

A Buffer Zone for Peace: Andong Protectorate and Diplomatic Relations between Silla, Balhae, and Tang in the 8th to 10th Centuries*

KIM Jong-bok

Abstract

One of the crucial incidents in Balhae history was Balhae's attack on Tang Dengzhou in 732. This triggered the unified armed forces of Silla-Tang to engage in an attack on Balhae, similar to the Silla-Tang allied forces' attack on Goguryeo in 668. However, while Goguryeo had been no match for this powerful alliance, Balhae emerged victorious. In order to locate the factors that sustained Balhae's durability and prosperity, this article explores the diplomatic relations between Silla, Balhae, and Tang, specifically by analyzing the sovereignty of Liaodong and the condition of the northwestern areas of the Korean peninsula where the three states bordered one another. Andong Protectorate, which originally ruled this area, was demoted to Andong Area Command in 698, making the northwestern Korean peninsula a buffer zone between Silla and Tang. Andong Protectorate was later restored in 705 only to be abolished again in 758, rendering Liaodong a buffer zone between Balhae and Tang. As a result, tension-inducing incidents with neighboring states, such as Balhae's attack on Dengzhou, were not repeated, and a long period of peace between the three states of East Asia ensued.

Keywords: Andong Protectorate, Andong Area Command, Andong Protector-General, *jimizhou*, buffer zone

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KIM Jong-bok is Assistant Professor at Andong University, Korea. E-mail: kjb6786@anu.ac.kr.

Introduction

The three ancient Korean kingdoms of Goguryeo 高句麗, Baekje 百濟, and Silla 新羅—commonly referred to as “Three Kingdoms”—engaged in fierce wars with one another after the fifth century. Sui 隋 and Tang 唐, which unified the Chinese continent in the seventh century, also engaged in the rivalry struggles of the three Korean kingdoms. The formation of the Silla-Tang alliance led to the demise of the Baekje and Goguryeo kingdoms, but Tang’s denial of Silla’s due share in the victory consequently led to the collapse of the alliance and instigated a war between the two states. As a result, the Andong Protectorate (安東都護府), which Tang established in Pyeongyang 平壤, the capital of Goguryeo, retreated into Liaodong 遼東 and left Silla in control of most of the Korean peninsula, thus successfully unifying the Three Kingdoms. However, Silla occupied only part of the Goguryeo territory; the rest of the territory was later established as Balhae 渤海 (Pohai in Chinese) by some Goguryeo refugees.

Since the late Joseon period, the period of time when Silla and Balhae coexisted ensuing the unification of the Three Kingdoms has been understood as the Period of Southern and Northern Kingdoms. In the early twentieth century, Japan began to acknowledge and conceptualize the history of Manchuria, which included both Goguryeo and Balhae. In opposition to the Japanese model, China declared Balhae as part of China’s northeast history. Despite this discrepancy, one common characteristic can be found when comparing Goguryeo and Balhae with different tribes and states. For example, Former Yan (Qian Yan 前燕) and Liao 遼, which branched from Eastern Hu (Dong Hu 東胡) and originated in the steppe area, as well as Jin 金 and Qing 清, which branched from Sushen 肅慎 and originated in the forest, advanced into northern China. On the other hand, Goguryeo and Balhae, which emerged from the agricultural region of Yemaek 濊貊, did not do so. Goguryeo was complacent with its reign over Liaodong and Balhae did not make any attempts at occupation.

In 668, 30 years after the fall of Goguryeo, some Goguryeo refugees and Malgal tribesmen joined together and founded Balhae. Naturally, the appearance of Balhae was welcomed by neither Tang China nor Silla. In

732, after Balhae's attack on Dengzhou 登州, Silla again formed an alliance with Tang and together launched a counterattack on Balhae—an incident reminiscent of the Silla-Tang unified forces' attack on Goguryeo some 60 years ago. However, while the fall of Goguryeo triggered a sudden change in East Asia, the perseverance and prosperity of Balhae resulted in the long-term stability of various states in East Asia. As such, the two cases are distinctively different. This article first aims to define how and why Balhae developed so drastically differently from Goguryeo. I will examine the relationships of the three states, namely, Silla, Balhae, and Tang, with focus on Liaodong—including the northwestern Korean peninsula where the three states made contact with one another. Two views were presented after the eighth century: the first was that the so-called So-Goguryeo 小高句麗 (literally, “small Goguryeo”) was in Liaodong, and the second was that Balhae occupied Liaodong right after its founding. However, supporting historical evidence and logical grounds are insufficient.¹ Thus, the second purpose of this article is to determine which state held ownership over Liaodong. The Andong Protectorate that Tang had established in order to reign over Goguryeo underwent three stages—abolishment, reestablishment, and final abolishment—through the span of one century. This article examines how, in each of these stages, the area under the jurisdiction of Andong Protectorate changed, as well as the conditions between Silla, Balhae, and Tang.

Geographical and Historical Overview of Liaodong Area

The former land of Manchuria included the area surrounded by Daxinganling to the west, Waixinganling to the north, and Amnokgang (Yalu in Chi-

1. In the 1950–1960s, Hino Kaisaburo proposed “So-Goguryeo” as a Tang puppet state founded by Goguryeo dispersed people in Liaodong, and argued that after the Rebellion of An Lu-shan, So-Goguryeo was subjugated by Balhae. North Korea, influenced by this theory, presented a view in the 1980s that stated Balhae's Anwonbu 安遠府 and Hoewonbu 懷遠府 were established in Liaodong, and that Balhae's princely state (Goryeo Huguk 高麗侯國) was from north of the Daedonggang river to the southern tip of Liaodong peninsula. For reviews on problems of these views, see J. Kim (2008, 136-154).

nese) river to the south. Since early times, this widespread stretch of land had been occupied by three large ethnic groups: Eastern Hu, Yemaek, and Sushen. These groups persevered as they repeatedly rose and fell; their processes of development corresponded with the development of China and Korea. Lattimore (1962, 103-149) categorized this region into three ecological zones—agricultural, forest, and steppe—and examined their history. Barfield (1989, 19) later added the coastal zone to these categories.

The first zone consisted of the lower Liaohe 遼河 plains and the Liaodong peninsula, a region suitable for agriculture where Chinese culture had prevailed since the Warring States Period. It was linked to the northern China plains by a narrow pass that ran between the mountains and the sea at Shanhaiguan 山海關. The Liaodong peninsula closely resembled Shandong, which it faced across a short stretch of sea. Yet because the Manchurian plains and Liaodong were physically isolated from China, they were vulnerable to attacks by pastoral nomads or forest tribes, and in times of disunion in China these districts fell into their control. The second ecological zone of Manchuria was the western steppe of Liaoxi and the Jehol mountains, home to pastoral nomads. Somewhat removed from Mongolia proper, or Outer Mongolia, they maintained their political independence whenever possible. Their close proximity to the farmers of the Manchurian plains provided them with a sedentary economic base that was richer and more easily exploited compared with other parts of the frontier. Manchuria's largest ecological zone consisted of heavy forests that bordered Korea and Siberia and had been settled by villagers who had a mixed economy of stock-raising and agriculture. Unlike the steppe tribes of the west, they raised pigs, an animal never found among pastoral nomads. The Pacific currents created a fourth maritime coastal zone located in the far north, and was inhabited by hunters and fishers who were isolated from the rest of region; it was regarded to be of little historical significance.

Of the four zones, the agricultural zone, Liaodong, played the most important role as it was connected to northern China at the southwest border, to the steppe area at the northern border, and to the forest zone and Korean peninsula at the eastern border. Due to this land, the Chinese dynasty was able to control its surrounding powers, Eastern Hu, Yemaek,

and Sushen. When the surrounding powers successfully took over this area, they were able to become strong states and advance into northern China.

The word “Liaodong” refers to the eastern area of the Liaohe where the Yemaek lived. Joseon 朝鮮 (known as Gija Joseon 箕子朝鮮 or Yemaek Joseon 濊貊朝鮮) was founded close to the east of the Liaohe by part of the Yemaek. In the early third century BC, Yan 燕 defeated Eastern Hu and established Liaodong Commandery (遼東郡). Liaodong Commandery’s ruling office was located in Xiangping 襄平, but its jurisdiction scope was limited to agricultural areas, including the lower Liaohe plains and Liaodong peninsula. Former Han (前漢) based in Liaodong Commandery destroyed Wiman Joseon and established the Four Han Commanderies (108 BC). Afterwards, the name Liaodong was used to refer to the territory that resulted from the merging of the Liaodong Commandery and the Four Han Commanderies. At the end of the second century, Eastern Hu’s branch, Wuhuan 烏桓, moved southwards from Mongolia proper to the Liaohe area, thus blocking the passage of Liaodong and the Later Han dynasty. Gungsumdu 公孫度, a governor of Liaodong Commandery, took advantage of this opportunity and integrated the Four Han Commanderies into his domain, naming himself as King of Liaodong in resistance to the Chinese dynasty. The Gungsun warlords took part of the Goguryeo and Wuhuan territories, and established the Daifang Commandery (帶方郡) to the south of Lolang Commandery (樂浪郡). Thus, Liaodong also came to include the area extending from Shanhai-guan to the northwestern Korean peninsula (H. Kim 2004, 53).

Gungsun warlords fell by Wei 魏 in 238, and the northern China plain was immediately seized by Eastern Hu’s branch, Murong Xianbei 慕容鮮卑. Goguryeo, a branch of Yemaek which had been founded in the middle Amnonggang river basin, also regularly engaged in fierce competition with the Chinese dynasty and Murong Xianbei in order to take over Liaodong. In the early fifth century, Goguryeo conquered the south of the Hangang river and the north of Buyeo 扶餘, and proceeded to advance into the northern Songhuajiang 松花江 area. Goguryeo thus developed into one of the strongest powers in East Asia, together with the Chinese Southern and Northern Dynasties, for two centuries.

As discussed above, the Chinese dynasty used Liaodong, which connected to northern China, and advanced into the northwest region of the Korean peninsula. During the confusing period of the central Chinese dynasties, Gongsun warlords used Liaodong as a base and took the area from Shanhaiguan up to the northwestern Korean peninsula, declaring their independence. Meanwhile, Eastern Hu's branch, Murong Xianbei, which had made a southward movement from the steppe area, took Liaodong and advanced to Liaoxi, reaching northern China. Goguryeo took Liaodong but did not make further westward movement.

Goguryeo was complacent with the capture of Liaodong primarily because of the Northern Wei's unification of northern China. However, Goguryeo, which rose to power in the Amnokgang river area, a region that bordered both agricultural and forest areas, was presumably reluctant to reign over the steppes of Liaodong. Goguryeo, preferring southward movement over westward movement, moved its capital to Pyeongyang in 427, declaring its identity as an agricultural state. Given these facts, Goguryeo's western limit line was Liaohe, and in the early seventh century spent 16 years constructing a defensive wall extending from Buyeoseong 扶餘城 to the southern tip of Liaodong peninsula in order to defend Liaodong against Tang's attacks. The Sui dynasty unified China in 589, ending nearly four centuries of division between the rival regimes of the Southern and Northern Dynasties, and forced a China-centric world order upon its surrounding states. But Goguryeo resisted their demands. Sui attempted to invade Goguryeo several times, but their trials were unsuccessful. The Tang dynasty, which succeeded Sui, also attempted to eliminate Goguryeo, but they, too, were unable to take down the kingdom. It was only after Tang and Silla formed an alliance and were able to defeat Baekje, the archrival of Silla, that Goguryeo was finally overwhelmed and subjugated to Chinese control. One reason why Sui and Tang demanded that Goguryeo should follow the China-centric world order was that Liaodong was part of ancient Chinese territory. Peiju 裴矩, Sui's Vice Director of the Chancellery, often argued that the Goguryeo area was originally the kingdom of Guzhuoguo 孤竹國, which was later entrusted to Gija 箕子 (Jizi in Chinese) during the Zhou 周 dynasty and then divided into three commanderies

during the Han dynasty. He also argued that the Jin 晉 dynasty also reigned over Liaodong, and then Goguryeo, which took over this area, did not bring it under the domain of China (*Jiutangshu* 2407). Wenyanpo 溫彥博, Tang's Vice Director of Secretariat, concurred with Peiju, arguing that Liaodong pertained to Gija during the Zhou dynasty and later became the Xuantu Commandery (玄菟郡) during the Han dynasty (*Jiutangshu* 5321). It can thus be said that Liaodong was close to the Chinese territory before the Weijin 魏晉 period, and therefore Goguryeo, which occupied Liaodong, should have been subjected to China.

In spite of these reasons, Goguryeo refused to concede Liaodong, as it had already occupied that land for over two centuries. As a result, Sui-Tang and Goguryeo engaged in wars for over 70 years. Although Tang was ultimately the victor, this triumph was attained only because of its union with Silla, leaving some variables to be resolved.

Expected Effects of the Establishment of Andong Protectorate

Despite repeated attempts by Tang Emperor Taizong 太宗 to eliminate Goguryeo, every endeavor ended in failure. After the defeat in 645, the Tang rulers implemented a strategy to frequently attack Liaodong with small troops, and sought to form alliances with Silla in 648. However, the Silla-Tang alliance was realized only after Tang's strategy failed, and only on the condition that after defeating the two states, Silla would take over Baekje and Tang would get control over Goguryeo.²

After the fall of Baekje in 660, Tang reshuffled Baekje's administrative districts from five *bu* 部, 37 *gun* 郡, and 200 *seong* 城 into five *dudufu* 都督府 (area command), 37 *zhou* 州, and 250 *xian* 縣. Tang also implemented a policy called *jimi* 羈縻 (literally, "loose rein"), by which it established *jimizhou* 羈縻州 (literally, "loose rein prefectures"), and appointed Baekje's local influential personnel like *dudu* 都督, *cishi* 刺史, and *xianling* 縣令 as governors. Tang led the occupation policy, but to crack down on Baekje revival groups,

2. See J. Kim (2010a).

Tang and Silla stationed 10,000 troops and 7,000 troops, respectively, in Baekje, suggesting that Silla had some stake in the Baekje territory. Furthermore, upon returning home Tang troops came back with 12,000 POWs, while Silla did not take as many, suggesting that Silla believed that Baekje would soon be its territory.

Meanwhile, Tang implemented a stronger occupation policy for Goguryeo than it did for Baekje. Specifically, Tang forcefully reshuffled Goguryeo administrative districts from five *bu* and 176 *seong* into nine *dudufu*, 42 *zhou*, and 100 *xian*, and appointed local influential personnel as governors who were to be supervised by Tang officials. Additionally, the Andong Protectorate was established as a high-ranking control agency, where 20,000 troops were stationed. However, Silla did not station its troops there and instead took 7,000 POWs back home. This suggests that Tang intended to make Goguryeo part of its territory rather than simply implementing the *jimi* policy, and that Silla acknowledged this scheme.

Tang established the Gyerim Superior Area Command (鷄林州大都督府) in Silla in 663, and the Ungjin Area Command (熊津都督府) in one half of the former Baekje region in 665. Subsequent to these developments, Tang installed the Andong Protectorate in the former Goguryeo region, and allowed it to rule both the Ungjin Area Command and the Gyerim Superior Area Command. It became a unit superior to Andong Area Command (安東都督府) and thus realized Tang's long-sought goal of a China-centric world order.

Silla commenced active resistance to Chinese domination soon after the fall of Goguryeo by supporting revival groups in Chinese-controlled territory during the period between 670 and 674. Initially Tang successfully suppressed Goguryeo revival groups, and proceeded to wage all-out wars with Silla, but it was later defeated in two battles that occurred in 675 and 676, thus forcing Tang to relocate the Andong Protectorate and change its ruling policy.

After the defeat at Maechoseong 買肖城 in 675, Tang withdrew its officials who supervised local governors such as *dodok*, *jasa*, and *hyeollyeong*. By the following February, it relocated the Andong Protectorate to Liaodongcheng 遼東城 (present-day Liaoyang), and the Ungjin Area Command

to Jianancheng 建安城, where several thousands of Baekje dispersed people were taken captive from inland Tang. However, after being defeated in Gibeolpo 伎伐浦 in 676, Tang returned former Goguryeo King Bojang 寶藏 and the dispersed Goguryeo people from inland Tang to Liaodong.

Subsequent to Tang's withdrawal of its officials and conciliatory policy through King Bojang, Tang converted to the *jimi* policy³ with the intention to stabilize Liaodong and win the Silla-Tang war. However, because it was somewhat dangerous to assemble King Bojang and the dispersed Goguryeo people again in Liaodong, Tang relocated the Andong Protectorate to Xincheng 新城 (present-day Fushun 撫順) in 677.

The Liaodongcheng in the Taizihe 太子河 area was the land and water transport hub, serving as the center of Liaodong, while to the northeast, Xincheng, which laid adjacent to the meeting point of the Hunhe 渾河 and the Suzihe 蘇子河 rivers, was the more strategic hub for controlling this area. Given the conditions of these locations, Tang dispatched King Bojang to Liaodongcheng in an attempt to appease the dispersed Goguryeo people in Liaodong while it relocated the Andong Protectorate to Xincheng in order to keep a watch on King Bojang (Hino 1984, 70). Considering that King Bojang was later caught conspiring with Malgal 靺鞨 (Mohe in Chinese) in 681, this measure could be said to have been successful for Tang.

After the Andong Protectorate was relocated to Xincheng, military confrontations between Silla and Tang no longer occurred. This is not to say that Tang gave up its ambition to subjugate Silla; in September 678, there was controversy over the attack of Silla in the Tang court. However, Tang first had to suppress Tufan 吐蕃, which launched attacks from its west. Despite the fact that Silla did not comply with Tang's scheme, it did not invade Tang's territory and thus Tang ceased its attacks on Silla (*Zizhi tongjian* 6385). This suggests that Silla did not intend to make further northward movement. Silla was ready to militarily confront Tang not because it refused Tang's China-centric world order but because Tang failed to keep its promise with Silla. Silla argued that if Tang's nominal *jimizhou*, which

3. A term which generally refers to the more eased version of the typical *jimizhou* system (Noh 1981, 83), or a shift from direct governing to indirect governing (Huang 1997, 64).

was the Gyerim Superior Area Command, and the Ungjin Area Command were separated, the China-centric world order could not be maintained (J. Kim 2010a, 86). In the end, Silla was content with its initial goal of conquering Baekje and even abolished the Bodeokguk 報德國, whose people consisted of Anseung 安勝, an illegitimate son of King Bojang, and Goguryeo dispersed people, in 683. As a result, Silla proudly unified the Three Kingdoms.

Silla reshuffled its expanded territory into nine *ju* 州, and established ten local military organizations named *jeong* 停. The *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 (The History of the Three Kingdoms) states that Silla established three *ju* in southern Goguryeo: Hanju 漢州, Sakju 朔州, and Myeongju 溟洲. In addition, two *jeong* were established in Hanju—namely, Namcheonjeong 南川停 and Golnaegeunjeong 骨乃斤停. As such, the overall area also included land south of the Hangang river, thus suggesting that Silla set the Imjingang river as its border. Maechoseong, where Silla and Tang militarily confronted each other in 675, was adjacent to that area.

When Andong Protectorate was established, it attempted to rule not only the former Goguryeo region, but also the Ungjin Area Command and the nominally named Gyerim Superior Area Command. However, after being defeated in the Silla-Tang war, Andong Protectorate moved to Xincheng, where it ruled only the former Goguryeo region. Although Silla and Tang were no longer on diplomatic terms, Silla did not make further advancements to the north of the Imjingang river, and thus avoided military confrontations.

The Abolishment and Re-Establishment of Andong Protectorate

In May 696, a Khitan 契丹 (Xiedan in Chinese) chieftain named Li Jinzhong 李盡忠 resisted Tang's *jimi* policy at Yingzhou 營州. His main troops made a southward move to northern China, while some troops moved eastwards. In September, they captured Chongzhou 崇州 and invaded the Andong Protectorate. The Andong Protectorate scarcely avoided being captured, but lost its control over Liaodong. As a result, the Governor-General of

Liaodong, Ko Gu-su 高仇須, led a defensive force against the Khitan attacks, and spontaneously gave notice to the Tang court.

Meanwhile, taking advantage of the rebellion of Li Jinzhong, Dae Jo-yeong 大祚榮 and Goguryeo refugees who lived in Yingzhou, as well as the Malgal tribes, moved to Liaodong to establish their own territory. In 686, Tang responded by making a plan to abolish the Andong Protectorate. Moreover, Tang had a plot to dispatch Ko Bo-won 高寶元, a grandchild of King Bojang, to Liaodong in order to secure the area and appease Dae Jo-yeong. However, Tang's plot failed and in June of 698, the Andong Protectorate was demoted to the Andong Area Command. Immediately afterwards, Dae Jo-yeong defeated Tang's troops and escaped eastwards beyond Songhuajing where he founded Jinguk 振國, which later came to be known as Balhae.

As the situation worsened, in 699 Di Renjie 狄仁傑 decided that the defense of Liaodong was meaningless as it had become a nuisance wasting national finance, and insisted that it would be better to reign over the area through the pro-Tang Goguryeo royal household (*Tanghuiyao* 1562). Following his judgment, Tang withdrew its troops from Liaodong and appointed King Bojang's son, Ko Deok-mu 高德武, as governor of the Andong Area Command. The Andong Protectorate was a government agency in Tang's frontier area that supervised nine Area Commands in Goguryeo, in addition to the Ungjin Area Command and Gyerim Superior Area Command, which had been established in Silla. As Andong Area Command only supervised the Liaodong of Goguryeo's former territory, it was of the same rank as the Gyerim Superior Area Command.

Regarding the post-699 situation, the *Jiutangshu's* 舊唐書 (Old Tang History) account of Goryeo states that the dispersed Goguryeo people in Liaodong defected with the Turk (Dolgwol in Korean; Tujue 突厥 in Chinese) and the Malgal, putting an end to the Goguryeo royal line. Meanwhile, the *Xintangshu's* 新唐書 (New Tang History) account of Goryeo claims that Goguryeo gradually prospered and offered musicians to Tang's court in 818. Other records such as the *Cefuyuangui* 冊府元龜 (Tortoise Shells for Divining from the Imperial Archives) and *Tanghuiyao* 唐會要 (Institutional History of Tang) mention the existence of Goguryeo after the

eighth century. But if these are accepted without criticism, it would result in a very sensational viewpoint that distinguishes the state named So-Goguryeo from the former Goguryeo (Hino 1984, 70). However, this So-Goguryeo theory has a crucial weakness. In 725, when Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 held a state ritual (*fengshan* 封禪) on Taishan 泰山 mountain, the Goryeo Joseon Gunwang 高麗朝鮮郡王 (Granted Vassal King of Goryeo-Joseon)⁴—who was probably Ko Deok-mu or his descendant—attended it as an inner official. Due to the reestablishment of the Andong Protectorate in 705, it can be said that the so-called king of So-Goguryeo stayed not in Liaodong, but in the territory of Tang (Noh 1981, 86; Furuhashi 1992, 34).

Tang managed to vanquish the rebellion of Li Jinzhong with the help of Turk. However, unlike Tang's plan, Khitan and Xi were subjugated to Turk. Tang, confronting Turk, attempted to recapture Yingzhou from Khitan. Measures taken included the appointment of Wei Yuanzhong 魏元忠 as military commissioner of Andong in 702, the appointment of Tang Xiujing 唐休璟 as governor-general of Youzhou and Yingzhou as well as protector-general of Andong in 704, and the reestablishment of the Andong Protectorate in 705 (*Xintangshu* 103-104; *Tanghuiyao* 1563). In actuality, Tang Xiujing only held the position of governor-general of Youzhou; the titles of governor-general of Yingzhou and Andong Protector-General were just honorary positions. Such appointments were intended to restore Yingzhou and to stabilize the eastward area. Tang recognized the importance of Liaodong's location, which was to the east of Yingzhou, and thus reestablished the Andong Protectorate. Considering these steps, Tang was attempting to secure not Liaodong, but Liaoxi.

Meanwhile, in 710, Xuanzong established a military governor in Youzhou, bidding to implement an aggressive external policy. Tang's policy for defending frontiers changed from a protectorate system to a military governorship system. In 717, he thus was able to restore Yingzhou and to establish a military governor in Pinglu 平盧. The ruling place of Andong Protectorate, which became subordinate to the Pinglu Military Command, continued to move to Liaoxi, starting from Pingzhou 平州 in 714, to Ying-

4. In this title, Goryeo denotes Goguryeo and Joseon denotes Gojoseon.

zhou in 719, to Yanjun 燕郡 in 723, and to Liaoxijun 遼西郡 in 743, but gradually moved eastward. Given that the Protector-General's duty was to appease foreign ethnic groups, stabilize the frontier areas, gather information, and enforce control over the territory, the Andong Protectorate focused its attention on the stabilization of Liaoxi, even while reigning over Liaodong.

In this respect, our attention should be given to Xue Tai 薛泰, the Andong Protector-General during the period of 720 to 725. In 720, by order of the governor-general of Yingzhou, he led 500 troops of his own as well as several Xi troops and attacked Khitan, but was captured alive (*Zizhi tongjian* 6743). As discussed later, Tang established diplomatic ties with Balhae in order to keep check of Khitan, but Balhae did not necessarily follow Tang's scheme. Thus, in 725, Andong Protector-General Xue Tai established a *jimizhou* in Heuksu-Malgal 黑水靺鞨 (Heishui Mohe in Chinese).

As a result, the *jimizhou* in Liaodong expanded during this period. Specifically, the four *dudufu* and 10 *zhou* that had been described in the *Jiutangshu* increased to nine *dudufu* and 14 *zhou*, according to the *Xintangshu*.⁵ Of the five *dudufu* and four *zhou* which were added, the Wolhui (Yuexi in Chinese) Area Command (越喜州都督府) and Buryeolju 拂涅州 (Funiezhou in Chinese) were related to the Wolhui 越喜 and Buryeol 拂涅 Malgal tribes, while the word *singni* 識利 (*shili* in Chinese) in Singniju 識利州 (Shilizhou in Chinese) was presumed to have been an erroneous spelling of Cheolli 鐵利 (Tieli in Chinese). These Malgal tribes all paid tributes to Tang via the Andong Protectorate during the reign of Xuanzong, and thus they were described in the historical records as if they were put under the control of the Andong Protectorate (Tsuda 1964, 64-67). Here, an important fact to note is that of the former Goguryeo region, the region south of the Amnokgang river, the *jimizhou* (the northwestern region of the Korean peninsula) was not seen over. Thus, it can be inferred that Tang gradually neglected the northwestern region of the Korean peninsula.

5. See *Jiutangshu* 1526-1527; *Xintangshu* 1128-1129.

Daedonggang River as a Borderline between Silla and Tang

To avoid Tang's attacks, Balhae moved from Liaodong to the forest area across the Songhuaqing river and sent its emissaries to Turk and Silla in order to bolster its diplomatic ties and expand its power to the surrounding areas. At that time, the Andong Protectorate was demoted to the Andong Area Command, suggesting that Tang lost its firm control of Liaodong, which offered a favorable situation for Balhae's development.

Amidst these events, Tang was the first to offer an olive branch to Balhae. In 705 when Tang reestablished the Andong Protectorate in order to reclaim Yingzhou from Khitan, it sent an emissary to appease Dae Jo-yeong. But the investiture of Dae Jo-yeong as a follow-up measure failed due to the invasion of Khitan and Turk, and was instead postponed to February 713. At that time, Dae Jo-yeong was given the titles of General-in-Chief of Left Courageous Guard (左驍衛大將軍), Holhan Area Commander (忽汗州都督), and Balhae Area King (渤海郡王). According to this appointment, Balhae became part of Tang's *jimizhou*, namely, the Holhan (Huhan in Chinese) area. Dae Jo-yeong was delegated by the Tang emperor to rule this area. The appointment of Dae Jo-yeong as the Balhae Area King was with the intention that he would keep the Khitan in check beyond the Gulf of Pohai 渤海灣 (J. Kim 2009, 96).

Meanwhile, Balhae established diplomatic ties with Tang for reasons beyond protecting itself against external powers, as proven by their proposal in December of 713, when the Balhae prince contacted Tang to settle a trade agreement. This was particularly meaningful, given the geographical environment of Balhae. As Balhae was located in the forest region, it had an abundance of animals and medicinal materials but lacked agricultural products, which a trading relationship could resolve. Malgal tribes such as Buryeol, Wolhui, and Cheolli also actively sent their emissaries to Tang. Only Heuksu-Malgal, located in the most northeastern area, began to send its emissaries to Tang as late as 722. Because they had to pass through Balhae in order to trade with Tang, Balhae exercised its influence over Malgal tribes.

However, the high expectations for the establishment of diplomatic

ties between Balhae and Tang were abandoned after the enthronement of King Mu 武. In 717 Tang recovered Yingzhou, and in September 720 sent an emissary to Balhae to inform them that Tang had conquered Khitan and Xi, presumably to request support from Balhae. But King Mu, without showing any response to the request, proceeded to conquer Malgal tribes in the eastern area. In 726, when Heuksu-Malgal sent its emissaries to Tang, Andong Protector-General Xue Tai proposed establishing a *jimizhou* in Heuksu-Malgal. Balhae's King Mu suspected that Tang and Heuksu-Malgal would soon mount an attack, and thus began to subjugate Heuksu-Malgal. Meanwhile, his younger brother Dae Mun-ye 大門藝, who opposed the war, sought sanctuary in Tang. This intensified tensions between Balhae and Tang and later led Balhae to attack Dengzhou 登州, Tang's naval base, in 732. However, during that time, Balhae did not attack Liaodong, suggesting that the *jimizhou* of Liaodong was a buffer zone between the two states.

In 713, Silla was able to advance to the Yeseonggang river beyond the Imjingang river, and in the same year, Tang appointed King Seongdeok 聖德 as Commissioner with Extraordinary Powers (使持節), Superintendent of Army Affairs in Gyerim Superior Area Command (大都督雞林州諸軍事), and Gyerim Prefect (雞林州刺史). These titles imply that Tang gave an autonomous military power to Silla.

In the year following Balhae's naval attack on Dengzhou, Tang mobilized troops from Youzhou, attacked Balhae, and commanded Silla to attack southern Balhae with Kim Yu-sin's 金庾信 grandson, Kim Yun-jung 金允中, as the leading general (*Samguk sagi* 419). This scheme was devised based on the historical experience from the time when the Silla-Tang alliance attacked Baekje and Goguryeo successfully. Balhae mobilized its naval troops and attacked Dengzhou, and Tang and Silla retaliated by sending out troops to attack the estuary of the Amnokgang river, but had failed. In 734, Silla came up with a plan to attack Balhae, under the approval of Tang. Tang praised Silla's plan to station troops alongside the Daedonggang river, assuming that Silla could now thwart the advance of Balhae with the cooperation of Tang's An Lushan 安祿山 (*Wenyuanyinghua* 2404).

The collapse of Turk, Tang's conquest of Khitan and Xi, and Silla's bel-

ligerent attitude had somewhat pressured Balhae to rescind its anti-Tang policy. At first, the confrontations between Balhae and Tang had little to do with Silla, but after Tang's failed attack on Balhae in 733, Silla was obligated to be involved. In the process, Silla took advantage of the situation and found an opportunity to advance further northward. Thus, Silla intentionally took a belligerent attitude towards Balhae and stationed its troops at the Daedonggang river. Finally, in 735, Tang officially approved Silla's domination of the area south of the Daedonggang river, and established it as the borderline (*Samguk sagi* 105). This area became part of the buffer zone between Silla and Tang. Meanwhile, Tang claimed the area north of the Daedonggang river as its own domain, which indicates its determination to prohibit Silla's further advance northward.

Abolishment of Andong Protectorate and Liaodong as Buffer Zones

The Andong Protectorate was abolished in 758, and its upper echelon, Pinglu Military Command, was relocated to Qingzhou 青州 in Shandong in December of 761 when Xi invaded. No historical data is available on the situation of Liaodong after it was cut off from northern China. For reference, the *Jiutangshu* provides information on the Andong Protectorate during the Tianbao 天寶 period (742–756)—namely, right before its abolishment—stating that none of the 14 *zhou* had moats and that the area had only 5,718 households and a population of 18,156 people. It is doubtful that the *jimizhou* in Liaodong, with no defense facilities and a scanty population, was able to form its own political system, even with the abolishment of the Andong Protectorate. This situation is evidenced by the position of Silla and Balhae's borders, which were located southeast and northeast of Liaodong, respectively.

Taking advantage of the confrontation between Balhae and Tang, Silla advanced to the Daedonggang river, undergoing three stages in order to capture its domain beyond the Yeseonggang river. During the first stage in 748, Silla established four prefectures on the west coast of the Yeseonggang river; in the second stage, in 762, it established six prefectures; and in the

third stage, during the reign of King Heondeok 興德 (809–826), it established four prefectures in the southern coast of the Daedonggang river (Lee 1984, 213–215).

As Silla incorporated the area south of the Daedonggang river into its domain during the mid-eighth century, Tang began including Silla in the jurisdiction of the Pinglu Military Command, which controlled the northeastern area. In other words, in 741, the Pinglu Military Command controlled Liangfan 兩蕃, a territory composed of the former Khitan and Xi territories, Balhae, and Heuksu (*Jiutangshu* 214, 307). This later changed to Silla, Balhae, and Liangfang—at least before 775. As is known, Tang maintained control over Balhae through Heuksu-Malgal. However, Heuksu-Malgal's contacts with Tang disappeared after 752, suggesting that Balhae controlled Heuksu-Malgal's external contacts. This is later confirmed by the fact that after Pinglu Military Command was relocated to Shandong in December 761, Tang was not able to maintain control over Balhae from across seas, and thus had an increasing need to form an alliance with Silla.

It can be said that the reason why Silla was able to advance to the area south of the Daedonggang river, the buffer zone between Silla and Tang, was that such a move was in line with Tang's plan to use Silla as a regulator of Balhae. Despite the Silla-Tang war, Silla was able to repair its relationship with Tang and to secure the area south of the Daedonggang river because of the appearance of Balhae. Thus, even after the Andong Protectorate was abolished, Silla did not advance to the area north of the Daedonggang river (*Samguk sagi* 122); in 826, Silla mobilized 10,000 people to build a defense wall along the Daedonggang river, which can be understood to have been Silla's defense against external powers.

On the other hand, after stabilizing its relationship with Tang, Balhae focused mainly on managing the northeastern region. Balhae had established its capital in Sanggyeong 上京 in the middle of the eighth century, temporarily relocated to Donggyeong 東京, and finally settled back in Sanggyeong. Tang's promotion of King Mun 文 (737–793) from Balhae Area King to Balhae State King (渤海國王) in 762 is an indication that Balhae's state power increased and it had developed an amicable relationship with

Tang.

After the long reign of King Mun, Balhae suffered from internal turbulence as six kings were enthroned over a period of 25 years. This loosened Balhae's control of local regions, allowing Wolhui, Uru 虞婁, and Heuksu to engage in independent trade relations with Tang. Upon his enthronement in 818, King Seon 宣 conquered several tribes along the North Sea (海北諸部). In *Liaoshi* 遼史 (The History of Liao), it is stated that prior to 820, Balhae conquered Silla from the south, attacked tribes in the north, and established several prefectures and districts (*Liaoshi* 457-458). Balhae's southward attacks forced Silla to withdraw its northeastern military base from Cheonjeong-gun 泉井郡 to Sakjeong-gun 朔庭郡 (Akabame 2011, 164) while building a defensive wall along the Daedonggang river to the northwest.

Balhae's expanded domain can be clarified by comparing the two sources—namely, the *Jiutangshu*'s account of Balhae-Malgal and the *Xintangshu*'s account of Balhae. The former mentions that the Balhae territory bordered Silla from the south, Wolhui from the north, and Heuksu from the northeast. The latter mentions that the Balhae territory was bordered by Silla to the south, the sea to the east, and Khitan to the west. In other words, in the ninth century, Balhae expanded its territory northeastward and westward. These articles, however, do not mention Balhae's southwestern borderline with Tang. Instead, the *Xintangshu*'s account of Balhae mentions five capitals, called *gyeong* 京; 15 prefectures, or *bu* 府; and 62 subprefectures, or *ju* 州. Seogyeong Amnokbu 西京鴨綠府 and Jangnyeongbu 長嶺府, which were established to the west, were the starting points of traffic roads that extended to Tang—Jogongdo 朝貢道 (Road to Tribute) and Yeongjudo 營州道 (Road to Yingzhou).

Jogongdo was a sea route which connected Tang's Dengzhou and Miaodao Islands (廟島列島), the entrance of the Amnokgang river, Bakjakgu 泊灼口, Balhae's Hwangju 桓州, and Sinju 神州. The Yeongjudo connected Yingzhou to Liaoyang (the location of the Andong Protectorate ruling place in 676), and branched into five roads from Liaoyang—two of which connected to Balhae. One connected southward to Bakjakseong 泊灼城, and the other connected northeastward to Balhae's Jangnyeongbu via

Xincheng, where Andong Protectorate was based from between 677 and 698.

It seems that Bakjakgu of the Jogongdo and Bakjaseong of the Yeongjudo were identical areas, a region which is presently identified as Pushihe 浦石河, a tributary of the lower Amnokgang river. Thus, in the early ninth century, the borderline between Balhae and Tang was presumed to be Pushihe to the south and somewhere between Xincheng and Balhae's Jangnyeongbu to the north. There were some points, such as Kuandian 寬甸, Xinbin 新賓, Qingyuan 清原, and Kaiyuan 開原, between these two places that were at the borderline between Tang and Balhae.

The Andong Protectorate generally controlled the area west of this borderline. However, in the mid-eighth century, the Andong Protectorate was abolished and its upper echelon, the Pinglu Military Command, moved to the Shandong peninsula. Despite these changes, the borderline was retained as it was. Although Tang abandoned Liaodong, Balhae, the Eastern Prosperous State (Haedong Seongguk 海東盛國), did not advance to this area, and in fact took a passive attitude toward it. This is supported by the fact that Seogyong Amnokbu, the capital of Balhae, was established not in Hwangju, which was Goguryeo's past capital (Hwandoseong 丸都城), but in Sinju, a distance of 800 km from Hwangju. On the other hand, Goguryeo, which located its capital in Hwandoseong, took Liaodong and Pyeongyang, and moved to Pyeongyangseong.

In the early tenth century, Khitan made three attempts to advance into Liaodong, to which Balhae responded differently each time (J. Kim 2009, 281-284). In the first attempt (903-908), Khitan conquered the Jurchens and advanced to the northeastern area, which had been presumed to be southwest of Balhae's Buyeobu 扶餘府. In the second attempt (908-915), Khitan tried to detour around the southeastern area in order to advance into Liaodong. In 915 when Khitan's founder, Yelu Abaoji 耶律阿保機, was fishing in the Amnokgang river, Silla and Goryeo sent emissaries, but did not receive any response. However, in the third attempt (918-925), when Khitan regained Liaoyangcheng and relocated its residents, Balhae responded by sending an emissary to Khitan in 918, and attacking Liaozhou 遼州 in 924. The two states' confrontation in Liaodong was put to an end when

Khitan mounted a surprise attack on Balhae's Buyeobu and conquered its capital.

Balhae did not respond to Khitan's first and second attacks but reacted to the third one, as Balhae had set Liaodong as a buffer zone between itself and Tang, and intended to use the area to stabilize its external relationships. In this background, Khitan's conquest of Liaodong led to the collapse of regional order in East Asia.

Conclusion: The Meaning of Liaodong as the Buffer Zone

After the fall of Goguryeo, Tang's new control organization, the Andong Protectorate, experienced many victories and defeats through a single century. It was first established in Pyeongyang in 668; withdrew to Liaodongcheng in 676, and then to Xincheng the following year; and in 698, it was demoted to Andong Area Command. The Andong Protectorate was re-established in the Liaoxi area in 705 and was since maintained until 758.

The greatest change was that in 698 the Andong Protectorate was demoted to Andong Area Command. Under Tang's system, the Andong Protectorate was supposed to control the Ungjin Area Command in the former Baekje region and the Gyerim Superior Area Command in Silla. However, the demoted Andong Area Command was placed under the control of the Pinglu Military Command, and actually controlled the *jimizhou* in Liaodong. At that time, Silla's northwestern border was limited to the Imjingang river. Thus, the area from there to the Amnokgang river was nominally part of Tang's domain, but actually functioned as a buffer zone against Silla. This is supported by the fact that in 735 Tang offered the area south of Daedonggang river to Silla. After the Silla-Tang war, Silla was able to improve its relationship with Tang and secure the area south of the Daedonggang river due to the emergence of Balhae. Thus, even after the Andong Protectorate was abolished, Silla did not advance into the area north of the Daedonggang river.

Meanwhile, the Andong Protectorate was demoted to Andong Area Command in 698. At that time Dae Jo-yeong assembled Goguryeo refu-

gees and Malgal tribesmen, and founded Balhae beyond the Songhuajiang river. In order to maintain control of Khitan, Tang reestablished the Andong Protectorate and built diplomatic ties with Balhae. It is important to note that Balhae, even throughout its stabilized relationship with Tang, focused on conquering various northeastern Malgal tribes, and that Tang had acknowledged this move.

Confrontations such as Balhae's attack on Dengzhou also occurred in the early eighth century. However, this remained a local war and did not develop into an all-out war because Liaodong served as a buffer zone. The Andong Protectorate, which was reestablished in 705, aimed to stabilize the Liaoxi area and focused less on the Liaodong area. Thus, even after the Andong Protectorate's abolishment in 758, Balhae did not advance to Liaodong; otherwise, the tensions between Tang and Silla might have been heightened. However, since Balhae did not advance into Liaodong, Balhae, Tang, and Silla—unlike the times of Goguryeo—were able to maintain peace. It was not until Khitan, which originated in the steppe area, began to occupy Liaodong that the stability of the three East Asian states began to collapse.

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