THE RETROACTIVE RE-EVALUATION TECHNIQUE WITH PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER AND THE NATURE OF SOLOMON'S CORRUPTION IN 1 KINGS 1–12[1]

Yong Ho Jeon

Summary

In the Solomon narrative in Kings (1 Kgs 1–12), Solomon's faults are explicitly criticised only in 1 Kings 11, in relation to his marriage with foreign women. However, his intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter appears in earlier parts of the narrative (1 Kgs 3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24) without any explicit criticism. Using a 'reader-sensitive' approach, which presumes that the author of the narrative tries to exploit the reader's reading process and prior knowledge, we show that the writer is using a 'retroactive re-evaluation technique' in his reference to 'Pharaoh's daughter' (the technique means that the author guides his reader to re-evaluate previous passages in light of new information). Additionally, through a theological reading of the narrative, the nature of Solomon's corruption is revealed as his 'return to Egypt'. This fits well with the 'retroactive re-evaluation technique', explaining why the

---

[1]   This article is originally a part of one chapter in my PhD dissertation 'Impeccable Solomon?: A Study of Solomon's Faults in Chronicles Using a Reader-Sensitive Approach' (University of Bristol, 2009). The chapter explains 'the Retroactive Re-evaluation Technique in the Solomon Narrative (1 Kgs 1-12) and Its Implication'. The content is an indispensable stepping stone to the exploration and interpretation of the Chronicler's Solomon account. In the Solomon narrative in Kings, the present author discovered, using the same methodology, two more cases of 'retroactive re-evaluation technique' which cannot be included in this article by the limit of space. The second case is 'Solomon's Transgression against the Three Norms of the King's Law' (1 Kgs 9:26–11:8), and the last case is 'Solomon's Heavy Yoke upon the Israelites (12:1-24).

This study includes 1 Kgs 12 in the Solomon narrative while usually 1 Kgs 1–11 is regarded as the narrative, because important information about Solomon's reign is given in 1 Kgs 12. The fuller study by the present author, which is based on 1 Kgs 1–12, will be published in due course.

references to 'Pharaoh's daughter' are arranged in the way that they are.

1. Introduction

Our understanding of the Solomon narrative in Kings (1 Kgs 1–12) has been increased considerably in recent years. Since Parker's observation (1988) of the literary structure and its implication triggered the discussion on the narrative, many scholars have added their insights into the narrative. The increasing interest in the narrative eventually produced two monographs on the narrative, by J. J. Kang and E. A. Seibert in 2003 and 2006, respectively.

   This article will give a brief survey of recent studies of the Solomon narrative in Kings, including the most recent two monographs' views. After discussing the merits and weaknesses of those interpretations, and exploiting their insights, a new understanding of the narrative concerning Solomon's corruption will be proposed. Approaching the narrative, special concern will be given to the narrative's presentation of the nature and process of Solomon's corruption. One would expect to detect a didactic lesson implanted in the narrative, concerning Solomon's turning from a pious king to an apostate, when one considers that the work is not a mere work of historiography but one with a didactic message or lesson for its reader, and that Solomon's turning from a pious king to an apostate is conspicuous and significant in the narrative and the book of Kings as a whole.

2. A Survey and Evaluation of Recent Studies

2.1 A Brief Survey of Recent Studies of the Solomon Narrative in Kings in Terms of Solomon's Corruption

Traditionally, the narrative was understood to have been composed in two parts, i.e. chs 1–10 and 11, showing Solomon's achievement and prosperity under God's blessing, and Solomon's sin and God's punishment, respectively. This understanding is based on the plain fact that it is only in chapter 11 that the narrator's explicit criticism of Solomon's action appears.

This view was challenged by Noth (1957), who observed that the second part of the Solomon narrative begins from chapter 9, where God's warning at Gibeon against disobedience and apostasy appears, and Solomon's undue payback to Hiram (9:10-14) appears as the 'first blot on Solomon's image'.[2] Parker (1988) advanced Noth's view considerably, observing that the narrative has 'a remarkable symmetry structure'.[3] According to Parker, chapters 1–2 and chapters 11:14-43 correspond as a frame story about Solomon's political enemies, and there are two sections, each being introduced by dream theophany (3:1-13 and 9:1-10a), and concluded by Solomon's attitude towards God (chs. 6–8; temple building, and 11:1-13; high places building and idols worshipping). The first section contains 'domestic policy' and 'labour relations', while the second contains 'labour relations' and 'foreign policy', in chiastic order. That means that the themes or materials in chapters 1–8 are 'duplicated' in chapters 9–11 as a literary strategy to contrast the first section, 'favourable' to Solomon, and the second, 'hostile' to Solomon.[4] Parker's interesting observation of the narrative has triggered further scholarly discussions, which have considerably improved our understanding of the narrative.

Frisch (1991) challenged Parker's view, proposing that the narrative has not a bipartite, but a concentric structure, with the building of the temple as the centre, and that the narrative ends not in chapter 11 but 12:24. In spite of the differing view of the range and structure of the narrative, Frisch's view is not different from Parker's in that negative description of Solomon begins from 9:10. A contribution of Frisch is his raising the question of why the negative aspect of Solomon's reign in 9:10–10:29 is presented implicitly while that in 11:1-10 is presented explicitly. According to Frisch, Solomon's material achievement in 9:10–10:29 is as God promised, and the author does not want to

---

[2]   Martin Noth, *Deuteronomistic History* (JSOTSupp 15; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991; orig. 1943): 97.

[3]   K. I. Parker, 'Repetition as a Structuring Device in 1 Kings 1-11', *JSOT* 42 (1988): 21.

[4]   Parker observes that the repetition structure implies 'the two sides of Solomon's character'. Chs. 3–8 are favourable to Solomon because there Solomon's wisdom agrees with Torah, in contrast with 9:1–11:13 where his wisdom is at variance with Torah (Parker, 'Repetition', 24-25). Sarvan's literary approach (1987) shows a similar understanding to Parker's view. However, he thinks that negative description of Solomon begins in the ominous mention of the future disasters, especially of the captivity in Solomon's dedicatory prayer in ch. 8 (G. Sarvan, '1 and 2 Kings' in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. R. Alter (London: Collins, 1987): 157).

'conceal' it with an explicitly negative description of Solomon's reign in the passage.[5]

Brettler (1991), pointing out some problems of Parker's analysis,[6] provides a redaction approach to the narrative. According to him, 3:3–9:23 is 'pro-Solomon', while 9:26–11:40 is 'anti-Solomon', which is slightly different from Parker's and Frisch's divisions of the narrative.[7] Brettler's contribution is in his attempt to show how 9:26–11:10 is arranged to reveal Solomon's transgression against the king's stipulation in Deuteronomy 17:16-17. According to him, 9:26–10:25 is about 'Solomon's wealth', 10:26-29 is about 'Solomon's horses', and 11:1-10 is about 'Solomon's foreign wives', corresponding to the three norms of the law of the king in Deuteronomy 17:16-17, which ban excessive wealth, many horses, especially Egyptian horse importation, and many wives for Israel's king. In this sense, he suggests that '1 Kgs 9:26-11:10 should be called "Solomon's violation of Deuteronomy 17:14-17"'.[8] The tricky question of why 'wealth' and 'horses' are criticised implicitly while the 'many foreign wives' matter is explicitly criticised, is answered by his redaction approach. That is, the 'wealth' and 'horses' passages were redacted from pre-existing material and simply pasted here, while the 'many foreign wives' passage was 'largely composed' by the redactor himself.[9]

---

[5]   Williams, who basically favours Parker's framework, tries to synthesise Parker's analysis with Frisch's and J. Walsh's. Walsh's view is very similar to Frisch's (J. Walsh, 'Symmetry and the Sin of Solomon', *SHOFAR: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 12 (1993): 11-27; A. Frisch, 'Structure and its Significance: The Narrative of Solomon's Reign (1 Kings 1-12:24)', *JSOT 51* (1991): 3-14; D. Williams, 'Once Again: The Structure of the Narrative of Solomon's Reign', *JSOT* 86 (1999): 49-66. However, Williams does not provide improved understanding of Solomon's corruption, for his concern is confined only to structural analysis based on language data.

[6]   M. Brettler, 'The Structure of 1 Kings 1-11', *JSOT* 49 (1991): 88. For example, the unbalanced word amount of the paralleled units, i.e. the first section concerning 'Solomon's attitude towards God' is comprised of 155 verses (1 Kgs 6–8), while the second has only 13 (1 Kgs 11:1-13)'.

[7]   According to Brettler, the frame accounts, i.e. 3:1-2 and 9:24-25, both mention 1) 'Pharaoh's daughter' with the city of David, 2) building projects, and 3) Solomon's worship, encompassing the 'pro-Solomon' section (Brettler, 'The Structure of 1 Kings 1-11', 89-90).

[8]   Brettler, 'The Structure of 1 Kings 1-11', 97.

[9]   Brettler, 'The Structure of 1 Kings 1-11', 96.

However, Knoppers (1996) argues against the application of the law of the king (Deut. 17:16-17) to the Solomon narrative.[10] According to him, Solomon's wealth, many horses, and the importation of Egyptian horses, simply show the fulfilment of God's promise given to Solomon in 3:11-14, and the narrative should not be interpreted by the yardstick of the law of the king.[11] Rather Knoppers propounds that the Solomon narrative in Kings is a conspicuous example which reveals that the so-called Deuteronomist (i.e. the author of Kings) had a different stance from Deuteronomy. Knoppers, insisting that the law of the king should not be applied to Solomon's corruption, points out that 1 Kings 11:2 has nothing to do with Deuteronomy 17:16-17, but with Deuteronomy 7:4 and Joshua 23:12-13, which prohibit not excessive multi-marriage but intermarriage.[12] This observation is right, and requires more careful approach to the text of Solomon's corruption in 1 Kings 11:1-10.

There is another important view, which sees Solomon's corruption from the early stage of the narrative. For example, McConville observes Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter in 3:1 as the first signal, and names it 'the beginning of a "return to Egypt" in the terms of Deuteronomy 17:16'.[13] He also points out that the order of words in 'king's house and God's house' in 3:1, and the comparative time scales in building God's house and the king's house in 6:38–7:1, are intended to betray Solomon's problematic priority. Furthermore, the introductory particle (רַק 'but' 3:2, 3) implies a negative evaluation of Solomon concerning high-place worship.[14] According to McConville, 1 Kings 3 intends to show an already 'flawed kingship' so that the reader should not have any expectation of permanent salvation

---

[10] Gary N. Knoppers, 'The Deuteronomist and the Deuteronomic Law of the King: A Reexamination of a Relationship', *ZAW* 108 (1996): 343; Knoppers, 'Solomon's Fall and Deuteronomy', in L. Handy, ed., *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (Leiden: Brill, 1997): 399-401.

[11] Knoppers, 'Solomon's Fall and Deuteronomy', 404. For Knoppers, 1 Kgs 1–10 is merely a description of nothing less than Israel's golden age.

[12] There are other commentators who do not relate 1 Kgs 11:1-4 to the law of the king, but only to Deut. 7:1-4 (or Exod. 34:11-16), for example, D. J. Wiseman, *1 and 2 Kings* (TOTC; Leicester: IVP, 1993): 134; J. Gray, *1 & 2 Kings* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1964): 252; A. Graeme Auld, *Kings* (DSB; Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1986): 80. Jones relates 1 Kgs 11:2 with Deut. 7:3-4, Exod. 34:15-16, and Josh. 23:12 (G. H. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings Volume I* [Grand Rapid: Eerdmans, 1985]: 233).

[13] J. G. McConville, 'Narrative and Meaning in the Book of Kings', *Biblica 70* (1989): 35.

[14] McConville, 'Narrative and Meaning'. He refutes Noth's view that 3:2 is a Deuteronomic excuse for Solomon.

in Solomon.[15] In fact, a greater number of scholars hold the view that Solomon's corruption is observed from the early stage of his reign in the narrative, with certain variations.[16] For example, Eslinger (1989) interprets Solomon's almost every action and speech as Machiavellian, while Wiseman (1993) observes Solomon's faults only in his intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter in 3:1 until chapter 11.[17] Between these two extremes, Bimson points out the unfairness of Solomon's administration between Israel and Judah in chapter 4,[18] and Walsh finds a discriminatory policy of corvée in 1 Kings 5:27,[19] and so on.[20]

The authors of the recent monographs on the narrative, both Kang (2003) and Seibert (2006) also observe Solomon's faults or negative sides from the early stage of his reign, although they have quite different concerns and approaches from each other. Kang begins to observe Solomon's fault in his bloodshed in chapter 2[21] and Seibert observes Solomon's negative aspects even from chapter 1, raising the

---

[15] McConville, 'Narrative and Meaning', 36. McConville's view of Solomon's early corruption is in accordance with his view of the books of Kings as permeated with a 'theology of grace' (46), which emphasises 'human fallibility' as its basic factor (36).

[16] For example, Iain W. Provan, *1 and 2 Kings* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995); J. Walsh, 'The Characterization of Solomon in First Kings 1-5', *CBQ* 57 (1995): 471-93; John J. Bimson, '1 and 2 Kings' in *New Bible Commentary*, ed. D. Carson, R. France, J. Motyer and G. Wenham (Leicester: IVP, 1994): 334-87; Lyle Eslinger, 'Chapter 5: King Solomon's Prayers' in *Into the Hands of the Living God* (Sheffield: Almond, 1989): 123-82; Wiseman, *1 and 2 Kings*, 82. On 3:1, Wiseman comments 'This one was the beginning of Solomon's spiritual downfall'; Gray, *1 & 2 Kings*, 114; Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings* (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1987): 30; W. Brueggeman, *The Land, Overtures to Biblical Theology* (London: SPCK, 1978): 85-86; D. Gunn and D. Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993): 169; John W. Olley, 'Pharaoh's Daughter, Solomon's Palace, and the Temple: Another Look at the Structure of 1 Kings 1-11', *JSOT* 27 (2003): 368; J. Daniel Hays, 'Has the Narrative Come to Praise Solomon or to Bury Him?: Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', *JSOT* 28 (2003): 149-74.

[17] Most scholars who insist on Solomon's early corruption regard his intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter as Solomon's significant fault. Naturally so, for the intermarriage is explicitly criticised by the narrator in ch. 11.

[18] Bimson, '1 and 2 Kings', 343.

[19] Walsh, 'Solomon in First Kings 1-5', 492.

[20] For example, Provan and Bimson draw attention to ch. 2 where Solomon executes several people in the process of the consolidation of his throne (Bimson, '1 and 2 Kings', 341; Provan, *1 and 2 Kings*, 31-42, esp. 40).

[21] Jung Ju Kang, *The Persuasive Portrayal of Solomon in 1 Kings 1-11* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003): 127-39, 299.

possibility that Nathan and Bathsheba persuaded David with a 'concocted story'.[22]

So far, through this brief survey, one fundamental problem has emerged. That is, there is no consensus even on the starting point of Solomon's corruption, though it is true that recent studies give more weight to the view that sees Solomon's faults from an early stage. To grasp the didactic message of the narrative on Solomon's corruption, it is very important to understand how the narrative describes the process of Solomon's turning from a wise king to an apostate. Therefore it is necessary to evaluate the scholarly views and to propose a new interpretation which accommodates various insights provided by the scholars.

2.2 Evaluation of the Three Views on Solomon's Corruption

From the survey, it is possible to categorise the various views into three groups, according to their opinion on the starting point of Solomon's corruption. For convenience, the views which observe Solomon's corruption before the temple building are named 'the early stage corruption view'. The views which observe Solomon's corruption from just after the temple building, i.e. about chapter 9, are named 'the middle stage corruption view', and the views which observe the corruption in the narrator's open criticism in chapter 11 are named 'the late stage corruption view'. Each view can be evaluated as follows.

A strong point of the 'early stage corruption' view is that Solomon's intermarriage, which is criticised by the narrator in chapter 11, evidently appears at the early stage (3:1, cf. 7:8). However, those scholars who hold this view do not provide a reasonable explanation of why the narrator openly criticises Solomon's fault only in the late stage (ch. 11).[23] Moreover, the view does not provide any explanation

---

[22] Eric A. Seibert, *Subversive Scribes and the Solomonic Narrative: A Reading of 1 Kings 1-11* (London: T&T Clark, 2006): 115.

[23] Walsh tries to touch on this matter. He suggests that the author 'antecedentally realizing the outcome' of the narrative, technically uses 'gaps, ambiguities, and verbal subtleties that carry the negative characterization of Solomon' to 'shape and colour' the narrative negatively in the seemingly positive descriptions in chs. 1–5 (Walsh, 'Solomon in First Kings 1-5', 492-93). However, his suggestion cannot be a direct and sufficient answer to our fundamental question. Why does the author only implicitly criticise Solomon even when Solomon's faults can be read, and then later criticise Solomon openly? Brettler tried to explain this with his redaction theory as mentioned previously.

of why the narrative duplicates similar themes or materials, which Parker and Frisch (the middle stage corruption view) at least try to explain. It can also be pointed out that an excessive fault-finding is a feature of some interpreters who subscribe to this view. For example, Walsh suggests that the woman to whom Solomon orders the living child to be given (3:27) is the wrong woman, appealing to the Hebrew grammar of the pronoun.[24] Eslinger insists that Solomon is portrayed as irresponsible when he gives the verdict to cut the living child into two halves, questioning what would happen if the real mother had not conceded.[25] However, it is plain from the context of the text that Solomon gave the child to the real mother, and his first verdict (3:25) is surely a well-calculated one based on an understanding of human nature.[26]

The 'middle stage corruption' view is successful in providing an explanation of the duplication of similar materials or themes (Solomon's wisdom, wealth, administration, and corvée in chs. 3–8 and chs. 9–10) in the narrative by interpreting the first material as positive and the second as negative. However, these structural-analysis approaches oversimplify the narrative, consequently ignoring negative elements in the first section (chs. 3–8), which are pointed out by 'the early stage corruption' view. At least 3:1 (Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter) should be interpreted negatively in light of the open criticism of the marriage in 11:1-2.

The 'late stage corruption' view observes Solomon's faults only where the narrator openly criticises Solomon in chapter 11. The problem of this view is that it cannot explain the previous descriptions of Solomon's intermarriage (3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24).[27] Knoppers' insistence

---

[24] Walsh, 'Solomon in First Kings 1-5', 488-89.

[25] Eslinger, 'Solomon's Prayer', 138-39. In Eslinger's view, not only Solomon, but also God is interpreted as a selfish being who is struggling to get the upper hand, modifying the previous unconditional promise to conditional. In this sense, the concept of Solomon's corruption itself is probably meaningless in Eslinger's view.

[26] For another example, Hays finds Solomon at fault in his not dancing humbly before the ark like David in the temple dedication ceremony (Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 170).

[27] Knoppers insists that the whole of chs. 1–10 should be interpreted as under God's blessing and that even in 11:1-2, the author 'blames Solomon himself and not his wives for his malfeasance', overlooking the apparently problematic nature of his intermarriage (G. N. Knoppers, *Two Nations under God; The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies, Volume 1: The Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1993): 145).

that the mention of 'Pharaoh's daughter' in 11:1 is a clumsy addition by a late scribe[28] is not a proper solution, and betrays a typical problem of redaction criticism, the error of circularity. This view also does not provide any explanation of the duplicated structure (chs. 3–8 and chs. 9–10).

Each view seems to have its grounds in the text to some extent. However, they seem to fall short of understanding the strategy of the narrative. Moreover, they do not pay sufficient attention to the process or development of Solomon's corruption. Hence, it will be worth seeking a device that shows the process of Solomon's corruption when we analyse the narrative. Another point that we need to consider is that, as has been shown in the cases of Eslinger and Walsh, a microscopic analysis of a limited passage cannot ensure objectivity in interpreting the reticent Hebrew narrative. To ensure objectivity, we need to pay attention to the literary technique or strategy of the narrative on a macroscopic level. Therefore, we will suggest and explain a certain literary technique or strategy which seems to be employed to describe Solomon's turning process from positive to negative or the development of his corruption on a macroscopic scale.

2.3 A Brief Review of the Two Recent Monographs on the Narrative

The narrative was carefully approached by J. J. Kang in terms of rhetorical persuasion devices in his monograph (2003).[29] Kang tried to see, through the lens of a modern version[30] of Aristotle's theory, the narrative as a rhetorically well designed coherent unit. After that, E. A. Seibert proposed, in a monograph (2006),[31] a bold hypothesis that the narrative is a product of subversive scribe(s) who cheated his (or their) patron. Both Kang and Seibert pay their substantial attention to the presence of negative touches in the portrayal of Solomon in the narrative, although the two approaches are quite different from each other in terms of author's basic stance and interest.

Kang ultimately argues that Kings was produced in the exilic setting and the message (which he discovers by the rhetorical approach) contained in the Solomon narrative supports that view. He, in fact, tries

---

[28] Knoppers, *Two Nations under God*, 141.

[29] Kang, *The Persuasive Portrayal*.

[30] Kang employs the method drawn from Aristotle's classical rhetoric adapted by Kennedy and Perlman (Kang, *The Persuasive Portrayal*, 80-99).

[31] Seibert, *Subversive Scribes*.

to argue against the theory that the book of Kings is the product of the double redactions i.e. Josianic and exilic ones. The theory that Kings is the product of the double redactions regards negative elements in the Solomon narrative as trace of the Josianic redaction in which Solomon's faults should be presented in contrast to Josiah, the ideal king. Kang's stance is that the negative elements in the Solomon narrative do not require the Josianic redaction theory. Rather, he argues that the presence of Solomon's faults from the early part of the narrative onwards was intended to highlight the message that the hope of the exilic community is found only in God's mercy, and not in a human being such as Solomon. He supports this view by showing how the whole narrative is coherently well composed with rhetorical devices. In Kang's view, the Solomon narrative is a well organised piece of literature even to the very details included for the purpose of rhetorical persuasion. In this sense, it can be said that Kang proposes an answer to the question of the presence of negative elements in Solomon's portrayal in Kings according to his concern of compositional setting and purpose of the narrative.

Kang's study, however, does not explore a deeper question of the unusual subtlety with which the negative elements of Solomon are presented. Seibert's approach is a more square and direct answer to the question of why the positive and negative elements of Solomon's portrayal do co-exist in the narrative in such a subtle way that 'mutually contradictory readings' have been produced for the narrative. He explicitly articulates his awareness of this issue.[32] In fact his whole work is primarily intended to answer this issue.

It can be acknowledged that Seibert rightly raised the question about the subtle presence of negative elements in the overall positive portrayal of Solomon in the narrative, and his answer is simple. The subtle combination of positive and negative elements in Solomon's portrayal is the result of subversive scribes' effort to cover their subversive intention in the portrayal of the king for whom they were working. In other words, the scribes pretended to write a propagandising history for the royal house, on the one hand, but in fact tried to undermine their patron, on the other hand, revealing his faults or negative aspects in such a subtle way.

---

[32] Seibert, *Subversive Scribes*, 90-91, 181-82. He articulates this under the heading, 'The Lack of More Compelling Explanations for Mutually Contradictory Readings'.

A few points concerning his view can be pointed out briefly here. The first is that it is doubtful that, given Solomon's serious transgression explicitly and so plainly appears in the end (1 Kgs 11), the author(s) disguised Solomon's other faults in an implicit manner, in order to pretend that they were presenting the king in a positive light in the narrative. The present form of the narrative does not allow his view. Secondly, it can be pointed out that his overall presumption is unrealistic. That is, Seibert's thesis that the subversive scribes produced the narrative, implicitly criticising Solomon's reign for those who could detect the subtle implication throughout the narrative, presupposes that the scribes expected that nobody on the king's side could notice the cunning subtlety and implicit criticism, while those of the opposite side would understand their intention. Considering the risk that the alleged scribes might have run when their intention might be detected, the presumption is unlikely. It is true that there is ancient Near Eastern royal propaganda for royal establishment which is to some extent very similar to Hebrew biblical narrative of certain kings' accounts, but to my knowledge, we do not have any ancient Near Eastern royal propaganda with covered subversive intention. This fact may indirectly indicate that such an attempt was not realistic. Thirdly, our attention should be drawn to a general feature of the Hebrew biblical narrative. In general, reticence towards characters' behaviour, leaving the judgement to the reader, is not something new. Seibert's allegation that the technique of 'covert critique' was employed by subversive scribes does not seem to consider the fact that not a few faults of Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, for example, presented without apparent criticism has nothing to do with propaganda, subversion, and subversive scribes.[33] Lastly, it should be pointed out that this kind of highly hypothetical approach is not necessary if the subtle presence of the critical elements throughout the text can be understood with identification of literary techniques employed to deliver its lessons and message effectively, even corresponding to the theological theme of the text.

---

[33] Seibert introduced, to support his view, a few studies of other scholars who suggest some passages of Genesis meant to criticise King David (Gen. 38) or Solomon's foreign policy (Gen. 3) (Seibert, *Subversive Scribes*, 68-69). However, their views are not convincing, as their suggestions overly rely on their imagination.

3. A New Approach: Macroscopic Literary Strategy, Retroactive Re-evaluation Technique and Its Implication or Message

Even though it is true that a literary approach, as employed by Parker and Frisch, reveals meaningful structures and implications of a text and consequently contributes to a better understanding, it seems to overlook some important aspects of the text. Firstly, the reader's interpretation of a text is made progressively, in general, according to the reading process. The reader interprets the text on the basis of knowledge of the previous passages of the text and the present passage, without knowing the remainder of the text, at least in his or her first reading. So, it is natural that an author considers and exploits this quality of the reading process when he or she implants his or her literary devices in a text. Furthermore, it is natural to presume that the author of a biblical text assumed that the reader would read the text repeatedly, and tried to make use of the fact. When we consider the subtleties of the Bible text, it is hard to believe that the author would expect his reader to understand completely, at his or her first reading, every meaning implanted in the text.

Therefore, in order to identify the literary techniques of the text, it is important to reconstruct the reading process, imagining how the interpretation would be formed from the reader's perspective, and taking into consideration the effects which could occur through repeated reading of the text. Through this reconstruction of the reading process, the literary technique and its intended message may be detected. Even though it is true that the reconstruction requires a degree of imagination, it is also possible to secure objectivity to a certain extent, for there are supporting clues within the text. It is also important to consider what was expected by the author, in terms of his reader's prior knowledge, in the reader's reading and interpreting of the text. It seems that the expected pre-knowledge of the reader could also be detected from the clues in the text itself.

In this context, we suggest that the Solomon narrative contains three cases of the same literary technique, which requires the reader to do retroactive re-evaluation. The technique is very effective in revealing the insidious and furtive process of Solomon's corruption, plainly discernible and ensuring comparatively much more objectivity in interpretation; it reveals itself in a macroscopic view. It is observed

firstly in the passages concerning Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter throughout the narrative (3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24; 11:1), and secondly in the passage concerning Solomon's excessive wealth, maintaining many horses or importing horses from Egypt, and many wives to which the king's stipulation (Deut. 17:16-17) is applied (9:26–11:10). Thirdly, it is observed in the passage concerning Solomon's oppression of the Israelites, which is indirectly revealed by the Israelites' complaint or protest after Solomon's death (12:1-14).[34]

This literary strategy or technique is based on the premise of the reader's natural reading process. This technique works when the reader of the text reads it from the first sentence to the last without knowing the contents that will come next, at least at the first reading. The text is 'intended to make sense as it is read cumulatively from beginning to end', as Provan states.[35] In fact, it is not a special premise but only a natural assumption that any author of literature would make concerning his or her reader, and exploit. Upon this basic under-standing of the interpretative principle, the 'retroactive re-evaluation technique' in the Solomon narrative can be identified. Tate explains this concept as follows:

> The author (storyteller) does not flatly state the case, but through the selective process, seeks to guide the reader into the construction of the message. The author invites the reader, therefore, to become involved in and engaged by the story. The author seeks to move the reader from one event or scene to another, leaving sufficient gaps of information so that the reader can make necessary inferences. Story does not allow the reader to remain static.[36]

> The author desired to construct a narrative in such a way that, given just enough hints, foreshadowings, and gaps, the reader might discover these facts on their own.[37]

> The reader cannot stand outside the text, but becomes a participant, filling out the work, making connections between textual segments,

---

[34] Owing to the limit of space, this article introduces only the first case.

[35] Provan, *1 and 2 Kings*, 4-5.

[36] W. Randolph Tate, *Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997): 117. The quotation is from the section of 'the Gospels and Acts'. However, Tate's understanding of the New Testament narrative seems not to differ from the narrative of the Old Testament.

[37] Tate, *Biblical Interpretation*, 105-106. By 'these facts', here, Tate means specific contents of a specific story of King David, i.e. David's self-verdict (2 Sam. 12:5-6) and his four sons' following death for his sin. However, Tate's statement seems to contain a general principle that can be applied to other passages in the Old Testament narrative.

evaluating new perspectives, and **reevaluating previous ones in light of new information**.[38] [bold: my emphasis]

However, so far, this kind of insightful understanding of biblical narrative has not yet been applied comprehensively to interpreting the Solomon narrative.[39] The retroactive re-evaluation technique is an effective device to convey a significant lesson or message of the narrative, ensuring a more objective interpretation of the text by being observed in a macroscopic view rather than a microscopic view.

Exploring this technique in the narrative, we will also discuss the thematic background of the technique, i.e. the 'Exodus motif' and, more importantly, the 'return to Egypt' motif in the narrative. As a result of the main discussion, we will be able to reach a reasonable conclusion on Solomon's corruption, and accommodate some insights of the three main views on the starting point of that corruption, with critical evaluations.

4. A Case of the Technique: Solomon's Intermarriage with Pharaoh's Daughter (1 Kings 3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24; 11:1-2)

Even though Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter is mentioned four times before chapter 11, it is never criticised openly on any of those occasions by the narrator. However, in 11:1-8, at last, the matter is clearly and crucially criticised, along with his idolatry, as part of Solomon's transgression against the law (Deut. 7:3-4), which forbids intermarriage. The reader, who has probably overlooked the problematic aspect of Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter, is now required to re-evaluate the previous passages retroactively. Before we look into the mechanism of this device in the text, we need first to explore the thematic background of this case of the technique.

---

[38] Tate, *Biblical Interpretation*, 104.
[39] Only R. Nelson seems to detect this device in the second case in his commentary (Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 65-67).

4.1 The Thematic Background of This Case of the Technique: The 'Exodus Motif' and the 'Return to Egypt' Motif

The 'Exodus motif' which the Solomon narrative contains is extensively explored by Frisch.[40] Ironically, however, the 'return to the Egypt motif'[41] is a substantial theme in the same narrative. In fact, Frisch does not distinguish the 'return to the Egypt motif' from the 'Exodus motif', dealing with both together under the title of the 'Exodus motif'. This is presumably because of their inextricable presentation in the narrative and also their intrinsic relationship. However, it is possible to distinguish the two motifs. It is interesting to observe how the two opposite themes can be set in the same narrative which describes the period of one man's reign. Before we think of the relationship of these motifs and its function in the narrative, it will be helpful to look into the way the two motifs appear in the text.

Regarding the 'Exodus motif', the manner in which the author describes the starting of the building of the temple by Solomon (6:1) implies that the ultimate purpose of the exodus is now about to be accomplished, giving the impression of 'at last'.[42]

> In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the Lord. (1 Kgs 6:1)

Solomon's building of the temple can also be regarded as the fulfilment of Moses' prophecy concerning God's chosen worship place in the promised land (Deut. 12:1-11). It is especially worth noting that peace and safety, a most important precondition of worshiping their God in his chosen dwelling place in the promised land (Deut. 12:10), is described as having been secured before Solomon starts building the temple (1 Kgs 4:20-21, 24-25). It is also worth remembering that the formal reason for the exodus was to sacrifice to the Israelite God (Exod. 3:1; 5:3; 8:25-28; 10:24-26). The stated purpose of the three

---

[40] E.g. Frisch, 'The Exodus Motif in 1 Kgs 1-14', 3-21. Frisch observes 'the Exodus motif in 1 Kgs 1-14' in an extensive way. He insists that the 'Exodus motif' has the unifying function of 1 Kgs 1–14. Oblath, 'Whence the Exodus?', 23-42. Oblath observes strong thematic and literary similarity between the Exodus narrative and the Jeroboam narrative.

[41] E.g. Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 172, 'reversal of the exodus'.

[42] Frisch, 'The Exodus Motif in 1 Kgs 1-14', 6. 'The association of the Temple with the Exodus in 1 Kgs 6:1, therefore, seems to indicate that the erection of the Temple is the apex of the extended process that began with the Exodus from Egypt.'

days' journey into the wilderness, for sacrificing to the Israelite God, or serving their God, should not be regarded as a mere pretence for escaping from Egypt. If the Israelites can stop their forced labour, which has been loaded upon them by the Egyptian ruler, in order to worship and serve their own God, they are not actually under Pharaoh's rule any more, but their God's, and consequently, their God can continue commanding what he wants, including, presumably, their coming out of Egypt, i.e. the exodus. The implication of sacrificing and serving the Israelite God, stopping forced labour, is that they are their God's people, not Pharaoh's. Therefore, the building of the permanent temple for sacrificing to and serving the Israelite God by Solomon in the promised land, has the significance that the Israelites have now accomplished their exodus in its full sense,[43] as they have the peace and safety to serve their God without any hindrance. In a sense, Solomon can be labeled as a 'new Moses' who takes over the first Moses' role and completes it.[44]

The reference to the 'four hundred and eightieth year' (6:1) also reminds us of the exodus, for it closely corresponds to the year counting in Exodus.

> The time that the Israelites had lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. At the end of four hundred and thirty years, on that very day, all the companies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. (Exod. 12:40-41)

The year count in 1 Kings 6:1 seems to correspond to the one in Exodus 12:40-41, showing that a similarly significant historic event is occurring or a similarly significant historic epoch is dawning. When we consider the rarity of this kind of year count throughout the historical narrative in the Old Testament, it is all the more plausible that the intention of the year count in 1 Kings 6:1, as part of the pair, is to present the temple building as an event of equal significance to the exodus, and at the same time to imply that it is the completion of what

---

[43] Frisch, 'The Exodus Motif, 6. 'The erection of the Temple in Jerusalem represents the concretization and fullest embodiment of this "you shall serve"'.

[44] Parker, 'Solomon as Philosopher King?', 81. 'As Moses' successor, Solomon re-enacts key events in Moses' life. He judges Israel (cf. Exod. 18 and 1 Kgs 3), establishes a bureaucracy (cf. Num. 2–4 and 1 Kgs 4), disseminates the law (cf. Exod. 19–24 and 1 Kgs 8), builds Yahweh a throne (Exod. 25–31 and 1 Kgs 6), and promises reward for obedience to the law and punishment for disobedience (Deut. 12–26 and 1 Kgs 8).'

was begun at the exodus.[45] Additionally, the enshrinement of the ark of the covenant in the temple (8:9, 21), which is described as containing the two tablets given during the exodus (in its broad sense),[46] also tightly links the exodus event to the temple building.[47]

The importance of the 'Exodus motif' is that it appears again after Solomon's death. It is not hard to notice that now Rehoboam, Solomon's successor, takes Pharaoh's role and Jeroboam takes Moses' role in chapter 12. That is, Jeroboam is the agent to deliver God's people from their 'slavery'.[48] As God hardened Pharaoh's heart in the original exodus, now God hardens Rehoboam's heart to accomplish his divine will (12:15).[49] Naturally enough, a question is posed here: how can the 'Exodus motif' appear immediately after the death of Solomon, during whose reign the completion of Exodus has been accomplished?[50] The answer to the question is simple. Israel has returned to Egypt again before Solomon's death. The 'return to Egypt' motif links the two 'Exodus motifs' and covers the period between them. Even though the first exodus had been completed in Solomon's reign, Israel became an 'Egypt' through Solomon's rule, and a new exodus had to take place.

The 'return to Egypt motif' has been noticed only fragmentarily by some scholars who observe Solomon's becoming a 'Pharaoh', especially in chapter 9,[51] where Solomon is described as imitating an Egyptian tyrant in implementing his enormous building project and

---

[45] Nelson presents a similar view, when he states that 'the introductory chronology (6:1) makes the event of temple building the culmination of Israel's saga up to this point'. Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 46.

[46] Frisch, 'The Exodus Motif in 1 Kgs 1-14', *JSOT* 87 (2000): 5, 'the bounds of the exodus event can fairly be seen as encompassing everything from the bondage in Egypt up to the preparations to cross the Jordan after forty years of wilderness wandering'.

[47] Frisch, 'The Exodus Motif in 1 Kgs 1-14', 7.

[48] Provan, *1 and 2 Kings*, 104.

[49] Provan, *1 and 2 Kings*, 103.

[50] In fact, the account of Hadad the Edomite (1 Kgs 11:14-22) also shows the 'Exodus motif'.

[51] '[T]he Egyptian aura', 'an Egyptian style of rule', Eslinger, 'Solomon's Prayer', 148; 'reversal of the Exodus', Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 172; 'Solomon's first subtle look in the direction of Egypt', K. I. Parker, 'Solomon as Philosopher King?: The Nexus of Law and Wisdom in 1 Kings 1-11', *JSOT* 53 (1992): 84. Parker observes the first occasion which contains the 'return to the Egypt' motif, only in ch. 9, with which this study does not agree; 'an Israelite pharaoh', Chris Hauer Jr, 'The Economics of National Security in Solomonic Israel', *JSOT* 18 (1980): 68. It is substantially discussed in E. W. Heaton, *Solomon's New Man: The Emergence of Ancient Israel as a Nation State* (New York: Pica Press, 1974): 28-30, 162-78.

maintaining a standing army and forced labour system. In his building project, 'store cities', 'chariot cities', and 'cavalry cities' especially remind the reader of Egypt.[52] Even though the Israelites do not go back to Egypt in a geographical sense, the Israelite kingdom itself is becoming an Egypt in a metaphorical sense. Additionally, the Israelites' complaint after Solomon's death (12:4), reveals that Solomon loaded on them a heavy yoke and disciplined them with whips, that he exploited and oppressed them (12:4, 10-11, 14) just as Pharaoh had done to their ancestors (cf. 8:51); that is, the Israelites experienced a similar thing to their ancestors. In other words, they have been living in an 'Egypt' under Solomon's reign. However, in fact, the 'return to Egypt' motif is already observed in Solomon's becoming Pharaoh's son-in-law (3:1) at an early stage. The frequent mentions of 'Pharaoh's daughter' throughout the narrative (3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24; 11:1), and, more directly, the mention of Solomon's making ships on the seashore of 'the Red Sea' (9:26) and sending his men to Egypt to buy Egyptian horses and chariots (10:28-29), betray the progressive development of the 'return to Egypt motif' as the narrative unfolds. Furthermore, the fact that the leader of the northern ten tribes, Jeroboam, is portrayed as a new Moses who has escaped being killed by a tyrant (11:40), and at last succeeds in delivering his people from the heavy yoke of the tyrant (12:3-20), also shows that the previous condition of the Israelites was like the one to which the original Moses was sent by God to save his people.

What, then, is the function of the 'Exodus motif' and 'return to Egypt motif', respectively, in the narrative? The 'return to Egypt' motif characterises the nature of Solomon's corruption while the 'Exodus motif' acts as a foil to it ironically. In other words, the 'Exodus motif' acts as a foil to the 'return to Egypt motif' in the narrative in order to highlight the tragic process and result of Solomon's corruption, which is none other than a 'returning to Egypt' that would cause a new exodus, namely the division of the kingdom. Solomon, the new Moses, became a Pharaoh, and a new exodus had to take place.[53]

---

[52] Eslinger, 'Solomon's Prayer', 148.

[53] Frisch, 'The Exodus Motif in 1 Kgs 1-14', 14; M. Oblath, 'Of Pharaohs and Kings—Whence the Exodus?', *JSOT* 87 (2000): 23-42. Oblath insists that Jeroboam was the model of Moses in the Exodus narrative, through the observation of the similarity of the two narratives with some other grounds. This study does not agree

4.2 A Brief Reconstruction of the Reading Process

Even if the reader has had some suspicion of the wrongfulness of Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter in 3:1, the following description of Solomon's love for God (3:3), which is very strong praise indeed, God's favourable theophany to Solomon (3:5-15a), which includes his satisfaction with Solomon's request (3:10), and Solomon's wisdom and prosperity, which is the very thing God has promised to him (3:12-13), have sufficient force to cause the reader to doubt that first suspicion. Therefore, it does not seem to be easy for the reader to maintain the suspicion that Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter in 3:1 is a serious problem which could lead to tragic consequences. Moreover, the fact that the subsequent mentions of 'Pharaoh's daughter' as Solomon's wife (7:8; 9:16, 24) do not bear any plain criticism of the marriage, is likely to increase the reader's doubt about any previous suspicions he or she had, until the reader confronts the open criticism of the marriage in 11:1 and has to re-evaluate it retroactively.

4.3 The Mechanism and Effect of the Retroactive Re-evaluation Technique in This Case

McConville maintains that Solomon's misconduct is observed from chapter 3 in his intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter (3:1a), the problematic priority in building his house and God's house (3:1b), and the existence of high places (3:2, 3), showing a 'flawed kingship' and conveying 'the message that there could be no permanent salvation for Israel in a Solomon'.[54] However, a question is raised. Did the author of the narrative expect such an observation from his reader on a first reading? The answer is negative. It will be sufficient enough to remember the fact that it has taken a long time and the enormous efforts of many scholars to reach the present understanding of the presence of Solomon's faults in his early stage, and to recognise the subtlety and exquisiteness of the narrative. What, then, did the author expect his reader to discover of Solomon's faults from the text on a first reading? The most plausible answer to this question seems to be that the author expected the reader to realise the negativity of

---

with his view, although his analysis sufficiently shows the surprising thematic and literary similarity between the two texts.

[54] McConville, 'Narrative and Meaning in the Book of Kings', 35-36.

Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter when he reached
11:1-2, and to re-evaluate the previous passages regarding the marriage
at that point. We can imagine that the author expected the reader to be
able thereafter to begin to observe many other faults of Solomon in the
account before chapter 11, standing upon this firm ground as an
evident clue.

McConville is right in noticing Solomon's corruptive element in the
early stage of his reign. However, McConville, like most others who
see Solomon's corruption from this early stage, does not seem to
consider the reading process[55] and the reader's epistemological
experience throughout the narrative. The question is whether the
reader could notice those things on a first reading with certainty. Hays,
taking a similar stance to McConville, insists that 'Solomon's
intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter' in 3:1 'should explode like a
bombshell in the reader's mind' because Egypt always has very
negative connotations in the Old Testament.[56] However, even for a
sensitive reader who has a deep understanding of the meaning of the
Egyptian motif in the Old Testament, and consequently had a strong
suspicion of Solomon's fault in 3:1, it would not be easy to sustain it
for the reasons presented above. As Hays himself admits, the author
does not provide a negative description of Solomon openly until
chapter 11, nor has the fragmentary implicit criticism of Solomon
strong force 'if analyzed one at a time in isolation'.[57]

Hays insists that 'the clear, but implicit references to Deuteronomy
17 at the end of 1 Kings 10 provide the strongest single supporting'
evidence to confirm the previous subtle and implicit criticism of
Solomon throughout the narrative.[58] However, it is doubtful whether
the reader could decide that Solomon has been described negatively in
a very subtle manner if the author had not criticised Solomon openly in
chapter 11. Therefore, we should say that the decisive trigger which
convinces the reader of Solomon's missteps in the previous passages is
the author's open criticism in chapter 11 rather than the end part of
chapter 10, where the author seems to try to give the impression that
Solomon has reached his peak, and even the Egyptian horse importing

---

[55] Kang pays his attention to the 'reading process' of the reader, to some extent, but
he does not notice any substantial literary technique from that.
[56] Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 161.
[57] Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 174.
[58] Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 174.

looks like a natural channel of increasing his or Israel's prosperity and security (10:26-29). The point where the reader can confidently decide that Solomon's corruption begins is at an early stage of his reign, from at least in the matter of his marriage (11:1-2 and following) through the plain critical statement supplied by the narrator.

The first mention of Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter invites the reader, who is now required to re-evaluate the previous passages by the open criticism in chapter 11, to review critically the very early stage of Solomon's reign. It provides the reader with the possibility of an alternative overall understanding of the narrative before chapter 11. The occasional mentions of 'Pharaoh's daughter' between chapter 3 and chapter 11 function as stepping stones which keep the reader reminded of the existence of Pharaoh's daughter as Solomon's wife until the reader finally reaches the condemnation of the intermarriage in 11:1. In this sense, the intermediate mentions of 'Pharaoh's daughter' (7:8; 9:16, 24) are like the pieces of bread scattered on the road for Hansel to trace back to his home later in the famous children's tale. But while Hansel failed because of thoughtless birds that came and ate up his pieces of bread, the author of the Solomon narrative seems to succeed in his device, because his markers cannot be deleted.

4.4 The Suitability of the Device in the Narrative

When we pay attention to 1) the relationship between 'Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter' and the main theme of the narrative, namely the 'return to Egypt' motif, 2) the significance and function of the mentions of 'Pharaoh's daughter' in the various locations in the narrative, and 3) the term itself in anonymous form, we realise the suitability of the device, and this in turn supports our view that the material of 'Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter' was used to constitute a substantial literary device in the narrative. Therefore, we will now explore the three points in order.

1) The Correspondence of the Term of the Device to the Main Theme of the Narrative

It is very clear that 'Pharaoh's daughter', as an element of the literary device, corresponds well to the main theme or the 'return to Egypt' motif that characterises and reflects the nature of Solomon's corruption, which nullifies the effect of the exodus. When we consider

that the 'return to Egypt' motif is a substantial or even a central theme, we can understand that it is not just a coincidence that 'Pharaoh's daughter', who is a very pertinent symbol of Solomon's link to Egypt, is used as one of the building bricks of the literary device which is designed to convey the message of the dangerous and insidious process of corruption.

2) The Significance and Functions of the Device in the Various Locations

Once the reader realises that Solomon's corruption started early, by noticing the link between 3:1 and 11:1, 'Pharaoh's daughter' acquires a negative connotation throughout the narrative. Besides the basic function of 'Pharaoh's daughter' which has been previously explained, each mention of 'Pharaoh's daughter' (3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24; 11:1), clearly stating or implying Solomon's intermarriage, has a specific function in the narrative.

As for 3:1, 9:24, and 11:1, similar themes are clustered in each case. The contexts of both 3:1 and 11:1 contain the themes of 'inter-marriage' (3:1 and 11:1-3), 'building project' (3:1 and 11:7-8), and 'use of high places for worship' (3:2-3 and 11:7-8), constituting a 'parallel' between 3:1-3 and 11:1-8, as rightly observed by Walsh.[59] The contexts of both 3:1 and 9:24 contain the themes of 'Pharaoh's daughter' (3:1 and 9:24), 'palace building project' (3:1 and 9:24), and 'temple-sacrifice' (3:2 and 9:25), constituting a 'parallel' between 3:1-2 and 9:24-25, as observed by Porten and Brettler.[60] In a sense, the three common themes are a summary description of Solomon's life, reflecting his emotional desire, administration, and spiritual activity

---

[59] J. Walsh, 'The Characterization of Solomon in First Kings 1-5', *CBQ* 57 (1995): 477. Walsh observes that these three materials are described in ch. 3 positively, while in ch. 11 negatively. Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 161. Hays also pointed out the similarity between 3:1-3 and 11:1-8, following Fretheim's observation on the text (Fretheim, *First and Second Kings* [Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1999]: 62).

[60] Brettler, 'The Structure of 1 Kings 1-11', 89-90. Brettler insists that the reason why the description of Pharaoh's daughter's entering her palace appears again in 9:24 anachronistically, in spite of the previous description of it in 7:8, is to constitute a frame which contains pro-Solomon material, by the 'framing repetition'. Brettler regards 3:1-2 and 9:24-25 as a frame containing pro-Solomon materials. Brettler observes that in the passage after 9:24-25, that is 9:26–11:10, Solomon is described as a transgressor of the king's stipulation of Deut. 17:14-17. Porten also observes that the two passages match each other (B. Porten, 'The Structure and Theme of the Solomon Narrative (1 Kgs 3-11)', *Hebrew Union College Annual 38* (1966): 98-99).

respectively. This means that whenever Solomon's life as an Israelite king is summarised in the narrative, his intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter appears as an important part of it, which implies the crucial significance of the intermarriage in Solomon's life.

9:16 also has an important role in reminding the reader of the intermarriage itself, by the mention of a dowry and by calling Pharaoh's daughter Solomon's 'wife' for the first time. Solomon's inferior position to Pharaoh is implied by the mention of Pharaoh's conquest of a city within Palestine and his giving it to Solomon, his son-in-law, in the form of a present to his daughter.[61] Additionally, the surrounding passage of 9:16, namely 9:15-21, is replete with Egyptian imagery, for example, building of 'cities of store', 'cities of chariots', 'cities of horsemen',[62] and 'bond-service'. The passage shows the image of Egyptian rule most intensively within the narrative, which concretises the 'return to Egypt' motif in the narrative, or Solomon's becoming a Pharaoh.[63]

The importance of the locus of 7:8 is recently revealed by Olley's literary structural analysis of the Solomon narrative. Olley observes that in the middle of the description of the temple building (6:1–8:66), there is the description of the palace for Pharaoh's daughter (7:1-12), and again, in the middle of the description of the palace building, there is Pharaoh's daughter herself (7:8).[64] Pharaoh's daughter therefore occupies the structural centre of the whole Solomon narrative,

---

[61] McConville, 'Narrative and Meaning in the Book of Kings', 36-37. McConville observes a 'so-called frame-break' here, which betrays 'the real measure of Solomon's achievement'.

[62] The 'cities of store' is a conspicuous term for Egyptian imagery (Exod. 1:11), while 'cities of chariots' and 'cities of horsemen' do not appear in the Exodus narrative. However, the fact that not only are 'chariots' and 'horsemen' closely associated with Egyptian military imagery (Exod. 14:6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 23, 25, 26, 28; 15:1, 4), but also that the expressions 'cities of chariots' and 'cities of horsemen' seem to be applied forms of 'cities of store', implies overall that the whole set of terms concerning 'cities' contain Egyptian imagery.

[63] Parker thinks that the slavery system in 9:21 is 'Solomon's first subtle look in the direction of Egypt' (Parker, 'Solomon as Philosopher King?', 84), which is in contrast to McConville's view that Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter in 3:1 is 'the beginning of a "returning to Egypt", in the terms of Deut. 17,6'. It is understandable that Parker, who insists that 'in 1 Kings 3-8 Solomon is portrayed as the ideal king', making a dichotomous structural analysis on the Solomon narrative, cannot acknowledge the presence of negative Egyptian connotation in the earlier chapters. Nevertheless, Parker's observation of Egyptian connotation in 9:21 seems to betray the comparatively intense presence of Egyptian elements in the nearby passage of 9:16.

[64] Olley, 'Pharaoh's Daughter', 364.

implying that Solomon's corruption exists even in the heart of
Solomon's seemingly most pious achievement.[65] When we think that
the temple building is a consummation of the exodus, in a sense the
very presence of Pharaoh's daughter in the heart of the description of
the temple building cannot but be significant, betraying the insidious
presence of corruption. This observation was missed by Parker and
Frisch, who have treated chapters 6–8 as a simple unit of temple
building, ignoring the significant detailed structure within the
comparatively large unit.

3) The Effect of the Anonymity of the Term

Pharaoh's daughter seems to be Solomon's chief wife, for a palace is
built for her and she frequently appears in the narrative.[66] However, her
name is not given and she remains simply as 'Pharaoh's daughter'
throughout the narrative.[67] This is conspicuous because we can observe
many other names of characters who are less significant than
Pharaoh's daughter in the nearby passages. Not only male officials'
names (1 Kgs 4:2-19), but also many females' names are given. For
example, Solomon's mother's name Bath-sheba, King David's last
concubine Abishag, a Shunammite, Solomon's successor Rehoboam's
mother, an Ammonitess, Naamah (1 Kgs 14:21), and Solomon's
daughters, Taphath and Bas-math, who were given to local governors
as their wives (1 Kgs 4:11, 15). In contrast to David's wives' names,
which are given in 2 Samuel 3:2-5, Solomon's chief wife remains
strikingly anonymous.[68]

---

[65] Olley, 'Pharaoh's Daughter', 368. In contrast, Bimson proposes the opposite view
that, to emphasise the comparatively larger significance of the temple, the description
of the palace is inserted or submerged in the description of the temple building, even
though in its physical measure, the palace is bigger than the temple (Bimson, '1 and
2 Kings', 345-46). Younger also points out that the account of the construction of the
Solomonic palace is the 'very pivot point' of 'the account of the building and
dedication of the Temple', however he does not go further (K. Lawson Younger Jr,
'The Figurative Aspect and the Contextual Method in the Evaluation of the Solomonic
Empire (1 Kings 1-11)' in *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of
Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, ed. David J. A. Clines,
Stephen E. Fowland and Stanley E. Porter (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990): 166-67).

[66] Bimson, '1 and 2 Kings', 345.

[67] It is interesting that the 'daughter of Pharaoh' is only once described as Solomon's
wife in 9:16.

[68] Solomon himself has an extra name, i.e. Solomon's God-given name Jedidiah
(2 Sam. 12:25).

The anonymity of Pharaoh's daughter is well understood as a literary technique, which, as Reinhartz argues, 'encourages readers to typify anonymous female character(s) rather than viewing them as individuals'.[69] In this sense, 'Pharaoh's daughter' is a well-chosen designation in order to be the representative of an enormous number of unnamed foreign wives. That is, in the narrative, Pharaoh's daughter is simply the first of Solomon's enormous number of intermarriages or a representative of them, rather than a meaningful chief wife to Solomon. Furthermore, the term 'Pharaoh's daughter' is more suitable than any Egyptian name of the princess for implying Solomon's resemblance to Pharaoh himself. In that sense, the term is appropriate for containing the 'return to Egypt' motif, which characterises the progress of Solomon's corruption as Solomon's transformation into an Egyptian ruler.[70]

Once it is recognised that the phrase 'Pharaoh's daughter' is to be understood as a significant literary device of the narrative, Knoppers' insistence that 'Pharaoh's daughter' in 11:1 is a clumsy insertion by a later scribe,[71] and that the whole account of 1 Kings 1–10 is a positive description of Solomon's wisdom, fortune, and glory,[72] is not plausible. This is clear when we consider that the 'return to Egypt' motif in the narrative is very plain, and that the previous mentions of 'Pharaoh's daughter' are intended as conspicuous signs that reveal the process of the 'return to Egypt', which has started from the early stage of his reign.

---

[69] A. Reinhartz, 'Anonymous Women and the Collapse of the Monarch: A Study in Narrative Technique' in *Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings*, ed. A. Brenner (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994): 63.

[70] Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Kings*, 43, pays attention to the anonymity of Pharaoh's name rather than Pharaoh's daughter's name. He insists that the anonymity of Pharaoh's name is intended to recall the Exodus situation, which has the same anonymity of name of the Egyptian ruler, quoted in Hays, 'Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11', 161.

[71] Knoppers, *Two Nations*, 141. Cohen also thinks that the 'Pharaoh's daughter' in 11:1 is a late addition (Shaye J. D. Cohen, 'Solomon and the Daughter of Pharaoh: Intermarriage, Conversion, and the Impurity of Women', *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 16-17 (1984-85): 26.

[72] Knoppers, *Two Nations*, 57-134.

5. Conclusion

We have detected a 'retroactive re-evaluation technique' in the Solomon narrative in Kings using a reader-sensitive approach in which the reader's reading process is carefully considered. This technique has been shown to work effectively with the references to Solomon's intermarriage with Pharaoh's daughter in the narrative. This is well supported by the observation that the nature of Solomon's corruption is 'return to Egypt' which is revealed through the theological reading of the narrative.