as does the scholarship from which they were drawn.) Cumulatively, the results of these studies have drawn attention to the importance of local environments, history, and social relations in determining the structure of regional economies and their varying responses to the exogenous impact of English colonial decisions and accelerating integration into an increasingly commercialized world. The colonial power is no longer viewed as having been all-powerful, and its ability to transform indigenous institutions and society is increasingly seen as having been constrained by these local factors. What is missing from both volumes, however, is an explicit discussion of how these regional economies of the subcontinent were linked to each other. What were the mechanisms, for example, that apparently transferred so quickly the exogenous shocks of the collapse of the Calcutta managing agency houses and the export of specie from Bengal in the 1820s to prices and production in villages in distant Gujarat, the Deccan, and Madras?

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Colonial Masculinity: The 'manly Englishman' and the 'effeminate Bengali' in the late 19th century. By MRINALINI SINHA. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995. xi, 191 pp. $69.95 (cloth); $19.95 (paper).

Mrinalini Sinha's book, based upon her dissertation research, is a detailed and engaging empirical study of colonial gender relations in nineteenth-century Bengal. Sinha is already known for her important analysis of the Ilbert Bill, which comprises the first chapter of the book and has appeared elsewhere in article form. The remaining three chapters discuss the emergence of contested notions of masculinity in controversies generated over the native volunteer movement, the Public Service Commission, and finally the 1891 Age of Consent Bill. Sinha argues that the framework of national cultures is inadequate for understanding how these debates reflect the construction of British and Indian masculinities, which must rather "be understood in relation to one another, and as constitutive of each other" (p. 7). The reframing that Sinha attempts—the description of an Indian/British "imperial social formation"—is an ambitious one, and she is to be lauded for attempting to chart a new course through colonial discourse analysis and the contemporary historiography of Indian nationalism. Ironically, however, the book draws the most from, and succeeds the best at, the form of colonial discourse analysis Sinha seeks to move beyond.

Sinha seeks to show that "colonial and nationalist politics in the 1880s and 1890s is best captured in the logic of colonial masculinity" (p. 1), which locates both India and Britain in the same nineteenth-century imperial social formation. She argues that the "bivalence" of class and racial categories tends to differentially polarize into the terms of the "manly Englishman" and "effeminate Bengali" at distinct moments of public debate. A major focus of the book is how British and Indian men defined the terms of colonial masculinity in relation to one another, although chapter 1 also contains an analysis of how such masculinity was defined vis-à-vis notions of colonial femininity and the participation of women in public debate on the Ilbert Bill. The introduction to the book skillfully shows how the term *babu* was gradually coded as "effeminate" by colonial discourse.

Sinha seeks to "broaden the significance of feminist historiography" by aligning herself with a form of "materialist-feminist" analysis which does not prioritize gender (p. 182). Yet her nod toward feminist scholarship on the sex-gender system (p. 11) seems to leave this prioritization intact, even as the more interesting questions about whether Victorian Britain and nineteenth-century India, as part of the same "imperial social formation," shared a singular sex-gender system, or interlocking but contradictory sex-gender systems, remain unasked. In chapter 4, for example, the familiar scenario of British and Indian men debating the age of consent is replayed without consideration of the question of women's agency or how colonial debates about women may have worked to consolidate patriarchy in the "imperial social formation," despite Sinha's earlier gesture in this direction (p. 44). She concludes unoriginally that "the history of colonial masculinity exposes the patriarchal politics of nationalism" (p. 181), but fails to make the link between colonial masculinity and imperial patriarchal structures. The term "patriarchy" itself is left oddly undefined.

Sinha's emphasis on the *logic* of colonial masculinity at times also prevents her from fruitfully exploring the contradictions of the nineteenth-century British/Indian imperial social formation. For example, in chapter 2, instead of exploring the exclusion of elite Bengali men from the Indian volunteer corps as a site of contradiction within imperial racial ideology at a moment when colonial officials needed to consolidate elite support, Sinha argues that the notion of effeminacy was introduced to justify exclusion. The presence of the masculine "martial" elites would seem to complicate her argument, however. She concludes weakly that the strategy of separating "martial" from "non-martial" Indian elites evolved "merely to justify the racial exclusivity of volunteering in India" (pp. 82, 86) in order for colonial rule to be consistent with professed ideals. The difficulty here is that her analysis highlights precisely how colonial rule was, more often than not, quite inconsistent with its professed ideals.

Few would argue with Sinha about the value of understanding metropole/colony relations as part of an imperial social formation. However, she fails to achieve a description of the imperial social formation which would productively unsettle the national/colonial dichotomy of current historiography. Though imperial social formations do not transcend, but rather work through, such dichotomies, the book lapses into a retelling of what the British did in India, and Indian nationalist response to it. Sinha is able to demonstrate that what the British did in India was linked to what they did at home, but is unable to show how what happened in the colony might have reshaped the politics of the metropole. There are, indeed, suggestive passages in the book which point to how British class and gender relations in turn shaped and were affected by events in the Indian colony (see particularly pp. 9–10, 54–55, 71–72, 153, 161–63), but they are too few and sketchy to sustain the book's central project. Without more extensive treatment of how gender, class, and race relations were mutually played out in Victorian Britain and nineteenth-century India, what Sinha's study amplifies is perhaps less the workings of an imperial social formation than the category of imperial history itself.

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Tamil Love Poetry and Poetics. By TAKANOBU TAKAHASHI. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995. xiv, 255 pp. $95.00 (cloth).

The title of Takanobu Takahashi's rich, intelligent book should be changed to *Tamil Love Poetry VERSUS Poetics,* in that the stated intention of the volume is to