



## **Women as Sacred Custodians of the Earth? Women, Spirituality and the Environment**

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"... an interesting collection of essays ... the text is engaging and highly informative." · H-Net Review  
Literature on women, development and environment is abundant. This book offers a new perspective, specifically to challenge the assumption that women have a special affinity with the Earth and therefore a historic mission for the care of the environment. The book explores spiritual, religious and philosophical beliefs concerning women and ecology, and whether women are truly "sacred custodians" of the Earth. This concept has evolved from ideas developed by eco-feminists. Whether and how different belief systems can be put to use to create an awareness to protect, preserve and improve ecological conditions is discussed. The collection of papers demonstrates the complexity of the issues and the variations and vulnerability of the assumed relationship between women and the environment in different cultural and political contexts. The book challenges policy solutions which are devised to be on a global scale and to create unrealistic global aspirations, and the value of targeting women in a particular attempt to achieve environmentally sustainable development. Alaine Low has a D.Phil. in History from the University of Oxford. She has taught and carries out field work in Latin America and is an Associate Lecturer at the Open University. She is the Associate Editor of the five volumes of Oxford History of the British Empire. Soraya Tremayne has a D.Phil. in Social Anthropology from the University of Paris, Sorbonne and currently is the Co-ordinating Director of the Fertility and Reproduction Studies Group, University of Oxford. She was formerly the Acting Director of the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research on Women, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, and has carried out research in Iran and Malaysia. She is a Vice-President of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

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