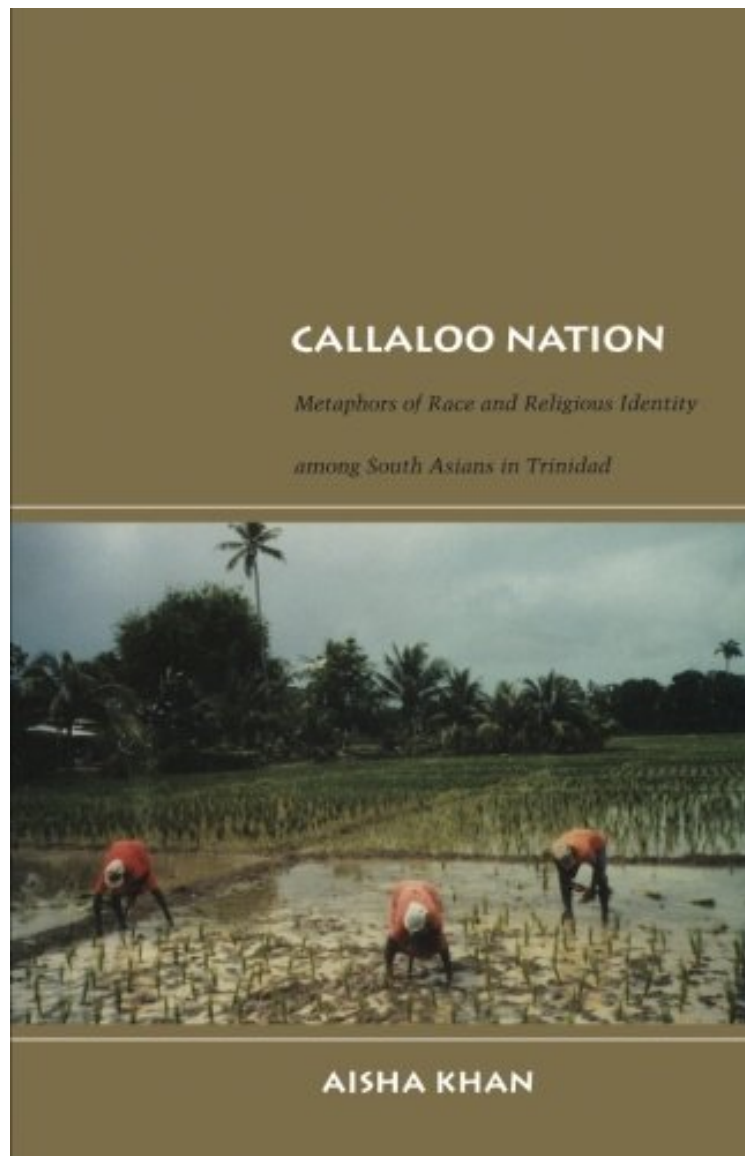


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Callaloo Nation: Metaphors of Race and Religious Identity among South Asians in Trinidad (Latin America Otherwise)

Aisha Khan

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Aisha Khan : Callaloo Nation: Metaphors of Race and Religious Identity among South Asians in Trinidad (Latin America Otherwise) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Callaloo Nation: Metaphors of Race and Religious Identity among South Asians in Trinidad (Latin America

Otherwise):

Mixing whether referred to as *mestizaje*, *callaloo*, *hybridity*, *creolization*, or *multiculturalism* is a foundational cultural trope in Caribbean and Latin American societies. Historically entwined with colonial, anticolonial, and democratic ideologies, ideas about mixing are powerful forces in the ways identities are interpreted and evaluated. As Aisha Khan shows in this ethnography, they reveal the tension that exists between identity as a source of equality and identity as an instrument through which social and cultural hierarchies are reinforced. Focusing on the Indian diaspora in the Caribbean, Khan examines this paradox as it is expressed in key dimensions of Hindu and Muslim cultural history and social relationships in southern Trinidad. In vivid detail, she describes how disempowered communities create livable conditions for themselves while participating in a broader culture that both celebrates and denies difference. Khan combines ethnographic research she conducted in Trinidad over the course of a decade with extensive archival research to explore how Hindu and Muslim Indo-Trinidadians interpret authority, generational tensions, and the transformations of Indian culture in the Caribbean through metaphors of mixing. She demonstrates how ambivalence about the desirability of a *callaloo* national multicultural society is manifest around practices and issues, including rituals, labor, intermarriage, and class mobility. Khan maintains that metaphors of mixing are pervasive and worth paying attention to: the assumptions and concerns they communicate are key to unraveling who Indo-Trinidadians imagine themselves to be and how identities such as race and religion shape and are shaped by the politics of multiculturalism.

Callaloo Nation is a solid contribution to anthropological theory and Caribbean ethnography. In helping us to understand that group identity is in constant flux, Aisha Khan shows, far better than just about anybody else, what the term essentialize really means. Sidney Mintz, author of *Caribbean Transformations*