



**The Gift of a Virgin: Women, Marriage, and
Ritual in a Bengali Society Second Indian
impression with a new introduction on "Some
Contemporary Issues in Context" (Oxford India
Paperbacks)**

Lina M. Fruzzetti

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This intimate study vividly portrays the activities and rituals of life in Vishnupur, a large town in West Bengal. Fruzzetti shows how rituals are crucial to a better understanding of women's daily lives, and to Indian society as a whole. She explores the public lives of these Bengali women, as well as their private lives. The work demonstrates how rituals define their private world--customs, habits, and actions restricted to the conduct by women as opposed to the public rituals and festivals over which men preside. Though their two worlds are separate, Bengali women are neither isolated from or inferior to men. In this second impression, Fruzzetti has added a new introduction in which she questions how has a social system that traditionally held women in such high esteem allow such aberrations as bride burning, exorbitant dowry demands, and other forms of harassment, and the reactions of the women's movements in India.

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