

Land of the Cosmic Race: Race Mixture, Racism, and Blackness in Mexico

Christina A. Sue



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Land of the Cosmic Race: Race Mixture, Racism, and Blackness in Mexico Christina A. Sue *Land of the Cosmic Race* is a richly-detailed ethnographic account of the powerful role that race and color play in organizing the lives and thoughts of ordinary Mexicans. It presents a previously untold story of how individuals in contemporary urban Mexico construct their identities, attitudes, and practices in the context of a dominant national belief system. The book centers around Mexicans' engagement with three racialized pillars of Mexican national ideology - the promotion of race mixture, the assertion of an absence of racism in the country, and the marginalization of blackness in Mexico.

The subjects of this book are mestizos - the mixed-race people of Mexico who are of Indigenous, African, and European ancestry and the intended consumers of this national ideology. *Land of the Cosmic Race* illustrates how Mexican mestizos navigate the sea of contradictions that arise when their everyday lived experiences conflict with the national stance and how they manage these paradoxes in a way that upholds, protects, and reproduces the national ideology. Drawing on a year of participant observation, over 110 interviews, and focus-groups from Veracruz, Mexico, Christina A. Sue offers rich insight into the relationship between race-based national ideology and the attitudes and behaviors of mixed-race Mexicans. Most importantly, she theorizes as to why elite-based ideology not only survives but actually thrives within the popular understandings and discourse of those over whom it is designed to govern.

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