

# CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
1 The Medieval Period in Bengal: A Brief Introduction	1
<b>PART I</b>	
<b>Shakta Literature in Bengal</b>	<b>21</b>
2 Hindu Goddesses and Patriarchal Politics: Unveiling Goddess Imagery in the <i>Chandi Mangal</i> , the <i>Devi Mahatmya</i> and the <i>Srimad Devi Bhagavata Purana</i>	37
3 Suppression and Resistance: Celebrating Manasa in Text, Performance and Ritual	55
4 Kali, Goddess Power and Sexuality: The influence of Tantra on the <i>Kalika Purana</i>	72
<b>PART II</b>	
<b>Vaishnava Literature in Bengal</b>	<b>89</b>
5 Radha as a Social Rebel: Female Sexuality in the Vaishnava Padavalis of Bengal	105
6 The Concept of Androgyny in the Chaitanya Hagiographies of Bengal	124

CONTENTS

**PART III**

<b>Interpreting the Epics: <i>Anuvada Sahitya</i> or <i>Itihasa Sahitya</i></b>	<b>139</b>
<b>7 Empowering the Silenced Voices: The Paradox of Female Chastity in Krittivasa's <i>Ramayana</i></b>	<b>153</b>
<b>8 Women's <i>Ramayanas</i>: Chandraboti's Folk Ballad</b>	<b>169</b>
<i>Index</i>	<b>182</b>