

# 구약논단

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<p>농경적 왕조로서의 한국과 이스라엘을 비교하였으며, 방법론적으로 사회 과학적 이론을 사용하였다. 두 사회의 지정학적 성향과 위치는 사회 엘리트층의 과별화를 이끌게 되는데, 종교적 논쟁 속에 그 갈등이 표출되어 있기도 하다. 역사적 사례와 그 해석, 그리고 추가 연구를 위한 제안을 하였다.</p>	
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# Korea and Israel: Historical Analogy and Old Testament Interpretation<sup>1)</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

Any attempt to compare preindustrial Korea with biblical Israel must seem a strange project for an American professor of Old Testament who does not speak or read Korean. Add that my knowledge of Korean history is mostly self-taught and gained, of necessity, from sources available in western languages, and a topic nearer the center of one of my research interests in

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1) It was an honor and privilege to read a version of this paper at the International Conference in Celebration of the Jubilee Year of the Korean Society of Old Testament Studies. I am most grateful for the warm welcome accorded me on that occasion and for the responses there to my essay. I congratulate the Society most heartily for having achieved this impressive milestone in its distinguished history. Most of this essay was written during the spring term of 2010, while I was a Visiting Professor at The United Graduate School of Theology of Yonsei University. A version of the paper was delivered there on May 17, 2010. I hereby acknowledge with deep gratitude the generous hospitality of the administration, faculty and students at Yonsei.

Hebrew Bible would seem a far more obvious choice of subject for this occasion. My genuine interest since the 1980s in the comparison of Korea and Israel hardly compensates for a lack of firsthand access to much that is intrinsically and essentially Korean. One brief written foray into this topic several years ago<sup>2)</sup> probably would have ended my seemingly quixotic quest were it not for repeated experiences epitomized in a conversation that I had a number of years ago with a Korean colleague in theological education.

He had obtained his doctoral education in the United States and visited there often. On one such trip, he asked me to share with him what my Korean-American colleague, Dr. Warren Wonkyeng Lee, and I were doing in a course we were co-teaching that compared Israel and Korea. I replied that while I would be happy to share with him, he could learn nothing from me about Korea, because I had learned much of the little I knew from him. I have never forgotten his reply. He told me that, while of course I knew the history and culture of the United States in far more detail than he, he could show me things about them that I did not see because I was too close to them. In that regard, his outsider status gave him a perspective that was difficult or impossible for me to gain unaided. Conversely, he said, I occupied an analogous perspective regarding Korean history and culture. He promised to correct my errors of fact and of naïve misinterpretation, but urged that he was actively interested in what my outsiders eyes saw. We pledged to each other that day continuing and candid sharing of what we thought we saw when we looked at the others homelands and their histories.<sup>3)</sup>

It is in the posture and spirit taught me that day and on many other days by many other Korean and Korean-American colleagues that I come to this

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2) Marvin L. Chaney, *Pluralism in Text and Context: Some Reflections on a Hermeneutic of Dynamic Analogy between Biblical Israel and Historical Korea*, [Korean translation by Eun Suk Cho], *Christian Thought* 513 (2001): 198-219; repr. in *Biblical Israel through an Agrarian Lens: Essays on Religion and Society in Old Testament History, Literature and Interpretation* [Korean], (ed. Taek Joo Woo; trans. Samuel Cheon et al.; Seoul: Handl, 2007).

3) This difference in perspective between insiders and outsiders is formalized in anthropological theory in the epistemological distinction between emic and etic. See, classically, Marvin Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968), 568-604.

subject. I do not in any way presume to interpret the Old Testament *for* Korean Christians and their churches nor to tell them how they should interpret it for themselves.<sup>4)</sup> I have neither standing nor desire to assume such a posture. What I will try to offer is a very preliminary sketch of some of what I *think* I see when I juxtapose my work as a professional student of the Hebrew Bible with my interested beginners knowledge of matters Korean. I hope and expect to be corrected on subjects large and small.

## 2. Some Elements of Comparison

The theoretical basis for my comparison of Korea and Israel during their monarchic periods lies in the fields of historical and comparative sociology and anthropology. More specifically, I refer to Gerhard Lenski's delineation of a limited number of generic types of human societies that have existed in the world.<sup>5)</sup> Many of the societies about which we have the most historical information, including both Korea and Israel during their lengthy periods as monarchies, are what Lenski calls *agrarian* societies. In his theoretical framework, agrarian societies have as their principal economic base peasant agriculture that uses the plow and traction animals in some form, but does

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4) On the other hand, I know from personal experience that I learn much when Korean Christians embrace their national experience and cultural heritage as a part of their disciplined interpretation of Old Testament texts. Several Korean scholars whose doctoral work I have been privileged to supervise have found historical analogies between Korea and Israel useful in voicing their own perspective on Old Testament interpretation: see Eun Suk Cho, *Josianic Reform in the Deuteronomistic History Reconstructed in the Light of Factionalism and Use of Royal Apology* (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 2002); Seong-Hyuk Hong, *The Metaphor of Illness and Healing in Hosea and Its Significance in the Socio-Economic Context of Eighth-Century Israel and Judah* (Studies in Biblical Literature 95; New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006); Sung-Jae Kim, *The Ger and the Identity of Ancient Israel: Socio-Literary Analysis and Deconstructive Interpretation* (Th.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1996); and Taek Joo Woo, *The Marzeah Institution and Rites for the Dead: A Comparative and Systemic Study with Special Attention to the Eighth-Century Prophets* (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1998).

5) Gerhard E. Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (2nd ed.; Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 90-93; idem, *Ecological-Evolutionary Theory: Principles and Applications* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2005), 81-109; and Patrick Nolan and Gerhard Lenski, *Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology* (11th ed.; Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2008), 63-75.

not make the extensive use of inanimate energy sources associated with the industrial revolution. For all their variation in the *specifics* of history and culture, societies meeting Lenski's definition of agrarian manifest striking similarities to one another at the *generic* level.<sup>6)</sup>

Agrarian societies, for example, are almost always monarchic in political organization, and evidence a remarkable consistency in their patterns of social stratification. A ruling elite of slightly less than two percent of the population controls more than half of the total goods and services produced by society. A peasant majority of from seventy to ninety percent of the population produces most of society's goods and services, but routinely gives up more than half its production to a variety of rents, taxes and fees. Together these exactions extract an economic surplus that is then redistributed based on priorities that the ruling elites set.<sup>7)</sup> According to the historical indications we have, such was the situation both in Korea and in Israel from the time each evolved into a monarchic state.

Preindustrial Korea and biblical Israel shared a number of other characteristics, however, not evidenced by all agrarian societies.<sup>8)</sup> The arable land in both occurred in relatively small regional units. Separated from one another by various natural impediments, these cantons were characterized by certain differences in climate, topography, soil, size and configuration of fields and mix of crops and goods produced.<sup>9)</sup> In both cases, this situation

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6) Lenski, *Power and Privilege*, 189-296; idem, *Ecological-Evolutionary Theory*, 96-99; and Nolan and Lenski, *Human Societies*, 137-175.

7) Note the convenient graphic summary in Lenski, *Power and Privilege*, 284-85; cf. Nolan and Lenski, *Human Societies*, 170-71.

8) The following discussion partially reprises an analysis that I first sketched in my essay, Debt Easement in Israelite History and Tradition, in *The Bible and the Politics of Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Norman K. Gottwald on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. D. Jobling et al.; Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1991), 326, n. 6; repr. in *Biblical Israel through an Agrarian Lens*; and extended in Pluralism. Some wording from both is repeated here with permission.

9) For Korea, see, conveniently, Young-Han Park et al., eds., *Atlas of Korea* (Seoul: Sing Ji Mun Hwa Co., 2008), 2-13; and Seong Hwan Kim et al., *Atlas of Korean History* (trans. Whanyung Kim and Jeong-hyeon Yi; Singapore: Stallion Press, 2008). Most atlases of biblical Israel continue to be dependent for technical data upon the classical *Atlas of Israel* (3rd ed; Tell-Aviv: The Survey of Israel, 1985). Among older Bible atlases, that of Denis Baly and A.D. Tushingham, *Atlas of the Biblical World* (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1971),

contrasted with the oldest, larger, near neighbor Egypt in the case of Israel, China with regard to Korea. Major riverine systems in Egypt and China facilitated communication and transportation over far more extensive inland areas. They simultaneously provided incentive for the centralized control of the political economy necessary to bring large river valleys to their full potential for preindustrial agricultural production.<sup>10)</sup> Egypt and China also present social scientists with major examples of primary state formation, instances where the state arose without significant outside influence. Israel and Korea, on the other hand, provide textbook illustrations of secondary state formation.<sup>11)</sup> That is where a state is formed under the considerable influence of an older, neighboring state. The earlier chapters of the political history both of Syro-Palestine and of Korea are dominated by Bronze Age walled towns under the impress of the larger and older neighbors. Regional centers of power emerged early in the Iron Age in both areas, and these regions contested rule where their fluid borders met and crossed. National unification in both societies David's kingdom in Israel and the so-called Silla unification in Korea involved one of these regions dominating the others through a combination of military and diplomatic means. Whenever central control weakened in either of the resulting monarchic nation-states, however, regional identities and loyalties born of the geographic environment produced a fractious gaggle of rival candidates for national leadership.<sup>12)</sup>

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contains an unusually full treatment of matters relevant to this essay.

- 10) This is not at all to embrace the widely criticized theories of Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981), but only to posit this factor as one among many.
- 11) For the comparative study of state formation, see, classically, Morton H. Fried, *The Evolution of Political Society: An Essay in Political Anthropology* (New York: Random House, 1967); and Elman R. Service, *Origins of the State and Civilization: The Process of Cultural Evolution* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1975).
- 12) For Syro-Palestine and Israel, see, conveniently, J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (2nd ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 1-85, and the literature there cited. For Korea, cf., variously, Bruce Cumings, *Koreas Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (updated ed.; New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 19-57; Young Woo Han, *Ancient/Goryeo Era* (vol. 1 of *A Review of Korean History*;

Regionalism and factionalism were thus intrinsic to the process of state formation both in Korea and in Israel.<sup>13)</sup> They were and are also intrinsic to the task of conceptualizing state formation in both societies. Critics of the Silla Unification version of state formation in Korea point out that proponents of the view have lived and worked in a modern South Korean state dominated during a formative period by leaders from the southeast of the country, the home territory of Silla. Some of these critics seek to find the mainstream of Korean national origins in Goguryeo and its successor states of Balhae and Later Goguryeo. Though its rulers ranged far and wide, its territorial center of gravity was in what are today parts of North Korea and Manchuria areas of particular interest to the proponents of this historical view.<sup>14)</sup> I have neither

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trans. Chaibong Hahm; Paju Book City: Kyongsaewon Publishing Company, 2010), 75-304; and Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea* (trans. Edward W. Wagner with Edward J. Schultz; Seoul: Ilchokak Publishers, 1984), 9-138.

- 13) The discussion of *factionalism* has been far more explicit among historians of Korea, though Cho, Josianic Reform, 105-334, begins comparative work. Lee, *A New History*, controversially takes factionalized elites as the most salient factor in Korean history. In the Korean original, a concluding chapter, The Ruling Elite and the Course of Korean History, not translated in the English version of the book, (see p. vi), develops the theoretical point at some length. Cumings, *Koreas Place*, 22, comments briefly but trenchantly on the powerful role of *regionalism* in Korean history. Discussions of Korean factionalism usually focus on the Joseon dynasty, particularly its latter portion. For a useful collection of writings about factionalism from within Joseon-dynasty Korea itself, see, Yong-ho Choe, Peter H. Lee, and Wm. Theodore de Bary, eds., *From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries* (vol. 2 of *Sources of Korean Tradition*; New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 12-33. Cf., further, Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology* (Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 36; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 93, 299-300; Ja-Hyun Kim Haboush and Martina Deuchler, eds., *Culture and the State in Late Choson Korea* (Harvard East Asian Monographs 182; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 5-6, 47-48, 123-24, 129; Duk-kyu Jin, *Historical Origins of Korean Politics* (trans. Jei-min Kim; Seoul: Jisik-sanup Publications Co., 2005), 407-412, 458; Kim et al., *Atlas of Korean History*, 124-27; Bae-yong Lee, *Women in Korean History* (trans. Kyong-hee Lee; Seoul: Ewha Womans University Press, 2008), 109-12; James B. Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyongwon and the Late Choson Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 7, 19, 63-64, 92-93, 96-98, 101-02, 113, 457, 459; 539-40; and, idem, *Politics and Policy in Traditional Korea* (Harvard East Asian Series 82; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 15-16, 291-92 n. 30.
- 14) Cf. Cumings, *Koreas Place*, 22-45; Han, *Ancient/Goryeo Era*, 56-64, 87-271; Jung Bae Kim, Formation of the Ethnic Korean Nation and the Emergence of Its Ancient Kingdom States, *Korean History: Discovery of Its Characteristics and Developments* (ed. Korean National Commission for UNESCO; vol. 5 of *Anthology of Korean Studies*; Seoul: Hollym,

the knowledge nor the standing to evaluate independently these rival narratives of state formation in Korea. I note only that both the processes themselves and their historical interpretation were and are contested in ways that have deep regional and factional roots. Historical events on the ground were almost certainly more complicated and cross cut than any of the competing historical narratives, left to themselves, would make plain.

A parallel characterization is equally true for biblical Israel. From a Jerusalemite perspective, influenced heavily by the Deuteronomistic History and Deuteronomistic editing in a number of other Old Testament books, a true monarchic state began only with David. Texts in the Hebrew Bible of a more northerly provenance, where they have survived Jerusalemite editing, take a somewhat different tack. Certain Assyrian texts suggest to some that an Israel they could recognize as a monarchic state arose with the Omrids. Contemporary disputes among minimalist, maximalist and moderate historians of ancient Israel routinely privilege one or another of these regionally and factionally rooted perspectives.<sup>15)</sup> Such historiographic battles are rarely lacking connections with regional conflicts in the modern Middle East, whether or not their contestants are fully conscious of those connections. Once again my concern here is to note this regionally and factionally based contestation and its longevity, not to resolve it.

The larger geopolitical location, moreover, reinforced this topographical proclivity for factionalized elites both in Korea and in Israel. Biblical Israel was flanked by societies more populous and powerful than itself. A significant role for these superpowers in the political economies of Palestine did not begin with the defeat and exile of the national leaders of Israel and Judah. Long before the superpowers dominated these petty states outright, they rarely ceased to meddle in the affairs of their smaller neighbors, who occupied the

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2004), 27–35; repr. from *Korea Journal* 27 (1987); Lee, *A New History*, 9–109; Tae Don Noh, Theories on the Formative Period of the Korean *Minjok*, *Korean History* (UNESCO), 3–25; repr. from *Korea Journal* 37 (1997); Kiho Song, Several Questions in Historical Studies of Balhae, *Korean History* (UNESCO), 133–58; repr. from *Korea Journal* 30 (1990).

15) See the convenient summary in Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 119–326, and the literature there cited.

land bridge where superpower interests met and clashed. Egyptian, Mesopotamian and other foreign diplomats sought influence with various factions of the Israelite and Judahite elites toward their own superpower ends. The latter, just as obviously, sought to strengthen their own hands domestically through powerful international connections, while at the same time retaining as much autonomy as possible from their foreign allies. Specific alignments were as intrinsically unstable as the generic dynamic was constant over extended periods.

Similarly, the factionalization of the elites of agrarian Korea was exacerbated by its geopolitical position in northeast Asia as a shrimp among whales. Korea occupied the turf where the regional superpowers China and, later, Japan (to whom Korea had mediated much in Chinese culture),<sup>16)</sup> and later still, Russia, the powers of western Europe and the United States of America all contested claims and influence. Specific links between any given Korean elite faction and one of the larger, foreign powers often proved ephemeral, but the generic pattern of such alliances describes a powerful constant in Korean history.<sup>17)</sup>

To be cogent and honest, of course, any socio-historical comparison such as that being sketched here between Korea and Israel as monarchies must look at significant differences as well as similarities. The two climates were quite

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16) The geopolitical position of Korea differed from that of Israel in at least one significant regard. Israel was caught between the two, ancient, primary, riverine civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia, both far larger and older than Israel. China was in an analogous role for Korea. Japan, by contrast, was a secondary state, dependent in many ways upon cultural antecedents in and initiatives from Korea. Japan was long the more populous of the two, however. Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1978), 177, 181, offer the following estimates for the populations of Korea and Japan, respectively: in 800 C.E., 2 million vs. 4 million; in 1500, 4 million vs. 17 million; in 1700, 6.25 million vs. 29 million; and in 1850, 9 million vs. 32 million. That difference in the size of the two societies frequently translated into differences in political and military power. Japans nineteenth-century embrace of industrial technology exacerbated, but did not initiate, its power to pressure its Korean neighbor.

17) In addition to the controversial theories of Lee, *A New History*, and the materials listed in n. 12 above, note, too, the perspectives of Yong-sop Kim and his students on late Joseon, now represented in English by Kie-chung Pang and Michael D. Shin, eds., *Landlords, Peasants and Intellectuals in Modern Korea* (Cornell East Asian Series 128; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2005).

different. Israel had a relatively mild, rainy winter and a mostly dry summer, both typical of its Mediterranean climate. Rainfall varied markedly, not only in its annual total, but also in its timing within the rainy season. Wheat was the staple grain, produced by rain agriculture. Because of the high risks inherent in rain agriculture in such a climate, the herding of sheep and goats and the raising of perennial tree and vine crops were important mechanisms of spreading risk. With its temperate climate and year-round precipitation, Korea was not quite as risky an agricultural environment. Irrigated, wet-paddy production of rice provided the staple grain. While both drought and flood could cause periodic devastation, neither was as omnipresent a threat as was drought in Israel. Long, severe winters in most of Korea helped to control agricultural pests in a manner not true for Israel's milder winter climate, but were themselves the source of much suffering.<sup>18)</sup>

Korea was significantly larger than Israel both in territory and in population. The boundaries of both were fluid and fluctuated historically. For comparative purposes, however, it suffices to note that the Korean peninsula, south of the Yalu-Dumen border, is slightly over 220,000 km<sup>2</sup>, while modern Israel plus the West Bank and Gaza cover approximately 27,000 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>19)</sup> McEvedy and Jones estimate the population of Israel to have averaged less than 1 million throughout the Old Testament period, and often less than half that.<sup>20)</sup> In Korea, they estimate a population of 1 million in 600 C.E. to have climbed to about 7.5 million by 1800 and to 12 million by 1900.<sup>21)</sup> Using more recent data, Broshi and Finkelstein estimate a peak population for Israel and Judah combined to have reached ca. 460,000 in Iron Age II,<sup>22)</sup> though Herr warns

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18) According to modern measurements and assuming climatic variations within a relatively limited range in historical times, we can assume that a large majority of the territory of ancient Israel received between 300 and 800 mm. mean annual rainfall, with areas to the south and east receiving far less, and only mountainous regions near Lebanon receiving more; see *Atlas of Israel*, 12. By similar measure, a large majority of historical Korea received between 800 and 1400 mm. mean annual rainfall, with areas still wetter in the south and east and under 800 mm. only in the northeast; see Park et al., *Atlas of Korea*, 12.

19) McEvedy and Jones, *Atlas of World Population*, 142, 176.

20) *Ibid.*, 141-44.

21) *Ibid.*, 176-78.

that their estimates for Transjordan are too high.<sup>23)</sup> Estimates for Korea in the *Atlas of Korean History* agree in range with those of McEvedy and Jones, and vary internally for an eighteenth century peak in the population of Joseon from over ten million to a graphic depiction of over 18 million.<sup>24)</sup>

A population of 400,000 for ancient Israel would yield a population density of approximately 14.8 per km<sup>2</sup>. A Korean population of 4 million, the estimate of McEvedy and Jones for both 1200 and 1500 and the average of all their estimates for the intervals from 600 to 1800,<sup>25)</sup> yields a population density of 18.2 per km<sup>2</sup>. While such figures obviously should not be pressed based, as they are, upon estimates they tentatively confirm the rough comparability of agrarian technology in the Iron Age monarchies of Israel and Korea during most of their life. The numbers, of course, mask the markedly uneven distribution of population in the territories of both societies. The higher figure in Korea can be interpreted plausibly as the result, at least in part, of the higher average precipitation there. The much higher population figures for later Joseon probably reflect advances in agrarian technology and influences from industrializing societies, among other factors, and belie certain stereotypes of later Joseon as a moribund hermit kingdom.

Korea and Israel also varied markedly in their access to the sea and their intercourse with other societies across it. Israel and Judah lacked significant harbors during monarchic times.<sup>26)</sup> Their access to the sea was mostly through the Phoenician city-states. Korea, by contrast, was rich in natural ports. From an early period these ports supported fishing, seaborne trade and international political and military relations. Whereas Israel occupied the land bridge where the regional superpowers met and clashed, Korea's interactions with China

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22) Magen Broshi and Israel Finkelstein, The Population of Palestine in Iron Age II, *BASOR* 287 (1992): 47-60.

23) Larry G. Herr, The Iron Age II Period: Emerging Nations, *BA* 60:3 (1997), 137.

24) Kim et al., *Atlas of Korean History*, cf. 132 with 108.

25) *Atlas of World Population*, 177.

26) Only in Herods time did his massive construction of an artificial harbor at Caesarea Maritima fundamentally change that situation. See, conveniently, Robert L. Hohlfelder, Caesarea, *ADB* 1:798-803.

were by sea as well as by land, and with Japan, of necessity, by sea. Were any of Korea's episodes of technological innovation, such as that experienced during Sejong's time, related in any way to the maritime component in its advanced agrarian society?<sup>27)</sup>

The agrarian monarchies of Israel and Korea were both related to herding societies, but in somewhat different ways. Regions too arid to support cultivation bounded Israel on the south and east. Between cropland and true desert, however, lay significant territories with sufficient precipitation during the rainy winter to support seasonal grasses and water holes. These areas served as winter pastures for flocks of sheep and goats. This use not only allowed economic exploitation of land too dry to cultivate, but also provided a disaster bank on the hoof that stored surpluses from wet years to be utilized in dry years when crops were sparse. The same flocks found summer pasture on the stubble of the harvested grain fields, fertilizing them with their bodily wastes as they grazed. Such herding was thus symbiotic with cereal agriculture in biblical Israel, and was incorporated into its agrarian society as an integral part.<sup>28)</sup>

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27) For a review of innovations in early Joseon, see, conveniently, Young Woo Han, *Joseon Era* (vol. 2 of *A Review of Korean History*; trans. Chaibong Hahm; Paju Book City: Kyongsaewon Publishing Company, 2010), 83-123. Lenski, *Ecological-Evolutionary Theory*, 99-101; and Nolan and Lenski, *Human Societies*, 181-83, note that the rate of technological innovation was faster, on balance, in maritime societies than in the advanced agrarian societies to which they were most often related. The latter period of Goryeo saw an active maritime trade through the harbor near the capital on the Yeseong River estuary; see Han, *Ancient/Goryeo Era*, 265-67. Early Joseon saw an emphasis on naval forces to suppress Japanese piracy and to convert the relationship from raiding to trading; see Han, *Joseon Era*, 45-48. While Korea's trading partners in this period ranged from as far away as Arabia, Song China was the major such partner. Cumings writes of this period (*Korea's Place*, 42), Scholars have long pondered the rapid commercial and industrial development of the Song period, and the wide trading network that culminated in Admiral Cheng Ho's seven seafaring expeditions to the Persian Gulf and the African coast in the period of Yi Song-gye and Sejong, that is, 1405-33. The question is, Why did this fruitful period come to an end? That is, indeed, an important historical question. Another is whether an increased maritime component in Korea's agrarian society helped to spark technological innovation there.

28) See David C. Hopkins, *The Highlands of Canaan: Agricultural Life in the Early Iron Age* (The Social World of Biblical Antiquity Series 3; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 245-50; cf. Marvin L. Chaney, Bitter Bounty: The Dynamics of Political Economy Critiqued by the Eighth-Century Prophets, in *Reformed Faith and Economics* (ed. Robert L. Stivers; Lanham, MD: University

Agrarian Korea had no such integral relationship with herding. It was a significant economic activity only in the relatively dry northeastern corner. But the vast grasslands of Central Asia were home to horse-riding herders who, in various configurations, were a major political factor in Manchuria and along what eventually became Korea's northern border. Such herders had a major impact in Goguryeo and its successor states, on Goryeo in the form of the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, and on Joseon in the form of the Manchu invasions, to name only the most famous instances. Many other periods of Korean history witnessed pressure and raids from the north by herders hungry to share the more abundant food supply of Korean agriculturalists. Notwithstanding that major and repeated political role, the generalizations of Nolan and Lenski about herding societies as a class also seem to fit the specifics of Korean history: Despite their many military victories, herding peoples were never able to destroy the agrarian social order. In the end, it was always they, not agrarian peoples, who changed their mode of life.<sup>29)</sup>

The analysis of herding societies by Nolan and Lenski may suggest one influence that they exercised in Israel and Korea both, though, as seen above, through rather different mechanisms. Even though virtually all agrarian societies are patriarchal in their gender relations,<sup>30)</sup> herding societies appear even more male-dominant. Nolan and Lenski posit a principal reason for these tendencies. Above all, they reflect the often militant nature of pastoral life. Raiding and warfare are frequent activities, and as we have noted before, these activities stimulate the growth of political authority.<sup>31)</sup> Does the ongoing influence of herding life upon monarchic Israel and Korea even if by different means help to account for the often-virulent patriarchy in both? If so, that influence was compounded by the fact that their geopolitical positions

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Press of America, 1989), 22-23; repr. in *Biblical Israel through an Agrarian Lens*.

29) *Human Societies*, 181; cf. Lenski, *Ecological-Evolutionary Theory*, 101-03.

30) Nolan and Lenski, *Human Societies*, 167-68. For a cogent explanation of the patriarchy of agrarian societies, see Laurel Bossen, *Women and Economic Institutions*, in *Economic Anthropology* (ed. Stuart Plattner; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989), 318-50.

31) *Human Societies*, 180.

guaranteed that they saw more than their share of agrarian warfare. Periods of protracted warfare and of agricultural intensification both tend to exacerbate male dominance.<sup>32)</sup> Such technological, geopolitical and economic factors in the heightening of patriarchy deserve to be investigated alongside the ideological influences of Neo-Confucianism more usually discussed by historians of Korea.<sup>33)</sup>

Other similarities between Israel and Korea suggest themselves. Barley was a secondary crop in both. Typically grown on land that was more marginal because of less availability of water, relatively higher altitude, soil that was alkaline, saline or nutrient-poor, or some combination of these factors, it often served as the food of the poor in both societies.<sup>34)</sup> Arable land occurred in both in a patchwork of relatively small fields, interrupted by mountains in Korea, and both by mountains and by desert badlands in Israel. The topography of both produced many relatively small rivers and streams, though some of Korea's rivers were relatively larger and notably more navigable. But no huge valleys in either concentrated food production and social control, as was the case in China, Mesopotamia and Egypt. Areas that could produce the most grain in both Cholla in the case of Korea, areas in and near the Esdraelon and coastal plains in the case of Israel tended to send more grain to their political capitals than they received commensurate goods and services from their national governments. Regional resentment was endemic in the areas thus exploited, and could be fanned into the flames of open rebellion when other factors proved conducive to it. Earlier tribal and/or regional identities frequently resurfaced in these rebellions. Relatively slight differences

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32) Bossen, *Women*, 330-50; Marvin L. Chaney, *Accusing Whom of What? Hoseas Rhetoric of Promiscuity*, in *Distant Voices Drawing Near: Essays in Honor of Antoinette Clark Wire* (ed. Holly E. Hearon; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 106; repr. in *Biblical Israel through an Agrarian Lens*; and Carol Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 189-96.

33) Cf. Cumings, *Korea's Place*, 47; Deuchler, *Confusion Transformation*, 231-81; Lee, *Women in Korean History*, 5-6, 15-81; and Palais, *Confucian Statecraft*, 27.

34) Cf. Oded Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 91-92; David Hopkins, *Barley*, *The New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* 1:398; and Palais, *Confucian Statecraft*, 110.

in regional dialects also took on added significance in such conflicts.

The sources of regionalism and factionalism both in Korea and in Israel were thus multiple and similar. In addition, and most significantly, religious ideology in both societies served as a major medium to express and conduct regional and factional struggles. Rival elites often appealed to the same or similar religious traditions, but leveraged them to their own advantage and to their opponents detriment. As a result, the articulation of religious ideology in both societies was frequently quite polemical. This disputatiousness of religious expression, in fact, recurred in Israel and Korea both across extended periods of time and wide variations in other factors. In my previous article, I surveyed the role of religious ideology in a whole series of regional and factional struggles in Korea. I also discussed briefly the genre and purpose of the Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomistic History and the Priestly Writing in this same, comparative framework.<sup>35)</sup> Chung-shin Park has recently treated the first century of Protestantism in Korea from a similar perspective.<sup>36)</sup> Structures of space prevent repetition of any of that material here. Instead, as time permits, I wish to look at other examples.

### 3. Regionalism and Factionalism in the Establishment of David's Throne and Dynasty<sup>37)</sup>

One obvious place to begin is with a brief discussion of the nature and

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35) Pluralism, *passim*. On the role of religious ideology in Korean factionalism and sectionalism, note particularly the summarizing quotations in Pluralism from Carter J. Eckert, et al., *Korea Old and New: A History* (Seoul: Ilchokak Publishers, 1990). On factionalism and religious ideology in biblical Israel and beyond, see, conveniently, Robert B. Coote and Mary P. Coote, *Power, Politics, and the Making of the Bible: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).

36) *Protestantism and Politics in Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).

37) Many contemporary scholars of the Hebrew Bible doubt, of course, any access to a historical David. By writing this section of the current essay and those that follow, I reveal that I am neither minimalist nor maximalist. For convenient discussion of the historical issues regarding David and a representative sample of the literature, see Baruch Halpern, *Davids Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001); Steven L. McKenzie, *King David: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 148-85.

function of what is often called The Apology of David in 1 Sam 16: 14 through 2 Sam 5: 10. These chapters present Davids emergence over against the failures and purported crimes of Saul, whom he usurped. An insightful study of this material by McCarter judges it to be a royal apology.<sup>38)</sup> Following Hoffners study of similar Hittite texts,<sup>39)</sup> McCarter characterize such an apology as a document composed for a king who had usurped the throne, composed in order to defend or justify his assumption of the kingship by force.<sup>40)</sup> Documents written in this genre routinely present the king or leader usurped as inept, corrupt, unpopular, and having lost the mandate of heaven. His usurper is just as routinely pictured as arising from obscurity through merit and being of spotless integrity, though frequently slandered. Convenient deaths that helped to pave his way to the throne, for instance, are explained as neither his doing nor intent. He also enjoys both popular acclaim and divine mandate.

Saul and David, respectively, as portrayed in 1 Sam 16: 14 through 2 Sam 5: 10, certainly fit this pattern. Sectional as well as personal rivalries were involved. Saul was a Benjaminite, David a Judahite. The winner of a regionally based power struggle thus framed the perspectives and categories that have dominated perceptions of the period. If Saul or his apologist could speak from the grave, how might the historical picture be changed or nuanced? As we have already seen, accounts of national origins in general, and in Israel and Korea in specific, are rarely neutral or objective. History is always a mediation between what is known or knowable about the past and the concerns, viewpoints, vested interests and meaning making of the historian and his or her constituency.

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38) P. Kyle McCarter, *The Apology of David*, *JBL* 99 (1980): 489-504; cf. Michael B. Dick, *The History of Davids Rise to Power and the Neo-Babylonian Succession Apologies*, in *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in Honor of J. J. M. Roberts* (ed. Bernard Frank Batto and Kathryn L. Roberts; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 3-19.

39) Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., *Propaganda and Political Justification in Hittite Historiography*, in *Unity and Diversity: Essays in the History, Literature, and Religion of the Ancient Near East* (ed. Hans Goedicke and J. J. M. Roberts; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 49-62.

40) Hoffner, *Propaganda*, 49; quoted by McCarter, *Apology*, 495-96.

The founders of the Goryeo and Joseon dynasties in Korea both produced documents that while not identical in literary genre struck many of the same notes as David's apology, and for similar reasons. Both regional and factional factors played a role in the chaos and disintegration that preceded and led to the founding of Goryeo.<sup>41)</sup>

All three rebel leaders of the Later Three Kingdoms period hoisted the banners of their independence in former Paekche and Koguryo territories. To rally support behind them, they exploited, with apparent success, the residual anti-Silla sentiment in these areas by invoking memories of long-vanquished kingdoms. That such sentiments could be exploited some two and a half centuries after the first attempt at unified rule in the peninsula is suggestive of a less than complete success in that original endeavor. Perhaps even more revealing is the fact that those who exploited it were persons with no known Paekche or Koguryo lineage in their background.<sup>42)</sup>

Various of the proclamations of Wang Geon, Goryeos dynastic founder known also by his posthumous title, Taejo, emphasize the failings and cruelty of Gungye, whom he usurped, faults that are seen as leading to the loss both of popular support and of divine mandate. He, by contrast, is portrayed as enjoying hearty support and the mandate of heaven, as learning from his predecessors mistakes, working for the good of the whole country, and exhibiting widely acknowledged merit and integrity.<sup>43)</sup> Yi Seonggye issued similar documents to justify his usurpation that brought the chaos and rivalries of the last years of Goryeo to an end.<sup>44)</sup>

In biblical Israel, sectionalism and factionalism did not end with the Davidic Unification. Numerous factors point to regional and factional conflicts

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41) Cf. Han, *Ancient/Goryeo Era*, 238-48; and Lee, *A New History*, 97-105.

42) Peter H. Lee and Wm. Theodore de Bary, eds., *From Early Times Through the Sixteenth Century* (vol. 1 of *Sources of Korean Tradition*; New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 145.

43) *Ibid.*, 151-56.

44) *Ibid.*, 272-76; cf. Han, *Joseon Era*, 25-30; and Lee, *A New History*, 162-65.

throughout David's rule and far beyond.<sup>45)</sup> He became king of his home tribe of Judah first. Only years later and separately did he assume the throne of the northern tribes, and even then the North was grudging. Leaders in the remnant of the Saulid camp sensed that their hand had played out. With no viable heir to the throne, they apparently saw David as a lesser evil than the Philistines. Sensitive to these tensions, David took measures to address certain of the regional and factional rivalries inherent in his so-called United Monarchy.<sup>46)</sup>

Choice of a capital city loomed large amidst these tensions. The natural capital of his home tribe of Judah was Hebron, an old Bronze Age city-state. Shechem was in many ways the counterpart in the northern hill country. Had David chosen Hebron as his national capital, he would have alienated further the already suspicious North. A choice of Shechem, however, would have separated him from his base of power and left his most stalwart supporters feeling betrayed. Rather than either of these costly choices, then, David opted to move the national capital to Jerusalem, an old Jebusite city on the border between North and South, but not previously part of either. It had become David's possession through right of conquest by his personal troops.<sup>47)</sup> David also sought religious legitimation for his new capital by bringing the ark there

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45) Marvin L. Chaney, Systemic Study of the Israelite Monarchy, *Semeia* 37 (1986): 67-74; repr. in *Biblical Israel through an Agrarian Lens*.

46) See Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 167-69, and the literature there cited.

47) *Ibid.*, 169-72. Like David, the founders of the Goryeo and Joseon dynasties both chose to emphasize their break with the immediate past by moving their capitals. Geopolitical concerns were involved in both cases. Han, *Ancient/Goryeo Era*, 241, says Wang Geon . . . moved the capital back from Cheorwon to his power base of Songak (Gaeseong). Cf. Lee, *A New History*, 111-12. The decadence of Goryeo's final years encouraged the new Joseon dynasty to symbolize a fresh start by moving the capital from Gaeseong to Hanyang (Seoul). While Baekje had been able to build a strong kingdom with Hanyang as its capital for over 500 years, the city was thereafter intermittently occupied by both Goguryeo and Silla. In this regard, as Hanyang incorporated cultural elements of all three kingdoms, it was in many ways the least affected by regional sentiment (Han, *Joseon Era*, 32-33). Cf. Lee, *A New History*, 165; and Lee and de Bary, *From Early Times Through the Sixteenth Century*, 277-78. Both Gaeseong and Hanyang were in the region where the Silla and Goguryeo spheres of influence and centers of gravity met and overlapped: cf., conveniently, Kim et al., *Atlas of Korean History*, 68-69.

after its return by the Philistines. He hoped thereby to link his regime to the religious traditions and rituals previously focused in Samuel, Shiloh and its priesthood. Shiloh was in the territory of Ephraim, a major northern tribe.<sup>48)</sup> The northern tribes, however, never owned Jerusalem, the city of David, as their capital the way David's home tribe of Judah did.

Other elements point to continuing tensions within his regime. The national sanctuary that he established in Jerusalem had a dual high priesthood. Abiathar traced his line back to Shiloh and represented its tradition. Zadok, whose origins scholars have traced variously to Jerusalem or Hebron, was more identified with the innovations of the Davidic monarchy than with the North's religious past. David's military command was similarly divided. Joab, his kinsman, was in charge of the tribal levies/citizen soldiers with roots firmly in the soil of premonarchic Israel. Benaiah son of Jehoiada, on the other hand, was over the Cherethites and Pelethites, Cretan and Philistine mercenary shock troops who were related to David much as he and his band of irregulars had once been related to Achish, the Philistine ruler of Gath.<sup>49)</sup>

#### 4. Regionalism and Factionalism in Solomon's Succession and Administration<sup>50)</sup>

The factional tensions witnessed in these dual administrative structures became only too apparent when David grew old and his sons and retainers struggled with one another over the succession to his throne. (Absalom's earlier attempt to usurp his father had surfaced in the persons of Mephiboseth (Merib-baal) and Shimei son of Geraold animosities regarding David's usurpation of Saul.)<sup>51)</sup> The final struggle to succeed David involved Adonijah, David's fourth son by his wife Haggith in Hebron, and Solomon, the tenth of

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48) Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 176-77.

49) Chaney, *Systemic Study*, 70; and Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 177-79.

50) For the many historical issues regarding Solomon and his administration, see Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 186-220; and Lowell K. Handy, ed., *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

51) Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 172-76.

David's sons, born after David was long ensconced in Jerusalem. Among the party that supported Adonijah were Joab and Abiathar. Their respective counterparts, Benaiah and Zadok, conversely, supported Solomon.<sup>52)</sup>

As a much younger son, Solomon was by no means the obvious choice to succeed his father. When he at last surmounted this factional struggle for power, however, his actions regarding those of his father's officials who had supported his rival are informative. He instructed Benaiah to violate the sanctuary of the altar to which Joab had fled. Benaiah unceremoniously dragged Joab from the altar and dispatched him forthwith. Abiathar's treatment was a bit different. As a priest, he might have been more powerful in death than in life if Solomon had martyred him. Instead, he removed him from office and the center of power in Jerusalem by exiling him to his country estate at Anathoth.<sup>53)</sup>

Both dynamics find numerous parallels in the factional power struggles of the Joseon dynasty in Korea. Many a high official paid with his life for being on the wrong side of a succession struggle. Others, whose lives were spared, were nevertheless rendered relatively powerless by being banished from Seoul and its court intrigues to live in exile under the grass roof on their family estates. Sectional and clan rivalries were frequently involved.

Another element of sectional and factional conflict manifests similarities between Israel and Korea. Royal and elite marriages in both these monarchic states involved complex diplomatic ties.<sup>54)</sup> David's rise to power was replete with multiple marriages designed to forge alliances and to neutralize or overcome rivals.<sup>55)</sup> Just as David's sons by these wives were rivals to succeed to their father's throne, their mothers were rivals, both for David's favor and on behalf of their sons' dynastic ambitions. Bathsheba's role in the final contest of David's sons for his throne was only the first of many such episodes. Any

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52) Chaney, *Systemic Study*, 70.

53) *Ibid.*: cf. Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 391-406.

54) For Korea, see Lee, *Women in Korean History*, 48-52, 109-184.

55) Jon D. Levenson and Baruch Halpern, *The Political Import of David's Marriages*, *JBL* 99 (1980), 507-18.

royal wife whose son succeeded to the throne would probably enjoy an influential position at court.<sup>56)</sup> Solomon, if one is to credit a historical kernel in the tendentious biblical descriptions, took the convention of diplomatic marriages to new heights, thereby forming marriage alliances with a number of foreign rulers.

Most royal wives remained in active contact with their fathers, uncles, brothers, and male cousins. They could thus serve as two-way conduits between affairs at court and the interests of their home clan or country. That is why, in the books of Kings, the formulary summarizing the reign of a king of Judah usually mentions his mother by name and often by affiliation.<sup>57)</sup> These data are not biblical trivia. They are important indications of powerful connections and influences impacting the king in question and his rule. The matters at issue far transcended merely personal considerations.

Another tension fractured the elites of the Israelite and Korean monarchies. Aristocracies in both were supported by agricultural production on landed estates that they often held in perpetuity and passed on from father to son in so-called patrimonial domain. The more secure an aristocrats hold on the tenure and income of his land, the greater his de facto independence from the crown. The bureaucracies necessary to administer both of these monarchies formed the other pole of this tension. Deployed at least partially on models from Egypt and China, respectively, bureaucrats in Israel and Korea usually enjoyed much of their power and privilege only as long as they retained royal favor and office. When the income of a particular estate supported the holder of a given bureaucratic office only while he was incumbent in that office, so-called prebendal domain obtained. Such arrangements gave the crown greater power.<sup>58)</sup>

Patrimonial and prebendal domains are ideal types, with the histories both of

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56) See Nancy R. Bowen, *The Quest for the Historical Gebir*, *CBQ* 64 (2001), 597-618, and the literature there cited.

57) *Ibid.*, 616-17, provides a convenient table with references.

58) For a description and analysis of patrimonial and prebendal domains, see, classically, Eric R. Wolf, *Peasants* (Foundations of Modern Anthropology Series; Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 50-59.

Israel and of Korea witnessing many mixtures and combinations. Tensions between landed aristocrats, on the one hand, and the crown and its royal bureaucrats, on the other, however, constituted an important source of fractioning.<sup>59)</sup> In Korea's Joseon dynasty, for instance, particularly in its latter period, the yangban aristocracy was markedly successful in resisting royal taxation. That configuration of power left an enfeebled national government to face the aggressive incursions of Japan and the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>60)</sup>

When powers and jurisdictions between the aristocracy and the royal bureaucracy were not clearly defined, peasantries usually suffered. Peasant agriculture was the economic base, both of the aristocracy and of the royal court. Both sets of overlords had incentive to extract as much surplus as possible. If not restrained by clear jurisdictional lines, the combined demands of local aristocrats and royal bureaucrats could easily bring vulnerable peasants to ruin, thereby killing the goose that laid the golden egg. Under such circumstances, peasants longed for redress from a good king, who could and would understand, balance, and modulate the multiple pressures on peasant production, and restrain both aristocratic and bureaucratic rapaciousness. Understanding these complex tensions goes far to illumine both the iconic status of King Sejong in Korean history and culture and the rise of so-called messianic expectation in biblical Israel.<sup>61)</sup>

Solomon's administrative structures concentrated power in the royal court and drove the peasantry, particularly that of north Israel, to the brink. While details remain unclear and disputed, it seems probable that Solomon's tax regime favored his home region and power base in Judah and bore heavily

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59) For Korea, see the well-informed generalizations of Cumings, *Koreas Place*, 40.

60) Han, *Joseon Era*, 269–72; idem, *Modern Contemporary Era* (vol. 3 of *A Review of Korean History* (trans. Chaibong Hahm; Paju Book City: Kyongsaewon Publishing Company, 2010), 25–120; and Lee, *A New History*, 224–327.

61) On Sejong, see Young-Key Kim-Renaud, *King Sejong the Great: The Light of Fifteenth Century Korea* (rev. ed.; Washington, D.C.: International Circle of Korean Linguistics, 1997). For messianic expectation in Israel, see John Day, ed., *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* (JSOTSup 270; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), and the literature there cited.

on the North. Corvée duty on royal building projects and royal land constituted a direct tax on peasant labor and added to the already heavy burden of taxes in kind.<sup>62)</sup> One is reminded of the role of the Cholla region in most of Korean history. It was the rice bowl, much of whose production was exported to feed others, but it received few commensurate goods or services in return. It is small wonder that many of its citizens through the years have cast longing glances back to the days of Baekje's power.

#### 5. Regionalism, Factionalism and National Division

Royal dynasties deemed oppressive by significant sections of their realm are particularly vulnerable when an old king dies and his son and successor has not yet consolidated his reign. That was the case when Solomon died and his son and designated heir, Rehoboam, sought to succeed him. Many of the elements of sectionalism and factionalism already reviewed were involved in the ensuing events that ultimately divided the South and the North into the separate monarchies of Judah and Israel. David, it should be remembered, had come to rule the two regions separately.<sup>63)</sup> Solomonic consolidation of royal power had removed the checks and balances of David's regime and had consistently favored Judah over northern Israel. That northern hostility to

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62) See, conveniently, Miller and Hayes, *A History*, 212-14, and the literature they cite.

63) Partial parallels in Korea deserve thoughtful, nuanced exploration. National division in Korea is so traumatic a topic that it is often difficult to discuss it historically. Any historical account of the division has powerful ethical and political implications in the present. As an American, I am painfully aware of the role my government played. Probably this can be said, however, with wide agreement among historians in Korea, as in Israel, regional identities and differences, broadly correlated with the two divided nations, *preceded* the particular national state that was divided. Lee, *A New History*, 71, writes that . . . Unified Silla and Parhae confronted each other hostilely much like the southern and northern halves of a partitioned nation . . . . While Cumings, *Koreas Place*, 35, cautions that Lee's characterization may risk some retrojection, he does so in the context of making precisely the point about regionalism being pressed here. Elsewhere, Afterword, in Pang and Shin, eds., *Landlords, Peasants and Intellectuals in Modern Korea*, 405-06, Cumings summarizes what he regards to be the surest conclusion of Yong-sop Kims detailed and voluminous scholarship: the root cause of the national division is to be found in the history of lord and peasant, and the remedies that both Koreas took (or did not take) to deal with the fundamental problems that arose from those longstanding relationships. As we are about to see, elite-peasant relations were also of the essence in the division of ancient Israel.

Solomon's oppressive policies had left his son in a weakened position is evidenced by Rehoboam's traveling to Shechem - the natural capital of the North - to meet with the assembly of Israel.<sup>64</sup> Had he been playing a stronger hand, representatives of the North would undoubtedly have come to the court in Jerusalem to do obeisance.

There are several indications that oppressive taxation of the North was a major bone of contention. *Corvée* duty seems to have been particularly hated. Rehoboam was asked, Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you.<sup>65</sup> The older men who counseled Rehoboam advised that he heed the peoples request. His younger advisors, however, like him born to the purple, counseled a harsh and contemptuous show of authority: thus you should say to them, My little finger is thicker than my fathers loins. Now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.<sup>66</sup> When Rehoboam took the advice of his young contemporaries, the people of the North seceded from the rule of the Davidic dynasty: What share do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own (dynastic) house, O David.<sup>67</sup>

Three public personages who figure prominently in these events of national division also point up the fact that sectional animosities, fueled in part by Jerusalem's abuse of *corvée* service in the North, were at the heart of the dispute. Rehoboam sent Adoram so called Adoniram to quell the rebellion of the Northerners. When *corvée* had been instituted later in David's reign, Adoram was the officer placed in charge. He had functioned as chief of *corvée* throughout Solomon's rule. He thus epitomized what northern peasants who had suffered under the *corvée* of the Davidic dynasty so hated, and they responded corporately by judging him guilty of capital crimes and stoning

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64) 1 Kgs 12:1.

65) 1 Kgs 12:4.

66) 1 Kgs 12:10-11.

67) 1 Kgs 12:16.

him to death.<sup>68)</sup>

In its break with the Davidids, the North was led by Jeroboam. His background is instructive. A man of humble beginnings, he had impressed Solomon with his ability. As a result, the king had placed him over the *corvée* of the house of Joseph, that is, of the two large and powerful northern tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. As is frequently the case for such officials in agrarian monarchies, Jeroboam had played both ends against the middle. While he had been ingratiating himself to Solomon, he had also been playing on northern grievances that he knew only too closely. When Solomon found him out, he fled to Egypt. Egypt's geopolitical strategy in Syro-Palestine had for centuries been the policy of divide and conquer. The kingdom on the Nile routinely harbored dissident leaders from the petty states of western Asia. Jeroboam undoubtedly enjoyed Egyptian encouragement in sundering the realm of the Davidids. Small-power factional and sectional politics were inseparably linked to large-power geopolitical manipulation in Israel as in Korea.<sup>69)</sup>

Because Jeroboam was the son of a nobody, an upstart and a secessionist, he needed religious legitimization even worse than most agrarian kings. We should note carefully where he found it. The prophet Ahijah, called the Shilonite, sanctioned Jeroboam's secession with an acted prophecy.<sup>70)</sup> Ahijah's title, the Shilonite, links him with the same religious tradition represented by Abiathar. David had, of course, welcomed Abiathar as one half of his dual high priesthood, but Solomon had deposed him and exiled him to his family estate in Anathoth for supporting Solomon's rival, Adonijah. That faction of northern religious tradition now came back to bite Solomon's son in the person of Ahijah. Three centuries later, Jeremiah, who was from among the priests who are in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin<sup>71)</sup> and who had a

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68) See, conveniently, Phillip E. McMillion, Adoniram, *ADB* 1:76.

69) On Jeroboam, see, conveniently, Wesley I. Toews, Jeroboam, *The New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* 3:241-45.

70) 1 Kgs 11:29-38.

71) Jer 1:1.

special interest in the traditions of Shiloh, probably served as an heir of that same, continuing tradition.

Even after Jeroboam had made good on the political establishment of a separate northern state of Israel with the help of Ahijah's religious legitimation, he still had a problem of religion. The ark at one time the chief icon of the Shilonite religious tradition in which Samuel, Abiathar, and Ahijah all stood now resided in the inter sanctum of the Davidic dynastic temple built by Solomon in Jerusalem. Jeroboam could scarcely stabilize his fledgling secessionist state if his subjects trooped back to Jerusalem to worship in a temple controlled by and legitimating his enemy, Rehoboam. Jeroboam desperately needed state shrines of his own.

His solution to this problem was to reconstitute the old patriarchal shrines at Bethel and Dan as royal sanctuaries that legitimated his rule. Bethel proved to be of particular significance. It sat just north of his border with Rehoboam's Judah on the ridge road that ran south to Jerusalem. There it could intercept any of his subjects who might be tempted to travel to Jerusalem to worship. By increasing travel to and jurisdiction in Bethel, Jeroboam also increased his subjects' ownership of this site and their willingness to defend the nearby border against Judahite incursions (Dan, his other royal sanctuary, was in the far north, where it could serve similar functions in helping to defend Jeroboam's border against growing Aramaean power).

Bethel's pedigree was impeccable. It was none other than the place where Israel's eponymous ancestor, Jacob/Israel had experienced a theophany promising future greatness, both to Jacob's descendants and to the site itself. One analysis plausibly views the much-discussed Elohist strand in the Tetrateuch as a polemical recomposition of the Yahwist, designed to legitimate Jeroboam's breakaway regime. If that is, in fact, the case, the particular combination of J and E in the biblical account of this theophany (Gen 28: 10-22) receives detailed illumination.<sup>72)</sup>

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72) See Robert B. Coote, *In Defense of Revolution: The Elohist History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991). If Coote is correct in reading the Elohist as an apologist for Jeroboam I, Es' mandate for administrative hierarchy in Exod 18:13-27, (see Coote, *In Defense*, 121-22), may

As we have seen, Jeroboam's shrines required an iconographic alternative to the ark in order to symbolize and mediate God's presence. In Jerusalem, as in Shiloh before it, the ark was understood as a pedestal upon which Yahweh was invisibly enthroned. Jeroboam chose a parallel iconography that claimed patriarchal roots even older than the arks. The Bull or Mighty One of Jacob/Israel is a divine epithet designating Israel's God in Gen 49: 24; Isa 1: 24; 49: 26; 60: 16; and Ps. 132: 2, 5. In the Northwest Semitic material culture outside of Israel and Judah, the bull frequently served as a symbol of strength with various deities represented as sitting astride it, enthroned on its back. Many historians of religions understand Jeroboam's golden calves at Bethel and Dan as standing solidly in this tradition of iconography. In 1 Kings 12-13, the Deuteronomistic Historian, eager to legitimate the Josianic Reform, clearly understands these golden calves as idolatrous and apostate. If Yahweh was conceived as enthroned invisibly upon their backs, however, they were no more idolatrous or apostate than the ark. The matter was rather one of two rival sections and factions making alternative use of religious traditions to legitimate their particular vested interests.<sup>73)</sup>

## 6. Conclusions and Implications

If occasion permitted, many further examples of socio-historical parallels between agrarian Korea and biblical Israel could be adduced, along with significant and clarifying differences. Those further examples, I believe, would bolster the analysis I have offered, as well as nuancing it. The space available, however, allows only some brief conclusions and hints of where such an analysis may lead if pursued. In all of this, my concern is to open discussion

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be compared readily with Taejos proclamation on the formation of government from the first year of the Goryeo dynasty, (see Lee and de Bary, *From Early Times Through the Sixteenth Century*, 153). Secessionists and usurpers most often find it easier to unite popular resentment against the old regime than to legitimate their new regime, while at the same time enforcing control and discipline within it.

73) On Jeroboam's religious institutions, see Wesley I. Toews, *Monarchy and Religious Institution in Israel under Jeroboam I* (Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 47; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), and the literature there cited.

and dialogue, not to effect any premature or dogmatic closure. If there is any cogency in the comparison of Korea and Israel that I have sketched, then what significance may we find in it? I shall simply offer some brief suggestions to stimulate your further thoughts and analysis.

If Korea and Israel are as similar at a generic level as I believe, knowledge of Korean history and culture can help to tutor scholars of biblical Israel about what questions to ask their fragmentary and skewed data base, and how to conceptualize the possible relationships within it. On the whole, the Korean side of the comparison is far more fully documented and understood than is ancient Israel. Comparative suggestions can never substitute for specific data, but they can and should inform how partial data are processed and evaluated. In this regard, I believe that Korean Old Testament scholars have an inbuilt tool denied those of us in the field whose nations have experienced histories far less like that of biblical Israel. Korean biblical scholarship has reached a kind of critical mass in the present generation of persons trained to an internationally recognized level. My plea to my Korean colleagues would be to follow their own research agenda wherever they lead, to be sure, but to consider owning and honing their knowledge of and access to Korean history and culture as an intentional and distinctive part of their contribution to scholarship on the Hebrew Bible. I, for one, would love to hear more from them in this guise.

Though the history of agrarian Korea is, as stated, known in greater detail than the history of monarchic Israel, methodologically disciplined comparison of the two can benefit the interpretation of both histories. Theoretical dimensions of the comparison have called attention to a significant maritime component in Korea's agrarian society a component fundamentally lacking in Israel during the Old Testament period. Can attention to maritime influences help to explain certain periods of rapid technological innovation in Korean history? Israel and Korea have both been shown to have sustained significant influence from herding societies, though by different means. Does that influence help to explain the strength of male dominance in both societies?

Examining the environmental, technological, political, economic, and social dimensions of patriarchy in both societies can provide an important supplement to discussions of gender that focus on the ideological.

I have argued that elite factionalism and sectionalism were deeply intrinsic to the socio-historical dynamics both of biblical Israel and of preindustrial Korea. That analysis could be extended readily into all the later periods of the Israelite and Judahite monarchies, and on more certain historical footing than the early period that I have hazarded to survey. I have understood the articulation of religious ideology in both societies as more often than not polemical, at least in part as a result of that pervasive factionalism and sectionalism. Can such an analysis help to gain us critical distance on the disputatious expression of religious ideology both in Israel and in Korea? What are the implications of understanding that both the biblical canon and Korean religious history include many voices that are partial in both senses of the English word and for similar reasons? In churches, nations and a world increasingly drawn close and interdependent by technological advances in transportation, communication and economic activity, can any of us afford the polemical parochialism born of the factions and regions of a past now definitively and irrevocably changed? If trying to force all players to produce one single melody is no longer viable or faithful, how do we learn together to produce a symphony?

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