

A History of Social Scientific Approaches on the Early State Development of Ancient Israel

Kyung-Sik Park*

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to examine scholarly analysis regarding the early state development in ancient Israel, using various social scientific approaches. In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the scholarly discourse on state formation, I will also examine some early models that explain the origin and context of ancient Israel before the 10th century BCE. Primary focus will be on Saul's reign, as the biblical narrative describes it as the first state-wide setting. However, scholars argue that the early state setting did not emerge during his reign but rather that his reign was that of a chiefdom.

Seeking the answer to the question of how the state came to be formed in ancient Israel is desirable but not precisely an easy task. The scholars on this issue have not yet come to a decisive conclusion. In fact, the biblical accounts on this issue could not provide an exact portrayal of the state development with confidence. However, recent social scientific approaches provide valuable points that support some possible models. This explains why social scientific methods work as the main critical tools to investigate the social phenomenon of the time periods. Therefore, sociological investigation of ancient Israel during

* Mokwon University, Assistant Professor, Old Testament

these time periods with its larger context must consider its history and society as important factors in the internal development. In other words, the tools of sociology are required to understand the society of the ancient Israel.

Dale Martin suggests that social scientific criticism involves applying the theories and methods of social sciences to the interpretation of biblical texts because this approach seeks to understand the social contexts reflected in the content of the biblical literature. As Martin indicates, the practitioners of social scientific criticism range from “social historians,” using traditional historical-critical methods, to “social scientists,” using explicit sociological or anthropological models for comparison with evidence in the texts under investigation.²⁾ Martin gives particular attention to both the advantages (challenging of ethnocentric preconceptions, simplified patterns for sorting data) and inherent dangers (potential rigidity, oversimplification, anachronism, and confusion of model with reality).³⁾ He cautions against the notion of “probability,” while maintaining social criticism’s usefulness in opening new perspectives and offering new tools for interpretation. Thus, by conducting sociological investigations that draw on the fields of sociology, anthropology, political science, and economics, along with the assistance of archeological research, I believe that a more comprehensive understanding of theories and models can be achieved by examining their interrelationships. These studies will provide both comparative parallels and useful theories for application.

Recognizing the complexity of organizing all human affairs into social groupings of various types, one useful analytical tool is to divide the elements of human social life into three broad categories: infrastructure, structure, and superstructure. First,

2) Dale B. Martin, “Social-Scientific Criticism,” in *To Each Its Own Meaning* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 129.

3) Ibid., 130–132.

Infrastructure encompasses the tangible factors that shape a society, including buildings, money, food, climate, geography, technology, and population. It raises questions about how these elements interconnect and what drives their creation. For example, David Hopkins highlights the impact of population growth on agricultural subsistence and explains how it affects Israel as a whole.⁴⁾ Overall, infrastructure deals with practical matters rather than abstract ideals, making it a vital foundation for any society. Second, structure refers to social organization, group, family and kinship patterns, hierarchy, role, institution, and modes of production. Structure is the ask of the question of who produces the infrastructure and how do people organize themselves. Third, Superstructure, the building blocks of ideology, comprises beliefs, values, and religion. It is not superior but rather built on top of because all groups have self-understanding and unique ideas—religious, political, cultural, and legal. In ancient Israel, studies on ethnicity define superstructure. In sum, it is important to note that these three categories are not separate entities, but rather critical analytical tools that offer different ways to examine the formation of any society. While various sociological studies and methods may focus more closely on one category than the others, the combination of all three is necessary to achieve a comprehensive understanding of human society.

This article is structured in four parts. Firstly, I examine scholarly works about the early state development in relation to various social scientific approaches. For each scholar's thesis, I present their argument and evaluate the contributions they make towards scholarship. Secondly, I offer a critical review of the current state of scholarship and suggest a synthesis of scholarly analysis. Thirdly, I compare scholars' positions and suggest how chiefdoms before state formation influenced the emergence

4) David C. Hopkins, *The Highlands of Canaan: Agricultural Life in the Early Iron Age* (Decatur: Almond, 1985).

of statehood. Finally, based on these discussions, I try to figure out Saul's reign in relation to the question of state formation.

2. Scholarly works

2.1. The Bible as a Historical Source

Understanding the history of the early state period requires reconstructing its social world, which involves gathering various types of information to create a reliable image of the past. However, there have been different opinions regarding the use of ancient sources, particularly the Bible, to construct the history of ancient Israel. While some scholars accept the historicity of the biblical text without considering its credibility problems, others reject it as a historical source and approach it with skepticism. Philip Davies argues that what scholars have constructed as “ancient Israel” is a combination of the literary construct of “biblical Israel” and the real historical Israel.⁵⁾ He suggests that “the biblical literature must have emerged as a political-cultural product of the Jerusalem establishment based in the temple” and possibly the court of the governor.⁶⁾ Therefore, biblical Israel can be seen as a literary production created by a small group of scribes from the Persian province of Yehud and their successors during the Greek period. Other scholars, such as David Jamieson-Drake, argue that it is unlikely that a Davidic Empire was administered from Jerusalem and that Judah did not become a state until at least the 8th century BCE.⁷⁾ Similarly, scholars like Davies suggest that the idea of

5) Philip R. Davies, *In Search of “Ancient Israel”* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).

6) *Ibid.*, 20.

7) *Ibid.*, 64–66.

any kingdom uniting the territories of Israel and Judah is highly implausible due to the lack of supportive archaeological data. In summary, the historical reality of ancient Israel is still subject to debate among scholars.

One of famous scholars who argue that modern scholars have created an invented product when referring to the Israel of the Iron Age, Niels Lemche insists that it is impossible to determine what the historical Israelite, as depicted in both written and material remains, truly is.⁸⁾ He explains that the inscriptions such as the Israel-Stele of Merneptah, the Beth David inscription, and the Mesha Inscription, along with other textual evidence, do not provide proof of a political entity named Israel or Judah.

Furthermore, Lemche suggests that some references found in these materials do not provide any specific information regarding the ethnic composition of the two states of Israel and Judah.⁹⁾ From the background of the revolutionary model by Mendenhall who explains the change of the settlement style from heavily fortified cities to scattered villages, Lemche proposes an evolutionary model which does not rely on the secondary sources such as the Bible and is based on a reasonable interpretation of the physical remains dating from the period.¹⁰⁾ He argues that a very tiny population may establish a royal establishment on the site of Jerusalem, but not before the first part of the ninth century BCE. Lemche states that “a living society is always in a state of change from something to something else [...] however, that it is difficult to point to any specifically Israelite ethnic identification marks.”¹¹⁾ Lemche decisively rejects united and divided monarchy and even the prophets be-

8) Niels P. Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998).

9) Ibid., 62.

10) Ibid., 63.

11) Ibid., 166.

cause these are artificial constructs. Therefore, his understanding of the early state development follows a natural evolution of societies in Ancient Near East.

Davies is criticized by scholars such as Baruch Halpern who views him as a minimalist—people who believe that the history of monarchy was a product—and asserts that the books of Kings provide many accurate historical accounts and the archaeological record in his view rather clearly show that the pre-monarchic period of settlement and expansion are perfectly reasonable.¹²⁾ For example, he argues that the reference to Shishak's military campaign in Palestine at the end of the 10th century, and remains of defense and fortifications of a centralized government authority at the late 10th century BCE.

Paula McNutt introduces the consensus among biblical scholars and archaeologists that there was at least “some movement toward centralization during the course of the 10th century BCE.”¹³⁾ He continues that the biblical traditions are myths “which functioned, and continue to function, as myths function in other cultures and their religions.”¹⁴⁾ Scholars are currently engaged in a debate regarding the credibility of the Bible as a historical source and to what extent it can be trusted. Reaching a consensus on this matter has proven challenging. However, these studies have sparked a broader discussion, suggesting that the dates traditionally assigned to the formation of the state may need to be reconsidered.

12) Baruch Halpern, “Erasing History: The Minimalist Assault on Ancient Israel,” *Bible Review* XI(6) (1995), 26.

13) Paula M. McNutt, *Reconstructing the Society of Ancient Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 113.

14) *Ibid.*, 9.

2.2. Nomad theory/Kinship-based society

According to the ‘nomad theory’ put forth by Rainer Kessler, during the Bronze Age, Egypt had political control over the Levantine region.¹⁵⁾ He argues that the region was comprised of small, independent city-states that coexisted with each other in a competitive and cooperative relationship and alongside the city-states were two distinct groups, the Apiru and the Shasu nomads, which were differentiated in sources such as the Amarna letters and the Mari texts. He believes that the Merneptah stele from the Late Bronze Age also mentions a group called Israel. However, there is a gap of approximately 400 years in Israel’s history after this period. Thus, he points out that during this gap, many Canaanite city-states were destroyed by Egypt, and later, the coastal areas were settled by the Philistines with support from Egypt.¹⁶⁾

Kessler’s theory suggests that the Israelites were not a distinct group with a unique history but rather a group of people who emerged from the development of new settlements in Palestine’s hill terrain during the early Iron Age. He argues that these settlements were founded by a mix of Apiru, Shasu nomads, and survivors from other towns, and that they established trade relations with the remaining Canaanite cities. The ‘Israel’ mentioned in the Merneptah stele belonged to these young, little hill country cities. According to Kessler, the social structure of ancient Israel was based on kinship, with the family being the basic unit of society. He points out some important figures. The male head of the family was the defining figure, and all members traced their lineage back to a common ancestor. The society

15) Rainer Kessler, *The Social History of Ancient Israel: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008).

16) For more information about the connection between Egyptian texts and the emergence of Israel, see, Cristian G. Rata, “The Canaanite Landscape during the Late Bronze Age,” *Canon&Culture* 6(1) (2012), 55-60.

was not hierarchical, but rather egalitarian. Later, tribes emerged as the highest social unit, and Israel's unity was likely based on genealogy, with Israel serving as the common ancestor of all the tribes. He finally argues that in terms of economy, Israel was primarily an agricultural society, much like the surrounding nations at that time. However, there is evidence that some Israelites may have worked on Phoenician ships, and that there were also Canaanite slaves within their society.

Kessler also points out that during the pre-state epoch, the social conditions of Israel exhibit interesting features: Most people lived in an agrarian life; there were some people who were in service to Canaanite and Phoenician cities; some lived in small settlements and others in cities; some became rich managing large farmsteads and others suffered from economic distress and were involved in crimes.¹⁷⁾ Therefore, the leadership structure in the kinship-based society was not likely set up well as a government. But it is clear that in times of military crisis, leaders were chosen to take care of their crisis within limited time periods.¹⁸⁾ Their origins were very various as the book of Judges provides.

2.3. Patron-Client Relationship

K. L. Noll uses archeological and textual research to reconstruct the ancient history of Israel, which reveals the ideological purpose behind the biblical narrative and offers a more accurate understanding of the real history of Israel.¹⁹⁾ He argues that the biblical stories serve as an authentic record of the com-

17) Ibid., 53-60.

18) Ibid., 61.

19) K. L. Noll, *Canaan and Israel in Antiquity: An Introduction* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).

munity's construction of its self-identity, but they are not historical accounts.²⁰⁾ Noll also highlights the fact that the term Canaan does not refer to an ethnic group, but a geographical region, and that Israel was one part of the Canaanite population and shared common stories and values with them.²¹⁾

In general, ethnicity based on various factors involves social boundaries. According to Paula McNutt, notions of ethnicity are social constructs that adapt in response to changes in group goals and interests. This perspective highlights that ethnicity is not a static trait, but rather a flexible concept influenced by evolving social, political, and economic dynamics.²²⁾ In other words, McNutt sees that ethnicity is a very fluid notion which possibly changes over time based on "the specific boundary markers by which this people distinguished itself from others in its formative years and later."²³⁾ Scholars also argue that there is no clear ethnic distinction among the groups during the period preceding the rise of the state.

Noll believes that the 'patron-client relationship' is the fundamental social and political structure in all the royal governments of the Ancient Near East, although there are many different labels depending on their size and other factors, such as chiefdoms, ethnic states, city-states, segmentary states, or imperial kingdoms.²⁴⁾ His understanding of the patron-client relationship is that the patron is the king (or even any leader who has power) and the clients are the people the king ruled. The king has the power to protect his clients and the clients have an obligation to offer taxes. This structure is also commonly practiced in the religious structure, namely a patron-god religion,

20) Ibid., 103.

21) Ibid., 104.

22) McNutt, *Reconstructing the Society of Ancient Israel*, 34.

23) Ibid.

24) Noll, *Canaan and Israel in Antiquity*, 185.

creating a three-tier hierarchy: the patron god, the human patron, and human clients.

Noll challenges the idea of a united monarchy in ancient Palestine, arguing that there is insufficient evidence to support such a hypothesis.²⁵⁾ He suggests that the urbanization and increased trade network of Judah and Jerusalem in the 10th century do not provide a solid foundation for a large, regionwide state governed by Jerusalem at that time. Instead, he proposes the Low or Middle Chronology, which moves the excavated strata associated with King Solomon's building projects down to the 9th century BCE. This argument supports the idea that autonomous cities arose to regional kingdoms as a basic political process during this period. Saul, David, and Solomon were minor kings of the Cisjordan Highlands who never controlled a major city such as Megiddo or Hazor.²⁶⁾ Their reigns were short-lived, lasting "perhaps from the 940s to 920s BCE."²⁷⁾ I think that while Noll's argument on the Low or Middle Chronology is subject to debate, the concept of clientship is significant in the study of the chiefdom model. Establishing patron-client relationships was a keyway to legitimize a chief's position of leadership in a segmentary system.

2.4. Cultural Evolutionary Hypothesis

James Flanagan argues that understanding the development of states in Israel is essential to identify the main causes behind social change.²⁸⁾ Chiefdoms lack social stratification and the ability

25) Ibid., 245.

26) Ibid., 251.

27) Ibid.

28) James W. Flanagan, "Chiefs in Israel," *JOT* 20 (1981), 47-73.

to impose physical sanctions, while the government of a state is highly centralized with a professional ruling class.²⁹⁾ Flanagan argues against the immediate transition from tribes to monarchy, suggesting that there may have been a chiefdom stage in between. He points out that chiefs played an important role in Israel and their existence fits into his three approaches.³⁰⁾ Firstly, he highlights the different functions of genealogies in segmented societies, where kinship ties are emphasized, and in societies where inheritance and succession are not based on familial concerns. Secondly, he notes that the role of chiefs in leadership shows different positions, as Saul failed to establish a state of dependency through redistribution, while David was able to successfully redistribute resources as a warrior-intensifier-redistributor. Finally, he suggests that the different use of royal terminology such as *nagid* and *melek* supports the idea of different stages of cultural evolution. In particular, the use of the term *nagid* (instead of *melek*) in the text describes the historical role of Saul and David as chiefs.

Another scholar, Norman Gottwald, proposes that the main factor in the rise of kingship in ancient Israel was to defend the centralized military threat of the Philistines who possessed advanced iron weapons.³¹⁾ He asserts that Saul only displays military function and there is no sign that he set up a state apparatus for taxation. Saul only exercised military leadership for the duration of Israel's emergency. Gottwald states that "the actual powers exercised make him appear more an intertribal military chieftain than a king in the usual ancient Near Eastern sense."³²⁾ He further propose that David decisively defeated the Philistines, pushing them to the coastal plain, and moved to

29) Ibid., 48-51.

30) Ibid., 53-60.

31) Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

32) Ibid., 320.

establish a state apparatus, building an administrative center at Jerusalem. In other words, Gottwald evaluates David as a king who assembled the necessary elements of a state administration.³³⁾ Finally, the work of David and Solomon made it possible to move Israel from chieftainship to hierarchic kingship. In his view, the four most fundamental changes in the transition are 1) political centralization, 2) social stratification, 3) shifts in land tenure, and 4) domestic repercussions of foreign trade, diplomacy and war.³⁴⁾

Gottwald argues that ancient Israel and Judah show a pattern of behavior that all human societies inevitably follow.³⁵⁾ Then, he repeats that the formation of the state from the early village and lineage based tribal society was the result of geographical and economic circumscription together with external pressure. In this respect, the Hebrew Bible preserves an authentic memory of Israel's premonarchic formation as a tribal society.³⁶⁾ The hypothesis is that the pre-state arose before the state, and this was kept in the Bible because of a desire to reconnect with later generation. Gottwald also points out that David who was a Judean chief had achieved the unity and thereafter, the two states again split into a "larger, more multicultural and cosmopolitan northern state" and "a smaller, more monocultural and insular southern state."³⁷⁾

David Hopkins claims that Gottwald's study of ancient Israel focused on the preference for the ideological and thus missed the importance of the value of the material basis to support the development or even existence of ancient Israel.³⁸⁾ The key

33) Norman K. Gottwald, *The Politics of Ancient Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 179-183.

34) Ibid., 181-182.

35) Ibid., 200-201.

36) Ibid., 198-204.

37) Ibid., 199-201.

38) David C. Hopkins, *The Highlands of Canaan: Agricultural Life in the Early Iron*

point Hopkins argues is that the ancient Israel was obviously an agrarian society, and its agricultural systems were the fundamental resource to look at the process of the formation of Israel in the highlands. Based on the new advanced technology at his time, such as Paleosteological investigations, examination of vegetational remains, and Epigraphic materials, he proposes that irrigation, terracing, fallowing, and crop rotation based on Sabbatical and Jubilee system are the prominent objectives to understand the process of Israel's emergence.

Hopkins suggests that the Israelites settled in the Iron Age Highlands to overcome three main subsistence challenges: environmental diversity, variability, and labor requirements for agriculture. This eventually led to the formation of a society where households and villages were not isolated but part of larger social circles.³⁹⁾ The growth of the population in response to these challenges led to the formation of the larger social body of Israel, including the monarchy. While his systemic approach to understanding the formation of ancient Israel is valuable, his diachronic approach needs more attention to the advanced monarchic system of the mode of production, as agricultural intensification and labor concentration are basic phenomena in all states.

2.5. Ethnoarchaeology

By using anthropological models, Frank Frick proposes the cultural evolutionary hypothesis to investigate the process of state development of ancient Israel.⁴⁰⁾ His main thesis is that the environment in relation to agricultural intensification naturally

Age (Decatur: Almond, 1985).

39) *Ibid.*, 271.

40) Frank S. Frick, *The Formation of the State in Ancient Israel: A Survey of Models and Theories* (Decatur: Almond, 1985).

forced the people in early Israel to select farming technologies and better social organizational structures that might maximize the capabilities of the labor supply. In this respect, the ancient Israelites developed from a segmentary society (Judges) to a chiefdom (Saul and early David) as it changed from egalitarian society to class society, and gradually transformed from chiefdom to an early state (David and Solomon).

Frick employs anthropological archaeology and comparative ethnography as his primary methods. He uses Elman Service's categorization and comparison of human societies into "tribes, chiefdoms, and states" to propose that cultural development typically advances through various organizational stages.⁴¹⁾ In addition, Frick compares the pre-colonial African societies' egalitarian systems, which preserve genealogical lineages and a common ancestral leadership, with Israel's tribal system to argue that Israel's origin was in a segmentary society. He explains that as Israel moved towards monarchy, Philistines attacked as a result because Israel became too strong and the Philistines could not take agricultural goods.⁴²⁾ The pressure faced by individual tribes in early Israel to incorporate other groups resulted in the formation of chiefdoms.⁴³⁾ Frick identifies redistribution, an appeal to religious sanctions, and clientship as three critical dimensions of chiefdoms for the success of an emergent chiefdom.

His understanding of agricultural circumstances as the most important factor in this development process coincides with the argument of David Hopkins. Although Hopkins lists more detail advancement of agricultural setting of the highland in a scope of material criticism, Frick's study is different from Hopkin's study in that Frick focuses more on a wide range of social scientific approaches in order to thoroughly support his argument

41) Ibid., 19.

42) Ibid., 21-24.

43) Ibid., 25.

on the evolutionary model of early state development.

Robert Coote and Keith Whitelam argue that the main priority to study social setting and development of early Israel is to interpret archaeological data within a broad interdisciplinary framework including anthropological studies. They look at the appearance of dispersed settlements in the highlands, steppe zones of Palestine at the beginning of the Iron Age I, and the rapid centralization of this area. Based on the archeological data, Coote and Whitelam assert that early Israel had emerged in the highlands and margins of Palestine as a result of “the collapse of Mediterranean trade.”⁴⁴⁾ They suggest that the research on the periodic fluctuation between expansion and retraction of settlement provides a clear link to the fact that changes in trade patterns and cycles caused many settlement shifts in various time periods.

They point out that the models of the emergence of early Israel by prior scholars such as Mendenhall, Gottwald, and Chaney failed to provide clear analysis because they were all based heavily on the issue of literary interpretation of the biblical text, and the Hebrew Bible is a large “theological product” for a millennium or more, having “complex and hidden history of development, transmission, adaptation and reformulation.”⁴⁵⁾ Moreover, recent archaeological evidence from Palestinian sites proves difficulties with these interpretations.

Furthermore, they argue that there was no sharp demarcation between early Israel and the Israelite state. Rather, these two events are closely connected to each other. Agreeing with Harris’s idea of ‘chiefdoms,’ they see a lot of shifts within Israel by increasing pressures on tightly circumscribed resources, and following large centralization, military advantages to secure their need led naturally to the inauguration of the monarchy in a

44) Robert B. Coote and Keith W. Whitelam, *The Emergence of Early Israel in Historical Perspective* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1987), 164.

45) Ibid., 13–14.

part of long-term processes. Coote and Whitelam insist that the ‘circumscription theory’ moreover helps not only to provide background for “the fusion of local autonomous groups into an Israelite monarchy,”⁴⁶⁾ but also to explain why the state disintegrated into two kingdoms after Solomon’s failure to support greater financial and labor burdens. The emergence of Israel and the later formation of the state is deeply influenced by environmental and social pressures and the social transformation was a result of the decline of interregional trade.

Taking a different approach, Min Su Oh, in his discussion of the term “Israel,” argues that most scholars believe the identity and origin of Israel reflect a national tendency.⁴⁷⁾ However, he emphasizes that the use of the term “Israel” does not imply a categorical distinction for the existential continuity of its readers. According to Oh, the term does not necessarily designate the period of state formation. Instead, he explains that “Israel” was used both as an ancestral name and as a geographical designation. Therefore, the term had no direct connection to any political entity or state situation.⁴⁸⁾

Oh delved deeply into the naming traditions of different peoples, exploring ancient linguistic conventions and uncovering the rich interpretive meanings embedded in the memories of that era, transcending mere linguistic expressions.⁴⁹⁾ He points out that the nomenclature for nations—such as Edom, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, Tyre, Sidon, Assyria, and Babylon—often reflects a relationship with their ancestral names or city names, based on their neighboring countries. Thus, the concept of “Israel” as a human group, originating from a common ances-

46) Ibid., 165.

47) Min Su Oh, “Israel’s Identity and Origin: Focusing on Ancient Near Eastern Archives and Ethnic Designation,” *ACTS Theological Journal* 46 (2020), 13-14.

48) Ibid., 32.

49) Ibid., 23-29.

tor and assigned a specific territory by God, was inherently present in these naming conventions.⁵⁰⁾ In conclusion, the term “Israel” does not clearly specify the time period of the state’s development, as many scholars now associate it with the era when the nation was originally established.

2.6. Ethno-Sociological Study

In her article, Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger insists that the biblical narratives reflect the historical reality of the processes leading to statehood, and that an early form of the state mostly developed during the reign of Saul.⁵¹⁾ Schäfer-Lichtenberger rejects chiefdom model in the immediate vicinity of primary states because necessary conditions for the development of chiefdoms such as geographical isolation are not present in Palestine. In other words, the notion of chiefdom is inappropriate for understanding the formation of political associations in tenth century Palestine.

Schäfer-Lichtenberger uses H. J. M. Claessen’s three development phases of the early state (inchoative, typical, and transitional) to argue that Saul’s reign represented an inchoative state, while David’s reign was a transitional early state in some sense and an inchoative state as well.⁵²⁾ The inchoative early state is characterized by political structures dominated by kinship and community ties, with common ownership of land serving as the economic base. She explains that 1) trade and the market are of inferior importance, and taxes consist of occasional labor for the state, voluntary contributions, and tributary gifts; 2)

50) Ibid., 31-32.

51) Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger, “Sociological and Biblical Views of the Early State,” in *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 78-105.

52) Ibid., 90-93.

Officials receive compensation for their services in the form of produce and land, while succession to political office is hereditary and the judicial system is informal; 3) The ruling stratum depends on income from their own land, and social differences are denied and reduced through reciprocity.⁵³⁾

In contrast, she suggests that the typical early state is characterized by counterbalanced kinship relations, with trade and markets developing on a supra-local level. Some features of that are as follows.⁵⁴⁾ 1) Regular taxes are imposed in the form of produce and obligatory services, administrative positions are filled by competition and appointment, officials begin to receive payment, and redistribution and reciprocity determine relationships between social strata. 2) Private ownership of land is minimal, but the state is beginning to control land. 3) The transitional early state is characterized by political actions that marginalize the influence of kinship relations, with private ownership of the means of production and the market economy asserting themselves and open class antagonism appearing. 4) The administrative machinery is controlled by appointed officials who are more numerous than those receiving remunerations, and the tax and contribution system is fully developed and maintained by a complex apparatus to ensure a stable income from taxes. Finally she argues that the law is codified and utilized by judges. From biblical records, Schäfer-Lichtenberger categorizes Saul's reign as an inchoative early state and David's reign the transitional early state with some characteristics of the typical early state.

Saul Bar also argues against scholars who downplay Saul's achievements, highlighting his military innovations, including a skilled army, new weapons, protective gear, and a bodyguard system.⁵⁵⁾ Bar also emphasizes Saul's introduction of taxation,

53) Ibid., 96-98.

54) Ibid., 99-104.

55) Shaul Bar, "Saul: The State Builder," *Old Testament Essays* 36(3) (2023), 742-744.

a crucial step in establishing Israel as a state.⁵⁶⁾ The creation of Nob as a religious center was another significant achievement. Overall, Saul's impact went beyond military success—he unified the tribes, professionalized governance, and laid the foundation for a centralized kingdom and future Israeli kings.

Young-Jin Kim argues that the establishment of kingdom brought about significant change and conflict between those who supported the traditional political system and those who advocated for the new state system. The biblical records in 1 Samuel 8 notes that sons would be taken and served in a military base. The king will assign sons to work for service.⁵⁷⁾ And there would be taxes as noted in “the king [...] will exempt his father's family from taxes in Israel” (1 Sam 17:25). Saul had a conflict with Samuel because he performed a burnt offering himself and killed the priests of Nop, who had sheltered David from Saul. These conflicts indicate that there was significant political change in Israel, which continued to develop into the new establishment of kingship following Saul.⁵⁸⁾

I agree with Schäfer-Lichtenberger about the two different notions of state: one is the result of conflicts and the other is the result of a consensus between the ruler and the ruled. However, Weber and Claessen's three criteria of the early state show very minimal differences and how the ancient society characterized in these three similar models is still questionable.

2.7. Systemic Analysis

According to D. Premnath, understanding the patterns of

56) Ibid., 740-741.

57) Young-Jin Kim, *History of Israel* (Seoul: Jireh Publishing House, 2006), 189.

58) Ibid., 189-192.

property ownership before to the eighth century BCE can provide insight into the social world of Israelite and Judahite cultures.⁵⁹⁾ Termed systemic analysis, he examines how different social structures and functions interact. This approach has two aspects: comparative and historical.⁶⁰⁾ The comparative dimension involves comparing a society's interrelated structures and functions with those of other societies. The historical dimension concentrates on substantial shifts that transform the society as a whole. Premnath asserts that in agrarian societies, land typically serves as the primary source of subsistence and the majority of the population in such societies is comprised of peasant cultivators.⁶¹⁾ Therefore, questions regarding the ownership of the land and its exchange, and questions about how people and land are related become very critical.

Based on his argument, what Premnath insists is that in Late Bronze Canaanite society (1550-1250 BCE), the crown had the authority to control all cultivable land, and the titles to the land were held by the crown.⁶²⁾ Peasants, who were common workers, were responsible for ensuring agricultural production. Consequently, land was leased to the peasants for cultivation, and they were required to pay taxes and rent. Landowners had to ensure they received income from their land. This common practice established a social structure constituting a highly stratified society, resulting in widespread poverty among the peasants. This stratified society and its value were supported by the Canaanite religious ideology which projected the social structure with the ruling elite class at the top and the common laboring people at the bottom. The emergence of the pre-monar-

59) D. N. Premnath, *Eighth Century Prophets: A Social Analysis* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003).

60) Ibid., 3-6.

61) Ibid., 7-10, 25.

62) Ibid., 25.

chic Israel can be seen as a conscious revolt against and secession from such oppressive socio-economic and political systems of the Late Bronze Canaanite society.⁶³⁾

Scholars tried to explain the emergence of pre-monarchic Israel by three different models to understand the society during this period: the conquest model, the peaceful settlement model, and the peasants' revolt model (later, agrarian social revolution). The first two models have their own understanding of the emergence of Israel. However, the peasants' revolt model is clearly worth studying. It was initiated by George Mendenhall⁶⁴⁾, developed by Norman Gottwald⁶⁵⁾ and further studied by Marvin Chaney⁶⁶⁾. The emergence of pre-monarchic Israel is now seen as a result of a revolt. This is also deeply related to a geographic secession from the oppressive socio-economic and political systems of the Canaanite societies. The study has recently changed by Gottwald to see agrarian social revolution instead of peasants' revolt. That is, the social revolution has an impact on the area of land tenure system.

Premnath contends that the emergence of monarchy in ancient Israel was primarily driven by the threat posed by the Philistines. He argues that while the Philistines had the power to destroy the Israelites, they instead sought to extract economic benefits from them.⁶⁷⁾ However, the Philistines soon realized

63) Ibid., 27-29.

64) George Mendenhall, "The Hebrew Conquest of Palestine," *Biblical Archaeologist* 25 (1962), 66-87; For more detailed information about Mendenhall's influence on the comparison study of the ancient materials, see. Ada Taggar-Cohen, "The Hebrew Biblical *bérit* in Light of Ancient Near Eastern Covenants and Treaties," *Canon & Culture* 14(2) (2020), 5-50.

65) Norman K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh. A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E.* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1979).

66) Marvin Chaney, "Ancient Palestinian Peasant Movements and the Formation of Premonarchic Israel," in *Palestine in Transition: The Emergence of Ancient Israel* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), 39-90.

67) Premnath, *Eighth Century Prophets*, 29-31.

that the Israelites of the pre-monarchic era had already developed a robust economic base in the hill country, utilizing advanced technologies such as iron tools, cisterns coated with slaked lime, and terrace farming.⁶⁸⁾ Therefore, the Philistines decided to allow the skilled workers to produce productions. Instead of destroying them, the Philistines worked with a more complicated strategy which was to leave them to produce what they needed.⁶⁹⁾

The emergence of a strong Israelite power under David had changed the relationship with the Philistine. David utilized a bureaucracy which helps to manage the vast territory.⁷⁰⁾ Furthermore, an extended bureaucracy with a large retinue of civil and military officials became important to maintain a larger state. Premnath believes that this change caused consequences for the management systems of land. For example, the officials or elites were paid for their service through land grants. He argues that the biblical narratives prove this information in the story of Mephibosheth and David in 2 Sam 9; 16; 19.⁷¹⁾ The story reflects that the crown has complete authority to confiscate and dispose of land and the system of land grants from the crown created that an elite who granted a land became dependent upon the crown.

Premnath provides detailed information of economic side based on archeology. He argues that latifundialization (the accumulation of land) is very important to figure out the social change of the 10th through the 8th century BCE. This mode of production greatly influenced social settings of the period. Land accumulation was caused by elites and kings, and this practice influenced the formation of the social structure. However, latifundialization is a concept that is hard to compare

68) Ibid., 30.

69) Ibid.

70) Ibid., 31.

71) Ibid.

as an effect because, for example, increased taxation may have same effect. Many scholars about latifundialization deal with cases that a wealthy person acquires more land. However, it is not clear that only kings or elites could accumulate land.

2.8. Beyond Ethnology

In his book, Rainer Kessler argues that in the southern Levant around the 10th century BCE, two states - Israel and Judah - emerged.⁷²⁾ Following some biblical accounts, he explains that the first monarchy was established by Saul, which extended over the tribal territory of Benjamin and neighboring areas. However, Saul's reign did not last long, as a rival named David emerged and established an independent power in the south of Benjamin. David was able to defeat Saul and rule over Judah. During David's reign, Judah expanded its territory and united all the Israelite tribes. This memory of a great empire was then elevated, along with traditions about David and his successor, Solomon. After Solomon's death, the empire broke into two, and both states faced continual challenges. However, Israel was stronger than Judah, thanks to the strong dynasty of Omri.⁷³⁾

Kessler's research shows that the Assyrian Empire played a crucial role in the development of Israel and Judah. Inscriptions from Assyrian kings refer to "Ahab of Israel" and mention King Omri, indicating that the Omrides were recognized as significant rulers.⁷⁴⁾ However, successive Assyrian annexations led to the collapse of the northern kingdom of Israel. Kessler argues that

72) Kessler, *The Social History of Ancient Israel*, 64-65.

73) Ibid., 64-72.

74) Ibid., 69.

Israel and Judah emerged in a context where other states already existed, as evidenced by the hill country forming around Shechem and Jerusalem.⁷⁵⁾ The development of Israelite-Judahite state can be divided into three stages, with the fully developed state emerging in the 9th and the 8th centuries BCE. This research sheds light on the complex political landscape of the ancient Near East and the role of empires in shaping the development of smaller states.

The northern kingdom of Israel was characterized by frequent changes in the ruling dynasty, which were often initiated by the military's power. As a result, it was difficult for an aristocracy of civil servants to emerge. However, scholars generally believe that the establishment of a government metropolis in Samaria laid the foundation for a powerful state. The dynasty of Omride, which ruled during this time, formed alliances with part of the local upper class. In contrast, the stability of Judah's dynasty was ensured by the support of the landed aristocracy and civil servant families. These official families were attested to during the late period of Judah. The need to establish such an official aristocracy arose during the transition to a fully developed state in the wake of the social crisis that began in the eighth century. It appears that in both Israel and Judah, the early state had fully developed by the 8th century at the latest.

Israel Finkelstein also insists that according to the recent new archaeological datas, the Samaria-ruled United Monarchy which included a Northern Israel ideology was continually developed to the united Israel.⁷⁶⁾ In the devastation process of Iron I during the late eleventh century BCE, Shechem centered city-state moved to the Gibeon-Gibbeah area, resulting the transition of the rule of Israel over the entire area of Israel and

75) Ibid., 72-74.

76) Israel Finkelstein, "First Israel, Core Israel, United(Northern) Israel," *New Eastern Archaeology* 82(1) (2019), 12.

Judah.⁷⁷⁾ It is the ideology of united Israel written in the early biblical texts.

Min Su Oh, in his discussion of the term “Israel”, argues that most scholars believe the identity and origin of Israel reflect a national tendency.⁷⁸⁾ However, he emphasizes that the use of the term “Israel” does not imply a categorical distinction for the existential continuity of its readers. According to Oh, the term does not necessarily designate the period of state formation. Instead, he explains that “Israel” was used both as an ancestral name and as a geographical designation. Therefore, the term had no direct connection to any political entity or state situation.⁷⁹⁾

Oh delved deeply into the naming traditions of different peoples, exploring ancient linguistic conventions and uncovering the rich interpretive meanings embedded in the memories of that era, transcending mere linguistic expressions.⁸⁰⁾ He points out that the nomenclature for nations—such as Edom, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, Tyre, Sidon, Assyria, and Babylon—often reflects a relationship with their ancestral names or city names, based on their neighboring countries. Oh concludes that the concept of “Israel” as a human group, originating from a common ancestor and assigned a specific territory by God, was inherently present in these naming conventions.⁸¹⁾

3. A Synthesis of Scholarship

77) Ibid., 13-14.

78) Min Su Oh, “Israel’s Identity and Origin: Focusing on Ancient Near Eastern Archives and Ethnic Designation,” *ACTS Theological Journal* 46 (2020), 13-14.

79) Ibid., 32.

80) Ibid., 23-29.

81) Ibid., 23-30.

In the previous sections, I have discussed various scholars' models and their theses on the emergence and development of ancient Israel as a fully developed state. These models were derived from different social research methods and provide valuable resources for understanding the social movement that led to the establishment of the state. It is important to note that the research into the origins of the state in ancient Israel is not just an esoteric reconstruction, but a direct contribution to understanding the nature of human culture. By studying the political and social changes that occurred in ancient Israel, we can gain insights into how cultures evolve and develop over time.

Some scholars, such as Davies and Lemche, argue that the concept of ancient Israel as a state during the Iron Age is an invention of modern scholars, and that the idea of early state formation is based on a natural evolution model due to a lack of archaeological evidence. However, their treatment of the sources has been criticized as problematic by other scholars. Davies and Lemche only accept what is attested by external evidence, but there is also external evidence that they do not explain. On the other hand, some scholars argue that the biblical texts contain reliable information about historical events, and there are other reasons to support this view. Despite their criticisms, Davies and Lemche's work has contributed to a critical reassessment of traditional approaches and spurred more advanced methods of analysis.

Kessler constructs the kinship-based society before the state and points out several critical features. Noll proposes that patron-client relationship is the most fundamental structure in all types of societies at that time and he explores the relationship between Samaria and Jerusalem to trace the emergence of monarchy. Flanagan proposes the chiefs in Israel model in order to reject the old model that the social setting of Israel had changed directly from tribal confederation to monarchy.

Gottwald rejects Martin Noth's amphictyony model and argues that Israel was at first politically decentralized and dominated by tribes. Then, eventually, a centralized state emerged but the early model before the state formation was not ruled by kings but by military leaders who had the power to defend Israel from threats in short periods.

Hopkins explores the process of Israel's emergence by examining agricultural systems and argues that the formation of the monarchy was the consequence of the growing population to meet the challenges of agricultural subsistence. Frick, advancing Flanagan's chiefdom model, argues that agricultural intensification forced the people to develop farming technologies and require better social organizational structures to maximize the capabilities of the labor supply. Coote and Whitelam believe that the formation of the early state is a long-term process and there was no sharp demarcation between early Israel and the Israelite state which supports chiefdom model as a basis. Premnath argues that the mode of production, especially latifundialization, influences social settings of the periods. Kessler suggests fundamental consequences for the structure of both state and society in the transition from a kinship-based society to a state society. He agrees with Frick that Israel and Judah were secondary states.

Even though Schäfer-Lichtenberger intends to counter the proposal that a chiefdom was one of the stages in the processes of centralization in Iron Age Palestine, I observe that the model that she uses, especially the inchoative early state, is very similar to the chiefdom model. Moreover, her argument is not able to describe any specific distinction from the chiefdom model. She disagrees with chiefdoms as a permanent form of political association as she could not find any condition of the geographical isolation in Palestine. However, in my opinion, two main features of chiefdoms represent a movement toward social

differentiation along with centralization of leadership in the person of a chief: 1) ranked statuses of individuals within a local community and 2) centralized local communities in regions. In addition, leaders in segmentary societies do not employ religion to legitimate their leadership. Frick also proposes that chiefdoms are ranked societies and that demographic data are important indicators of chiefdoms as evidence of cooperative production. He believes that chiefdom with an organizing principle, based on hierarchical social divisions, emerged when labor needs exceeded what could be supplied by productive specialization in the local household or residential group.

4. Conclusion

Scholars present various approaches to explain the early state development in ancient Israel. Through the research, I found the chiefdom model is convincing. I disagree with Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger who proposes early state models from Claessen and Weber in order to reject chiefdoms in the state formation of ancient Israel. Schäfer-Lichtenberger's argument on the state development during Saul's reign does not provide clear differences from the chiefdom model. Rather, I argue that the development of chiefdoms is clearly presented in the ranking system with an attempt to move to the centralization of the power in the narrative, and Saul's reign does not provide any specific form of the state.

In addition, Flanagan's approach of comparing both segmental and linear genealogies based on the biblical texts show that there is clear difference in treatment of characters. This explains that segmented genealogies belong to segmented societies where kinship ties are stressed, and linear genealogies explain that in-

heritance and succession are not determined by familistic concerns. Therefore, Israel did not move from tribes to monarchy directly. Rather, the rule of Saul and early David were chiefdoms.

The biblical text does not provide much explanation about the formation of Saul's state. Some assumptions that I take provide displays of Saul's reign. For example, when Samuel appoints Saul, he proclaims that Saul and he are clear from any cheating or oppressing others (1 Sam 12:3-5). In this regard, I observe that the society was an egalitarian society, that people thought of fairness and equality as important, and egalitarian motif maintains that all humans are equal in fundamental worth or social status. Saul's appointment began his task as a chief which broke the social setting of Saul's contemporary time. However, the biblical texts about Saul only display his warfare in somewhat a ranking military system and his personal anger to David, his 41 successors. There is no indication that Saul constructed a state. Flanagan's study on the term, king, also provides an ample trace that Saul's reign was different than a monarchy.

The narratives of Saul's reign and early David's reign show many identical points with the features of chiefdoms.⁸²⁾ Furthermore, I argue that the tax system and the function of religion were the most important key to conclude Saul's reign as chief. Saul could not set up any taxation system nor build a temple, but David later exhibits his attempt to tax his people by census in 2 Sam 24. However, the narrative shows a negative response to his task. David also attempts to build a house of God (a temple) which was rejected by God in 2 Sam 7 and 1 Chr 17. The temple buildings in Egypt and Mesopotamia worked as monumental statues in a state setting, probably working as central offices of taxation. This rejection can be interpreted as a resistance to the move to kingship. In this respect, Saul's

82) Flanagan, "Chiefs in Israel," 47-73.

reign was not yet a monarchy. David's reign was a time to transition from chiefdom to monarchy.

Anthropologists distinguish between two different ways in which societal development occurs. The first is primary state development, which is viewed as a natural evolutionary process. Families, tribes, chiefdoms, and eventually states or monarchies emerge in this model. Chiefdoms gradually grow in size until they become too large for a single chief to oversee, while monarchies tend to be more formal and established. The second is secondary state development, which occurs when organized groups such as states expand into less organized groups such as tribes. Empires often engage in secondary state development through military conquest, which can quickly and drastically alter social structures. In my opinion, the early state development in ancient Israel followed a natural process from a kinship-based society to a chiefdom and eventually a state. Later, there were moments of great change that influenced state development in different ways, with King Solomon's reign being an example of secondary state development.

Recently, there have been discussions about the cultural differences of interpretations.⁸³⁾ Juan Garcia suggests that the shift in focus is away from rigid classifications of political entities like 'state,' 'chiefdom,' and 'city,' and from ranking them by evolutionary complexity.⁸⁴⁾ Instead, it critiques the overemphasis on the European concept of the 'state' as the global standard for statehood. This traditional view defined states by clear borders, centralized power, and specific governmental functions, often disregarding different historical and cultural contexts.⁸⁵⁾ Garcia critiques the traditional neo-evolutionary frameworks

83) Juan Carlos Moreno Garcia, *From House Societies to States: Early Political Organization, from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2022).

84) Ibid., 1.

85) Ibid., 2.

used to analyze early and pre-modern states, which often depict a linear progression from simpler to more complex forms. He argues that these models oversimplify historical realities and ignore the diverse socio-political organizations that existed.⁸⁶⁾ Instead of a straightforward evolution towards centralized states, he highlights the resilience of alternative forms of governance, such as nomadic or maritime societies, which maintained autonomy and thrived independently of larger state structures. Garcia calls for a more nuanced understanding of historical political systems, emphasizing the need to recognize the complexity and diversity of past socio-political arrangements.⁸⁷⁾

In conclusion, what has been developed here as suggestions for a model or models for understanding the development of the state in ancient Israel seeks to set forth at least the beginning of an explanation in a systemic form, recognizing that the variables involved are mutual-causal in nature, with none of them occupying the place of prime-mover.

<Key Words>

Social Scientific method, Chieftdom, Saul's reign, Ancient Israel, State development

<주요어>

사회과학비평, 군장국가, 사울왕국, 고대이스라엘, 국가형성

* Received August 2, 2024, Revised August 22, 2024, Accepted August 30, 2024

86) Ibid., 17-19.

87) Ibid., 20.

Bibliography

- Bar, Shaul, "Saul: The State Builder," *Old Testament Essays* Vol. 36 No. 3 (2023), 736-753.
- Chaney, Marvin, "Ancient Palestinian Peasant Movements and the Formation of Premonarchic Israel," In *Palestine in Transition: The Emergence of Ancient Israel*, 39-90, Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983.
- Coote, Robert B. and Keith W. Whitelam, *The Emergence of Early Israel in Historical Perspective*, Sheffield, England: Almond Press, 1987.
- Davies, Philip R., *In Search of "Ancient Israel"*, Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992.
- Finkelstein, Israel, "First Israel, Core Israel, United(Northern) Israel," *New Eastern Archaeology* Vol. 82, No. 1 (2019), 8-15.
- Flanagan, James W., "Chiefs in Israel," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, no. 20 (July 1, 1981), 47-73.
- Frick, Frank S., *The Formation of the State in Ancient Israel: A Survey of Models and Theories*, Decatur: Almond, 1985.
- Garcia, Juan Carlos Moreno, *From House Societies to States: Early Political Organization, from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2022).
- Gottwald, Norman K., *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.
- _____, *The Politics of Ancient Israel*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- _____, *The Tribes of Yahweh. A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E.*, Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1979.
- Halpern, Baruch, "Erasing History: The Minimalist Assault on Ancient Israel," *Bible Review* XI, no. 6 (1995), 26-35.
- Hopkins, David C., *The Highlands of Canaan: Agricultural Life in the Early*

- Iron Age*, Decatur: Almond, 1985.
- Kessler, Rainer, *The Social History of Ancient Israel: An Introduction*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008.
- Kim, Young-Jin, *History of Israel*, Seoul: Jireh Publishing House, 2006.
- Lemche, Niels P., *The Israelites in History and Tradition*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.
- Martin, Dale B., "Social-Scientific Criticism," In *To Each Its Own Meaning*, 125-41, Louisville: John Knox Press, 1999.
- Mendenhall, George, "The Hebrew Conquest of Palestine," *Biblical Archaeologist* 25 (1962), 66-87.
- McNutt, Paula M., *Reconstructing the Society of Ancient Israel*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.
- Noll, K. L., *Canaan and Israel in Antiquity: An Introduction*, London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.
- _____, *The Politics of Ancient Israel*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Oh, Min Su, "Israel's Identity and Origin: Focusing on Ancient Near Eastern Archives and Ethnic Designation," *ACTS Theological Journal* 46 (2020), 9-39.
- Premnath, D. N., *Eighth Century Prophets: A Social Analysis*, St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003.
- Rata, Cristian G., "The Canaanite Landscape during the Late Bronze Age," *Canon & Culture* Vol. 6, no. 1 (2012), 39-68.
- Schäfer-Lichtenberger, Christa, "Sociological and Biblical Views of the Early State," In *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States*, 78-105, Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Taggar-Cohen, Ada, "The Hebrew Biblical *bérit* in Light of Ancient Near Eastern Covenants and Treaties," *Canon & Culture* Vol. 14, no. 2 (2020), 5-50.

<Abstract>

A History of Social Scientific Approaches on the Early State Development of Ancient Israel

Asst. Prof. Kyung-Sik Park
(Mokwon University)

This article explores scholarly analysis of the early state development in ancient Israel, using various social scientific approaches. It includes early models that explain the origin and setting of ancient Israel before the 10th century BCE to provide context. I acknowledge the difficulty of determining how the state came to be formed and the limitations of biblical accounts in providing a clear portrayal. Therefore, this article emphasizes the value of social scientific methods in investigating social phenomena of the time period, with a focus on sociology, anthropology, political science, and economics. I also categorize the elements of human social life into infrastructure, structure, and superstructure, and argue that a combination of all three provides a better understanding of human society. This article reviews scholarly works on early state development, evaluates their contributions to scholarship, suggests a synthesis of scholarly analysis, compares scholars' positions, and mainly analyze that Saul's reign did not occur in a state setting.

<초록>

고대 이스라엘의 초기 국가 발전에 대한 사회과학적 접근의 역사

박경식

(목원대학교, 조교수)

이 연구 논문은 다양한 사회과학적 접근을 기반으로 고대 이스라엘의 초기 국가 발전에 대한 다양한 학자들의 학술적 분석을 비평하고 정리하는 것이다. 이를 위해, 고대 이스라엘의 기원과 배경을 설명하는 일부 초기 모델도 포함하여 국가 형성에 대한 전반적인 학자들의 의견을 조사하였다. 고대 이스라엘에서 국가가 형성되는 과정을 찾는 것은 성서가 정확한 정보를 제공하지 않기 때문에 어려운 작업이다. 그러나 최근의 사회과학적 접근은 발전된 모델을 제시하고 있다. 그러므로 이 논문은 먼저 각 학자의 주장을 정리 분석하여 비교하고, 이를 토대로 대안적인 평가를 제시한다. 또한 국가 형성 이전의 족장사회가 국가의 출현에 어떤 영향을 미쳤는지를 제시한다. 특별히 성서 기록에서 사울의 통치를 첫 번째 왕(king)으로 기술하는 부분에 있어서 초기 왕국 설정은 그의 통치 중 형성되지 않았기 때문에 사회학적인 용어로 볼 때 그의 통치는 왕국(kingdom)이 아닌 군장국가(chiefdom)라는 것을 주장하는 학자들의 이론을 평가한다.