



# Singing to the Goddess: Poems to Kali and Uma from Bengal

*Rachel Fell McDermott*

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## **Singing to the Goddess: Poems to Kali and Uma from Bengal** Rachel Fell McDermott

This vibrant collection presents 145 brief Bengali lyric poems dedicated to the Hindu goddesses Kali and Uma. These poems--many of which are presented here for the first time in English translation--were written from the early eighteenth century up to the contemporary period. They represent the unique Bengali tradition of goddess worship (Saktism) as it developed over this period. Included are forty poems by the most famous of all Sakta poets, Ramprasad Sen (c.1718-1775) and ten lyrics by the renowned 20th-century poet Kaji Najrul Islam. McDermott's lucid introduction places these works in their historical context and shows how images of the goddesses evolved over the centuries. Her lively translations of these poetic lyrics evoke the passion and devotion of the followers of Kali and Uma and shed light on the history and practice of goddess worship.

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