of tribal society as traced principally in its poetry, and the multitudinous connections of poets to Aden and to the wider Yemeni diaspora that occasions the emergence of “metropolitan genres” of verse.

Such themes are explored in chapters packed with ethnohistoric and historical detail, which are insightfully analyzed and wittily written. There is a background chapter on the southern Yemeni region, Yafi, the primary site of the author’s multi-year fieldwork, and the socio-political place of poets in that region (Chapter Two); a detailed linguistic and poetic analysis of the main poetic genre, the qasida (Chapter Three); a unique history of the Adeni-based recording industry (including cassette tapes of sung poetry) dating from the late 1930s until the present (who would have thought that, according to Miller, it was at one time the second largest recording industry in the Middle East, after Egypt), along with a charming ethnography of cassette studios (Chapter Four); a fascinating social and artistic portrait of one of Yemen’s most charismatic tribal poets (Chapter Five); the cultural construction of ‘character’ as a moral problem of poetic authorship illustrated in the career of that leading poet and his ouvre (Chapter Six); and the narration of a rich event-history in cassette poetry, complete with a surprise about the charismatic poet’s compositions (Chapter Seven). We encounter people and places that are finely wrought, providing an intimacy that might have been lost in an ethnography so deeply immersed in the intricacies of form and sound recording.

Linking these chapters theoretically is what the author calls the “aesthetics of resonance,” developed in the Introduction and referred to throughout the rest of the book, which he contrasts to the “aesthetics of circulation.” Millar claims that “[the aesthetics of resonance] enables reflections on the emergence of such objects [as poems] from the sensate, dynamic, and therefore partly metaphysical qualities of media” (p. 26). He discovered a similar distinction in the writings of one of Yemen’s greatest singers, Muhammad Murshed Naji and it thus has a certain etmic value, though he also draws on analytical concepts in recent literature on media that have to do with attunement to the “senses,” and especially with listening as a moral practice. Hence the key phrase in the subtitle, “moral resonance.” While acknowledging that the two aesthetics of circulation and resonance are integral to each other, Miller argues that it is particularly the aesthetics of “resonance” that is important to understanding how moral authority, political order (or disorder), and artistic success are debated by Yemenis. This idea, and the claims the author makes for it, will surely occasion lively discussion and debate.

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