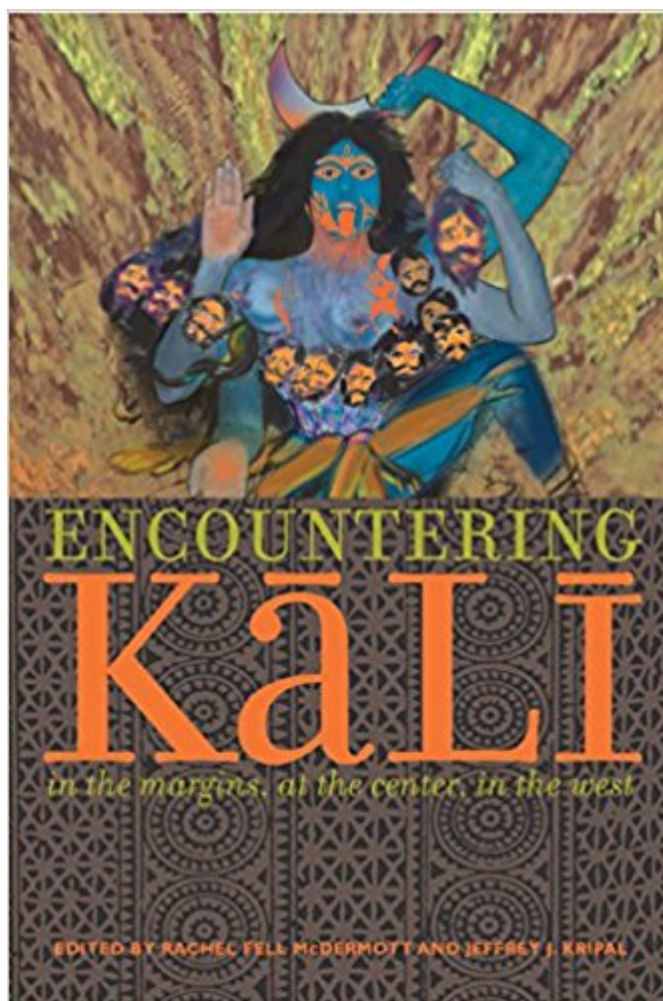


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# Encountering Kali: In The Margins, At The Center, In The West



## Synopsis

Encountering Kali explores one of the most remarkable divinities the world has seen—the Hindu goddess Kali. She is simultaneously understood as a blood-thirsty warrior, a goddess of ritual possession, a Tantric sexual partner, and an all-loving, compassionate Mother. Popular and scholarly interest in her has been on the rise in the West in recent years. Responding to this phenomenon, this volume focuses on the complexities involved in interpreting Kali in both her indigenous South Asian settings and her more recent Western incarnations. Using scriptural history, temple architecture, political violence, feminist and psychoanalytic criticism, autobiographical reflection, and the goddess's recent guises on the Internet, the contributors pose questions relevant to our understanding of Kali, as they illuminate the problems and promises inherent in every act of cross-cultural interpretation.

## Book Information

Paperback: 321 pages

Publisher: University of California Press (May 5, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0520232402

ISBN-13: 978-0520232402

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #550,863 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #74 in Books > History > World > Religious > Hinduism #604 in Books > History > Asia > India #1169 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Hinduism

## Customer Reviews

"The editors take us from the margin, through the center, to the West, "through the shifting lenses of scriptural history, temple architecture, political violence, feminist and psychoanalytic criticism, autobiographical reflection, and the goddess's recent guises on the Internet," a round tour of an obscure, dense, powerful subject."--News India Times

"The editors have assembled a South Asian/History of Religions dream team, and the result is a book that captures the sexy, gory power of the dark goddess who is the most exciting of all Hindu deities—and perhaps the most controversial and notorious of all deities. Academically profound and

theoretically subtle, these essays are also vivid and juicy."#151;Wendy Doniger, author of *The Bedtrick: Tales of Sex and Masquerade*"If any subject ever called for a book of many parts, it is Kali. These original and provocative essays, well chosen and thoughtfully organized, point to all sides of the Goddess's character. The result is a sharp and challenging book-the essential starting point for a new century of encountering Kali."#151;John Stratton Hawley, Ann Whitney Olin Professor of Religion, Columbia University and co-editor of *Devi: Goddesses of India*

I will likely update this review whenever I finish this book, but so far, I am loving what I am reading. It is a great introduction book for those newer to studying Kali and provides good insight on her (from a scholar and historical context of her).

This is a really valuable resource for anyone interested in getting multiple perspectives on Kali. Ranging from mythological origins to cultural practices to the influence of colonialism, it offers some excellent and diverse perspectives on this complex Goddess.

This book is a compilation of academic essays on Kali ma. It's a must read. Enjoyed it alot.

This book is more than an academic study. It provides an experience of Kali devotions at the deepest levels. It also presents a variety of perceptions heretofore unavailable in a single volume. An outstanding contribution. Ron Frost, R.N., M.A.

great product! product as stated and fast shipping! A+

This collection of scholarly essays is an easy and enjoyable read for scholars and laypersons alike. What's so great about it is how many perspectives it gives on, as another reviewer noted, "the Kali phenomenon." McDermott and others tear away notions Westerners have of Kali, and present a much broader picture of her mythology, worship and cultural significance. McDermott's concluding essay spearheads the Western fascination with Kali, and dispels many myths along the way - including common etymological mistakes made frequently by feminist scholars and writers on Kali. Western devotees of Kali should especially consider reading this volume - it will give necessary depth and breadth to your understanding of this complex Goddess, and is exceptionally readable. As this book was primarily written by and for scholars who are familiar with Sanskrit, those unfamiliar with transliteration diacritics will want to refer to online sources. Devotees who have

Swami Satyananda Saraswati's excellent Kali Puja book will find a transliteration pronunciation guide in the back, which would be useful in this context.

I went into this book knowing next to nothing about Kali. This book is a wonderful collection of essays on different aspects of Kali and her worshippers. It is scholarly yet easy to read. It held my attention and launched my imagination. A really great resource for anyone that wishes to learn more about Kali. This book helped deepen my connection with Ma.

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