silla in the mid-sixth century. It means that reclaiming the Han-gang area was the primary intention of Goguryeo at this time (Yim Ki-hwan 1995: 155). To counteract and ultimately neutralize Sui dynasty's threat, which meant either occupying a more favorable position in its relationship with Sui, or defending the country from Sui's attacks, Goguryeo had to re-consolidate its original realm of power, and Goguryeo's southward advances in the Korean peninsula were planned for that purpose. Goguryeo also established a close relationship with the Japanese invaders in order to put not only Sui but also Silla under constant check (Yi Seong-si 1990 and 1998).

This kind of approach on Goguryeo's part regarding foreign policies continued until after the Tang dynasty replaced the Sui. In its early days, Tang had to use both strong and gentle measures when it came to the issue of Goguryeo, as it had to first bring unity to the fractions inside China that resurfaced after Sui's collapse. So, Goguryeo responded to Tang's approach accordingly, seeking for any possibility of peaceful coexistence. In the meantime, the Goguryeo nobles were dividing into two groups due to their differences in viewing the international situ-

ation. One group opted for a more gentler approach, while one group supported a more resolute approach. When Tang reunited China and pressed Goguryeo, the internal debates became more volatile and the level of hatred and animosity was also heightened, finally resulting in Yeongaesomun (淵蓋蘇文), one of the supporters on the resolute front, taking over the government in 642 (Shin Chae-ho 1948; Yi Man-yeol 1978). He took control of the government under the cause of supporting the necessity of taking a more firm-handed approach to international conditions, so after his takeover it became considerably harder for Goguryeo to devise flexible foreign policies (Noh Tae-dong 1989a).

In order to counteract Tang's invasion, Yeongaesomun continued the construction of the Cheonri Jangseong Great wall, which was initiated in 630. He attempted to solidify the military defense of northwestern borders, kept Malgal under Goguryeo's restraint, and repelled the intrusions from Khitan and Turks which were being orchestrated by Tang at the time (Yeo Ho-Kyu 2000c). Added to that, under the leadership of Yeongaesomun, Goguryeo formed an alliance with Baekje and launched a joint attack upon Silla (Noh Jung-guk 1981b), and upgraded its military relationship with the Japanese invaders (Kim Ji-yeong 2003). Goguryeo also tried to establish a dialogue with Seolyeonta (薛延陀) through a Malgal channel (Seo Yeong-gyo 2003), and also dispatched emissaries to the Central Asian regions (Anasawa Kazumitu and Bame Jyunichi 1976; Bak Jin-uk 1988; Noh Tae-dong 1989b).

Implementing this kind of series of foreign policies, Goguryeo was able to defend itself from Tang's hostile intentions. But Yeongaesomun committed a fatal tactical error in 642 by refusing to rescue Silla in spite of its explicit request, and lost a critical opportunity to stabilize the southern border area. Refused by Goguryeo, Silla turned to Tang for assistance and finally chose to form an alliance with Tang. The allied forces of Tang and Silla threatened Goguryeo from both its north and south sides. The Tang troops received provisions from Silla, so they were able to conduct operations for a prolonged period of time inside Goguryeo territory, and Goguryeo's solid internal defense system was effectively neutralized as a result (Yeo Ho-Kyu 1998b). This kind of condition significantly weakened and also narrowed Goguryeo's strategic position, and foreign policies of any kind or military operations of any sort became increasingly difficult to be either newly hatched or maintained. Eventually, Goguryeo faced a quick death, as the conflicts inside the "nobility society" intensified to the extent of being out of control, and the allied forces continually launched attacks upon Goguryeo on all fronts.

Conclusion

Above, we have examined the international situation of the East Asian world and also the changes that occurred in Goguryeo's foreign policies. As we have seen, Goguryeo established various diplomatic relationships with many countries, dynasties and entities including all the Chinese dynasties, Baekje and Silla of the Korean peninsula, Japan, and also the Northern tribes. And the levels of those relationships differed due to the nature of the opponents. Goguryeo faced many failures and backfires in its dealings with the outer world, to the extent of even losing its own capital city several times, but for the most part it managed to respond to the outer world challenges delivered to them by devising foreign policies that would differ from time to time in a very flexible fashion in order to match the ever-shifting international condition.

During the time period from founding the dynasty, Goguryeo actively took advantage of the changes spotted in Former Han's or Later Han's foreign policies, and managed to develop itself into an ancient state while also repelling the Hyeonto County's rule. After the dynasty was founded, Goguryeo also utilized Later Han's passive local control policy and expanded its reaches to the eastern coastal area where others had not been able to establish a permanent fixture of power. But the relationship with Later Han was shaky to say the least, as Goguryeo had to achieve survival by not only aggressively attacking it but also from time to time surrendering its ground and acknowledging the China-based international power-play. This kind of relationship was repeated in Goguryeo's relationship with the Gongson clan House regime and also in its relationship with the Wei dynasty. It was the only choice that Goguryeo could have made at the time in order to survive in the midst of powerful and also hostile entities.

In the early fourth century, Western Jin collapsed and the situation of East Asia changed rapidly. The unitary international order centered upon China was dismantled, and a new plural, multi-layered international order replaced it. The traditional tributary-investiture relationship that constituted the main feature of such unitary order was transformed and came to have new meaning, mutual and reciprocal acknowledgment of the independent power and authority of all involved parties. Goguryeo also discovered the merits of such a newly formed international situation, and tried to make the best of it. Goguryeo formed a tributary-investiture relationship with Former Yan and stabilized its Western borders. Then it issued foreign policies that would let itself establish an independent power block throughout the eastern regions. And in the fifth century, it main-

tained peaceful relationships with Chinese dynasties, which further helped Goguryeo to solidify its own realm.

But the situation changed again when the Sui dynasty reunited China in the late sixth century. Sui refused to accept the plurality of the current international order, and chose to abandon it in favor of the original, China-centric unitary world order. It was only inevitable for Goguryeo to expect devastating clashes with Sui as long as Goguryeo was in favor of the plural order. Several conflicts and compromises ensued that finally resulted in an all-out war. At the northwestern front, Goguryeo prepared for Sui's invasion, and also tried to reconstruct its own power realm within the Korean peninsula by attacking Baekje and Silla. This foreign policy continued until after Tang came. But as Tang became increasingly apparent in its intentions, and as Goguryeo nobles who preferred a more resolute position in dealing with outer world conditions took control of the government, flexible policies were hard to find. A perfect example of such was Goguryeo's denial of Silla's request, which in the end prompted the Silla people to run right into the arms of the Tang dynasty. An alliance between Tang and Silla was born, and in the wake of the out-of-control hostility among Goguryeo noble figures themselves, Goguryeo had nowhere else to go but to face destruction.

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