PREFACE

This volume contains nine articles. The first five are the outcome of the International Workshop on Israelian Hebrew held last year in Tsukuba, Japan. The next two constitute a supplement to the special issue of the previous volume, “Near Eastern Studies in Japan: Islamic Period.” Abbreviations of the names of journals used in these articles are listed in Vol. XXXVII, pp. 4-5. The final two articles were contributed by members of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan. It is worth mentioning here that contribution to *Orient* is open to all scholars. Those interested are kindly directed to the “Instructions for Contributors” in the inside back cover of the journal.

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The International Workshop on Israelian Hebrew was held on July 31 and August 1, 2002, at the University of Tsukuba. It was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture. The research subject of the grant was “Isoglosses of Northwest Semitic Languages in the First Millennium B.C.E.: a Reexamination.” Its main idea was to reexamine isoglosses between Hebrew and other NWS languages based upon recent new developments in Hebrew linguistics, i.e. studies in the Northern, or Israelian, dialect of the Hebrew language (IH below) in Biblical times. This idea was originally conceived by three Japanese scholars who shared the podium at the symposium “Old Testament and Language” held by the Society for Old Testament Studies in Japan in October 1999. They are Prof. David Toshio Tsumura (Japan Bible Seminary), Prof. Akio Moriya (Tokyo Woman’s Christian University), and myself.

The three of us met several times during the year after the conference and came up with the idea of inviting two scholars from abroad and holding a symposium on IH in Japan. We decided to invite Prof. Gary A. Rendsburg of Cornell University, U.S., who leads the studies on IH worldwide, and Prof. Shlomo Izre’el of Tel Aviv University, Israel, whose expertise is the pre-Hebrew linguistic geography of the Levant as reflected in cuneiform documents. Both scholars willingly accepted our invitation. I would like to take this occasion to express our heartfelt gratitude to them.

The five of us named the symposium the “International Workshop on

Israelian Hebrew” and prepared for it for about a year and half. One of the goals of the workshop was to provide a state-of-the-art description of the IH grammar and lexicon. This assignment was given to Prof. Rendsburg, the only scholar in the world who could do it. Prof. Tsumura’s assignment was to critically reexamine Prof. Rendsburg’s findings, taking full advantage of his current project of writing a commentary on the Books of Samuel.

The dialect geography of Syria-Palestine during 1000-586 B.C.E. was studied carefully by W. Randall Garr in his 1985 book. This certainly serves as a solid basis for our project, but as it was published 17 years ago, an update is indispensable. This assignment was given to Prof. Moriya.

Another important aspect of IH studies is its diachronic developments. This assignment was given to Prof. Izre’el and Prof. Rendsburg. Prof. Izre’el surveyed dialect geography of the land of the Bible in the pre-Biblical period, while Prof. Rendsburg explored the relationship between IH and post-Biblical Hebrew, especially Mishnaic Hebrew.

My ultimate goal for the whole research project is to put all these contributions together and reexamine isoglosses of Northwest Semitic languages in the first millennium B.C.E. For the workshop, however, I took on myself a smaller assignment, i.e. to propose a few new grammatical features of IH.

Thus we got together in Tsukuba in the summer of 2002 and held the workshop. A few dozen Japanese scholars and graduate students who have a keen interest in Biblical Hebrew joined us. We enjoyed a fruitful academic exchange for two days, for which I am grateful to all the participants. Thanks to our discussion, we came to share a basic view about the diglossic relationship between IH and JH (Judahite Hebrew) in northern Israel. There is something curious about IH grammatical and lexical features. While we do find IH features in Israelian materials in the Bible, they usually occur side by side with JH features. In other words, no portion of the Bible is written strictly in IH. At the workshop I raised the simple question of why this is so. Is it because Israelian materials were originally written in IH, and later “translated” into JH by the redactors of the Bible, who did not do a thorough job of translating? Or is it because there was diglossia in northern Israel with JH as the high (written) variety and IH as the low (spoken) variety? Whereas there might be other possible lines of explanation, we tentatively took the latter possibility as a working hypothesis. We assumed that a scribal tradition and its written language based on the language spoken in Jerusalem were established in northern Israel during the time of the united monarchy, and continued to be used even after the split in the kingdom resulted in the two independent states of Israel in the north

and Judah in the south (cf. Chaim Rabin, “The Emergence of Classical Hebrew,” in A. Malamat (ed.), *The Age of the Monarchies: Culture and Society*, Jerusalem: Massada Press, 1979, 71-78, especially p. 77). That is to say that in northern Israel IH was spoken and JH was written from the time of King David, and the low variety sporadically got into the high variety. Since this is a very common situation in any diglossic community (e.g. Standard Babylonian and Assyrian in Assyria, literary Arabic and spoken Arabic in Arabic-speaking communities), this offers a more natural explanation to the phenomenon than does the first possibility, which relies on a hypothetical “translation” in the course of the redaction of the Bible.

I am deeply grateful to the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan and its editorial board, which appreciated the importance of our workshop, for offering space in its journal to publish the papers read at the workshop. I would like to append a note here that Prof. Moriya’s article arrived too late to be published in this issue. It will be published in the next issue of *Orient* as a supplement to the five articles in this one. I am also grateful to Mrs. Susan Tsumura, who took the effort to check and correct the grammar and style of the articles written by Prof. Izre’el, Prof. Tsumura and myself.

While reading the following five articles, the reader will immediately notice that the transliteration systems used by the four authors differ. This was not a problem at all at the workshop, as we mostly used Hebrew characters for the handouts. The problem emerged when I asked the authors to transliterate Hebrew characters in accordance with the instructions for the contributors to *Orient*. The following table illustrates the major differences:

	Rendsburg	Tsumura	Izre’el	Ikeda
pataḥ / qameṣ	$a / \bar{a} \sim o$		$a / \text{ā}$	
segol / šere	$e / \bar{e}$		$\text{æ} / e$	
vocal / silent schwa	$\text{ě} / -$	$\text{ə} / -$	$- / -$	
compound schwa	ǎ, ě, ǫ		a, æ, ā	
matres lectionis	v^h	î, ô, û, v^h	-	$\text{i}^y, \text{o}^w, \text{u}^w, \text{v}^h$
dagesh lene	Not Indicated.		Indicated by $\underline{b}, \underline{g}, \underline{d}, \underline{k}, \underline{p},$ and $\underline{t}$.	
“qof”	q		ḳ	

Because each transliteration system has its own merits and demerits, I dared not unify them. I apologize in advance for any inconvenience this may cause the readers.

Lastly, I would like to express thanks to three graduate students of University of Tsukuba, Mr. Nozomu Ariga, Mr. Yona Takahashi, and Mr. Akira

Ikeda. They helped me in many ways before, during and after the workshop. Without their help this workshop would not have been successful.

Jun Ikeda

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International Workshop on Israelian Hebrew: Program

July 31, 2002

- 13:30 **Gary A. RENDSBURG** (Cornell University)
A Comprehensive Guide to Israelian Hebrew Grammar
- 15:00 **David T. TSUMURA** (Japan Bible Seminary)
Israelian Hebrew in the Book of Samuel
- 17:30 Reception

August 1, 2002

- 9:00 **Shlomo IZRE'EL** (Tel Aviv University)
Canaanite Varieties in the Second Millennium B.C.:
Can We Dispense with Anachronism?
- 10:30 **Akio MORIYA** (Tokyo Woman's Christian University)
Genitive Constructions in Aramaic
- 13:00 **Jun IKEDA** (University of Tsukuba)
Three Notes on Israelian Hebrew Syntax
- 14:30 **Gary A. RENDSBURG** (Cornell University)
The Geographical and Historical Background of the Mishnaic Hebrew
Lexicon