

On the Periphery

NENA dialects have been subject to a great deal of influence from Iranian languages, principally Kurmanji, but also Sorani and Gorani. This influence is mainly, though not entirely, to be found in the lexicon and the phonology. This is consistent with what van Coetsem describes as recipient-language agency, that is elements of Iranian which speakers of NENA have incorporated into their language. In such a situation the core structure of the receiving language is not affected. However, there are some dialects of NENA where the Iranian influence has been more powerful. These are cases where NENA speakers were likely more at home in the Iranian language of their neighbors, and where, as a result, they have reshaped their NENA dialects in certain ways. This paper will discuss two such phenomena: First, the post-verbal particle *-awa*, which is found in the Jewish Trans-Zab dialects on the Eastern periphery of the NENA area. And second, the particle *-la/* which is used both as an enclitic on verbs and a postposition on nouns in the Bohtan dialect on the Western periphery of NENA. We will discuss the ways in which these particles differ from other instances of Iranian influence, and what they and other features of these dialects show about the milieu in which they were spoken.

References

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