**MESTIZAJE**

**Topics Covered:**

1. **Historical Foundations of Mestizaje: Indigenous-European Interactions**
   1. The initial contact between indigenous populations and European colonizers.
   2. Social structures and racial categories developed during colonial rule.
   3. Mestizaje as a product of colonization: blending of indigenous and European cultures.
2. **Mestizaje as a National Ideology in Latin America**
   1. The role of mestizaje in nation-building, particularly in countries like Mexico and Peru.
   2. Key historical figures: José Vasconcelos and the idea of "La Raza Cósmica."
   3. How mestizaje contributed to a sense of unity while overlooking indigenous cultural autonomy.
3. **Cultural and Political Implications of Mestizaje**
   1. The dual role of mestizaje: promoting cultural blending while enforcing European cultural dominance.
   2. State policies and their impact on indigenous populations.
   3. Mestizaje as a tool for assimilation and "blanqueamiento" (whitening).
4. **Cultural Expressions of Mestizaje**
   1. Literature, visual art, and music as expressions of mestizo identity.
   2. Case studies: Mexican muralism, Andean mestizo art, and the role of mestizaje in shaping cultural identity.
   3. The blending of indigenous and European traditions in festivals, rituals, and everyday practices.
5. **Mestizaje in Contemporary Latin America**
   1. Modern interpretations of mestizaje and its evolving role in multicultural societies.
   2. The resurgence of indigenous movements and their critiques of mestizaje.
   3. The relevance of mestizaje in contemporary cultural and political discourse, especially in multiculturalism and the recognition of indigenous rights.
6. **Learning Activities:**
7. **Pre-Reading Assignment:**
   1. Excerpts from José Vasconcelos' *La Raza Cósmica* (1925).
   2. Wade, P. (1997). *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America* (Chapter on mestizaje and nation-building).
   3. De la Cadena, M. (2000). *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, Peru*.
8. **Lecture/Presentation:**
   1. Overview of mestizaje as a historical process and national ideology.
   2. Discussion of how mestizaje has both unified and marginalized indigenous groups in Latin American societies.
9. **Class Discussion:**
   1. Analyze the political use of mestizaje in national identity formation.
   2. Debate on the potential positive and negative aspects of mestizaje for indigenous cultures.
10. **Case Study Analysis:**
    1. Analyze the impact of mestizaje in Mexican muralism (Diego Rivera) and its role in promoting a national mestizo identity.
    2. Discussion of mestizaje’s influence in shaping Peruvian and Andean identities through cultural expressions.
11. **Group Activity:**
    1. Students will be divided into groups to debate the following question: *Is mestizaje a celebration of cultural diversity or a form of cultural erasure?* Each group will defend one position, using examples from the readings and lectures.