definite noun is followed by a relative clause: *hāḏi l-mufātīḥ al-qurft al-bīha ḏ-ḏahab* 'here are the keys of the room in which the gold is' ibid., *az-zlimt al-ʿid rāsha* 'the man who was close to her head' XLI 4, *az-zlimt al-ymūt* 'the man who dies' XLI 14, *mā ʿidhum has-siqārt al-yišrabūnha* 'they don't have even one cigarette to smoke' XXXII 5, *hāḏi al-faruwt as-sawwētha-lak* 'here is the fur which I made for you' XXV 11. In one instance the first term of a construct phrase carries a definite article, perhaps due to the phonetic similarity of the article and the relative pronoun: *al-miftāḥ al-qurft al-mqaffala* 'the key of the locked room' XI 11; cf. *hāḏi l-mufātīḥ al-qurft al-bīha ḏ-ḏahab* 'here are the keys of the room in which the gold is' one line before.

The most frequently used verb for 'to wish, want' is *rād, yrīd*, but in the idiolects of some speakers the pseudoverb *bidd* + pron. suffix is of common occurrence. Interestingly, this old Syro-Palestinian sedentary feature is also attested by Behnstedt (Map 359) for al-Ḥasake and the banks of the Jaġjaġ River.

To sum up, Lidia Bettini's extensive collection of Bedouin women's narratives is a major contribution to the study of Arabic dialects. Ample in material and exact in presentation, this is an outstanding work indeed. In addition to rich, carefully documented linguistic data, it is excellent material for the study of oral literature and folklore, and moreover, makes enjoyable reading.

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Elie Kallas: *Intimate Songs from the MS. Vatican Arabic 366.* Città del Vaticano. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. Studi e testi 436. 2007. 95 + 39 pp. ISBN 978-88-210-0861-0.

This manuscript published by Elie Kallas is one of the manuscripts brought to Rome by Pietro della Valle (1586–1652) and joined to the Vatican Apostolic Library in 1719. The language of the booklet, consisting of thirteen songs, was described by Levi della Vida (1935) as "lingua volgare (dialetto di Siria)". The text, written in a very elegant *naskhī* script, is almost fully vocalized, which is

rather surprising in view of the nature of the language and the contents. On the grounds of the elegant layout with vellum cover and decorated pages, the vocalization and many desecrating invocations, Kallas comes to the plausible conclusion that the author was a non-Muslim who was commissioned by a wealthy non-native speaker of Arabic to compile a number of erotic songs to be performed by a non-native chorus. Because of the obscene character of the songs, Kallas refrains from giving translations unless absolutely necessary.

In the metrical analysis of the poems, Kallas draws the conclusion that the metres used were not quantitative but based on stress. The vocalization reveals the syllable structure and shows indisputably that the number of syllables—not their quantity—plays a crucial role in the prosody. Kallas gives a short description of such common types of popular strophic Syro-Egyptian songs as *muwaššaḥ*, *ʿatāba*, *muʿannā*, *mawwāl*, and *šurūqī*, but because the author of the collection has artistically mixed several variants and metres within the same song, Kallas prefers not to indicate the genres of the songs.

The linguistic register of the manuscript varies from an elegant poetic form of Standard Arabic to a most vulgar register of vernacular speech. In the linguistic analysis the key question is about the mother tongue of the author. As a result of a detailed analysis, Iraqi Arabic was definitely excluded, and thus the choice had to be made between Syrian and Egyptian dialects, of which the manuscript shares several typologically distinctive traits, e.g., the use of the *b*-imperfect and the interrogatives *ʾēš*, *lēš*, *la-mīn*, and *wēn*. Two major features finally led to the conclusion that the author was a speaker of Egyptian Arabic. One was the 1st p. pl. personal pronoun *ʾeḥnā*, which does not occur in the Syrian dialect area to the north of Palestine. The other was the short demonstrative pronoun *dā/dī*, which is almost nonexistent in Syria, neither has it been attested in earlier dialectal material from the area (see Jérôme Lentin, *Recherches sur l'histoire de la langue arabe au Proche-Orient à l'époque moderne*, 2 vols. Diss. Paris IV, 1997). Also, the presentative *ʾādī* and the items written <kyfa> 'as' and <kaḏā> 'so, in this way' are distinctive traits of Egyptian Arabic as against Syrian Arabic. Kallas draws attention to the fact

that, contrary to Modern Egyptian Arabic, *dī* in this manuscript exclusively occurs before the noun. In my opinion this corroborates the hypothesis that the postpositive position of the short demonstrative pronoun in Egyptian Arabic is a relatively late feature. In the dialectal Egyptian Arabic seventeenth to eighteenth century manuscript which I discussed in *Oriente Moderno* 2000: 83–97 and published in *Le Muséon* 120, 2007: 395–433 and 121, 2008: 111–141, *da/di* invariably occurs in preposed position. According to Humphrey Davies (*Seventeenth century Egyptian Arabic: a profile of the colloquial material in ... al-Širbīnī's Hazz al-Quḥūf*, Unpubl. Ph.D. diss., UC, Berkeley, 1981; p. 170), the preposed position and the postposed position adopted by analogy to the adjective had been in free variation, but in *Hazz al-Quḥūf* the preposed position had already acquired a specialized function, viz., the marking of an extra intensity. The same conclusion had been drawn by Madiha Doss, "The position of the demonstratives *da*, *di* in Egyptian Arabic: a diachronic inquiry", *Annales islamologiques*, XV, 1979: 349–357. Although the postposed position undoubtedly is a younger trait, I would argue that the use of the preposed position in a text does not necessarily imply an earlier date. In the above-mentioned manuscript published in *Le Muséon*, the text is a traditional narrative which follows an established, conservative linguistic form of oral story-telling, and the songs published by Kallas were composed in a linguistically mixed form. Anyway, the *ante quem* date of these songs is the time of della Valle's travels (1614–1626), but an essentially earlier date, perhaps the Mamluk period, seems probable, as the outward elegance and apparent old age of the manuscript may have been decisive reasons for purchasing it.

As a result of a careful linguistic analysis, Kallas comes to the conclusion that the linguistic form of the songs "follows well-defined artistic norms alternating and mixing standard and colloquial varieties, high and low registers, Egyptian and Syrian forms". Kallas supports, with good reason, Jérôme Lentin's claim of the existence of a dialectal Levantine koine in the Ottoman period. With reference to Ibn Ḥajja (d. 1433), who tells that because the Mamluk sultans were not Arabs, they used to hire their own court-*zajjāls*, he suggests that the Levantine koine may very

well already have been developed in the Mamluk period, when Syria and Egypt were under Mamluk dominance. This is a suggestion worth noticing when further manuscripts from that period are analyzed.

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Everhard Ditters and Harald Motzki (eds.): *Approaches to Arabic Linguistics, presented to Kees Versteegh on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.* Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007. (Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, vol. 49). xxxii + 757 pp. ISBN 0081-8461, ISBN 978-90-04-16015-6.

Kees Versteegh has been widely considered to be one of the most eminent scholars in the field of Arabic linguistics, the core area among the broad range of his scholarly interests. Since his Ph.D. dissertation *Greek Elements in Arabic Linguistic Thinking* (1977), his publications include a great number of important contributions to Arabic linguistics and the history of Arabic, among them several monographs, e.g., *Pidginization and Creolization: The Case of Arabic* (1984), *History of Arabic Grammar* (1986), *Arabic Grammar and Qurʾānic Exegesis in Early Islam* (1993), *The Arabic Linguistic Tradition* (1997), and *The Arabic Language* (1997). He is also widely known as a tirelessly working editor and co-editor of renowned book series, collective volumes and encyclopaedias, such as *The History of Linguistics in the Near East* (1983), *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar* I and II (1985, 1990), *The History of Linguistics in the Low Countries* (1988/1992), *History of Language Sciences* (Vol. I, 2000), *Woordenboek Arabisch-Nederlands* and *Nederlands-Arabisch* (2003), *Approaches to Arabic Dialects* (Festschrift Manfred Woidich, 2004), and the monumental *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* (2006–).

According to the preface, the broad range of Versteegh's scholarly interests, his expertise in different fields, his academic contribution to them, as well as his network of global contacts