PETER UNSETH

Dissertation abstract

Bi-Consonantal Reduplication in Amharic and Ethio-Semitic

Dissertation accepted at the University of Texas at Arlington on May 23, 2002 to obtain a Ph.D. degree in Linguistics

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was one of the first monasteries at the head of the *qebat,* or unctionist, monastic network.

Third, this written document, the ሥርት (*sərrit*), and its oral complement have permitted for the first time an understanding of the relationship between land tenure and social hierarchy inside the parish.

This thesis is a persuasive synthesis of written material, both published and unpublished, of oral information, and of information derived from church paintings. It illuminates important questions in Ethiopian history, some specific to this period, others of more general import.

Peter Unseth, *Bi-Consonantal Reduplication in Amharic and Ethio-Semitic,* Dissertation accepted at the University of Texas at Arlington on May 23, 2002 to obtain a Ph.D. degree in Linguistics.

This dissertation is a study of the consonant reduplication process in Amharic, a process that is herein named "Bi-Consonantal Reduplication" (BCR). In this reduplication process, the last two consonants of a root are repeated, a process that has never been studied in a systematic way in Amharic or any other Semitic language.

Previous authors have used a variety of labels for this process, too often writing their definitions in ways that include other types of reduplication or that exclude some genuine examples of this reduplication pattern. This dissertation provides a more precise definition for this process that includes all and only genuine examples, leading to the new label BCR. It is shown that some additional classes of forms are clearly derived by BCR, though it had previously been assumed that these were derived by a totally different process of reduplication.

It is shown that derived forms from certain types of roots can be inflected as verbs, but derived forms from other types of roots cannot. The latter can be used for verbal functions as the non-inflected lexical bases of compound verbs or as nouns and adjectives. Also, this study has led to the discovery and identification of certain classes of roots that cannot be reduplicated by BCR.

This dissertation also contains a survey of the semantic categories represented by words derived by BCR. It is shown that BCR is used with certain semantic categories frequently, including impairment of gait, and dressing up fancy.

The dissertation provides evidence that BCR was a part of Semitic at a very early stage. Evidence is presented of BCR in languages where it had been previously overlooked, and a hypothesis is given for why it has been lost in certain other languages.