



The Book of the Cailleach: Stories of the Wise Woman Healer

Gearóid Ó Cruaíaoich

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This powerful analysis of the wise women healer from the oral traditions of Ireland's rural communities is unique in its depth and perspective. Stories, told and retold, embedded in the texture of culture and community, collected and studied for many decades, are here translated and made available to the general reader for the first time. The figure of the wise woman, the hag, the Cailleach, or the Red Woman are part of an oral tradition which has its roots in pre-Christian Ireland. In the hands of Gearóid Ó Cruaíoch, these figures are subtly explored to reveal how they offered a complex understanding of the world, of human psychology and its predicaments: the thematic structure of the book brings to the fore universal themes such as death, marriage, childbirth, and healing, and invites the reader to see the contemporary relevance of the stories for themselves.



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